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Dungeon Crawl Classics #30

Vault of the Dragon Kings

By Jason Little

Gen Con 2005 Tournament Module

AN ADVENTURE FOR 10TH LEVEL CHARACTERS



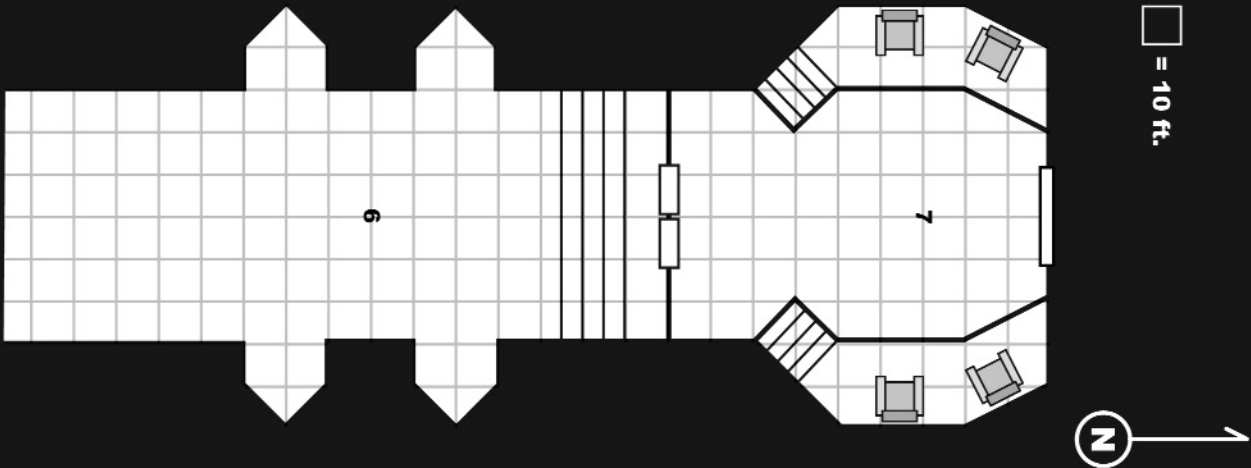
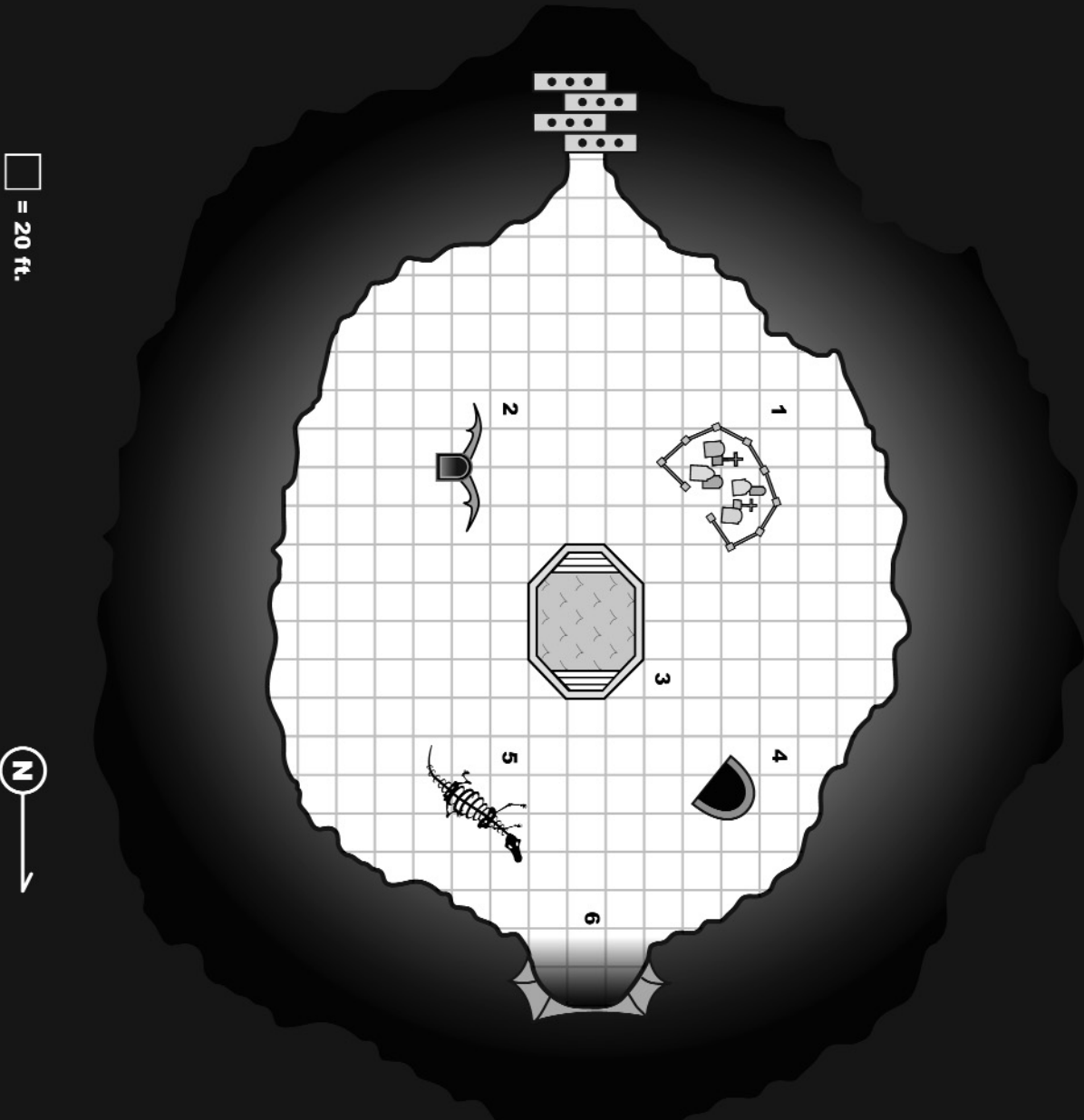
Remember the good old days, when adventures were underground, NPCs were there to be killed, and the finale of every dungeon was the dragon on the 20th level? Those days are back. Dungeon Crawl Classics adventures don't waste your time with long-winded speeches, weird campaign settings, or NPCs who aren't meant to be killed. Each adventure is 100% good, solid dungeon crawl, with the monsters you know, the traps you remember, and the secret doors you know are there somewhere.

This special tournament module was used for the Second Annual Dungeon Crawl Classics Open Tournament at Gen Con Indy 2005. It includes the official tournament scoring system, pregenerated characters, and illustrated player handouts. In the lofty reaches of a distant mountain range lies an ancient vault shrouded in mystery. An evil dragon has penetrated the vault in order to bring about a new age of dragons – an age that has no place for the likes of man, dwarf, or elf. Only the heroes can stop him!

If you enjoy this adventure, look for the rest of the Dungeon Crawl Classics series!



Vault of the Dragon Kings – Level 2



Dungeon Crawl Classics #30 Vault of the Dragon Kings

By Jason Little
AN ADVENTURE FOR 10TH LEVEL CHARACTERS



Official Tournament Module

Dungeon Crawl Classics Second Annual Open Tournament
Gen Con Indy 2005



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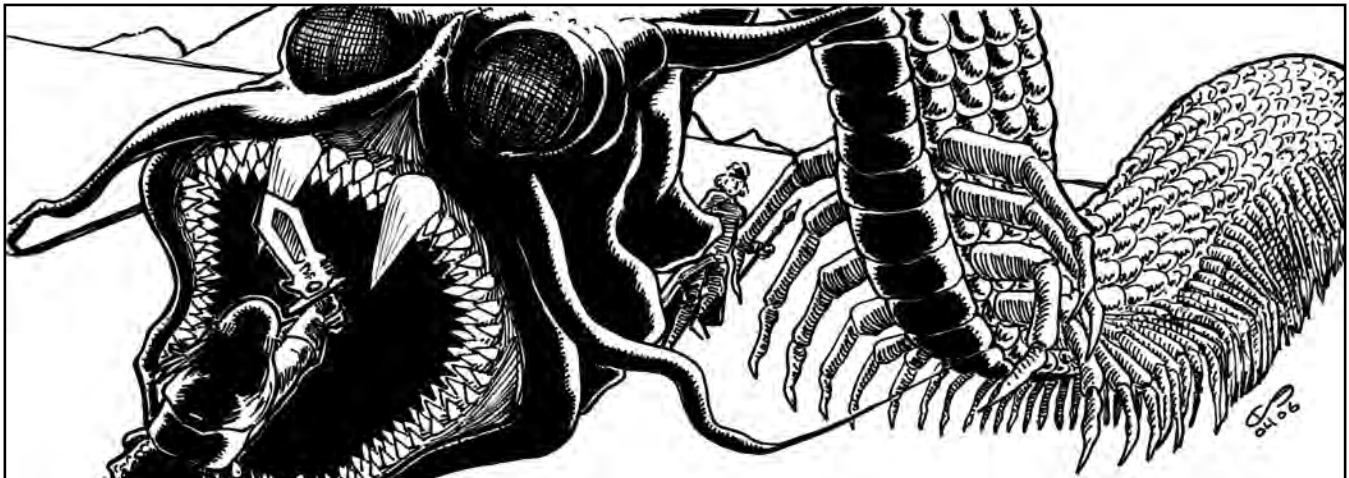
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Gen Con Tournament Judges: Chris Anderson, Chris Doyle, Dan Forest, Jason Goodwin, Ken Hart, Erica King, Jason Little, Ken McKutchen, Jeff "Iron DM" McSpadden, Adrian Pommier, Todd Rooks

Playtesters: St. Louis Crew (Eva Crespo, Toni Easter, Matt Gossett, Haden Huffaker, Stephanie Huffaker, David Husted, Brian MacMillan, Erin McSpadden, Jeff McSpadden, Jorge Montero, Michael Silbey, John Weber), Buffalo Crew (Isaiah Choczyski, Christine Doering, Kathy Doering, Cindy Moore, Scott Moore, Deneb "Under Protest" Pirrone, Estevan Puerto, Hannibal "Ubu" Shareef)

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Are you going to Gen Con Indy this year? Be sure to sign up for the Third Annual Dungeon Crawl Classics Open Tournament! 100 gamers participated last year in a tournament where every slot filled up within 24 hours of preregistration opening. For a summary of last year's tournament results, see page 3.

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Official Tournament Results

FIRST ROUND

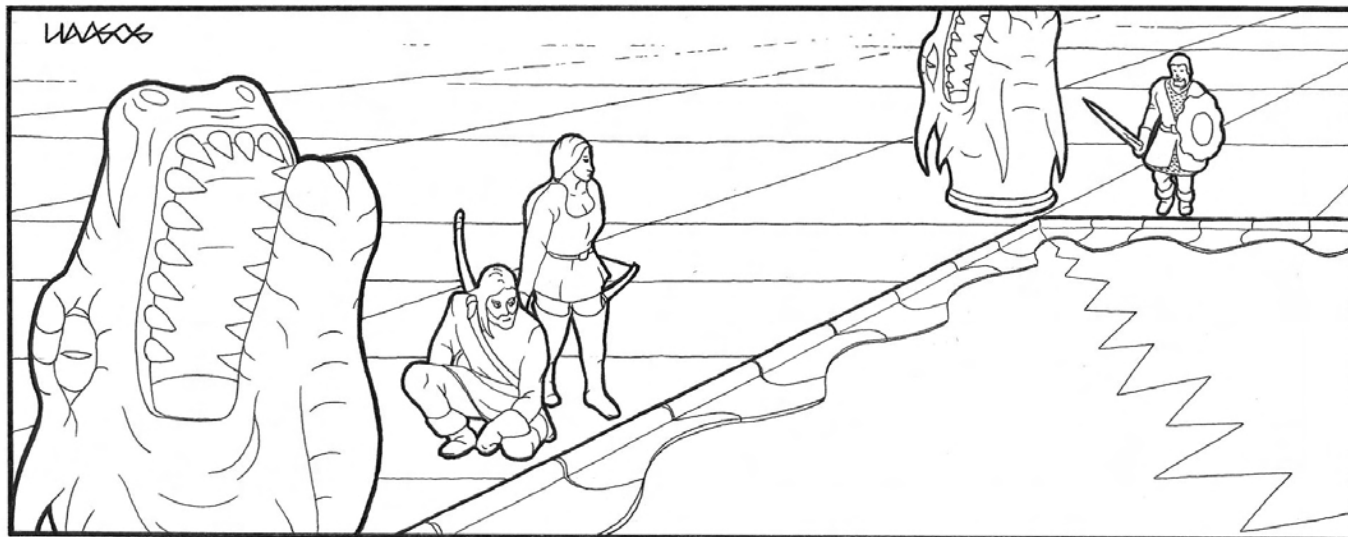
Rank	Team Name	DM	Score	PCs <0 hp	Player Names
1	Dead Bunny Crew	Chris Anderson	5,425	1	Leslie Foster, Scott McAhren, Beth Olsen, Scott Cowson
2	OCR Bunny Killers	Chris Anderson	5,100	0	Michael Meanza, Joshua O'Connor-Rose, Dustin Short, Kerry Rogers
3	The Generics	Ken McCutchen	4,295	0	Christopher Kreader, Bill Fisher, Gregory Weir, Jordan Thayer
4	Clan Yeoman	Jeff McSpadden	3,940	1	Nicole Buckley, Tim Buckley, Leah Adams, Dan Adams
5	Fish in a Barrel	Jason Little	3,900	0	Jim Lamanna, James Pike, John Burns, Tom Gintner
6	This Horn Blows	Chris Anderson	3,525	0	Aaron Webb, Pete Petrusha, Chris Barnett, Ben "Superfan" Waxman
7	Team Falconmoor	Adrian Pommier	3,415	1	Matt Budner, Stephen Saunders, Mark Serrahn, Jerry Bryant
8	Hurray for Fascists	Jeff McSpadden	3,400	0	Christian, Darren, Sean, Tony
9	Tim's Not Here	Jason Little	3,330	0	Jeff Dean, Chris Smith, Todd Kath, Andrew Frieiniz
10	Nova Wastrels	Ken McCutchen	2,555	1	Mark Wilkins, Emily Wilkins, Dan Bates, Don Parish
11	Hit n' Run	Erica King	2,485	2	Dave Hurluge, Allen Eblin, Cole Crawford, Zach Johnston
12	Brogan's Heroes	Todd Rooks	2,440	0	Matt Capel, Lee Spires, Chris Foley, Andy Brogan
13	The Foursaken	Jason Goodwin	2,350	1	Derek Lloyd, Fred Cappel, Tom Kummer, Matt MacGregor
14	Heroes of the Silver Lights	Todd Rooks	2,315	1	Rob Hand, Chris Platz, Paul Cassinetto, Dusty Hodges
15	The Pin Cushions	Jason Little	2,205	0	Rob Lee, Brian Patterson, John Nickerson, Ben Donahue
16	Juggling Hammers	Dan Forrest	2,025	1	Joe Jolly, Will Harris, Eric Artis, Rob Vought
17	The Dragon Slayers	Ken McCutchen	2,005	0	Greg Liberatore, Dave Hall, Joseph Frenia, Terri Frenia
18	Guinea Pigs (TH1)	Erica King	1,990	2	Ed McGlynn, Mark Waits, James Hart, Mark Mancuso
19	Random Encounter	Jeff McSpadden	1,990	4	Ethan, Paul, Dan, Jim
20	What Plan? #1	Erica King	1,885	1	Mars Getsoian, Mark Nardduzzi, James Grummeo, Scott Thede
21	Dead Men Delving	Dan Forrest	1,740	2	Tim Ballew, Eric Pratt, Rich Miller, Rich Franks
22	Don Hastily and his Caballeros	Dan Forrest	1,680	1	Tim Nuttle, John Burnson, Mark Albright, Cory Tadlocke
23	Bouncing Barbarians of Doom	Chris Anderson	1,625	2	Glen Ausso, Keith Wall, Magdalene Bloom, Daniel Bloom
24	Evil Beeware	Jason Goodwin	1,495	1	Kelley Rogers, Brian Ferrenz, Mark Menton, Chase Rogers
25	Team "Just Met in the Hallway"	Adrian Pommier	1,125	3	Andrew Cooper, Derek Rainey, Chris Webb, Kerry Bourgoine
26	Team Ubo	Jason Goodwin	790	3	Brent Gray, Micheal DeSensi, Hann Cummings, Matt Jeffries
27	Council of the Confused	Todd Rooks	190	5	Ian Burgess, Francois Moret, Brian Goose, Lion Godchaux
28	What Plan? #2	Dan Forrest	-70	3	Nick Richardson, Tim Thomas, Marion Nelepa, Bob Peterson
			Total	36	=32% kill rate

SECOND ROUND

Rank	Team Name	DM	Score	PCs <0 hp	Player Names
1	OCR Bunny Killers	Jeff McSpadden	4,800	0	Michael Meanza, Joshua O'Connor-Rose, Dustin Short, Kerry Rogers
2	The Generics	Jeff McSpadden	2,545	1	Christopher Kreader, Bill Fisher, Gregory Weir, Jordan Thayer
3	This Horn Blows	Erica King	2,400	2	Aaron Webb, Pete Petrusha, Chris Barnett, Ben "Superfan" Waxman
4	Tim's Not Here	Adrian Pommier	2,390	0	Jeff Dean, Chris Smith, Todd Kath, Andrew Frieiniz
5	Fish in a Barrel	Ken McCutchen	2,275	1	Jim Lamanna, James Pike, John Burns, Tom Gintner
6	Clan Yeoman	Jason Little	2,020	1	Nicole Buckley, Tim Buckley, Leah Adams, Dan Adams
7	Team Falconmoor	Ken McCutchen	1,845	3	Matt Budner, Stephen Saunders, Mark Serrahn, Jerry Bryant
8	Nova Wastrels	Adrian Pommier	1,280	1	Mark Wilkins, Emily Wilkins, Dan Bates, Don Parish
Total			9	=28% kill rate	

FINAL ROUND

Rank	Team Name	DM	Score	PCs <0 hp	Player Names
1	OCR Bunny Killers	Jason Little	2,745	1	Michael Meanza, Joshua O'Connor-Rose, Dustin Short, Kerry Rogers
2	The Generics	Adrian Pommier	815	5	Christopher Kreader, Bill Fisher, Gregory Weir, Jordan Thayer
3	This Horn Blows	Chris Doyle	-1,245	4	Aaron Webb, Pete Petrusha, Chris Barnett, Ben "Superfan" Waxman
Total			10	=83% kill rate	



Introduction

Remember the good old days, when adventures were underground, NPCs were there to be killed, and the finale of every dungeon was the dragon on the 20th level? Those days are back. Dungeon Crawl Classics don't waste your time with long-winded speeches, weird campaign settings, or NPCs who aren't meant to be killed. Each adventure is 100% good, solid dungeon crawl, with the monsters you know, the traps you fear, and the secret doors you know are there somewhere.

Vault of the Dragon Kings is the special tournament module used for the Second Annual Dungeon Crawl Classics Open Tournament at Gen Con Indy 2005. This module includes the official tournament scoring system, pregenerated characters, ten illustrated player handouts, and an event summary from Gen Con. Vault of the Dragon Kings has been designed for four to six 10th-level characters. All classes will find this a challenging adventure, and a well balanced group with a variety of skills and abilities is the key to survival and success.

Adventure Summary

In the lofty reaches of a distant mountain range lies an ancient Vault shrouded in mystery. It is rumored to be the Vault of the Dragon Kings, home of the legendary paragons of power and strength who once ruled unquestioned over all of dragonkind. Recently, however, the Vault of the Dragon Kings has been disturbed. The esoteric secrets it holds now risk falling into the hands of a once majestic and proud silver dragon named Myrkjartan – who has become tainted by an evil spirit within the Vault.

The heroes venture to the Vault to stop the machinations of this fiend before he can bring about the dawn of a new age of dragons – an age that has no place for the likes of man, dwarf, or elf. Along the way, they will be sorely tested by the deadly traps and guards that protect the Vault, as well as the foul minions of the corrupted silver dragon.

Background Story

The Dragon Kings

Oft the subject of myth and rumor, the legendary Dragon Kings once ruled over the vast empires of the dragons from time immemorial – a time before the coming of man, and even before the storied histories of elves or dwarves. The Dragon Kings were purportedly missives of the first gods themselves, to care for and rule over the gods' greatest creations: the dragons.

The Dragon Kings were titanic avatars of the gods, standing 15 to 20 feet tall. Each of the four Kings embodied one of the four draconic elements, reflecting the nature and ideals of fire, lightning, cold, and acid. The four Dragon Kings watched over the dragons as they flourished in a time of great peace, prosperity, and discovery.

These four Kings were iconic giants, paragons of strength and virtue sent by the gods to guard and rule the dragons. Each King was associated with a cardinal direction on the compass, further reflecting their ties to the draconic elements, and reinforcing the concept that these Dragon Kings brought direction and focus to dragonkind.

The King of the North was the King of Fire, representing spiritual renewal, strong passions, aggression, warfare, vengeance, and the spark of life. The King of the South was the King of Ice, who embodied patience, stamina, intuition, unquestioned loyalty, and unyielding resolve. The King of the East was the King of Lightning, embracing spontaneity, assertiveness, artistic expression, freedom, and unpredictability. The King of the West was the King of Acid, who personified memories, the passage of time, persistence, irony, and the inevitability of decay.

As time passed, the connection between the gods and their avatars grew tenuous. Despite their great powers, the Dragon Kings were not gods themselves. As the gods took greater interest in the affairs of humans, elves, and other mortal races, the power of the Dragon Kings ebbed. No longer immortal, the Dragon Kings found their formidable powers taxed as they sought to retain control over their dragon vassals.

History of the Vault

The mountain stronghold is an elaborate, awe-inspiring symbol of the Dragon Kings' power and prescience. The Dragon Kings oversaw the development of the Outer Holdings and their Seat of

Judgment early during their reign, to best serve their needs and the needs of their charges. Nestled in the highest reaches of the Frosteye Mountains, the complex insulates the Valley of the Fallen and the dragonkin from the troubles of the outside world while still allowing the Dragon Kings and those they deem worthy access to the mountain stronghold.

The valley itself is open to the sky, but the incredibly high altitude and perilous cliffs made it impossible for virtually all but the dragons to safely fly to and from the Valley of the Fallen. But the valley and its idyllic, almost oasislike charm provided everything the dragons needed, and few ventured from their mountain home to the world outside.

Once the gods turned their attention to the mortal races, the Dragon Kings knew their time was drawing short. They soon ordered the construction of the Vault, the centerpiece of their domain nestled deep within the mountains, accessible only through the Kings' Seat of Judgment. It is there, inside the Vault of the Dragon Kings, where the Pool of Dreams lies.

The construction of the Pool would become the Dragon Kings' greatest accomplishment. The Pool of Dreams cares for the souls of the dragons once they passed from the mortal realm. In essence, the spiritual "blueprints" of the dragons live on in the Pool. All their collective knowledge, memories, and experience are preserved until the time when the gods favor the dragons once more. Ideally, when this renaissance occurred the current generation of dragons would drink from the Pool of Dreams and draw upon the awesome legacy left them from the previous generations.

The Great Rebellion

The creation of the Vault and the Pool of Dreams taxed the waning power from the Dragon Kings. Shortly after the Pool of Dreams was completed, the Kings of the East and West paid the ultimate price for their labors and died. The passing of these two Dragon Kings created a mighty rift in the dragon society.



The once unquestioned power and control of the Dragon Kings was now shown to be fragile and failing. Soon the dragons found themselves divided philosophically and ideologically. Some scholars speculate that this event is the first schism among the dragons, forcing a dramatic change in dragonkin development. The two factions were split as to how to interact with the different races of the world and how to conduct their own internal politics and policies.

And thus came to pass their evolution into chromatic and metallic dragons. Before, under the rule of the Dragon Kings, there was no distinction. All dragons co-existed, for the most part peacefully, despite their differences. Those dragons retaining a sense of structure, purpose, pursuit of knowledge, and valuing the ideals of their masters retained their lustrous sheen and countenance. The dragons that lusted for power and selfish gain and looked to free themselves of the yoke of the Dragon Kings lost their deific appearance, their colors becoming flush and matte.

The most powerful dissident was a great red dragon named Sunscratch, for his scales burned with the raging moil of the sun itself. Sunscratch slowly gathered support from other like-minded dragons and staged a rebellion against the two remaining Dragon Kings and the good-aligned dragons. The rebellion served as the final stimulus that irrevocably fractured dragonkind into their metallic and chromatic factions.

The King of the South was slain by Sunscratch soon after the rebellion began. The King of the North exacted revenge for Sunscratch's treachery and his fellow King's death. The last of the Dragon Kings smote Sunscratch in an epic battle that left the King of the North grievously wounded. The King of the North retreated to the Seat of Judgment and barred the great doors while the rebellion raged outside.

Upon seeing Sunscratch's death, the remaining chromatic dragons fled the valley and their ancestral home. Disillusioned and lacking the leadership or guidance of the Dragon Kings, the metallic dragons soon followed. All the surviving dragons joined the exodus, leaving behind only the Vault's caretakers and the wounded King of the North.

And so ended the line of the Dragon Kings and peace among dragonkind. As the dragons left their ancestral home, the remaining custodians had difficulty maintaining the Vault, the precious Pool of Dreams, and the Outer Holdings. The Vault soon fell into disrepair.

Recent History – A Visitor

It was only a matter of time, however, before the Vault was discovered once more. Millennia later, an inquisitive and well-educated silver dragon named Myrkjartan stumbled across references to the entrance to the Vault in ancient texts. Scouring the continents for information, Myrkjartan eventually determined the location of the Vault, hidden high in the towering Frosteye Mountain range, far from the realms of mortals.

Driven by his curiosity and insatiable lust for knowledge, Myrkjartan flew to the mountain stronghold and found the Valley of the Fallen. There, he learned about the true history of dragonkin. Rather than satisfying his curiosity, all he learned only made him more determined to plumb the depths of the Vault.

Eventually, Myrkjartan found a means to access the Seat of Judgment and met the King of the North. Gladdened to see a well-meaning dragon enthusiastic to learn about his kin, the King of the North granted him access into the Vault, teaching the eager Myrkjartan all he could of the Vault's history. He even granted Myrkjartan access to the Pool of Dreams. Without knowing what he had stumbled upon, Myrkjartan drank deeply from the Pool of Dreams to slake both his curiosity and his thirst.

But the power of the Pool was too much for the young dragon. The knowledge and memories of the history of the dragon race exploded through Myrkjartan's senses. And something darker found its way into Myrkjartan's mind, as well – the essence of Sunscratch, the last dragon to have his spirit added to the Pool, had found a new home. Myrkjartan was slowly driven mad by the experience. His genial, contemplative nature was slowly being subverted by the vile, bloodthirsty spirit of Sunscratch. Frightened by what had happened, Myrkjartan fled the Vault.

Less of Myrkjartan's personality exists, as Sunscratch exerts his will upon the poor silver dragon. Now knowing that the King of the North still lives and the Vault lies virtually unprotected, Sunscratch has put into motion plans to seize the Vault and slay the King who had killed him so long ago. Sunscratch also seeks to begin his rebellion anew by freeing the spirits of the chromatic dragons and scouring the lands of mortals.

Sunscratch Returns

Under the control of Sunscratch's spirit, Myrkjartan has assembled a group of adventurers to lay siege to

the Vault. Myrkjartan and his minions worked their way through the Outer Holdings. He compelled the still living custodians of the Vault to serve him and ensured the traps were still working. Eventually, his band of mercenaries moved through the Valley of the Fallen toward the Vault entrance once more.

The King of the North was surprised to see Myrkjartan again, growing increasingly more suspicious. The King of the North escorted Myrkjartan back to the Pool of Dreams, where the silver dragon feigned to wish to return the knowledge he had inadvertently come by during his first visit.

When the King of the North opened the Pool, Sunscratch's personality surfaced and the Dragon King saw the visitor for what he truly was. A terrible battle took place, mirroring the great struggle between the two ages ago. Myrkjartan, empowered by the fury of Sunscratch's spirit, fought savagely but was forced back by the King of the North. The last Dragon King backed Myrkjartan into the Pool of Dreams and sealed the portal, locking the dragon within.

The Dragon King was wounded once more and lacked the strength to pursue Myrkjartan's minions. The King of the North wallows in his depression as his wounds slowly knit, all the while the foul minions of Myrkjartan seek to find the means to free their master, defeat the King of the North once and for all, and seize control of the Vault.

Getting the Players Involved

During his research to discern the location of the Vault of the Dragon Kings, Myrkjartan assumed a human form and visited with a kindly old sage named Anwar Fadain. It was rumored that Anwar knew more about dragonkin history than anyone not born of dragon blood. Myrkjartan found this to be true, and soon he revealed his draconic nature to Anwar, the two becoming close friends.

Armed with important knowledge gained from his new friend, Myrkjartan was able to pinpoint the location of the Vault to the Frosteye Mountains. Anwar wished the dragon luck for his journey, and the two parted ways. Anwar had not heard from Myrkjartan for nearly a year, when his draconic friend visited him suddenly one evening, anxious about his discoveries in the Vault.

Myrkjartan told Anwar that terrible secrets lay hidden within the Vault, secrets that could spell the doom of all mortals, for a dragon with the proper arcane

knowledge could tap into the spirits of the great dragons of yore, unleashing them unto an unsuspecting world. Grief stricken, Myrkjartan fled, and was soon thereafter wholly consumed by Sunscratch's spirit.

Troubled by his friend's bizarre tale, Anwar Fadain has searched tirelessly for a group of intrepid adventurers willing to risk the perils of the Vault of the Dragon Kings and uncover what terrible secrets Myrkjartan had unearthed. While assembling this party of heroes, Anwar made a startling discovery using his arcane sorceries: Myrkjartan had returned to the Vault, apparently to try and stop this horrible secret by himself, but fell afoul of one of the Dragon Kings, and is now imprisoned somewhere within the Vault.

Anwar is not sure which is worse, the fact that his friend Myrkjartan has been captured or that one of the legendary Dragon Kings still lives! The sage is convinced that the last of the Dragon Kings must be slain to prevent the spirits of the dead dragons from returning and ravaging the land.

What the Players Don't Know

Anwar Fadain's intentions are good, but he has been deceived. The information gleaned from scrying has been biased by Myrkjartan's tales and Anwar's own concern for his dragon friend. The dragon's memories and mind were partially clouded by Sunscratch's spirit, and the old sage was beguiled by the great wyrm. Unbeknownst to Anwar, the King of the North was acting to protect mankind when he sealed Myrkjartan in the Pool of Dreams, for the Dragon King recognized in him the spirit of the rebellious Sunscratch.

Special Conditions within the Vault

The Vault is a massive, ancient structure with many dangers. However, there are more dangers and surprises than simply the traps and guardians themselves. Several environmental conditions and other challenges await the characters.

The Trap Failsafe: Sensing "Dragonblooded"

To protect their charges, the Dragon Kings constructed numerous complex, deadly traps within the Vault. Few of the dragons even knew about the traps, since the Dragon Kings had the foresight to create a magical failsafe within the traps themselves. Should the

magical traps sense the aura of one of the Dragon Kings or a "dragonblooded" individual, the trap simply would not trigger.

Myrkjartan's research revealed the history of the traps. Coupled with his keen observations and witnessing the sudden, violent mutilations of some of his clumsier minions, he now understands this failsafe as well. As such, Myrkjartan and his minions no longer risk setting off the traps.

Most, but not all, traps in the complex include this magical failsafe. If a trap does include this feature, it will be noted in the individual trap description. For the purposes of such a trap, the following conditions fulfill the dragonblooded classification, providing protection by the magical failsafe:

Any targets with the dragon type. This includes actual dragons, but also characters possessing the half-dragon template or being suitably advanced in the dragon disciple class.

Targets with the [reptilian] subtype, such as kobolds and lizardfolk.

Concealed or "shrouded" characters, such as those wearing dragonscale armor or a magical dragonskin cloak. Targets dressed in a substantial amount of dragon leather or skin will register as dragonblooded. This means enterprising players could use the corpses of protected creatures within the Vault (such as the Castellan in area 1-4) to help bypass traps in certain areas.

Should a potential target with any of the previously described characteristics enter the activation area of a trap, the trap simply does not trigger. However, if any other target enters the area, the trap triggers normally and any dragonblooded targets in the area of effect are subject to the trap's effects. Once triggered, a trap no longer distinguishes between dragonblooded targets and any other types until the trap resets.

Again, please note that several traps do not contain the dragonblooded magical failsafe. These are based either on proximity triggers or in some cases were built by the Dragon Kings to protect the Kings against the dragons themselves.

The Perils of High Altitude

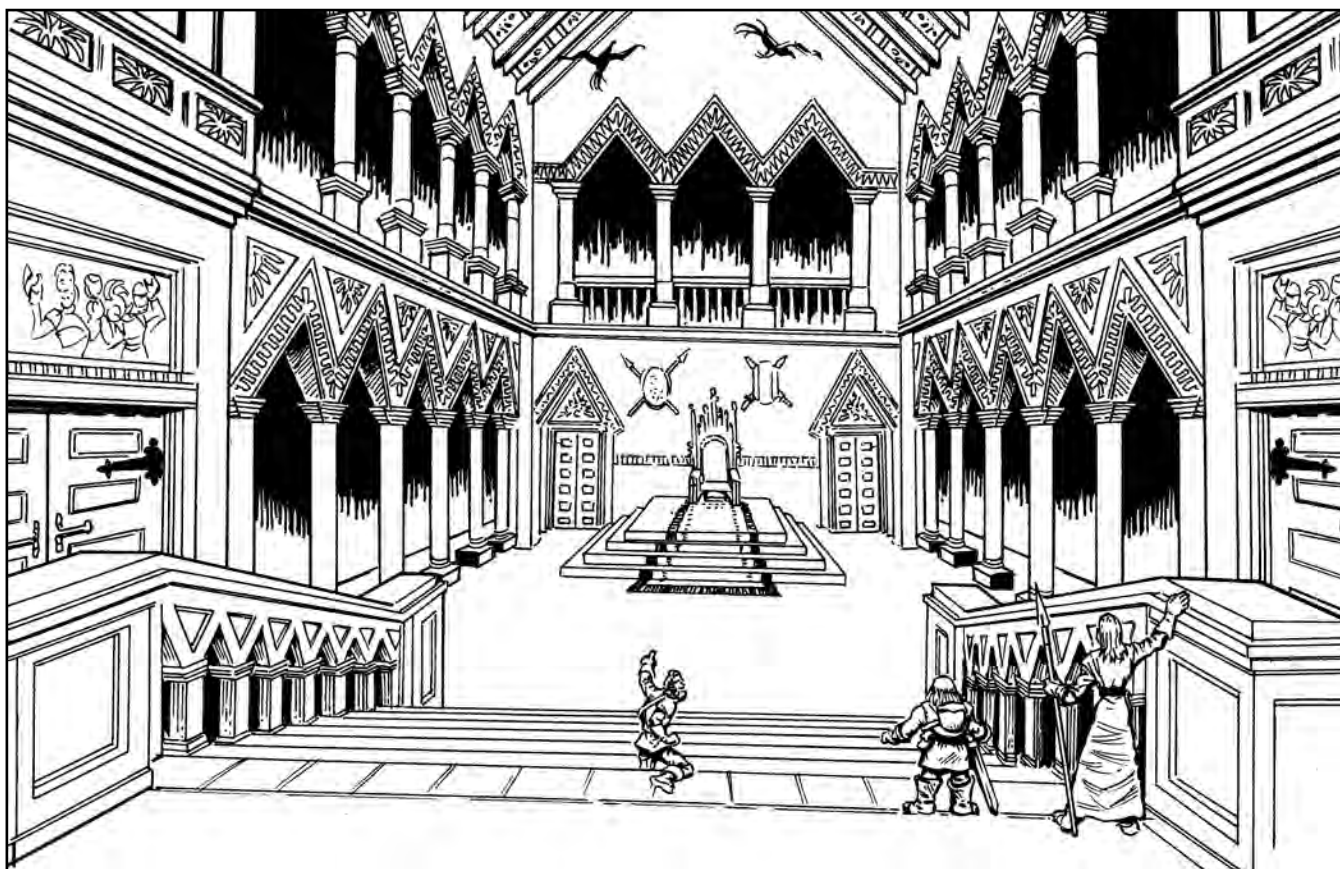
The towering peaks that house the mountain complex and the Vault of the Dragon Kings are considered Low Peak Altitude, and will test the character's endurance and resolve. All nonacclimated creatures labor to breathe in the thin air at this altitude. In home

Game Master's Section

Encounter Table

To help the GM prepare, we have included a quick reference table showing all encounters at a glance. **Loc** – the location number keyed to the map for the encounter. **Pg** – the module page number that the encounter can be found on. **Type** – this indicates if the encounter is a trap (T), puzzle (P), or combat (C). **Encounter** – the key monsters, traps, or NPCs that can be found in the encounter. Names in *italics* are classed NPCs. **EL** – the encounter level.

Loc	Page	Type	Encounter	EL	Loc	Page	Type	Encounter	EL
1-1	12	P/T	icy ascent	9	2-6	60	C	<i>Hb'kir</i> , lizardfolk Clr4	9
		T	stone dragon mouth				C	<i>Charp</i> , lizardfolk Rgr4	
		T	<i>antimagic, dispel magic</i> auras				C	<i>Sle'astakk</i> , lizardfolk Ftr4	
1-2	15	C	animated stone dragon tail	9			C	advanced ice basilisk	
1-3	17	P/T	dragon head trap	8			T	collapsing rubble	6
1-4A	20	C	4 lizardfolk skeletons	6	2-7	64	C	The King of the North	14
1-4B	21	C	<i>The Castellan</i> , half-dragon ettin Ftr2	10			T	poisoned blade trap	10
		T	<i>glyph of warding</i> trap	6			T	insanity mist vapor trap	
1-4C	23	P/T	the gearwalk mechanism	10			T	<i>icy burst scythe</i> trap	
		T	<i>enervation</i> key panel trap				T	improved <i>acid arrow</i> trap	
1-5	26	C	2 necromantic constructs	10			P	The Vault door	
1-6	28	C	Kreeaasi, flame paragon	11	3-1	69	T	spiked stairwell trap	8
		T	vent to Plane of Fire				T	<i>enervation</i> dragon eyes trap	
1-7	31	C/T	4 kostkorian frost demons	10	3-2	71	T	dragon blades trap	12
1-8	34	C	will-o'-wisp Sor4	10			C	2 Zelekhut guardians	
		T	electrical circuit trap		3-3	73	T	<i>geas/sphere of annihilation</i>	10
1-9	37	C	frost shambler	10	3-4	74	C	ghostly King of the South	12
		C	4 lizardfolk wraiths		3-5	78	C	4 jann defenders	10
1-10	40	C	primordial remorhaz	11	3-6	81	C	<i>Deryn the Black</i> , human Wiz10	10
2-1	43	T	crushing stone wings	6			T	<i>explosive runes</i> trap	4
		C	<i>Thelias</i> , spectre gravewarden Clr8	13			C	<i>Slysska</i> , Wiz7/Lor3	11
		T	<i>black tentacles</i> trap	7	3-7	86	T	poison on heavy chain	9
2-2	46	C	6 wyrmling skeletons	10			C	<i>Gnarga</i> , Dragon King	12
		C	6 wyrmling shadows				C	<i>Orgak</i> , Dragon King	
2-3	49	C	Oolgluur, black pudding	10			T	Poisoned dart trap	5
2-4	52	C	<i>Keeper of the Ways</i> , Drd10	11	3-8	89	C	2 troglodyte Bbn6	9
		C	dire polar bear companion				P	Pool of Dreams	
		T	dragon breath trap	5			C	Myrkjartan, mad dragon	20
2-5	58	C	8 frostsnap lizards	10					
		T	<i>destruction</i> trap						



adventures, characters must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 15, +1 per previous check) each hour of normal adventuring or after 10 minutes of strenuous activity or become fatigued. A character who is already fatigued becomes exhausted. The fatigue ends when the character descends to an altitude with more air.

If a character succeeds at four Fortitude saves during the course of the adventure, he becomes acclimated to the altitude. Acclimated characters do not have to attempt additional Fortitude saves, but retain fatigue or exhaustion if they've already succumbed to the effects of the altitude.

For tournament purposes, the Fortitude save is required after every odd-numbered encounter a party has, or after strenuous activity as indicated in the area descriptions. This is based on the number of encounters faced, not the area numbers. So each party member must make a Fortitude save after their 1st (DC 15), 3rd (DC 16), 5th (DC 17), 7th (DC 18), and 9th (DC 19) encounters (and so on). Each new tournament round “resets” the character’s fatigue and acclimation – so characters who were fatigued during Round 1 are refreshed, but those characters who may have been acclimated after Round 1 must make Fortitude saves again when exploring Round 2.

A Sense of Scale

Since the Vault was designed for both the Dragon Kings and their dragon charges, the scale of the Vault is immense. Everything in the Vault complex is in a much larger scale than Medium characters would be accustomed to. Roughly speaking, the Dragon Kings were three to four times the size of a normal human. Stairways are more than two feet between steps, doorways arch greater than 20 feet high, and chairs are crafted to seat the massive girth of the titanic Dragon Kings.

Many of the areas are built to an even larger scale to accommodate dragons flying through the complex. A simple rule of thumb to deal with any “spur of the moment” encounters or measurements would be to simply double the size of anything that would accommodate a Medium character.

Keep in mind that this means normally simple tasks can prove quite challenging. Door handles rest 8 feet off the ground, well out of the reach of any Small characters. Searching a door for traps is a completely different task when you can’t easily reach the handle or hinges.

Player Beginning

The long, arduous journey through the Frosteye Mountains is coming to an end. The horses and pack animals, fatigued from the high altitude, were unable to make their way through the narrow file that snaked its way up the steep mountain. Making camp beneath the greatest peak, you take one final inventory of your supplies and gird yourself for the rigors tomorrow will bring.

For tomorrow, you enter the Vault of the Dragon Kings.

At first, you were unsure if the old sage Anwar Fadain knew where the Vault was located, but now there is no doubt. Even from here, near the base of the dizzying peak, you can see the entrance to some great cavern, curled like a small frown on the face of the mountain. A long, sharp shadow stretches down the mountainside from the entrance, light catching on some enormous structure built into the mouth of the cave.

Bundled under your sturdy winter gear, you wonder if you'll ever shake the chill from your bones. You huddle together near the small fire you afford yourself this night, as your party goes over final preparations. Now you understand why Anwar needed hearty and hale adventurers – the high altitude, bitter cold, and dangers that surely lie ahead would force most seasoned veterans back toward warm beds and mulled wine.

But there's a dragon that needs to be rescued. And more that need to be stopped. Fortunately, the dragon needing rescue is a friend of Anwar's, a silver dragon who traveled to this fabled Vault of the Dragon Kings to learn more about his ancestry. And apparently this silver dragon stumbled across a heinous plot by one of the surviving Dragon Kings to unleash a host of evil dragons upon the realm.

The only thing standing between you and the fate of the realms of man are the icy perils of the mountain, the unknown dangers lurking within the mountain stronghold, and a fearsome Dragon King of legend. Best get what warmth and sleep you can; tomorrow is going to be a long day.

A Helping Hand

For tournament purposes, aside from gear listed on their character sheets, the party also has a small trunk with some basic supplies – this ensures that certain essential adventuring gear will be available regardless of which PCs make up the party. Give the players the equipment list below. The characters are free to pick and choose among this gear however they wish, but need to keep encumbrance and weight in mind when kitting out.

Equipment trunk (30 lbs empty)

Oil of resurrection (1 use; CL 15th; 1 lb)
10 torches (1 lb each)
10 1-pint flasks of oil (1 lb each)
2 sunrods (1 lb each)
1 100-foot length of knotted hemp rope (20 lbs)
1 50-foot length of silk rope (5 lbs)
2 grappling hooks (4 lbs each)
4 bedrolls (5 lbs each)
4 heavy blankets (4 lbs each)
2 canvas tents (20 lbs each)
1 crowbar (5 lbs)
20 days' worth of trail rations (1 lb each)

The total weight for all this equipment is just about 185 pounds. While much of the equipment could be carried, it's quite possible adding too much of this gear could encumber some party members. Additionally, carrying the trunk requires both hands, unless a sled is constructed to pull it behind a character.

Vault of the Dragon Kings Round 1: The Outer Holdings

Unless otherwise noted, all ceilings are 40 feet tall. Doorframes and archways stretch nearly to the ceiling to allow room for flying travelers to retain altitude while moving through the complex. There are no random encounters in this level.

Light Sources and Surveillance Equipment:

Except where noted in specific room descriptions, the Outer Holdings are illuminated with flat stone panels enchanted with widened *continual flame*. These stone panels clearly illuminate a 40-foot radius and provide shadowy illumination out to an 80-foot radius. These panels also serve another purpose: several are the viewpoint for *clairvoyance* surveillance tied to the Castellan's guard house in area 1-4b. Anyone casting *detect magic* can notice the subtle presence of divination magic amidst the *continual flame*'s illusion magic with a DC 25 Spellcraft check. These light sources are most often set into the ceiling at regular intervals. They are 5 feet long, 3 feet wide, and 6 inches thick, weighing approximately 300 pounds each. A DC 30 Disable Device check is required to remove or deactivate one of the panels.

The Dragon Choir: Hidden throughout the different levels of this adventure are the four pieces of a mysterious dragon relic: the *Dragon Choir*. A single dragon's voice is a magical thing – it can invoke magic, breath fire or lightning, create fear, or calm nerves. Combining the voices of many dragons is a powerful source of ancient magic lore.

The Dragon Kings crafted four peerless dragon trumpets, each one producing a perfect note that resonates with the power and majesty of a particular dragon. Each dragon trumpet is a masterwork tool for Perform checks, but collecting all four dragon trumpets and using them in certain areas will have some interesting results. Two of the trumpets are hidden on level one, in areas 1-4a and 1-9.

Scoring Bonus – Exploration: Teams earn bonus points for the number of rooms they explore on each level. A room is considered “explored” if the room has been entered by one or more party members and searched or the creatures/traps encountered (regardless of whether or not the encounter was overcome). Simply walking into a room and turning around again does not qualify. Consult the table below to determine how many points the team earns each round. These are not cumulative awards.

Rooms Explored

1-3
4-5
6-7
8
9
10

Bonus Points

0
200
400
600
800
1,000

Hewn stone walls: 5 ft. thick; hardness 8; hp 900; Break DC 80; Climb DC 22.

Worked stone doors: 18 in. thick; hardness 8; hp 270; Break DC 45; Climb DC 22.

Stone light panels: 6 in. thick; hardness 8; hp 90; Break DC 30; Disable Device DC 35.

High Altitude Reminder

Don't forget the dangers the high altitude present to the party. Before running this round, you should skim The Perils of High Altitude on page 8.

Areas of the Map

Area 1-1 – An Icy Ascent (EL 9)

When the party is ready to begin their adventure, they will need to make their way to the base of the mountain cliff housing the cavern entrance. Read the following:

Access to the Vault's Outer Holdings seems so close, yet so very far away. A grand stone sculpture of a colossal dragon in flight marks the entranceway, towering 100 feet overhead. Slick, dark ice clings to the side of the cliff like a thick blanket.

The ice floe runs from the entrance of the cave to the talus pile frozen at the base of the cliff. The ice lies draped in thick sheets around the outstretched wings and craning neck of the dragon sculpture. The rest of the cliff face is dotted with small, unsteady ledges and small cracks clotted with crumbling stone.

From this angle, you can tell that the cave entrance stretches more than 120 feet wide, its hewn stone ceiling arching easily 80 feet at its highest point. The massive neck from the stone dragon protrudes 30 feet from the face of the cliff; the dragon's fearsome head must be the size of a sturdy warhorse!

The howling wind blows relentlessly at these heights, snapping and tugging at your heavy clothes as it blows savagely from the west. The higher you ascend in these perilous Frosteye Mountains, the thinner the raw, arctic air grows.

Windy conditions: Aside from the bitter chill and high altitude described in the Special Conditions within the Vault section above, the howling wind makes it difficult to hear anything. All characters must make DC 15 Fortitude saves or become deafened until they reach area 1-2 and get out of the wind. Further, communication is nearly impossible beyond 30 feet without shouting, and all Listen and Concentration checks have their DCs increased by +5 due to the background noise.

Once the characters begin their ascent, they will have to deal with the force of the winds, in addition to the noise. The winds swirling outside the entrance are considered Strong Wind. The wind automatically extinguishes unprotected flames (candles, torches, and the like). Such gusts impose a -2 penalty on ranged attack rolls and on Listen checks. Tiny or smaller creatures are knocked down (DC 10 Fortitude save to avoid). Creatures size Small or larger are unaffected. Flying or airborne creatures count as one size category smaller when determine wind effects.

Wind has another potentially dangerous effect on the characters as they ascend the mountain. The wind is strong enough that any character under the effect of *levitate*, *feather fall*, or a comparable effect will drift. Characters drift 5 feet to the east per round when levitating or feather falling, unless they can hold on to something for stability (like a rope) or brace themselves against the wall of the cliff.

Getting into the Cave: There are three direct means to ascend the mountainside: scale the ice sheet itself, use rope and grapple to assist the climb, or use magic (to fly or grant some other

movement ability). Clever groups may come up with still more ideas, but these three approaches are addressed here. Regardless of the approach used, once any party member reaches a point where he gains a better vantage to peek into area 1-2, give them Player Handout A.

Scale the Ice: The sheer cliff face is very difficult to scale. Without a proper climber's kit or special equipment to find purchase in the ice, this cannot even be attempted. However, with the right gear, the Climb DC is 18. Characters working in concert to create handholds or rig harnesses or other implements to make the climb easier can decrease the DC by 5 for the climbers that follow.

However, scaling the ice has definite risks. The ice sheets are relatively fragile. Should any 10-foot-wide column of ice ever bear more than 300 pounds, there is a cumulative 5% chance each minute the ice sheet will separate from the cliff side. In addition to any damage suffered from the fall itself, each character within 20 feet of the base of a collapsing sheet suffers 4d6 (14) points of damage from falling ice and debris. Characters on the ground when this happens can attempt a DC 15 Reflex save for half damage, but characters caught by the debris while falling get no save.

Grappling Hooks: Attaching a grapple to any surface on the face of the ice will have the same effect as climbing the ice itself, as outlined above. However, there are two obvious areas to secure a grappling hook to assist with the climb: the great neck and head of the stone dragon, or the spurs located along the wing pinions which jut out from the ice. Each carries its own dangers.

Throwing a grappling hook requires a Use Rope check (DC 15, +2 per 10 feet of distance thrown due to the strong winds). This results in a DC 35 Use Rope check to secure the grapple around a wing spur or the neck from the base of the cliff. Once secured, using a grappling hook and line that allows a user to brace against the ice sheath

Climbing Reminder

Climbing characters are particularly vulnerable. You need both hands free to climb, but you may cling to a wall with one hand while you cast a spell or take some other action that requires only one hand. While climbing, you can't move to avoid a blow, so you lose your Dexterity bonus to AC (if any). You also can't use a shield while climbing. Any time you take damage while climbing, make a Climb check against the DC of the slope or wall. Failure means you fall from your current height and sustain the appropriate falling damage.



requires a DC 15 Climb check. Increase this to DC 20 if climbers can't help support themselves on the cliff face. A Climb check that fails by 4 or less means the character make no progress, and one that fails by 5 or more means the character falls from whatever height he has already attained.

However, only a small 5-foot section of the dragon's neck against the cliff face is safe to secure a grapple, as are the outermost spurs along the wing. These safe zones are marked on the map. Securing a grapple to any other portion of the dragon's neck and head or to the spurs closest to the neck risks activating the animated dragon head, as detailed below.

Using Magic: The most obvious application of magic would be to cast *fly* to reach the cavern entrance or help secure a grappling hook. Other possible uses would be to improve character's abilities using spells like *bull's strength*, teleporting characters to the cavern entrance, or summoning creatures to help carry characters or supplies. However, this is also a risky proposition, as magic gems socketed in the statue's eyes radiate *antimagic* and *dispel magic* auras in a 50-foot radius around the dragon's head.

Hidden Dangers – Animated Dragon Head:

The dragon head can sense targets within a complete 50-foot sphere, except for the 10-foot path directly behind the head along the back of its neck.

When anyone comes within the 30-foot reach of the stone dragon head, the head animates and swings toward the nearest target to bite. Once activated, it remains active unless incapacitated from damage or until no targets remain within its 50-foot range of vision. The dragon head can bite at targets within its 30-foot reach, but also has a breath weapon which extends well past its sensory range. It targets characters outside its bite range but still within its sensory range with its fiery breath.

In addition to normal damage, the fire automatically increases the chances of the ice sheath breaking apart and falling by 20% each time it breathes. Also, any characters climbing the ice shelf or a grappling hook attached to the dragon's head must make Climb checks or fall, as their ascent is violently disrupted by the animated head's movements. Any ropes in the cone of flame are immediately incinerated, further complicating the climb.

Hidden Dangers – Magic Dampening Auras:

Within the eye sockets of the dragon head are two magic gems. The gem in the left eye socket is enchanted with a permanent *greater dispel magic* aura in a 50-foot radius. The *greater dispel magic* effect attempts to suppress any temporary magical effects first, and then suppresses magic items. It has a caster check value of +15 when attempting to suppress magic. The gem in the right eye socket is enchanted with an *antimagic field* with a 50-foot radius. Due to the meticulous construction of this device, the *antimagic field* and *greater dispel magic* field do not affect each other.

Keep in mind this means characters with magical flight risk having their flight suppressed by the *antimagic field* or completely dispelled by the *greater dispel magic* field, resulting in a rather long fall. This can also negate a mage's attempts to slow his descent with *feather fall*. And, if the fall is within the 30-foot reach of the great stone dragon head, it gets an attack of opportunity against any target falling past.

The extreme edges of the cave entrance lie outside the radius of these auras. There is a safe 10-

foot niche at each end that the magic auras cannot reach, as indicated on the map.

Animated Dragon Head: CR 8; magic device; proximity trigger (*detect non-dragonblooded*, 50-foot sphere); automatic reset (no targets within sensory range); Atk +17 (4d8+10 (28), bite, 30-foot reach) or dragon breath (70-foot cone of fire 3/day, 10d10 (55^M) points of fire damage, DC 21 Reflex save half damage); permanent *antimagic field* and *greater dispel magic* auras (50-foot sphere, Caster Level check +15); DC 20 Spot or Search to notice gems; DC 28 Spellcraft to identify magic auras; DC 25 Disable Device, DC 22 Strength check per gem (pry out gems from eye sockets), or Break DC 22 (shatter gem), or incapacitate head (hardness 10, 200 hp).

Aftermath: A character within 20 feet of the dragon head can attempt a DC 15 Spot check to notice the gems in the eye sockets. The DC increases by +5 for each additional 10 feet from the dragon head a character is, up to a maximum of DC 30 Spot from 50 feet away. The gems can be pried from the eye sockets with a DC 22 Strength check or a DC 25 Disable Device check. Once removed, the gems become inert and lose all magical properties, but are worth 2,000 gp each. If both gems are removed, the animated head deactivates.

If the dragon head attacks a character or characters are in a position to see the dragon's mouth, a DC 20 Spot check reveals a glint of metal from within the maw. An unlucky mage tried to fly to the cave entrance ages ago when he encountered the *antimagic field*; he was snatched from midair as he fell and crushed by the dragon's mouth. The body has long since been scorched from the dragon head's fiery breath, but some of the mage's gear remains intact, stuck inside the great stone gullet.

Once the head has been deactivated or incapacitated, a character can search the dragon mouth with minimal risk. Balancing on the dragon's head or climbing out along its neck requires a DC 16 Balance or Climb check. Increase the DC by +10 if the head is still active. Searching the mouth reveals the following gear: a *ring of sustenance* and *bracers of armor* +3. A successful DC 24 Search check also uncovers a *metamagic rod of silent spell* and a +1 *ghost touch dagger of spell storing* (currently charged with a CL 5 *shocking grasp*).

Scoring Suggestions: 900 points possible

50/gem: Remove gems from the dragon's head

50: Take special precautions against the wind and weather

100: Avoid activating the dragon head

50: Notice the hidden cache in the dragon mouth

200: Recover magic items from the dragon mouth

100: No more than 1 person falls during the ascent

100: Avoid the *greater dispel magic* and *antimagic field* auras – or ascend the cavern where the auras don't impact the climb

100: Disable the animated dragon head (by any means)

100: Get equipment chest (from Introduction) up into the cave

Area 1-2 – The Vestibule (EL 9)

Once the party has ascended the mountainside and has a view of the cave entrance, read the following aloud:

The cavernous entrance seems even larger than you thought from your previous vantage. The smooth stone walls curve to meet the ceiling 80 feet overhead. The enormous chamber extends for nearly 100 feet into the mountain-side, gradually narrowing into a 30-foot-wide corridor that cuts even deeper to the north, directly into the heart of the mountain.

The center of the chamber is dominated by the rest of the colossal stone dragon stretching out over the cavern mouth. The dragon's back and tail are hewn directly into the floor, the top half sitting 10 feet high and just as wide. Sharp spines jut along the stony neck to the tip of the broad, stone tail that points due north toward the only visible exit. The length of the stone dragon is just over 100 feet from snout to tail.

Flanking the great chamber are four enormous stone statues depicting quasi-human forms with fearsome draconic features. The statues stand 40 feet tall, the arch of the ceiling along the edges of the chamber nearly

brushing their helmed heads. These titans are clad in ornate armor and wield massive stone weapons, but the finer details of their features have been weathered away over countless centuries.

This is the grand entrance leading toward the Outer Holdings. The cavern was designed to be large enough that dragons could fly into the vestibule, but would need to land or assume another form to proceed, forcing a degree of humility. The statues hold the first clues about the nature of the Dragon Kings. The great stone dragon tail is a Colossal animated construct the party must contend with.

Statue details: The statues are highly stylized depictions of the Dragon Kings, made to a much larger scale than the kings themselves. The features have faded considerably, and at first glance it appears that the faces themselves are draconic. A DC 18 Knowledge (arcana) or Bardic Knowledge check assumes these statues indicate the Dragon Kings are half-dragon titans. However, a DC 25 Spot check reveals the faces are covered by ornate helms with exaggerated draconic features. Characters with Stonecunning receive an additional +2 circumstance bonus to realize this.

Each statue is marked N, S, E or W on the map to indicate which of the four kings it represents. A DC 18 Search check reveals that runes have been etched into the bases of the statues, but are terribly weathered and worn away to virtually nothing. However, a DC 18 Decipher Script check allows characters to get the gist of the carvings. Award a +2 circumstance bonus to this check for characters that speak Draconic, have at least 5 ranks in Knowledge (arcana), or possess Stonecunning.

The statues for the Kings of the West and South read:

The dragons are the gods' gift upon the world

The dragons serve with loyalty, passion, and grace

The statues for the Kings of the North and East read:

The Dragon Kings are the gods' gift upon the dragons

The Dragon Kings bend their knee to none but the gods

The Stone Dragon Tail: A DC 20 Spot check reveals that the stone dragon's tail is not completely flush with the floor of the cavern. Closer inspection and a DC 25 Search or Knowledge (engineering) check reveals the faint wear pattern of the stone tail's potential arc.

Once detected, the stone tail can be bypassed simply by moving around its range. Either by careful searching or triggering the tail, it should become fairly obvious what the tail's restrictions are. Characters can skirt the edges of the chamber and climb over the statues of the Dragon Kings to avoid the tail. Climbing the 40-foot-tall statues requires a DC 15 Climb check. Further, the party can "bait" the tail, getting the tail to lash out at one character while the other characters run past into the safety of the hall leading to area 1-3.

Tactics: The great stone tail has a readied action to animate and lash out against the first non-dragonblooded target it detects within its range, as indicated on the map. The tail has a 30-foot reach except against targets south of its pivot point. Unlike most Colossal creatures, the tail only occupies a space 10 feet wide and 30 feet long and is fixed to its current location. It attacks so long as there are targets within its range, and immediately returns to its default starting position once it has no target or receives enough damage to destroy it.

Keep in mind that a character hit by the stone tail's Knockback Slam attack may be bull rushed over the edge of the cliff, forcing them to suffer falling damage from the 100-foot fall.

Animated Stone Tail: CR 9; Colossal Construct; HD 26d10+80; hp 224; Init -3; Spd 0 ft.; AC 11 (-8 size, -3 Dex, +12 natural), touch -1, flat-footed 11; Base Atk +19; Grp +41; Atk/Full Atk Slam +17 melee (4d6+9 (23)); Space/Reach 30 ft./30 ft.; SA Knockback slam; SQ Construct traits, darkvision 60 ft., detect non-dragonblooded, hardness 10, low-light vision; AL N; SV Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +3; Str 22, Dex 4, Con —, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 1.

Knockback Slam (Ex): When the stone tail hits with a slam attack, it can attempt to knock back its opponent by making a bull rush attempt as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. Resolve the bull rush as normal, but the tail does not move to occupy spaces vacated by the bull rushed character. The target is moved back 5 feet for each 5 points by which the tail's check result is greater than the defender's check

result. If the defender is forced against an unyielding surface or object (such as a wall), he suffers 1d4 (2) points of damage for each 5 feet he is unable to move, and must make a DC 20 Balance check or fall prone.

Aftermath: Once characters have moved inside the cavern, the keening wind is less impairing than outside. Characters deafened by the wind in area 1-1 can attempt a new DC 15 Fortitude save now and once in each new area explored until they recover their hearing.

A small bird's nest is nestled atop the great helm of the statue depicting the King of the East. Any character climbing that statue notices the nest with a DC 15 Spot check. A DC 18 Search reveals a dozen copper dragon scales, a *ring of feather falling* and a *feather token (tree)* woven into the nesting.

Scoring Suggestions: 550 points possible

50: Determine the tail's reach and limitations

50: Recognize the half-dragon features or size do not necessarily depict the Dragon Kings themselves

100: Locate/discern runic clues by statues

150: Discover the bird's nest on the King of the East

200: Avoid the tail completely, or bait the tail while others rush past

200: Defeat the tail (mutually exclusive from above)

-50: Each person after the first slammed by the dragon's tail



Area 1-3 – The Kings' Gate (EL 8)

Once the party approaches the corridor, read the following aloud:

The monstrous cavern mouth slowly narrows as it transitions to this 30-foot-wide corridor. While small by comparison, the sheen of the highly polished stone makes the corridor seem much larger than it truly is. The corridor's vaulted ceiling arches 50 feet overhead, and is lit by the soft glow of wide, flat stones worked into the ceiling's mosaic pattern.

The corridor extends only 40 feet due north and ends abruptly at an enormous pair of doors that stretch up to nearly the full height of the corridor. Four large dragon heads are arranged in a circle around the sealed doors. Each dragon head is easily 15 feet long and intricately detailed. They are wrought from gold, silver, copper, and bronze and highlighted with brightly colored enamel. Large, spidery runes are carved into the stone doors above the circle of dragon heads.

There are two large, ivory levers set into the western wall and a matching pair set into the eastern wall. The levers are a roughly a foot in diameter and nearly two yards long. On closer inspection, the levers are intricately carved reliefs of kingly supplicants clad in ceremonial armor. The two levers closest to the door are both pointing upward; the two levers furthest from the door are down. Below each lever is a polished steel placard bearing more inscriptions in the same spidery script as the door.

The riddle of the door must be solved, and the levers manipulated properly to gain access to the next area. But there is more to the riddle than the runes imply with their clues. Setting the levers in the wrong position sets off a deadly trap. Once the party has time to examine the door, give them Player Handout B.

The Clues: Characters who know Draconic can read all the clues. Player Handout C displays the riddle as shown below. The runes above the dragon heads read:

To Face True Dragons is to Burn and Blaze

Be Humble, Great Kings, Avoid Their Gaze

Working clockwise from the southwest, the clues



under the levers read:

*The King of the West set sternly his way
Yet when the West speaks, the other Kings
sway*

*The King of the North spoke truth very plain
But his words made East and South quite
vain*

*The King of the East was quickened to act
But his Kingly brothers ignored this fact*

*The King of the South was patient and wise
And North paid heed to this King's advice*

There is an additional clue hidden from the casual observer. Anyone standing within 5 feet of the door making a DC 25 Spot check may notice something odd in the reflection of the dragon heads on the highly polished floor. Someone actively searching the dragon door makes this same discovery with a DC 25 Search check. Characters of Small size or smaller get a +4 circumstance bonus to these checks due to their vantage point.

Carved in a narrow gap along the underside of the two dragon heads nearest the floor are more Draconic runes, with another clue:

*A King Faces Whom He Pleases, and Bows
to None Save the Gods*

The Riddle: Some players may assume that the clues next to each lever indicate a particular order in which they must be activated. This is incorrect. The clues actually indicate the relationship between the levers – what happens to them when one of the levers has been moved.

Further, players who fail to notice the hidden clue, or disregard the hints from the runes by the Dragon King statues in area 1-1, may assume the clue above the dragon door means that all the levers must be “humbled” and positioned to face downward. Doing this, however, triggers the trap.

To solve the riddle, the party must position the levers so they all point *up*. This can be accomplished by sheer luck or by learning how the levers interact. The clues by each lever provide insight to its interaction with the other levers.

Lever 1 - King of the West (marked W on the map): Flipping this lever causes all other levers to immediately flip into their opposite position (not necessarily the opposite position of this lever).

Lever 2 - King of the North (marked N on the map): Flipping this lever causes levers 3 and 4 to move into the up position regardless of this lever's orientation. If levers 3 or 4 are already up, there is no noticeable effect on those levers.

Lever 3 - King of the East (marked E on the map): Flipping this lever has no effect on the other levers; it functions completely independently.

Lever 4 - King of the South (marked S on the map): Flipping this lever causes lever 2 to match this lever's new position. If lever 2 is already up and lever 4 is flipped up, there will be no noticeable difference. The same applies if lever 2 is already down when lever 4 is flipped down.

Given their starting orientation, the quickest solution requires only two steps: flip lever 1, and then lever 2. It will likely take more maneuvers to learn how these interact.

Use the following table to help track the position of the levers as the characters attempt to solve the riddle:

	Lever 1	Lever 2	Lever 3	Lever 4
Start	<u>down</u>	<u>up</u>	<u>up</u>	<u>down</u>
Move 1	_____	_____	_____	_____
Move 2	_____	_____	_____	_____
Move 3	_____	_____	_____	_____
Move 4	_____	_____	_____	_____
Move 5	_____	_____	_____	_____
Move 6	_____	_____	_____	_____
Move 7	_____	_____	_____	_____
Move 8	_____	_____	_____	_____

Moving the levers: The levers are very big, and mounted 15 feet high on the wall. They weigh approximately 300 pounds each. While strong characters could conceivably move them with little effort, the fact that they are too high for Medium or Small characters to easily reach makes it more challenging. Ropes can be easily slung over the raised levers to pull them down, but pushing them up is another story.

Unless a character with sufficient Strength to push or drag 300 pounds can find a way to gain leverage to move the levers, the party will need to be creative. After 5 minutes pass without a lever being moved, all levers reset to their starting positions.

Activating the trap: Remember, if the party positions the levers so that all four are pointing down, the trap activates. If this happens, read the following:

As the levers shift into their positions and face downward, a high pitched whine resonates from the door. You can hear the gnashing and grinding of gears from deep within the walls to either side of the door. The dragon heads lift from the surface of the door, craning their necks to point down the hallway. Suddenly, the four heads unleash a fearsome blast of dragon breath that fills the entire corridor!

Afterward, the dragon heads and all four levers return to their default positions.

Dragon Head Trap: CR 8; magic device; event trigger (levers all pointed down); automatic reset; supernatural ability effect (dragon breath, 30-foot-diameter line, 60 feet long, 4d8 (18) points of

fire damage, 4d8 (18) points of cold damage, 4d8 (18) points of electricity damage, 4d8 (18) points of acid damage*, a single DC 22 Reflex save for half damage from each element – this is considered a single breath attack with 4 different elemental components); Search DC 30; Disable Device DC 30 per dragon head (lock jaws of a head in place to prevent opening).

*Note that should a character fail the saving throw and suffer full damage (ie, does not have resistance to any of the energy types listed) the total damage is 72^M hit points, which requires a Massive Damage check.

Aftermath: Once the party positions the levers properly so all four levers are pointing up, read the following:

As the levers shift into their positions facing upward, there is a loud, audible grinding noise that rumbles from within the walls to either side of the great door. The dragon heads lift from the surface of the door and begin to rotate to the side. With a deep thrum, the doors part, revealing a large worked hall beyond. You've gained entrance into the Outer Holdings!

The dragon door remains open for 5 minutes. Afterward, the door closes and the dragon heads and all four levers return to their default positions. From the other side, the doors are flat and flush to the walls, with a large handle set in the center of each door (20 feet above the ground). The handles rotate easily to open the door from that side.

Scoring Suggestions: 850 points possible

50/lever: Determine the effect of the levers

100: Discover the hidden clue under the dragon heads

150: Realize the levers need to be positioned up instead of down *before* triggering the trap

400: Open the door in 2 moves

200: Open the door in 3-6 moves

100: Open the door in 7 or more moves

-100/trigger: Activate the trap more than once

Area 1-4 – The Hall of Scales (EL 13)

Once the characters have opened the dragon door and prepare to enter this area, read the following aloud:

The dragon door opens to reveal a grand hall with stark angles and meticulous workmanship. The vaulted ceiling is 50 feet tall and reinforced with sturdy, stone struts at regular intervals. More of the wide, flat, polished light stones are set into the struts along the eastern edges of the ceiling, but only a single stone, set far in the northeast corner, remains lit. The rest of the stones are cracked and dim.

The room stretches as wide as the cavern entrance behind you, spanning 120 feet from side to side. Small alcoves 20 feet wide are set deep into the far end of the eastern and western walls, each alcove housing a large pair of double doors.

An angular tower juts out from the stone wall to the west. The tower is 30 feet tall, with a crenellated ridge along the top. Small, darkened window slits ring the tower at two different heights. The tower appears to be two stories tall, but seems a smaller scale in construction and design than the other features surrounding you.

A larger, squat building is built into the eastern wall. It is 30 feet by 20 feet and only 20 feet tall. The building appears solid and sturdy, if unremarkable. There are no windows visible. Through the thick blanket of shadows, you can make out a stout door reinforced with metal bands.

You can barely make out two more hallways beyond the buildings, one heading east and the other west. You think you see a large metal door set into the northern wall 60 feet away, but it's difficult to say for certain with all the shadows.

A low, deep thrum of unknown origin rattles in your chest in a slow, regular beat.

This area is broken into three sections, detailing the most important features of the room. The watchtower marked area 1-4a houses a small group of lizardfolk skeleton archers who guard the hall. Area 1-4b is the guardhouse for the Outer Holding's Castellan, a half-dragon ettin.

The noise is coming from the large gear contraption found at area 1-4c. The gearwalk blocks access deeper into the complex until the party can figure out how to activate it.

The Watchtower (1-4a): There is no discernable entrance into the watchtower. There is a small "balcony" atop the tower's parapet. Spaced around the balcony are four banded wooden barrels. Each barrel holds 50 masterwork arrows and 2 masterwork spears. A DC 18 Search check of the balcony reveals a rectangular groove in the stone aligned flush to the western wall, obviously a secret door as shown on the map, but there is no discernable way to open it (the control is in the guardhouse in area 1-4b). Players may attempt to break into the tower by destroying the secret door.

Worked stone door: 18 in. thick; hardness 8; hp 270; Break DC 45.

The narrow window slits and poor lighting make it very difficult to look inside the tower. However, a DC 25 Spot check allows someone to catch a glimpse of metal coming from within the tower. This is the light shining off a nocked arrow of one of the watchtower's denizens.

Four lizardfolk skeleton archers stand watch inside the tower, positioned by the angled walls. There are two archers on the first floor and two archers on the second floor, with an archer positioned along the angled wall of the tower facing the door from area 1-3.

Tactics: Each skeleton has an arrow nocked and a readied action to attack any target not specifically a dragon, the Castellan, or accompanied by one of the Dragon Kings that moves within its "kill zone" as indicated by the shaded area on the map. Being dragonblooded is not sufficient to avoid being attacked by the skeleton archers. Each skeleton attacks the nearest eligible target until the target falls prone or moves out of range. The skeletons fight to the death. While the PCs are under attack by the skeletons, the Castellan rushes from behind them. See area 1-4b for details.

Special Conditions: Once the archers have begun firing, a character within 20 feet of the watchtower can attempt a DC 20 Spot check to notice the archers are in fact undead. Because the lizardfolk skeletons are separated by heavy stone walls and surfaces and obscured behind their arrow slits, only two of the skeletons can be

turned at a time; the intervening structures prevent a continuous line of effect between all the skeletons.

The narrow window slits provide each skeleton with improved cover, granting them Improved Evasion and +8 to their AC and Reflex saves. These bonuses appear in parentheses in the stat block as appropriate.

Lizardfolk Skeleton Archers (4): CR 1; Medium Undead; HD 2d12; hp 20, 18, 15, 12; Init +8; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18 (+4 Dex, +2 natural, +2 leather armor) (26*), touch 14 (22*), flat-footed 14 (22*); Base Atk +1; Grp +3; Atk Masterwork composite longbow +6 ranged (1d8+3 (8)/x3) or masterwork longspear +4 melee (1d8+3 (8)/x3) or claw +3 melee (1d4+2 (4)); Full Atk Masterwork composite longbow +6 ranged (1d8+3 (8)/x3) or masterwork longspear +4 melee (1d8+3 (8)/x3) or 2 claws +3 melee (1d4+2 (4)); SQ DR 5/bludgeoning, immunity (cold), undead traits; AL NE; SV Fort +0, Ref +4(+12*), Will +3; Str 14, Dex 19, Con –, Int –, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Feats: Improved Evasion*, Improved Initiative.

Equipment: Masterwork composite longbow (+2 Str), 20 +1 arrows, masterwork longspear, leather armor.

Entering the Watchtower: If the party finds the way in by activating the control panel in the guardhouse (area 1-4b) or breaks through the secret door, they find that the interior of the watchtower is very small. A stone shelf 15 feet off the ground is all that makes up the second floor of the keep, and a solid stone staircase connects the ground floor to the shelf and the shelf up to the secret door. Barring magic, gaining access to the tower is the only way to claim the archers' magic arrows or the bronze dragon trumpet.

On the second level of the watchtower is a sturdy wooden chest. The chest is locked but not trapped. The lock requires a DC 22 Open Lock check to open. Wrapped inside rich purple fabric is a sinuous dragon sculpture fashioned from bronze with blue enamel highlights. It stands nearly 3 feet long and weighs 40 pounds. This is one of the four Dragon Trumpets.

Wooden Chest: 3 in. thick; hardness 5; 30 hp; Break DC 28.

Dragon Choir Clue – The Bronze Trumpet: A DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) or Bardic Knowledge check reveals that the sculpture represents an

idealized dragon which incorporates features of both bronze and blue dragons, resulting in a perfect combination of the two. A DC 30 Spot or Search check reveals a small hole in the tip of the dragon's tail, and another in its mouth. It also reveals minute Draconic runes etched within the delicate dragon scales, which read:

The Blood of True Dragons Flows Strong

Lend Prowess to Those Who Hear its Song

Blowing into the dragon tail produces a single clear note that comes from the dragon's mouth. A DC 15 Perform (horn) or Bardic Knowledge check indicates these notes are perfect. If more than one Dragon Trumpet has been located, the character also knows these notes would work in harmony with each other, increasing the resonance and volume of the resulting notes.

The Guardhouse (1-4b): This small, one-room building is the guardhouse for the Outer Holding's current Castellan, a mighty half-dragon ettin. The Castellan lives in the guardhouse, and can monitor movement throughout the Outer Holdings from within. The door to the guardhouse is locked from the inside and swings outward toward the dragon door heading back to area 1-3. Picking the lock to the guard house requires a DC 28 Open Lock check. The lock mechanism is 8 feet above the ground, which may require some planning so the character picking the lock can access the mechanism easily.

Reinforced heavy wood door: 12 in. thick; hardness 6; hp 120; Break DC 28.

Once the party enters the guardhouse, give them Player Handout D. Eight large, smooth panels, each 6 feet wide and 4 feet tall, are mounted into the northern wall of the guardhouse. Each panel allows the viewer to see a specific section of the Outer Holdings in static-pocked, grayish images by virtue of permanent *clairvoyance* spells bound to the monitors and their linked panels – the large, polished *continual flame* stones set into the ceiling throughout the first level. Four of the eight panels are active, and currently allow the viewer to scry on the corridor outside the dragon door in area 1-3, clearly see the section of the Hall of Scales over the gearwalk in area 1-4c (via the one intact light stone left), and two of the four sanctums (areas 1-6 and 1-8).

There are blind spots in the surveillance along the western half of area 1-4, and the Castellan



will keep a cautious eye on the monitors if characters slink from view. The monitors grant the Castellan a +10 circumstance bonus on all Spot checks made to determine where the party is or what they are doing in any of the areas represented by surveillance equipment.

On the wall below the surveillance monitors is a large, circular stone dial one foot in diameter. This dial is the means to open the secret door on the parapet of the watchtower in area 1-4a. Rotating the dial counterclockwise opens the secret door on the watchtower's balcony. Rotating the dial clockwise triggers a magical trap. The secret door remains open until the dial is rotated back to its original position. This is how the Castellan replaces destroyed archers and keeps them supplied.

Glyph of Warding trapped dial: CR 6; spell; event trigger (rotate dial clockwise); manual reset; spell effect (*glyph of warding [blast]*, 16th-level cleric, 8d8 (36) points of sonic damage, DC 14 Reflex save half damage); multiple targets (all targets within 5 ft.); Search DC 28; Disable Device DC 28.

Tactics: The Castellan has been tracking the party's movements since they entered the complex. He waits for the party to enter the Hall of Scales and come under fire from the skeletal archers on the watchtower. Then, with the characters occupied, he bursts from his guardhouse and attacks, catching the PCs off guard and pinning them between himself and the archers.

The Castellan is an unsubtle but savvy combatant, and focuses his attacks upon obvious spellcasters first to remove them from the combat as quickly as possible. He opens combat with his breath weapons and then smashes weakened

opponents with his hammers until they retreat or succumb to his might. The Castellan routinely uses 4 points of Power Attack (already figured into the stat block) to increase the devastation caused by his warhammers. He will make heavy use of his Improved Sunder feat, attempting to smash the weapons of the most capable-looking melee fighters in the group.

Although capable of flight, the Castellan will only take to the air to escape if seriously injured, or to obtain a more defensible position on the field of battle. The Castellan fights to the death.

Once the Castellan has been reduced to fewer than 50 hp, he bellows in rage:

You will never enter the Valley of the Fallen – I'll see to that! Sunscratch won't suffer your meddling!

The Castellan then produces a large key nearly four feet long from a scabbard across his back – the key to the gearwalk in area 1-4c. He will devote half of his warhammer attacks per turn to destroying the key; the party needs to react quickly to prevent this important tool from being ruined.

Gearwalk key: 2 inches thick; hardness 10; hp 60; Break DC 28; 10 pounds.

The Castellan, Half-Dragon Ettin Fighter 2: CR 10; Large Dragon; HD 12d10+60; hp 136; Init +2; Spd 40 ft., fly 80 ft (average); AC 26 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +11 natural, +4 chain shirt), touch 11, flat-footed 24; Base Atk +9; Grp +24; Atk +1 *warhammer* +16* melee (2d6+16 (23)) or bite +19 melee (1d8+11 (15)); Full Atk +1 *warhammer* +16/+11* melee (2d6+16 (23)) and +1 *warhammer* +16/+11* melee (2d6+16 (23)) and bite +17 melee (1d8+5 (9)) or two bites +19 melee (1d8+11 (15)) and two claws +17 melee (1d6+5 (8)); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA Breath weapon; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, immunities (acid, fire, sleep, and paralysis effects), superior two-weapon fighting, wary; AL LE; SV Fort +15, Ref +5, Will +5; Str 32, Dex 14, Con 20, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 10.

* Indicates use of 4 points of Power Attack

Skills and Feats: Climb +19, Diplomacy +2, Intimidate +1, Jump +23, Listen +17, Search +15, Sense Motive +6, Spot +17, Survival +0 (+2 following tracks); Alertness, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Multiattack, Power Attack.

Possessions: Large chain shirt, two Large +1

warhammers, key to the gearwalk.

Breath Weapon (Ex): The Castellan's two heads are of differing draconic origin; the right head possesses copper dragon traits while the left is of obvious red dragon descent. Because of this unique feature, the Castellan can utilize two different breath weapons. Once per day the Castellan can spew a 60-ft. line of acid from his right head and a 30-ft. cone of fire from his left head. He can use his breath weapons independently or unleash both at once in a withering crossfire. Those caught in either of the two breath weapons take 6d8 (27) points of acid or fire damage as appropriate. A successful DC 20 Reflex save reduces damage from a single breath weapon by half. If a creature is caught in both breath weapons at once, this increases to a single DC 24 Reflex save for half damage from each breath weapon. Note that taking full damage from both breath weapons inflicts (54^M) points of damage, requiring a Massive Damage check.

Superior Two-Weapon Fighting (Ex): The Castellan fights with a warhammer in each hand. Because each of its two heads controls an arm, the Castellan does not suffer any penalties for attacking with two weapons.

Wary (Ex): The Castellan's range of vision and improved awareness with his two heads make it more difficult to take full advantage of flanking. Characters flanking the Castellan only receive a +1 bonus to attack rolls.

Description: Standing nearly 14 feet tall, the Castellan is a fearsome juggernaut of epic proportions, combining the might of ettin and dragon. Displaying both red and copper dragon heritage, the Castellan's draconic blood is readily apparent in his coat of burnished copper and crimson scales, as well as the twin malevolence contained in each fang-filled visage. He grips a mighty steel warhammer in each clenched fist and sports a massive shirt of blackened iron links.

Aftermath: A large, makeshift table occupies the eastern wall. The "table" is basically two large crates with a stout wooden plank nearly 10 feet long laid across them. A Large masterwork dagger pins a sheet of paper to the table. Written in Draconic is a list of chores for the Castellan. If anyone in the party can read Draconic, or can succeed in a DC 15 Decipher Script check, give the party Player Handout E.

Clean out the entrance. Some damn birds have been crapping on the Kings. We can't

have that now, can we?

Replace the tiles above the watchtower already; they've been out for a year now!

Finally finish that book. It's supposed to have a great ending....

Thelias mumbled something about keeping the darkness at bay if I ever choose to visit, but I can't remember what he said...Refuge? Sanctuary? Shelter?

The crates are locked, and hold some basic supplies. The keys are on the Castellan; otherwise, the crates can be opened with a DC 20 Open Lock check once the large, wooden plank (weighing 100 lbs) has been moved. The north crate holds several dozen torches, a 100-foot coil of sturdy rope, two vials of antitoxin, two *potions of cure serious wounds*, and a *potion of lesser restoration*. The south crate holds a flea-ridden blanket and bedroll, a set of Large-sized cutlery, plates, bowls, and cups, and a leather pouch with 37 pp, 48 gp, and an exquisite ruby worth 1,500 gp. A DC 25 Search check of the south crate reveals a small book wrapped up in the blanket. This is the book his chore list is referring to, a *manual of bodily health* +3.

There is a "vending machine" next to the Castellan's chair; a *gray bag of tricks* provides a near endless supply of munchies the Castellan can roast with his flame breath.

The Gearwalk (1-4c): When the party explores the Hall of Scales or approaches the gearwalk mechanism, give them Player Handout F. Then read the following aloud:

The north end of the great hall is dominated by an enormous archway. Inside the arch, you can view a portion of a gigantic, copper wheel. The patina on the wheel creates an odd, swirling pattern as the wheel rapidly spins in place. This is clearly the source of the low bass rumbling you heard.

For a moment during the wheel's rotation, you notice a wedge cut out of the metal. It gives you a brief glimpse of a solid copper wall just 10 feet beyond the 15-foot-wide corridor briefly formed by the opening in the cog as the wedge flies by. You get the sense that this is a portion of an enormous gear or fly-wheel attached to a contraption of monstrous scale, seated deep within the walls of the complex.

Just to the east of the contraption, a 2-foot, rectangular metal panel has been fastened to the wall, 10 feet above the ground. In the center of the panel is a small hole with little notches cut at the top, bottom and both sides. The hole is about 3 inches in diameter.

There are four gears total, each one tied to a magic circle in the different Sanctums found in areas 1-5 through 1-8. By activating the shrines found in the sanctums, the corresponding gear starts to rotate. The North and South gears rotate clockwise, while the West and East gears rotate counterclockwise. As the gears spin, the wedge-shaped “gaps” on the gear wheels overlap briefly to reveal a corridor leading to area 1-10.

There’s an opportunity to “lock” some of the gears into their open position by using the gearwalk key found on the Castellan if the key hasn’t been ruined. There is also a slight chance that one of the gears could be locked in place with a Disable Device check.

The Key Panel: The panel next to the gearwalk entrance is for the Castellan’s key. The key needs to be inserted so the notched ridge on the end of the key is pointing up. The gears are locked in place to their open position by rotating the key clockwise. Rotating it clockwise to the eastern notch locks the East cog, and so on around the circle. If the key is removed, the next time it is inserted and rotated, any gears that were locked start rotating once more. Rotating the key counterclockwise, or entering the key so the notched ridge lines up with any of the other three notches on the panel, triggers a trap.

Enervation Trapped Panel: CR 6; spell; manual trigger (use key incorrectly); automatic reset; spell effect (*enervation*, 7th-level wizard, 1d4 (2) negative levels, no save); Search DC 29; Disable Device DC 29 (scratch out runes along inner surface of keyhole).

The key panel only locks gears that have already started moving. It has no effect on inactive gears. The number of cogs that can be locked in place by the Castellan’s key depends on the condition of the key:

Perfect condition (60 hp): locks S, W and N gears in place

Damaged (45-59 hp): Locks S and W gears in place

Heavily Damaged (20-44 hp): Locks S gear in place

Ruined (less than 20 hp): Useless, locks no gears in place

A DC 24 Disable Device check can remove the plate covering the key mechanism. Once successfully removed, a second DC 29 Disable Device check can be attempted to try and lock one of the gears in place. If this succeeds, roll 1d4 to determine which gear is affected: 1: North (tournament result), 2: East, 3: South, 4: West.

Moving Through the Gearwalk: Gears that have been locked in place are safe to traverse, but some characters may try to move through the gears while they are still rotating. This can be done, but it is very risky.

To move from a stable, solid surface to a rotating wheel, a character must make a DC 10 Dexterity check. Failure indicates the character was unable to time his move and does not progress. Failure by 5 or more indicates the character misjudged the timing and must succeed at a DC 20 Reflex save or suffer 6d6 (21) points of crushing damage from the massive gears.

Moving from one rotating wheel to another rotating wheel increases the risk. The character must succeed at a DC 12 Dexterity check. Failure indicates the character was unable to time his move and does not progress. Failure by 5 or more indicates the character misjudged the timing as above, but must succeed at a DC 24 Reflex save or suffer 12d6 (42) points of crushing damage as both gears shear him.

Characters can also attempt a Jump check to jump through the apertures as they pass by, landing on a locked gear or into the valley beyond. Before jumping, a character must make a Dexterity check to time the rotation of the gears. The DC for the Dexterity check is 10, +2 for each gear the character is attempting to Jump through in one skill check. Failure by 5 or more indicates the character misjudged the timing and must succeed at a DC 20 Reflex save or suffer 6d6 (21) points of crushing damage from the massive gears. If the Dexterity check is successful, the character can Jump as outlined in the Jump skill. Falling short of the required distance could result in landing inside one of the spinning gears.

Once inside a rotating gear, the gear spins quickly enough that it completes a full rotation in just 2

combat rounds. Casting a spell within a rotating gear requires a Concentration check of DC (20 + spell level). Each round a character spends inside a rotating wheel, he must make a DC 15 Balance check. Failure results in the character falling prone. A character failing by 5 or more also suffers 4d6 (14) points of nonlethal damage from being battered around the inside of the gear. Any character that spends 4 consecutive rounds in a rotating gear must make a DC 18 Fortitude save or become sickened. This condition lasts for 1d10 (5) rounds after the character has reached stable, solid ground.

There is no light inside the gears. When the opening in the gears passes beyond the surface, the interior is in complete darkness.

A Glimpse of What Lies Below: If a character finds himself in the Eastern gear while it is rotating, he will be quickly whisked past a secret tunnel leading to area 1-9, an underground lizardfolk cache. Read the following to any character inside the East gear as it makes a full revolution:

The darkness of the gear gives way briefly to a soft, purple glow – there’s a tunnel leading from the cog opening into the depths of the mountain! You glimpse just enough to see patches of luminous fungus clinging to rough, earthen walls. What secrets could lie down this mysterious path?

If they wish to pursue this mystery, continue to area 1-9. This readaloud text is repeated in the description for area 1-9 for convenience.

A Complication: Even once all the shrines in the Sanctums have been activated, the North gear does not budge. It has been frozen shut by the elements and Myrkjartan’s icy breath. If the party has activated the remaining gears and can see the north gear, they will notice there is a heavy sheath of ice clinging to the edges, sealing it shut. The party must remove the ice before the North gear will move (possibly contending with some gears still rotating).

Ice sheath: 18 inches thick; hardness 0; hp 54; Break DC 30. Fire inflicts double damage.

Once the ice sheath has been cleared, the gear immediately springs into action and begins rotating. If the party’s actions would have locked the North gear into the open position, it rotates only far enough to reach the open position. Once the party has removed the ice from the North cog

and the gears open to reveal area 1-10, read the following aloud:

With a loud groan, the fourth cog breaks free from the remaining ice and lurches into motion. Between the wedges of the four wheels, you can see light beyond the gearwalk and smell crisp, fresh air. This gearwalk must lead directly through the mountainside and into the Valley of the Fallen – the ancestral home of countless dragons through the course of history.

Moving On: Once all the gears have been activated, the party will have access to area 1-10 and the Valley of the Fallen beyond. If the party is ready to proceed through the gearwalk and maneuvers through the gears to the valley, turn to area 1-10.

Scoring Suggestions: 2,400 points possible

50: Determine the archers are undead

25/skeleton: Per skeleton archer destroyed

50: Find the way to access the watchtower

300: Recover the copper dragon trumpet

100: Examine the crates supporting the table in the Castellan’s tower

200: Locate the *manual of bodily health*

400: Defeat the Castellan

300: Recover the gearwalk key in perfect condition

200: Recover the gearwalk key in usable condition

100/gear: Per gear locked into position (by any means)

100/character (400 max): Navigate the gearwalk without taking any damage, per character

100: Destroy the ice sheath on the North gear without suffering any damage

Area 1-5 – Sanctum of the King of the West (EL 10)

When the party approaches the doors to this room, read the following. If this is the first sanctum the party has approached, give them Player Handout G. If the party has already encountered one of the sets of doors, the GM can tell the party the door is similar to the previous one encountered, except the dragons on this door are copper and black.

A wide set of copper double doors blocks your way. The doors are each 10 feet wide and nearly 30 feet high. Etched into the copper doors are two powerful dragons flying in a circle, each chasing the other's tail. The dragons' features are highlighted with lustrous, black enamel. A heavy, copper ring, nearly two feet in diameter, is set in the center of each door.

This is the entrance to the sanctum devoted to the King of the West, also known as the King of Acid, who personified memories, holding grudges, the passage of time, persistence, irony, and the inevitability of decay. The doors are neither locked nor trapped. However, each door weighs 500 pounds and the handles are positioned high enough to make it difficult to find leverage or purchase to easily pull them open. Left unattended, the doors close by themselves with a relative Strength of 20 to determine how much force they exert.

Once the doors to the sanctum of the King of the West have been opened, read the following aloud:

The heavy doors open with a loud groan, revealing a long, rectangular chamber. The chamber is 20 feet wide and extends 50 feet west, before it ends in a beveled point. Runes carved in the stone floor pulse with a vibrant, green glow, casting long, strange shadows across the walls and ceiling.

A large, marble shrine sits at the end of the chamber. The shrine is fashioned as an ornate fountain, flanked by two elaborately crafted, twin-headed dragon sculptures. A thin arc of water bubbles from each dragon's mouth, their paths meeting atop the fountain in a bowl shaped to look like a cracked dragon's egg.

This is the Sanctum to the King of the West, the shrine dedicated to the draconic element of acid. The dragon sculptures are actually necromantic chimera constructs, programmed to guard the sanctum from intruders. A narrow, circular trench, a three-inch-wide groove beveled three inches deep, surrounds the shrine. A DC 25 Spot check is needed to notice the groove. A Spot check result of 30 or higher also reveals the contour of the trench is fashioned like a gear or cog of some sort.

The glowing runes in the Sanctum provide shadowy illumination throughout the chamber. A character fluent in Draconic or making a DC 15 Decipher Script check recognizes the runes glorify the King of the West, praising his deeds and accomplishments through the ages.

A DC 22 Spot check reveals the dragon sculptures appear to be comprised of leathery, desiccated skins, supported from the inside by copper rods and framework that poke through patches of missing flesh. Once combat has begun and their movements studied, a DC 22 Knowledge (religion) or Knowledge (arcana) check reveals the chimeric guardians are not technically undead, but actually constructs featuring undead components.

Tactics: The necromantic chimera constructs hold perfectly still, waiting until an eligible target (based on their ability to *detect non-dragonblooded*) is within range of their acid breath attacks. Once a target has been acquired, the dragon heads all rotate from the fountain and breathe out lines of acid. Any character caught flat-footed by the acid breath must also make a DC 18 Fortitude save or be blinded by the acid. The blindness is temporary, lasting until they flush their eyes with water or they are tended by another character making a successful DC 20 Heal check. Due to the construction of these necromantic chimera constructs, each head can only breathe acid twice during the battle; each construct has 2 heads, for a total of 8 possible breath attacks.

Once their attack commences, both constructs focus on the same target until the target is incapacitated or flees the room. The constructs only pursue interlopers if all other targets inside the shrine have fled. After spraying the room with their breath weapon, they advance into melee combat using simple tactics. They are capable of flight, but the chimera constructs' decayed wings

are usable for little more than short glides. The chimera constructs fight until destroyed.

Guardians of the West (Necromantic Chimera Constructs) (2): CR 8; Large Construct; HD 9d10+30; hp 89, 84; Init +0; Spd 20 ft., fly 40 ft. (clumsy); AC 22 (-1 size, +13 natural), touch 9, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +6; Grp +16; Atk Bite +11 melee (2d6+6 (13)); Full Atk Bite +11 melee (2d6+6 (13)) and bite +11 melee (1d8+3 (7)) and gore +11 melee (1d8+3 (7)) and 2 claws +6 melee (1d6+3 (6)); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA Breath weapon (40-ft. line, 3d8 (13) acid, Ref DC 14 for half), rotting touch; SQ Construct traits, DR 10/slashing, darkvision 60 ft., scent, turn defiance; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 23, Dex 11, Con –, Int –, Wis 11, Cha 1.

Rotting Touch (Su): Any living creature damaged by one of the guardians of the west must make a successful DC 14 Fortitude save or contract a disease called the foul rot (incubation period 1d4 (2) hours, damage 1d4 (2) Con and 1d4 (2) Dex). The disease acts and looks like advanced necrosis, blackening the flesh as tissue is destroyed by the accumulation of mild acids in the cell membranes. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Turn Defiance (Ex): The necromantic constructs are held together with dark energies and undead tissue, making them partially susceptible to turn attempts and divine energy, but not nearly to the extent of fully undead creatures. A character making a turning attempt rolls for the turn check and damage as usual. If the HD threshold from the turning check is high enough, the character inflicts damage to the nearest necromantic construct if there are no other eligible undead targets closer to the character. The damage inflicted is equal to the total turning damage roll. A necromantic construct is allowed a Fortitude save (DC = Turn Check result) for half damage.

Description: Two beasts lumber out of the deep green shadows, moving with the cumbersome certainty of the unliving. As the monsters advance, your eye can trace the definite outline of the chimera, but these abominations are cobbled together and half-frozen; they have very little in common with the great predatory beast of legend. Each leathery scrap of these beasts – dragon, lion, and goat – seems to have been salvaged from a moldering corpse, and then stitched together with the lackluster grace of depravity or madness. These foul creations bear two dragon heads – one of dull copper, the other matte black.

The King of the West, often secluded from the other kings for his dour demeanor, lovingly crafted these unique necromantic constructs to serve as his faithful guardians. He took great pride in his creations, and was painstakingly detailed in their construction. The dragons were a sort of homage to the copper and black dragons who shared his acidic element and personality, looking to combine the best features and characteristics of his beloved dragonkin. However, the chimeric form holds a subtle, unspoken threat; the King of the West demanded cooperation between his dragons – by force, if necessary.

Aftermath: Once the constructs attack, the acid remaining in the dragon egg begins to drain through a hole in the bottom of the bowl. The acid drains back into a large, metal reservoir of acid housed below the shrine. There are 2 gallons of acid in the bowl, and half a gallon drains every round. After four rounds, the bowl is empty. The acid does not affect metal or stone, and inflicts 4d6 (14) points of damage to flesh and natural materials (like leather or wood), doubled to 8d6 (28) if wholly submerged in the acid.

Characters can fill empty flasks or potion bottles with acid that can be thrown as splash weapons. Treat this attack as a ranged touch attack with a range increment of 10 feet. A direct hit deals 2d6 points of acid damage. Every creature within 5 feet of the point where the acid hits takes 1 point of acid damage from the splash. A DC 10 Sleight of Hand check or DC 15 Dexterity check is required to fill a flask without coming into contact with the acid.

Each dragon construct has a metal reservoir built into its framework that holds 4 gallons of acid. A construct uses 1 gallon of acid each time it uses its breath weapon. Characters can also demolish the shrine to access the acid reservoir secured underneath. The reservoir holds 8 gallons of acid.

Hewn stone shrine: 12 inches thick; hardness 8; hp 180; Break DC 35.

Activating the Western Gearwalk: The gear labeled W is controlled by the shrine in this sanctuary. To get the western gear rotating, the trench around the shrine must be properly activated with the draconic element tied to the King of the West – acid. To do this, the trench must be filled with the equivalent of one gallon of acid or have at least 40 points of acid “damage” applied to it

within 5 minutes. Once activated, the corresponding gear will continue to rotate for four hours.

Scoring Suggestions: 700 points possible

50: Use acid from the reservoir or constructs to fill the trench

50: Bottle some of the acid for later use

100: Discover the acid reservoir below the shrine

200: Activate the Western Gearwalk

150/construct: Defeat the necromantic chimera constructs (per construct)

Area 1-6 – Sanctum of the King of the North (EL 11)

When the party approaches the doors to this room, read the following. If this is the first sanctum the party has approached, give them Player Handout G. If the party has already encountered one of the sets of doors, the GM can tell the party the door is similar to the previous one encountered, except the dragons on this door are gold and red.

A wide set of gold double doors blocks your way. The doors are each 10 feet wide and nearly 30 feet high. Etched into the gold doors are two powerful dragons flying in a circle, each chasing the other's tail. The dragons' features are highlighted with lustrous, red enamel. A heavy, gold ring, nearly two feet in diameter, is set in the center of each door.

This is the entrance to the sanctum devoted to the King of the North, also known as the King of Fire, representing spiritual renewal, strong passions, aggression, warfare, vengeance, and the spark of life. The doors are neither locked nor trapped. However, each door weighs 500 pounds and the handles are positioned high enough to make it difficult to find leverage or purchase to easily pull them open. Left unattended, the doors close by themselves with a relative Strength of 20 to determine how much force they exert.

Once the doors to the sanctum of the King of the North have been opened, read the following aloud:

The heavy doors open with a loud groan, revealing a chamber 20 feet wide that extends 30 feet west before turning sharply

to the north, where it appears to end in a beveled point shortly thereafter. Runes carved in the stone floor pulse with a fiery red glow, casting shadows that dance across the walls and ceiling like tongues of flame.

Once the party is in a position where they can see the end of the chamber, read the following:

A 10-foot-tall marble shrine sits at the end of the chamber. The shrine is a giant brazier, with sculpted flames stretching toward the ceiling. The surface of the marble flames appears scorched, and a dusty layer of ash lines the floor around the brazier. A pitch black hole 5 feet across is hewn directly above the marble flames, but you cannot see anything within the hole.

This is the Sanctum to the King of the North, the shrine dedicated to the draconic element of fire. The ashes surrounding the shrine are the dormant remains of Kreeaasi, a Huge fire elemental empowered as a flame paragon. A narrow, circular trench, a three-inch-wide groove beveled three inches deep, surrounds the shrine. A DC 25 Spot check is needed to notice the groove. A Spot check result of 30 or higher also reveals the contour of the trench is fashioned like a gear or cog of some sort.

The glowing runes in the Sanctum provide shadowy illumination throughout the chamber. A character fluent in Draconic or making a DC 15 Decipher Script check recognizes the runes glorify the King of the North, praising his deeds and accomplishments through the ages.

A DC 20 Spot check reveals the black hole in the ceiling is smooth and featureless, and no light or shadows stretch within it.

The Hole in the Ceiling: The hole is a shielded "one way" portal linked directly to the Elemental Plane of Fire. It allows the intense heat of the sanctuary's guardian to vent harmlessly from the room without endangering the Vault complex or the other sanctuaries. The inky surface is pitch black and does not reflect light. The air immediately around the hole is slightly cool, as the heat is being sucked through the portal and released into the Elemental Plane of Fire. A DC 25 Knowledge (the planes) or DC 30 Spellcraft check reveals the nature of the portal.

Inanimate and living matter inserted into the portal suffers 10d6 (35) points of fire damage every

round it remains in contact with the Elemental Plane of Fire beyond the portal. Further, any inanimate object pushed into the hole must make a DC 25 Fortitude save or have the portion inserted into the portal seared off or melted away from the intense heat.

Waking the Guardian: The Huge flame paragon, Kreeaasi, is currently suspended in a state of torpor. The dread chill of the massive Vault sapped his strength, eventually forcing Kreeaasi into hibernation years ago. When he fell into torpor, Kreeaasi's flaming form disappeared, and he currently rests as the ash coating the floor of the shrine. As soon as any source of flame or heat damage comes within 5 feet of the shrine, the ashes ignite and Kreeaasi bursts into existence once more.

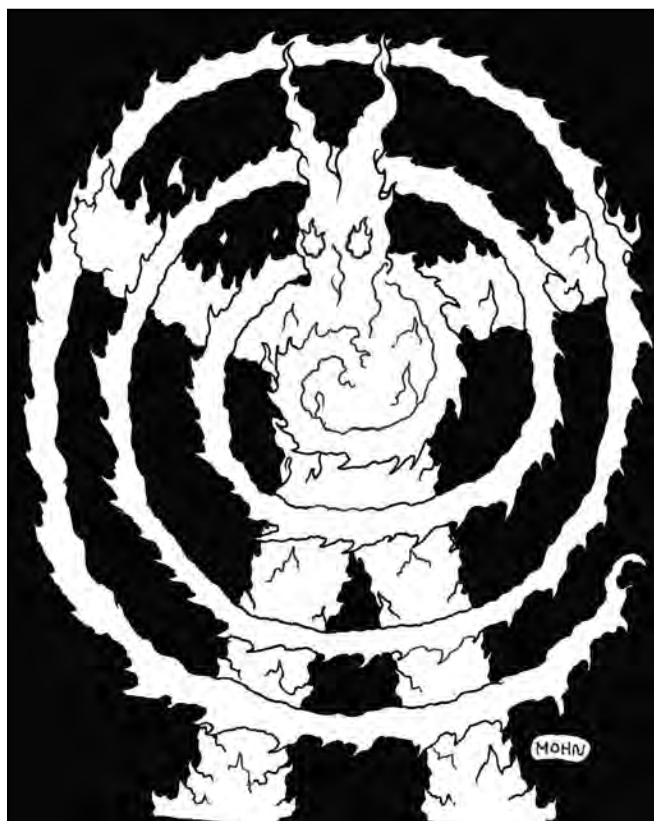
Kreeaasi's emergence is centered on the marble brazier. Any creatures within the Huge fire elemental's space when he emerges suffer 6d6 (21) points of fire damage (DC 25 Reflex save for half damage) and are forced out of his spaces to make room. Given his flaming composition and ties to the shrine, Kreeaasi can occupy the same spaces as the marble brazier and altar as if they were clear terrain.

Tactics: The guardian of the north uses simple but effective tactics, starting combat off by peppering player characters with spell-like abilities, beginning with *fire storm* and then a hail of *fireballs*. Once Kreeaasi has worn down his opponents he enters melee, attacking indiscriminately and attempting to set as many characters ablaze as possible. The guardian of the north relies on mobility in combat and will routinely use Spring Attack. Kreeaasi selects any characters with cold weapons or abilities as his Dodge opponent.

If at any time a PC uses a cold effect upon the guardian of the north, Kreeaasi immediately attacks him above all others, attempting to slay the offending PC quickly. If the party is well equipped with spells or magic items that produce cold effects, the guardian of the north casts *fire shield* to temporarily offset his dire vulnerability.

The guardian of the north fights to the death, but will not follow fleeing PCs beyond the sanctum of the King of the North, sensing, and fearing, the terrible cold of the mountain.

Kreeaasi, the Guardian of the North (Huge Flame Paragon Fire Elemental): CR 10; Huge Elemental; HD 16d8+96; hp 168; Init +11; Spd 60



ft.; AC 19 (-2 size, +7 Dex, +4 natural), touch 15, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +12; Grp +26; Atk Slam +17 melee (2d8+6 (15) plus 3d6 (10) fire); Full Atk 2 slams +17 melee (2d8+6 (15) plus 3d6 (10) fire); Space/Reach 15 ft./15 ft.; SA Aura of fatigue, burn, burning touch, spell-like abilities; SQ Damage reduction 5/–, darkvision 60 ft., elemental traits, immunity to fire, increased vulnerability to cold, melt weapons; AL N; SV Fort +11, Ref +17, Will +7; Str 22, Dex 25, Con 22, Int 6, Wis 11, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Listen +11, Spot +12; Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative^B, Iron Will, Mobility, Spring Attack, Weapon Finesse^B.

Aura of Fatigue (Ex): Kreeaasi radiates an aura of oppressive heat that can fatigue nearby opponents. All creatures not of the fire subtype within 10 feet of the guardian of the north must make a successful DC 24 Fortitude save or become fatigued. Creatures in the area of effect must make a Fortitude saving throw each round to avoid becoming fatigued. Fatigued creatures remain so for as long as they stay within 10 feet of the guardian of the north and for 16 rounds after that. Any type of fire or heat resistance renders a creature immune to the aura of fatigue.

Burn (Ex): Kreeaasi's slam attack deals bludgeoning damage plus fire damage from its

flaming body. Those hit by the guardian of the north's slam attack also must succeed on a DC 24 Reflex save or catch on fire. The flame burns for 1d4 (2) rounds, inflicting 1d6 (3) points of fire damage each round. A burning creature can take a move action to put out the flame. Creatures hitting the guardian of the north with natural weapons or unarmed attacks take fire damage as though hit by the guardian of the north's attack, and also catch on fire unless they succeed on a DC 24 Reflex save.

Burning Touch (Ex): Kreeaasi burns hotter than a standard fire elemental, inflicting an additional 3d6 (10) points of fire damage with a slam attack.

Increased Cold Vulnerability (Ex): Kreeaasi is incredibly vulnerable to cold-based attacks, even more so than a standard fiery creature. He takes double damage from cold effects, regardless of whether a saving throw is allowed, or if the save is a success or failure.

Melt Weapons (Ex): The intense heat of Kreeaasi's body can melt or char weapons. Any melee weapon striking the guardian of the north is allowed a DC 24 Fortitude save to avoid destruction.

Spell-Like Abilities: 3/day – *burning hands* (12 points of fire damage), *fireball* (40 points of fire damage), *fire shield*; 1/day – *fire storm* (60^M points of fire damage), *heat metal*, *protection from energy (cold)*, *scorching ray* (+17 to hit, 3 rays, 15 points of fire damage/ray), *wall of fire*. Caster level 16, Spell DC = 11 + spell level.

Description: Before you swirls a living monolith of flame, a towering inferno of ill intent and alien will. It has a vaguely man-shaped bulk, with two waving appendages and a fiery head in which burn two motes of golden flame. The heat coming off of this fiery monstrosity is beyond description, sucking the breath from your lungs and the strength from your bones.

The guardian of the north is a long-time ally of the King of the North. Known across the Elemental Planes of Fire as Kreeaasi, this flame paragon forged a lifelong devotion to the King of the North as the two fought side-by-side for countless ages in wars waged across the Elemental Planes. Eventually, the gods saw fit to pluck the King of the North from his endless war to serve as a Dragon King and become the idealized avatar for the draconic element of fire. The newly anointed Dragon King was quick to call upon his loyal friend and brother-in-flames, Kreeaasi, to serve as the guardian of his sanctuary.

Aftermath: The brazier is filled with a thick layer of soot and ash. A DC 22 Search of the soot reveals 4 perfect rubies, worth 2,000 gp each. The soot shimmers with moderate transformation magic if viewed with *detect magic* and functions as *dust of dryness*, keeping the shrine dry and clear. There is enough soot within the brazier for 6 applications.

Activating the Northern Gearwalk: The gear labeled N is controlled by the shrine in this sanctuary. To get the northern gear rotating, the trench around the shrine must be properly activated with the draconic element tied to the King of the North – fire. To do this, the trench must be filled with the equivalent of two pints of oil or other flammable liquid and set on fire, or have at least 40 points of fire “damage” applied to it within 5 minutes. Once activated, the corresponding gear will continue to rotate for four hours.

Note that when Kreeaasi bursts out of his torpor, he generates enough heat by himself to activate the gearwalk. A DC 25 Listen check by someone near the door while Kreeaasi is active reveals the sounds of a low grinding coming from area 1-4c. However, if Kreeaasi is slain with cold attacks, there is a chance the north gear will stop rotating. This happens if 20 or more points of cold damage are inflicted to Kreeaasi in the round he is destroyed, if the damage occurs in the area of the circular trench on the floor. In this case, the gear stops rotating in 2d6 (7) minutes.

Scoring Suggestions: 750 points possible

50: Discover the rubies in the brazier

50: Discover nature/purpose behind portal to the Elemental Plane of Fire

150: Discover the soot is actually *dust of dryness*

200: Activate the Northern Gearwalk

300: Defeat Kreeaasi, the flame paragon

-200: Anyone suffering damage from the portal to the Elemental Plane of Fire in the ceiling

-25/weapon: Each weapon melted away by Kreeaasi

Area 1-7 – Sanctum of the King of the South (EL 10)

When the party approaches the doors to this room, read the following. If this is the first sanctum the party has approached, give them Player Handout G. If the party has already encountered one of the sets of doors, the GM can tell the party the door is similar to the previous one encountered, except the dragons on this door are silver and white.

A wide set of silver double doors blocks your way. The doors are each 10 feet wide and nearly 30 feet high. Etched into the silver doors are two powerful dragons flying in a circle, each chasing the other's tail. The dragons' features are highlighted with lustrous, white enamel. A heavy, silver ring, nearly two feet in diameter, is set in the center of each door.

This is the entrance to the sanctum devoted to the King of the South, also known as the King of Ice, who embodied patience, stamina, intuition, unquestioned loyalty, and unyielding resolve. The doors are neither locked nor trapped. However, each door weighs 500 pounds and the handles are positioned high enough to make it difficult to find leverage or purchase to easily pull them open. Left unattended, the doors close by themselves with a relative Strength of 20 to determine how much force they exert.

Once the door to the sanctum of the King of the South has been opened, read the following aloud:

The heavy doors open with a loud groan, revealing a chamber 20 feet wide that extends 30 feet east before turning sharply to the south, where it appears to end in a beveled point shortly thereafter. Runes carved in the stone floor pulse with a deep blue glow, creating the illusion of myriad snowflakes dancing across the walls and ceiling.

Once the party is in a position where they can see the end of the chamber, read the following:

A 10-foot-tall marble shrine sits at the end of the chamber. The shrine depicts two dragons with heads craned low, a posture of subservience. The sculpted dragons are bowing at the feet of a humanoid dressed in crys-

talline armor. Three more dragons leer down from the corners of the ceiling, looking down on the armor-clad figure with cold disinterest. A pile of debris lines the southern wall, beneath a thick coat of ice.

The surfaces of the statues are sheer and angled, as if hewn from massive blocks of ice instead of stone. A thin layer of ice clings to the statues, walls, and floor. The room is cold, and your breath hangs frostily in the air.

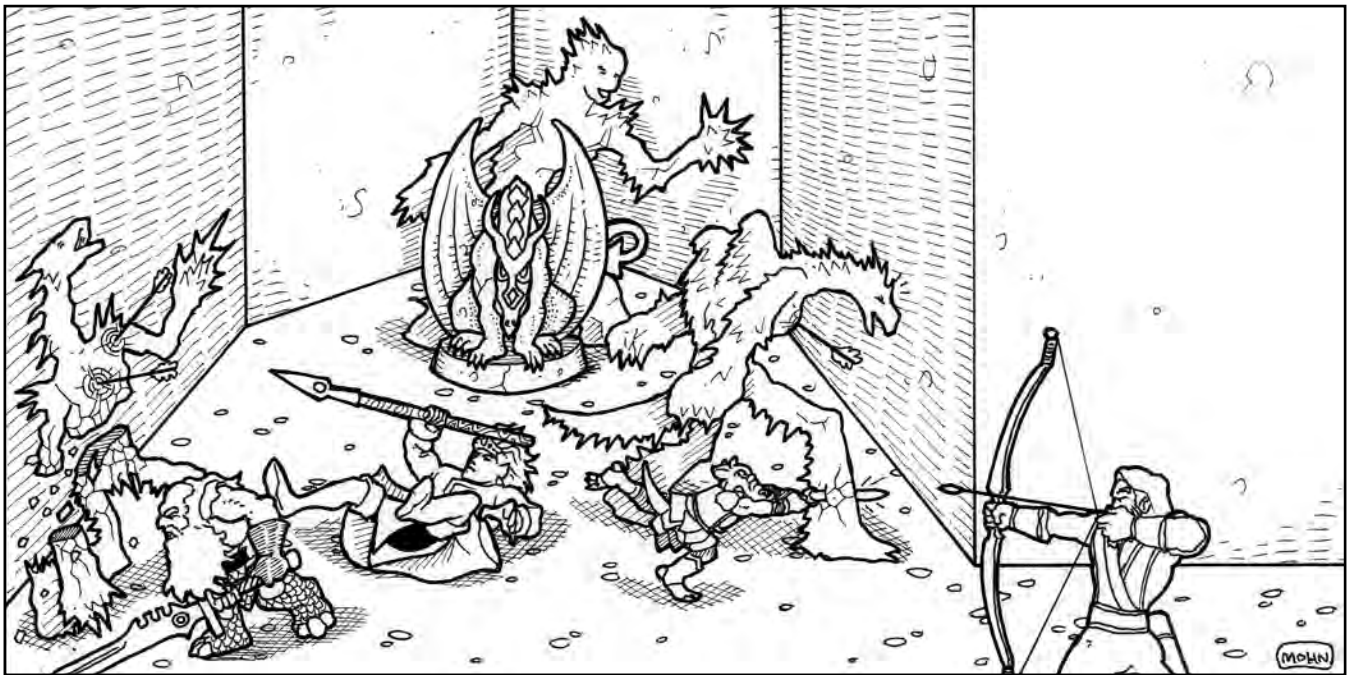
Four of the dragon figures are actually kostkorian demons, vile ice creatures fiendishly disguised to appear draconic instead of humanoid. The large humanoid statue is a depiction of the King of the South. Its crystal armor magically protects the chamber from the dangerous effects of heat and fire – affording the chamber's inhabitants a degree of protection, as well. The stone debris piles against the back wall are the crushed remains of the statues destroyed in this chamber to make room for the kostkorian demons.

A narrow, circular trench, a three-inch-wide groove beveled three inches deep, surrounds the shrine. A DC 25 Spot check is needed to notice the groove. A Spot check result of 30 or higher also reveals the contour of the trench is fashioned like a gear or cog of some sort.

The glowing runes in the Sanctum provide shadowy illumination throughout the chamber. A character fluent in Draconic or making a DC 15 Decipher Script check recognizes the runes glorify the King of the South, praising his deeds and accomplishments through the ages.

Icy conditions: The room is coated with ice, and the floor is slippery. Characters walking on the ice must spend 2 squares of movement to enter a square covered by ice, and the DC for Balance and Tumble checks increases by +5. It only takes 5 points of fire-based damage to clear a square of the ice – however, all fire effects are dampened by the protective aura of the crystal armor.

The Crystal Armor: The magically enchanted crystal armor on the figure in the center of the altar radiates strong abjuration magic. It has been enchanted with a version of *resist energy (fire)*, providing its protection to everything within 30 feet of the shrine. This affects creatures (including the characters) and objects – effectively reducing any fire-based damage as outlined on the accompanying table. As the crystal armor is



damaged, the amount of protection it provides weakens. If completely destroyed, the crystal loses all of its magic properties.

Crystal Armor: 3 inches thick; hardness 8; hp 45; Break DC 30.

Armor Integrity	Protection	Disable Device DC
Perfect (45 hp)	Fire resistance 30	35
30-44 hp	Fire resistance 20	30
15-29 hp	Fire resistance 10	25
1-14 hp	Fire resistance 5	20
0 or fewer hp	Destroyed, inert	n/a

Portions of the crystal armor can be removed from the statue with a Disable Device check. The difficulty depends on the condition of the armor. A successful Disable Device check recovers enough to be used as a pair of bracers, which function as *bracers of fire resistance* offering an amount of protection based on the condition of the armor. Exceeding the listed DC by 10 or more indicates scavenging enough armor to fashion a second set. Once removed from the statue, the crystal retains its fire resistance properties, but only affects the wearer.

Lying In Wait: The two dragons at the altar and two of the gargoyles hewn into the ceiling are actually kostkorian demons. The kostkorian are under the effects of *silent image* illusions, giving them their draconic appearance. The kostkorian remain perfectly still, and characters need to make a DC 28 Spot check to notice something

amiss. If the Spot check succeeds, characters can attempt the DC 16 Will save necessary to disbelieve the illusions once they interact with the statues. Once a kostkorian attacks, the individual illusion is dispelled and it appears in its true demonic form.

Tactics: The two kostkorian on the floor by the altar itself wait until the characters are close enough to either charge or take full round attacks with only a 5-foot step. The other two kostkorian wait for the party to engage their fellow demons, then attempt to summon more ice demons while remaining invisible. Then they join the fray, targeting the most vulnerable individuals.

Unsubtle and brutish, kostkorian favor uncomplicated tactics that involve crushing their opponents with their fists or heavy bludgeoning weapons made of hardened ice. They are crafty enough to use simple tactics such as flanking, and soften up foes at a distance with their breath weapon or spell-like abilities when the opportunity presents itself. A kostkorian's natural attacks, as well as any weapon it wields, are considered chaotic and evil-aligned for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

The kostkorian do not pursue attackers beyond the protection radius of the crystal armor. They rely on ranged magic or breath weapon attacks against targets beyond the protective radius. The room temperature and icy conditions fulfill the kostkorian's requirements to take advantage of its ice mastery ability as long as it is attacking

from a space still coated with ice. The kostkorian fight to the death.

Kostkorian (Frost Demons) (4): CR 6; Medium Outsider (Chaotic, Cold, Extraplanar, Evil); HD 7d8+21; hp 58, 54, 50, 46; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (+1 Dex, +6 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +7; Grp +13; Atk Ice maul +13 melee (2d6+9 (16) plus 1d6 (3) cold) or slam +13 melee (1d8+9 (13) plus 2d6 cold (7)); Full Atk Ice maul +13/+8 melee (2d6+9 (16) plus 1d6 (3) cold) or slam +13/+8 (1d8+9 (13) plus 2d6 cold (7)); SA Breath weapon, chill, spell-like abilities, summon demon; SQ Cold mastery, DR 10/cold iron or good, darkvision 60 ft., immunities (cold, electricity, and poison), resistance to acid 10, spell resistance 14, vulnerability to fire; AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +7; Str 23, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 8, Wis 15, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Appraise -1 (+1 weapons), Climb +16, Craft (weaponsmithing) +9, Intimidate +11, Jump +16, Knowledge (nature) +1, Listen +12, Spot +12, Survival +12; Cleave, Improved Sunder, Power Attack.

Breath Weapon (Ex): 1/day, 15-ft. cone of frost, damage 3d6 (10) points of cold damage, DC 16 Reflex save for half damage.

Cold Mastery (Ex): A kostkorian gains a +1 bonus on attack and damage rolls when it is in an environment featuring sub-freezing temperatures (below 32 degrees Fahrenheit). It takes a -4 penalty on attack and damage rolls in environments above 50 degrees Fahrenheit. This is *not* factored into the stats above, as this can be altered easily by PCs.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will – *chill metal*, *dispel magic*, *ray of frost*, *teleport* (self plus 50 pounds of objects only). Caster level 7th.

Summon Demon (Sp): Once per day, a kostkorian can attempt to summon 1 kostkorian with a 35% chance of success. This ability is the equivalent of a 3rd-level spell.

Description: This tall, ill-shaped humanoid seems to be made entirely of ice. Its body is crude and angular, containing none of the soft contours of more attractive humanoid forms. Like its body, the creature's face is roughly formed, lacking a nose and with a wide, ugly slash of a mouth. Two tiny pits of inky black are set deep into the creature's head, from which the unmistakable glare of malevolent evil exudes in oppressive waves.

These demons are loyal to the Sunscratch-tainted Myrkjartan. When the dragon returned to the

Vault, Sunscratch asserted himself on Myrkjartan's mind and attempted to summon baleful fire demons to destroy this sanctuary. Trapped within the silver dragon's host body, however, his powerful magic summoned ice demons instead. Making the best of this summoning quirk, the dragon stationed the kostkorian here in the sanctum and shrouded them with a *silent image* spell to make them appear like the statues he had previously destroyed.

Activating the Southern Gearwalk: The gear labeled S is controlled by the shrine in this sanctuary. The southern gear is already rotating, since the frigid conditions of the room and ice crusted into the trench fulfill the altar's requirements. However, if the ice has been melted away, the gear stops rotating after 2d6 (7) minutes and will need to be reactivated.

To reactivate the shrine and get the gear rotating, the trench around the shrine must be properly activated with the draconic element tied to the King of the South – ice. To do this, the trench must be filled with the equivalent of one gallon of water or other liquid and frozen, or have at least 40 points of cold “damage” applied to it within 5 minutes. Unless the ice in the chamber was destroyed during the battle with the kostkorian demons, the sanctuary is cold enough that room temperature water poured into the circular trench on the floor will freeze in 15 minutes. Ice from the cavern entrance could also be brought in and packed into the trench. Once activated, the corresponding gear continues to rotate for four hours.

Scoring Suggestions: 750 points possible

50: See through the illusion shrouding the kostkorian

100: Determine the source/nature of the fire protection from aura

50: Destroy the crystal armor to negate the protection effect

150: Recover sufficient fragments of the crystal armor to fashion a pair of *bracers of fire resistance*

200: Reactivate the southern gearwalk (if necessary)

50/demon: Defeat the kostkorian (per demon)

Area 1-8 – Sanctum of the King of the East (EL 10)

When the party approaches the doors to this room, read the following. If this is the first sanctum the party has approached, give them Player Handout G. If the party has already encountered one of the sets of doors, the GM can tell the party the door is similar to the previous one encountered, except the dragons on this door are bronze and blue.

A wide set of bronze double doors blocks your way. The doors are each 10 feet wide and nearly 30 feet high. Etched into the bronze doors are two powerful dragons flying in a circle, each chasing the other's tail. The dragons' features are highlighted with lustrous, blue enamel. A heavy, bronze ring, nearly two feet in diameter, is set in the center of each door.

This is the entrance to the sanctum devoted to the King of the East, also known as the King of Lightning, embracing spontaneity, assertiveness, artistic expression, freedom, and unpredictability. The doors are neither locked nor trapped. However, each door weighs 500 pounds and the handles are positioned high enough to make it difficult to find leverage or purchase to easily pull them open. Left unattended, the doors close by themselves with a relative Strength of 20 to determine how much force they exert.

Once the doors to the sanctum of the King of the East have been opened, read the following aloud:

The heavy doors open with a loud groan, revealing a long, rectangular chamber. The chamber is 20 feet wide and extends 50 feet east before it ends in a beveled point. Runes carved in the stone floor pulse with a strong, yellow glow, flashing long, jagged shadows across the walls and ceiling.

A large, marble shrine sits at the end of the chamber. The shrine is fashioned as an enormous thundercloud. Two large, bronze lightning bolts stretch from the wall behind the shrine, touching the floor in front of the cloud. Mounted into the wall behind the cloud are three large, overlapping circles of polished crystal fixed with heavy, bronze fixtures. The center circle is 2 feet in diameter, the other two half that size.

All the seams between the stones of the room and along the braces on the door are filled with bronze, giving the room an odd, grid-like appearance.

This is the Sanctum to the King of the East, the shrine dedicated to the draconic element of electricity. The three stone circles are actually the resting place of a powerful will-o'-wisp that guards the sanctum. A narrow, circular trench, a three-inch-wide groove beveled three inches deep, surrounds the shrine. A DC 25 Spot check is needed to notice the groove. A Spot check result of 30 or higher also reveals the contour of the trench is fashioned like a gear or cog of some sort.

The glowing runes in the Sanctum provide shadowy illumination throughout the chamber. A character fluent in Draconic or making a DC 15 Decipher Script check recognizes the runes glorify the King of the East, praising his deeds and accomplishments through the ages.

A DC 25 Spot check reveals the circular trench is partially filled with a coil of pure bronze. Two segments along the northern perimeter are missing a foot-long section of bronze.

Completing the Circuit: Two things are required to complete the circuit and activate the Eastern gearwalk: the doors must be closed and the trench must be filled with conductive material. However, completing the circuit triggers the room's trap and guardian.

Closing the doors ensures the bronze "wiring" in the doors connect and help complete half the circuit. The gap in the trench must be filled with something conductive to complete that portion of the circuit. This can be accomplished with a metal weapon, a piece of metal armor, or scavenged metal from elsewhere in the complex.

Clever groups may complete the circuit in the trench and then try to launch a *lightning bolt* or other electrical charge into the room from the safety of the hall. This will only succeed if the timing is right, and someone has a readied action to shut the door as soon as the *lightning bolt* is cast – otherwise, the current fails to flow through the door and the chamber does not activate.

Once the two conditions to complete the circuit have been fulfilled, read the following aloud:

A loud pop of static buzzes in your ears, fol-

lowed by a faint, high-pitched whine. An odd smell fills your nostrils and the hair on the back of your neck and arms starts to rise. The bronze fittings integrated into the room start to glow, starting with the sections nearest the door and racing along the walls to the fixtures supporting the lightning bolts and the three polished crystals.

The crystals glow brightly blue, then green, then red – and separate from the wall! The three spheres overlap like bubbles, arcs of electricity racing across their surface. The electricity surges violently across its surface, sending out tiny bolts randomly to touch the bronze integrated throughout the room. Then, with one final burst of electricity – the jumble of spheres disappears!

The Electric Cage: Once the circuit is complete, the room becomes a “live wire” and has massive amounts of electricity surging through it. This has several effects on the room.

First, the door becomes locked shut with an effective Strength of 40. Opening the door breaks the circuit, but will not deactivate the guardian. However, it is possible for a character to re-route the circuit to bypass the doors – allowing the doors to open as normal while keeping the circuit intact. This takes 2d6 (7) rounds, and requires a DC 25 Disable Device check. If done while the circuit is live, the character suffers 2d6 (7) points of electrical damage (DC 18 Fort for half damage) per round.

Electrified stone doors: 18 inches thick; hardness 8; hp 270; Break DC 45; Coming into contact with the door with natural or metal weapons inflicts 2d6 (7) points of electrical damage, DC 18 Fort for half damage.

Secondly, the two large lightning bolts in the center of the shrine discharge bursts of electricity each round at Initiative speed 0. Each sculpture releases one charge per round, inflicting damage as shown below to the target closest to that sculpture. If two targets are equidistant, the damage is split evenly between both targets. A character in metal armor is considered 5 feet closer and suffers -2 to his Reflex saves against the electricity, as are characters holding a metal weapon of at least Medium size when determining the nearest target. This means a character in metal armor holding a Medium metal weapon is considered 10 feet closer to *each* sculpture, and

suffers a total penalty of -4 to Reflex saves against the effects.

Round	Electrical Damage	Reflex Save (For Half)
1	2d6 (7)	12
2	3d6 (10)	14
3	4d6 (14)	16
4	5d6 (17)	18
5+	6d6 (21)	20

Finally, any character coming into contact with the walls, doors, or lightning bolt structures with natural or metal weapons suffers 2d6 (7) points of electrical damage per round, but are allowed a DC 18 Fortitude save for half damage.

The lightning bolt sculptures can be disconnected from the circuit, disabling them completely without affecting the rest of the circuit. A character attempting to disarm this trap while the circuit is live suffers 2d6 (7) points of electrical damage per attempt (DC 18 Fort save half).

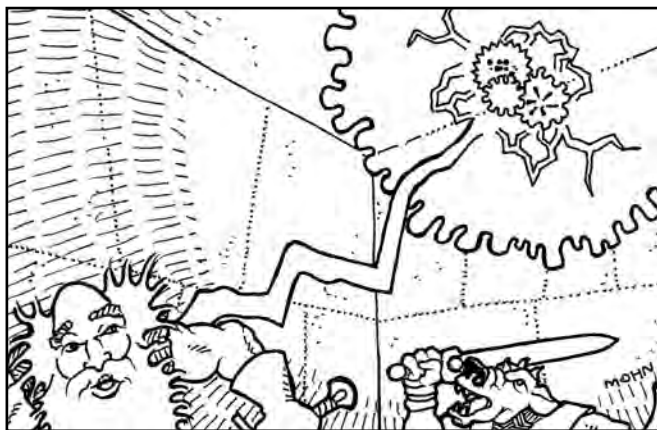
Electrical Circuit Trap: CR 8; magic device; event trigger (completing circuit); manual reset; special effect (as listed above); Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 28 (remove path to lightning bolts, cutting off from the circuit).

Tactics: The will-o'-wisp turns invisible as soon as it is released to size up the group and let them worry about the electrical trap. This will-o'-wisp is an exceptional member of its kind, and has developed minor sorcerous abilities. The wisp is a canny combatant and will do all in its power to stay out of the PCs' reach.

Once invisible, the will-o'-wisp casts *shield* and retreats to a corner of the ceiling. It relies on its high AC and innate spell resistance to foil ranged attacks and spells. Once positioned, the wisp casts *ray of enfeeblement* and *magic missile*, focusing on anyone attempting to deactivate the circuit trap and spellcasters first. It reserves *scorching ray* for any targets that appear to be resistant to electricity, or to take out weakened PCs.

The wisp turns invisible after casting, and repositions itself as necessary. If the electric current trap is active, the room is chaotic enough that it takes a DC 22 Spot check to notice the will-o'-wisp after it casts a spell, with a +2 circumstance bonus awarded to players specifically keeping an eye on the ceiling.

Only after it has impaired some of the PCs, or if they appear to be close to deactivating the electri-



cal circuit, will the will-o'-wisp enter melee combat. It uses Spring Attack to full effect, streaking down from the ceiling, shocking an opponent, and then retreating again. It continues this routine until it has slain or driven off the PCs.

If reduced to 15 or fewer hit points, the will-o'-wisp extinguishes its glow, effectively becoming invisible, and flees. It is likely that the wisp will escape the PCs, as its high rate of movement and natural invisibility make it very difficult to follow, in which case it may reappear later in the adventure to harass them.

Will-o'-wisp Sorcerer (Exceptional Will-o'-wisp Sor4): CR 9; Small Aberration (Air); HD 9d8+18 plus 4d4+8; hp 77; Init +14; Fly 50 ft (perfect); AC 30 (+1 size, +10 Dex, +9 deflection), touch 30, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +8; Grp -1; Atk/Full Atk Shock +19 melee touch (2d8 (9 electricity); SA Spells; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., immunity to magic, natural invisibility; AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref +14, Will +13; Str 1, Dex 31, Con 14, Int 16, Wis 16, Cha 18.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +20, Concentration +9, Diplomacy +11, Disguise +9 (+11 acting), Intimidate +11, Listen +13, Search +13, Spellcraft +10, Spot +13, Survival +8 (+10 following tracks); Blind-Fight, Dodge, Mobility, Improved Initiative, Spring Attack, Weapon Finesse^B.

Immunity to Magic (Ex): A will-o'-wisp is immune to most spells or spell-like abilities that allow spell resistance, except *magic missile* and *maze*.

Natural Invisibility (Ex): A startled or frightened will-o'-wisp can extinguish its glow, effectively becoming *invisible* as the spell.

Sorcerer Spells Known (6/7/4; save DC 14 + spell level): 0 – *detect magic*, *ghost sound*, *mage hand*, *ray of frost* (2 cold), *resistance*, *touch of fatigue*; 1st – *magic missile* (4 damage/missile, 2

missiles), *ray of enfeeblement* (+20 to hit, -5 Str penalty), *shield*; 2nd – *scorching ray* (+20 to hit, 16 fire).

Description: This small aberration is a coalescing combination of three small orbs of light that pulse angrily. Its spherical surfaces crackle with small bolts of white lightning. It hovers near the ceiling, well out of reach, producing a dissonant, ear-numbing chatter that sounds very much like mocking laughter.

The King of the East, always unpredictable and spontaneous, quickly decided to develop his shrine as a massive electrical cage. The will-o'-wisp was captured by the King of the East and forced to guard this chamber, which the Dragon King found highly amusing. The will-o'-wisp is an angry, vengeful creature, and delights in the torment of the PCs, but has no loyalty to the Dragon Kings and relishes the opportunity to finally be free of the Vault complex.

Activating the Eastern Gearwalk: The gear labeled E is controlled by the shrine in this sanctuary. To get the eastern gear rotating, the trench around the shrine must be properly activated with the draconic element tied to the King of the East – electricity. To do this, the gap in the trench must be filled with a conductive material to complete the circuit and at least 40 points of electricity “damage” applied to it within 5 minutes. Characters can also generate static electricity with metal and furs, or other appropriate materials. Characters struggling to find a source of electricity can attempt a DC 15 Intelligence check to get this idea. Once activated, the corresponding gear continues to rotate for four hours.

Scoring Suggestions: 750 points possible

- 50:** Discarding armor/weapons to lessen the impact of electricity
- 100:** Disabling the electric cage trap
- 100:** Rerouting the circuit around the door
- 200:** Defeating the will-o'-wisp
- 200:** Activating the eastern gearwalk
- 100:** Bonus to activate gearwalk without taking damage
- 200:** Allowing the will-o'-wisp to escape

Area 1-9 – A Secret Cache (EL 10)

Accessing this room requires nerves of steel and more than just a bit of luck. However, by timing the gear mechanism properly and riding inside the East gear to the bottom of its revolution, the gap in the gear passes quickly by a cavern leading to this area. Read the following to any character inside the East gear as it makes a full revolution:

The darkness of the gear gives way briefly to a soft, purple glow – there’s a tunnel leading from the cog opening into the depths of the mountain! You glimpse just enough to see patches of luminous fungus clinging to rough earthen walls. What secrets could lie down this mysterious path?

Accessing the Cavern: To move from the rotating East gear to the cavern entrance, a character must make a DC 10 Dexterity check. Failure indicates the character was unable to time his move and does not gain access to the cavern. Failure by 5 or more indicates the character misjudged the timing as above, but must succeed at a DC 20 Reflex save or suffer 6d6 (21) points of crushing damage from the massive gears.

Once inside the cavern, there is sufficient light for characters with low-light vision, but characters with standard vision are considered partially blinded in the dim light. A DC 15 Knowledge (nature) or Survival check reveals that the luminous, purple fungus is harmless.

A separate DC 15 Knowledge (nature) or Survival check reveals that this cavern is colder than you’d expect based on its depth underground. A DC 12 Craft (stoneworking) or Knowledge (architecture or dungeoneering) indicates the tunnel was roughly fashioned centuries ago with crude tools or possibly by hand.

The Secret: This cavern leads to a small underground cache of treasures set aside by the original builders of the vault – a tribe of lizardfolk indentured into service of the Dragon Kings. The

lizardfolk secretly carved out this tunnel and stored things they had stolen over the years. But they were never able to enjoy their stolen loot.

One of the chests they had brought down which they thought was filled with valuables actually held the dormant remains of a dangerous frost shambler – a foul-smelling plant creature that drains body heat from living creatures. Once the chest was opened, the frost shambler drained every drop of body heat from the lizardfolk, to the point that the cold-blooded creatures could not survive. The withered remains of four lizardfolk workers remain, but their spirits live on as wraiths, looking to protect this cache from interlopers.

Once a character has reached the room at the end of the tunnel, read the following aloud:

A roughly square room, 20 feet to a side, opens ahead of you. The walls and ceiling are uneven, but the dirt floor is relatively smooth and packed hard as stone. A thick layer of the purple fungus clogs the southwest corner of the room. Several crude cots and molding blankets line the northern wall. Three large chests and several barrels are stacked along the eastern wall. The room is rather cold, and you can see the plume of your frosty breath when you exhale.

The frost shambler, dormant again after years of hunger, lies beneath the carpet of purple fungus in the southwest corner. The withered lizardfolk corpses are bundled beneath their heavy blankets in the cots, where they died in their sleep. The wraiths lie merged with their corpses and are impossible to detect through normal means.

A DC 25 Search of the fungus in the southwest reveals a thick tangle of roots and frozen vegetation below the phosphorescent surface, which appears to be the source of the chill in the air.

Warming Up the Frost Shambler: As soon as any heat source (including any living creature) comes within 30 feet of the frost shambler, it slowly starts warming up. It requires 25 “units” of heat before it is stirred from its hibernation. Once

Partially Blinded

Partially Blinded: The character has great difficulty seeing. He loses his Dexterity bonus to AC (if any), moves at half speed, and takes a –2 penalty on Search and Spot checks and on most Strength- and Dexterity-based skill checks. All opponents are considered to have partial concealment (20% miss chance) to the partially blinded character.

it has absorbed enough heat, it emerges from the fungus at full health. This means the frost shambler may remain inert even after the wraiths have been dealt with, but more likely will emerge during combat to join the fray.

Heat source	Units of heat
Tiny creature	1/round
Small creature	2/round
Medium creature	3/round
Large creature	5/round
Torch	2/round
Fire spell	Equal to spell damage

Heat track: Use the boxes below to track the amount of heat the frost shambler has absorbed. Once the last box has been marked off, the frost shambler wakes up hungry and attacks!

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Tactics: The wraiths wait until characters start to split up to explore the room, and then rise from the withered corpses of the lizardfolk to strike. Each PC within 10 feet of a wraith needs to make a DC 25 Spot check or is surprised during the first round of combat and cannot act. The wraiths focus on characters disturbing their bodies or the treasure. They shift attention to PCs that can turn undead once any turning attempts have been made. The lizardfolk wraiths fight until destroyed.

Once the frost shambler emerges from hibernation, it lashes out at the closest PC, attempting to pull him into an icy hug and drain his heat as quickly as possible. Once hit with a fire-based attack or spell, a DC 18 Knowledge (nature) check reveals the frost shambler's immunity to fire. If the result is 23 or higher, the check also reveals fire attacks give the frost shambler temporary hit points instead of inflicting damage. The frost shambler attacks the remaining PCs until either it or they are killed, flailing about in the maddened throes of desperate hunger.

Lizardfolk Wraiths (4): CR 5; Medium Undead (Incorporeal); HD 5d12; hp 46, 42, 38, 34; Init +7; Spd Fly 60 ft. (good); AC 16 (+3 Dex, +3 deflection), touch 16, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +2; Grp –; Atk Incorporeal touch +5 melee (1d4 (2) plus 1d6 (3) Constitution drain); Full Atk Incorporeal touch +5 melee (1d4 (2) plus 1d6 (3) Constitution drain); SA Constitution drain, create spawn; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., daylight powerlessness, incorporeal traits, +2 turn resistance, undead traits,

unnatural aura; AL LE; SV Fort +1, Ref +4, Will +6; Str –, Dex 16, Con –, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Diplomacy +7, Hide +11, Intimidate +11, Listen +12, Search +10, Sense Motive +8, Spot +12, Survival +2 (+4 following tracks); Alertness^B, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative.

Constitution Drain (Su): Living creatures hit by a wraith's incorporeal touch attack must succeed on a DC 15 Fortitude save or take 1d6 (3) points of Constitution drain. The save DC is Charisma-based. On each such successful attack, the wraith gains 5 temporary hit points.

Create Spawn (Su): Any humanoid slain by a wraith becomes a wraith in 1d4 (2) rounds. Its body remains intact and inanimate, but its spirit is torn free from its corpse and transformed. Spawn are under the command of the wraith that created them and remain enslaved until its death. They do not possess any of the abilities they had in life.

Daylight Powerlessness (Ex): Wraiths are utterly powerless in natural sunlight (not merely a daylight spell) and flee from it.

Unnatural Aura (Su): Animals, whether wild or domesticated, can sense the unnatural presence of a wraith at a distance of 30 feet. They will not willingly approach nearer than that and panic if forced to do so; they remain panicked as long as they are within that range.

Frost Shambler (Icy Shambling Mound): CR 7; Large Elemental (Augmented Plant, Cold, Extraplanar, Water); HD 8d8+40; hp 76; Init –1; Spd 20 ft., swim 20 ft.; AC 19 (–1 size, –1 Dex, +11 natural), touch 8, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +6; Grp +15; Atk Slam +11 melee (3d6+5 (15) plus 1d6 (3) cold); Full Atk 2 slams +11 melee (3d6+5 (15) plus 1d6 (3) cold); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA Cold aura, constrict 2d6+7 (14) and 1d6 (3) cold, exude ice, icy touch, improved grab; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., ice mastery, immunity to fire, low-light vision, plant traits, resistance to cold 15, sonic vulnerability; AL N; SV Fort +11, Ref +1, Will +2; Str 21, Dex 8, Con 21, Int 7, Wis 10, Cha 9.

Skills and Feats: Balance +4, Climb +10, Hide +3 (+11 in areas of ice/snow), Listen +8, Move Silently +6; Improved Natural Attack (slam), Power Attack, Weapon Focus (slam).

Cold Aura (Ex): A frost shambler emits an aura of cold that can wound nearby creatures. Any creature within 10 ft. of it must make a DC 19 Fortitude save or take 2d6 (7) points of cold dam-

age per round it remains within range. Those saving successfully take only half damage (3). The save is Constitution-based.

Constrict (Ex): A frost shambler deals 2d6+7 (14) points of damage plus an additional 2d6 (7) points of cold damage with a successful grapple check. Those grappled must make a saving throw each round to avoid the paralyzation effect of the frost shambler's icy touch ability.

Exude Ice (Ex): At will as a full-round action, a frost shambler can exude a circle of slippery ice in a 20-foot-diameter spread centered on its body. The ice remains in the affected area, melting away as normal for the ambient temperature. Creatures walking on the ice must spend two squares of movement to enter any square covered by it. The DC for any Balance, Climb, or Tumble check made in the area increases by +5.

Icy Touch (Ex): The frost shambler's slam attacks (and successful grapple checks made during its turn) deal an additional 1d6 (3) points of cold damage. Any creature that makes a successful touch attack against it also takes 1d6 (3) points of cold damage. In addition, any creature damaged by the frost shambler's icy touch must make a DC 19 Fortitude save or become paralyzed for 1d4 (2) rounds.

Ice Mastery (Ex): A frost shambler receives a +1 morale bonus on attack and damage rolls if its opponent is touching ice. In addition, it never slips or slides on natural or supernatural ice unless it wishes, and it can always climb ice or icy surfaces as if affected by a *spider climb* spell.

Immunity to Fire (Ex): Frost shamblers take no damage from fire. Instead, any fire attack used against a frost shambler grants it a number of temporary hit points equal to the damage that would have been dealt by the fire attack. The frost shambler loses these points at the rate of 1 per minute.

Aftermath: There is a veritable horde of treasure among the chests and barrels. However, carefully maneuvering these treasures back through the gearwalk presents another obstacle. Trying to move the large chests or barrels onto the gearwalk increases each corresponding Dexterity check by +2.

A DC 15 Search of the lizardfolk remains reveals a silver torc fixed about the neck of each body, with Draconic runes marking them as indentured servants. The torcs are worth 200 gp each.

Two of the chests have already been busted

open with a nearby pick. A third remains locked, its surface scratched and marred by blows from the pick. The fourth is nothing but splinters, smashed apart by the frost shambler it once contained.

Chest 1: 200 pp, 2,000 gp, 4 exquisite rubies (500 gp each), 4 exquisite sapphires (500 gp each), 4 exquisite emeralds (500 gp each), 4 exquisite pieces of topaz (500 gp each), 4 large necklaces (gold, silver, bronze, copper – 400 gp each) and 1 exquisite silver and gold scepter which is a *rod of splendor*. A DC 20 Search of the bottom of the chest reveals a secret panel that slides out to reveal a velvet-lined drawer holding 6 *potions of cure light wounds* and 1 *potion of haste*. The liquid potions are currently frozen solid and must be thawed out before they can be consumed.

Chest 2: All the weapons and armor in this chest are of Medium size and will not adjust their size to accommodate other creatures; these items were originally intended for the Medium-size servants of the Dragon Kings. The chest contains the following: +2 *dagger of shock*, +1 *falchion of acid burst*, +1 *heavy steel shield of spell resistance* (15), +1 *chainmail of invulnerability*, and *gauntlets of ogre power*.

Chest 3: This chest is locked and requires a DC 22 Open Lock check. Wrapped inside rich, purple fabric is a sinuous dragon sculpture fashioned from silver with white enamel highlights. It stands nearly 3 feet long and weighs 40 pounds. This is one of the four Dragon Trumpets.

Wooden Chest: 3 inches thick; hardness 5; 30 hp; Break DC 28.

Dragon Choir Clue – The Silver Trumpet: A DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) or Bardic Knowledge check reveals the sculpture represents an idealized dragon which incorporates features of both silver and white dragons, resulting in a perfect combination of the two. A DC 30 Spot or Search check reveals a small hole in the tip of the dragon's tail and another in its mouth. It also reveals minute Draconic runes etched within the delicate dragon scales, which read:

The Blood of True Dragons Flows Strong

Share Secrets to Those Who Hear Its Song

Blowing into the dragon tail produces a single clear note that comes from the dragon's mouth. A



DC 15 Perform (horn) or Bardic Knowledge check indicates these notes are perfect. If more than one Dragon Trumpet has been located, the character also knows these notes would work in harmony with each other, increasing the resonance and volume of the resulting notes.

Scoring Suggestions: 750 points possible

- 100:** Locate the hidden passage
- 100:** Explore room at end of passage
- 25/wraith:** Defeat lizardfolk wraiths
- 150:** Defeat frost shambler
- 50:** Defeat all wraiths and leave before waking up the frost shambler (mutually exclusive from above)
- 300:** Recover silver dragon trumpet
- 100:** Additional penalty per character turned into a wraith

Area 1-10 – Entrance to the Valley (EL 11)

Once all the gears have been activated, the party will have access to area 1-10 and the Valley of the Fallen beyond. Navigating through the gearwalk is explained fully in area 1-4c. Once the party has passed through the gearwalk and actually enters the cavern proper, read the following:

A wide, natural cavern stretches before you, yawning wider and wider as it opens to the face of the valley. A thick layer of ice clings to the walls and ceiling. Fat droplets of water occasionally drip from the large icicles dangling overhead. Chunks of cracked and melting ice cover the floor of the tunnel, where it apparently broke free from the northmost wheel of the gearwalk.

But your breath catches as you spy the sprawling majesty of the Valley of the Fallen just a few hundred feet away! You've made your way through the Outer Holdings and are one step closer to your final destination, the Vault of the Dragon Kings itself.

Characters may let their guard down, thinking they've completed the first leg of their journey. However, there is a terrible surprise waiting for them. A DC 25 Spot check reveals that the ice frozen to the ceiling just outside the gearwalk is a single massive block, with a long fracture splitting its surface. It is actually the "cocoon" for a primordial remorhaz.

With magic and his host body's icy breath, Sunscratch lured the remorhaz from a tunnel deep within the Valley and froze it above the entrance to the Valley. Breaking through the ice attached to the North cog has weakened the cocoon, waking the remorhaz from its nap.

Tactics: Enraged with hunger and its long imprisonment, this primordial remorhaz follows no battle plan other than to devour everything in its path. It fires up its heat ability immediately, quickly melting away the remaining ice around its cocoon. It then falls upon the party in a frenzy of snapping jaws, attempting to grab and swallow as many foes as it can. It is not deterred by anything short of its own annihilation and gives chase to fleeing opponents, a fact that could be used to the PCs' advantage.

Primordial Remorhaz (Advanced Savage Remorhaz): CR 11; Gargantuan Magical Beast; HD 15d10+120; hp 202; Init +2; Spd 40 ft., burrow 30 ft.; AC 24 (-4 size, +2 Dex, +16 natural), touch 8, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +15; Grp +40; Atk/Full Atk Bite +24 melee (6d8+19 (46)); Space/Reach 20 ft./15 ft.; SA Improved grab, swallow whole; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., heat, low-light vision, scent, tremorsense 60 ft; AL N; SV Fort +17, Ref +11, Will +9; Str 36, Dex 15, Con 27, Int 3, Wis 14, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Climb +19, Listen +12, Spot +8; Alertness^B, Awesome Blow, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Improved Bull Rush, Iron Will, Power Attack.

Swallow Whole (Ex): When a primordial remorhaz begins its turn with a grappled opponent in its mouth, it can swallow that opponent with a successful grapple check. Once inside, the opponent takes 3d8+19 (32) points of bludgeoning damage plus 8d6 (28) points of fire damage per round from the primordial remorhaz's gizzard. A swallowed creature can cut its way out by using a light slashing or piercing weapon to deal 25 points of damage to the gizzard (AC 18). Once the creature exits, muscular action closes the hole; another swallowed opponent must cut its own way out. A primordial remorhaz's interior can hold 2 Huge, 4 Large, 8 Medium, 16 Small, 32 Tiny, 128 Diminutive, or 512 Fine or smaller opponents.

Heat (Ex): When enraged, a primordial remorhaz generates heat so intense that anything touching its body takes 8d6 (28) points of fire damage. Creatures striking a primordial remorhaz with natural attacks or unarmed attacks are subject to this damage, but creatures striking with melee weapons do not take damage from the remorhaz's heat. This heat can melt or

char weapons; any weapon that strikes a primordial remorhaz is allowed a DC 25 Fortitude save to avoid destruction.

Aftermath: If the remorhaz is killed while inside the gearwalk, the powerful mechanism eventually breaks down – it simply cannot move through the massive bulk of the remorhaz. Once the remorhaz's body has been removed, all gears occupied by the remorhaz will be permanently locked open. Removing the dead remorhaz from the gearwalk is a long and arduous task; all characters involved must make a DC 20 Fortitude save or become fatigued from exertion.

A party curious enough to dissect the remorhaz finds the remains of a previous meal partially digested inside its massive stomach. Among the chunks of flesh and strong digestive acids are a *+1 magical beast bane warhammer*, *+1 full plate of improved fire resistance*, and a *+1 ring of protection*.

This ends the first round of the tournament.

Scoring Suggestions: 950 points possible

500: Defeat the primordial remorhaz

200: Lure the remorhaz back into the gearwalk

100: Take tactical advantage of the gearwalk for cover/maneuverability

50: Notice the odd nature of the ice before the remorhaz attacks

100: Find the treasure inside the remorhaz

-50/PC: Getting swallowed whole

Using the Gearwalk

Using the Gearwalk: Parties may wish to retreat through the gearwalk for more maneuvering room. The remorhaz is frenzied and stupid enough to follow, heedless to the dangers. The remorhaz automatically fails any required Dexterity checks and becomes squeezed when entering the gearwalk. It suffers 6d6 (21) points of crushing damage per round for each active gear it is trying to move through. If the remorhaz takes any damage from the gears after being reduced to fewer than 100 hit points, it will pull its bulk back out of the gearwalk and wait in the tunnel.

Firing Through the Gearwalk: Ranged combatants may wish to time their attacks with the rotation of the gears and fire through one or more rotating cogs. To do so, they must use a readied action and act on Initiative 0. Each rotating cog between the attacker and the target provides a cumulative +4 cover bonus to AC. Ammunition missing its target through the gearwalk is automatically destroyed.

Vault of the Dragon Kings Round 2: Valley of the Fallen

The bowl of the valley lies 40 feet below the cavern leading from area 1-10. The gentle slope is easy enough to navigate and characters can move freely at their normal rate. Running or charging along the sloping walls of the valley, however, requires a DC 10 Balance check to avoid falling prone.

Lighting: The valley benefits from natural sunlight and all the areas outside are well lit. The indoor locations have illumination included in the individual area descriptions.

The Dragon Choir: Hidden throughout the different levels of this adventure are the four pieces of a mysterious dragon relic: the dragon choir. A single dragon's voice is a magical thing – it can invoke magic, breath fire or lightning, create fear, or calm nerves. Combining the voices of many dragons is a powerful source of ancient magic lore.

The Dragon Kings crafted four peerless dragon trumpets, each one producing a perfect note, resonating with the power and majesty of a particular dragon. Collecting all four dragon trumpets and using them in certain areas will have some interesting results. Two of the trumpets are hidden on level two, in areas 2-1 and 2-3.

Scoring Bonus – Exploration: Teams earn bonus points for the number of rooms they explore on each level. A room is considered “explored” if the room has been entered by one or more party members and searched or the creatures/traps encountered (regardless of whether or not the encounter was overcome). Simply walking into a room and turning around again does not qualify. Consult the table below to determine how many points the team earns each round. These are not cumulative awards.

Rooms Explored	Bonus Points
1-3	0
4	200
5	400
6	600
7	800

Hewn stone walls: 5 ft. thick; hardness 8; hp 900; Break DC 65; Climb DC 22.

Worked stone doors: 1 ft. thick; hardness 8; hp 180; Break DC 40; Climb DC 20.

High Altitude Reminder

Don't forget the dangers the high altitude present to the party. Before running this round, you should skim *The Perils of High Altitude* on page 8.

Valley of the Fallen Overview

When the party is ready to begin the second round of the adventure, give them Player Handout H and read the following:

You allow yourselves a brief moment to catch your breath and soak in the details of the wondrous valley sprawling before you. The flattest portion of the valley is an oval lying at the bottom of a deep bowl, stretching more than 150 feet north to south, and roughly 100 feet east to west. The slope gradually becomes steeper, until it meets back with the sheer cliff surfaces of the mountainside ringing the valley. Several structures catch your eye amid the pockets of frozen grass and light frost blanketing the valley.

A massive, marble pool lies in the very center of the valley's floor. It must be more than 50 feet wide and nearly 100 feet long, the whiteness of the stone a stark contrast to the brown floor of the frozen valley.

Looking down the valley to the northwest, you see what appears to be a graveyard of some sort; a large number of headstones inside an area ringed by sharp, metal spikes. In the middle of the ring is a large, stone dragon statue with its wings spread.

Further north, beyond the graveyard, is a dark cavern entrance 30 feet wide. The entrance is bordered with large tiles that appear to have runes carved into them, but you're too far away to make anything out.

Directly to the northeast, almost opposite the graveyard, a second large cavern entrance is hewn into the mountainside, 30 feet wide and arching as high. Stones along the top of the entrance have been set to look like a set of dragon's wings.

Beyond this cave entrance, northeast of the marble pool, the bone-white gleam of an enormous dragon skeleton beckons. A wide, stone platform sits nearby, and the light glints of something metal near the skeleton.

Finally, on the opposite end of the valley, a huge arch marks a cavernous hall carved into the far side of the mountain. The arch is more than 50 feet wide and nearly as tall. Outstretched dragon wings fashioned

from metal embrace the archway, and a massive dragon head peers down into the valley from its perch at the top of the arch. The style and structure are similar to the arch adorning the gearwalk in the Outer Holdings.

The party is free to explore the Valley in any order they choose. However, if the party spends too much time dawdling, dragging their feet, or trying to explore areas off the beaten path, the GM should call for a High Altitude check to avoid fatigue. Remember, each consecutive High Altitude check increases the DC for the Fortitude save by +1.

Areas of the Map

Area 2-1 – The Boneyard (EL 11)

When the party approaches this area for a closer look, give them Player Handout I and read the following:

This sprawling graveyard is built along a slightly steeper slope than the other points of interest around the valley. Massive, black iron spikes, each standing more than 15 feet high, are mounted in the ground every few feet. The spikes form an irregular curve, holding the graves in a cold embrace. A black iron gate leads into the graveyard at the ends along the eastern edge.

Scores of headstones, perhaps hundreds, stand in grim silence within the ring of blackened steel. You can only imagine the intricate carvings and exquisite workmanship these headstones once bore, but their faces are now cracked. Dirt and weeds cling to the stones, and bits of rubble from crumbling headstones litter the area.

In the center of the graveyard is a great dragon statue, fashioned from massive stone blocks. Its large wings and craned neck cast long shadows over the headstones.

At first this might appear to be a graveyard for dragons, but the graves are too small. This is actually the resting place for the servants of the dragons who earned honor and respect among the Dragon Kings and their charges. A DC 20 Spot check reveals that the vast majority of graves are fashioned to hold Medium or Large creatures.

Digging Up Secrets: Characters are free to explore the graves. A character can read the weathered engravings on the headstones with a

DC 18 Decipher Script check, with a +2 synergy bonus if they speak Draconic. Most of the engravings merely have a name and profession listed for a given vassal or servant, but for each headstone examined, there is a cumulative 10% chance of finding one of interest.

Roll on the following table to determine which notable grave is discovered. If you re-roll the same result, go to the next result on the table (or wrap around from result 6 to result 1). A DC 20 Knowledge (history) or Bardic Knowledge check reveals the background information included in each listing. Characters receive a +4 circumstance bonus to this check for any of these individuals they research in area 2-4, the Halls of History.

Aside from the noteworthy graves listed below, there are myriad other headstones. Some of the graves mark the burial site of those of lesser importance. The GM should feel free to create some additional names of bodies lying in the boneyard, perhaps tying in names from the group's past or background. Alternatively, the GM can use the following names to present red herrings to the party: Fenrian Arcaster, Teacher of Secrets; Garrack Stonebrow, The Runewarden; Icarian Lotro, Shadow Weaver; Kimmet Harcove the Crystal Craftsman; Murlo Stormwarden, Master of Revels; Ronick the Green, Herbalist, Healer.

Entry 4 is marked as the tournament result, indicating which grave parties in the tournament will dig up first. If a party chooses to continue digging during the tournament, simply go to the next headstone on the list.

1d6 Information

- 1 *Valiant Thelias – Faithful Servant, Loyal Follower, Friend. Died in service of his king during the great rebellion.*

This is the grave holding the mortal remains of the squire for the King of the North. Thelias is now the spectral gravewarden. A DC 15 Heal check of the skeletal remains reveals it was a Large humanoid with some minor spinal deformities.

- 2 *Azasha Ynnarctura – Sage, Scholar. Strength beyond his Stature. May the life beyond bring knowledge.*

This is the grave of the former Keeper of the Ways, a kobold and distant relative of Ynnen, the tournament's kobold rogue/ranger pre-gen-

erated character. A DC 12 Heal check of the skeletal remains reveals it was a Small reptilian humanoid. Among the bones are a *headband of intellect* +2 and a *ring of protection* +2.

- 3 *Master Murkand – Craftsman beyond peer. Artisan without equal. Master of Traps.*

This is the grave for the lizardfolk craftsman who designed the traps throughout the Vault and integrated the *detect non-dragonblooded* failsafes. DC 12 Heal check of the skeletal remains reveals it was a Medium reptilian humanoid.

- 4 [Tournament Result] *Vestus Aundorill – Wordsmith, Songsmith, Harpsmith. The Vault is sadly quiet without your sweet music.*

This is the grave of the lizardfolk bard who helped design and fashion the Dragon Trumpets and showed the Kings how to use them together in the Dragon Choir. A DC 12 Heal check of the skeletal remains reveals it was a Medium reptilian humanoid. Buried alongside the bones is a large, wooden box, lined with incredibly well-preserved satin. Inside the box is the Golden Dragon Trumpet.

- 5 *Jarl Thannik Rogash – Engineer and Overseer. The Vault could not have been completed without your dedication and drive.*

This is the grave of a half-dragon dwarven architect who designed the inner workings of the gearwalk and the Vault itself. A DC 12 Heal check of the skeletal remains reveals it was a Medium, stocky humanoid with draconic features.

- 6 *Suvo Thunderblood – Staunch Defender, Fearsome Warrior. The Vault was forever safe in your great claws.*

This is the grave of the former Castellan, a half-dragon ettin with one blue head and one silver head. A DC 12 Heal check of the skeletal remains reveals it was a Large, two-headed humanoid with some reptilian features. Among the remains are a Large +1 *flaming burst*/+1 *shocking burst* dire flail and a *ring of regeneration*.

Skullduggery: Any party despicable enough (or creative enough) to consider digging up any of the graves will only find something of interest in the graves of 2, 4, and 6, as indicated in the list. Digging up a grave is grueling work, and each

grave plundered requires a High Altitude check. The players need to make a Fortitude save (base DC 15, +1 per previous check this round) or become fatigued.

Dragon Choir Clue – The Gold Trumpet: A DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) or Bardic Knowledge check reveals the sculpture represents an idealized dragon which incorporates features of both gold and red dragons, resulting in a perfect combination of the two. A DC 30 Spot or Search check reveals a small hole in the tip of the dragon's tail and another in its mouth. It also reveals minute Draconic runes etched within the delicate dragon scales, which read:

The Blood of True Dragons Flows Strong

Bring Wisdom to Those Who Hear Its Song

Blowing into the dragon tail produces a single clear note that comes from the dragon's mouth. A DC 15 Perform (horn) or Bardic Knowledge check indicates that these notes are perfect. If more than one Dragon Trumpet has been located, the character also knows these notes would work in harmony with each other, increasing the resonance and volume of the resulting notes.

Accessing the Reliquary: A DC 22 Search of the dragon in the center of the graveyard reveals the outline of a wide, stone door fashioned within the great belly scales. There is no obvious handle. To open the door, the top scale on the belly, 20 feet overhead, must be pressed. Someone examining the top portion of the door closely can discover the mechanism by making a DC 20 Disable Device check. When the top scale is pressed, the door slides apart to reveal the reliquary. Manipulating the stonework, wings, belly, or other features near the door triggers a trap.

Crushing Stone Wings: CR 6; mechanical; action trigger (manipulate mechanism incorrectly); automatic reset; Atk crushing wings +18 melee (8d6 (28)); multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft.-by-10-ft. area in front of door); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 16 (jam wing mechanisms).

Once the door to the reliquary has been opened, read the following aloud:

The wide, stone bands along the dragon's belly slide noiselessly aside, revealing an inky black chamber. Thick shadows shroud the contents of the room, and the light from

the valley barely penetrates the murk. The floor appears to be one large mosaic depicting a great dragon head.

The chamber has been enchanted with a permanent *darkness* spell for the comfort of its spectral gravewarden. The walls are lined with shelves containing bones from powerful dragons throughout the Vault's long and storied history.

The floor of the room is trapped with a *black tentacles* spell. It is activated by a command word spoken by the gravewarden, and can be deactivated with the help of a clue discovered in the Castellan's guardhouse back in area 1-4b. The tentacles from the trap can sprout anywhere within the dragon head mosaic, as indicated on the map.

Tactics: If the party triggers the dragon wing trap leading into the reliquary, Thelias is prepared for battle – someone tripping the trap obviously does not belong in the reliquary. In this case, Thelias casts the following spells in preparation of battle: *desecrate*, *shield of faith*, and *divine favor*. He engages the PCs with his level draining touch, bolstering this nasty ability with liberal use of spontaneously cast *inflict wounds* spells.

Thelias targets spellcasters (especially good-aligned clerics) first, hoping to remove them from the conflict or seriously weaken their abilities. He uses his spells mostly to confuse and confound his opponents, relying on his touch attack to inflict direct damage. If the battle turns against Thelias or he is turned, he will pass into the floor and flee to area 2-7, hoping to stand and fight with the King of the North as he did in life.

For tournament results, Thelias' various *inflict wounds* spells deal damage as follows: *inflict light wounds* (9), *inflict moderate wounds* (17), *inflict serious wounds* (21), and *inflict critical wounds* (26). Please note that as an undead creature, Thelias can use these *inflict wounds* spells to heal himself, if required.

Thelias, Half-Giant (Fire) Spectre Cleric 8: CR 13; Large Undead (Augmented Giant, Incorporeal); HD 15d12; hp 97; Init +7; Spd 50 ft., fly 90 ft. (perfect); AC 14 (+3 Dex, +1 deflection), touch 14, flat-footed 11; Base Atk +9; Grp –; Atk Incorporeal touch +12 melee (2d6 (7) plus energy drain); Full Atk Incorporeal touch +12/+7 melee (2d6 (7) plus energy drain); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA Create spawn, energy drain, spells; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., fire resistance 10, incorporeal traits, rebuke undead, sunlight powerless-

ness, +2 turn resistance, undead traits, unnatural aura; AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +16; Str –, Dex 17, Con –, Int 17, Wis 21, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +3 (+5 armor), Concentration +7, Craft +10 (armorer), Diplomacy +8, Heal +14, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (history) +10, Knowledge (religion) +12, Listen +9, Search +7, Spellcraft +12, Spot +9; Alertness, Blind-Fight, Empower Spell, Eschew Materials, Improved Initiative, Improved Turning.

Create Spawn (Su): Any humanoid slain by Thelias becomes a spectre in 1d4 (2) rounds. Spawn are under Thelias' command and remain enslaved until his death. They do not possess any of the abilities they had in life.

Energy Drain (Su): Living creatures hit by Thelias' incorporeal touch attack gain two negative levels. Removing a negative level requires a DC 14 Fortitude save. The save DC is Charisma-based. For each such negative level bestowed, Thelias gains 5 temporary hit points.

Sunlight Powerlessness (Ex): Thelias is powerless in natural sunlight (not merely a *daylight* spell) and flees from it. If Thelias is caught in sunlight, he cannot attack and can take only a single move or attack action in a round.

Unnatural Aura (Su): Any creature of the animal type within 30 feet of Thelias automatically becomes panicked and remains so until the distance between it and Thelias is at least 30 feet.

Divine Spells: (6/6+1/4+1/4+1/3+1, DC 15 + spell level, Domains: Evil, Fire) 0–*detect magic, guidance, inflict minor wounds* (x2), *resistance, virtue*; 1st–*bane, burning hands**, *death watch, divine favor, doom, protection from good, shield of faith*; 2nd–*darkness, death knell, desecrate**, *hold person, silence*; 3rd–*animate dead, bestow curse, dispel magic, prayer, resist energy**; 4th–*poison* (DC 19 Fort, 1d10 (5) Con/1d10 (5) Con), *spell immunity, summon monster IV, wall of fire**. *Domain spells

Description: The baleful apparition of a massive, flame-haired man shimmers before you, its features twisted into a grimace of rage and anger. The spectre's body is stooped, his limbs and back twisted in deformity. Eyes of inky blackness, endless pools of wrath and hatred, stare at you from the apparition's unholy visage. Insubstantial and nearly transparent, the apparition glides toward you, filling the air with the sibilant muttering of a madman – or a maddened spellcaster bent on wreaking havoc.

Thelias was once the squire of the King of the North. Thelias stood alongside the great fire giant

and Kreeaasi the flame paragon (from area 1-6) in battle, aiding them with the might of his fiery deity. After his death during the great rebellion, Thelias was reduced to his present unliving state, but he still retains the clerical powers he held in life, a boon granted him by the gods for a life of service to one of their favored children, the King of the North.

Black Tentacles Trap: CR 7; magic device; manual trigger (command word, *Keyalkash*, “intruder” in Draconic); manual deactivate (command word, *Vurtali*, “sanctuary” in Draconic); no reset; spell effect (*black tentacles*, 7th-level wizard, 1d4+7 (9) tentacles, Atk Tentacle +7 melee (1d6+4 (7))); multiple targets (up to six tentacles per target in each of two adjacent 5-ft. squares); Search DC 34 (DC 29 if *darkness* is countered); Disable Device DC 29 (remove key pieces of mosaic). Note: the trap makes no distinction between dragonblooded or non-dragonblooded targets. A clue to the command word needed to deactivate the trap can be found in the Castellan’s guardhouse, in area 1-4b.

Aftermath: A Large +2 *heavy steel shield of arrow deflection* is mounted on the wall opposite the door; it is the ceremonial shield of the King of the East. The shield was placed here after the King of the East’s death, symbolizing the Dragon Kings’ commitment to watch over and protect the dragons and their vassals, even in death.

The different bones are worth a small fortune to curio collectors or wizards. The bones vary greatly in size and weight, but more than 200 specimens are available. A random bone will be worth 2d10 x 100 (1,100) gp and weigh 2d20 (21) pounds.

Scoring Suggestions: 1,000 points possible

25/grave: Per clue/identity discovered from any of the six key graves (100 pts max)

100: Avoid the stone door trap

100: Finding a way around the *black tentacle* trap (disable, discern command word, circumvent)

200: Defeat the gravewarden

300: Recover the Gold Dragon Trumpet

200: Recover the King of the East’s ceremonial shield

Area 2-2 – The Drakery (EL 11)

When the party approaches the cave for a closer look, read the following aloud:

As you approach the cavern, it becomes easier to examine the wide dragon wings hewn into the stone above the entrance. Upon closer inspection, the detail in the stonework is amazing. The wings are actually comprised of hundreds of smaller sculptures – a thick mass of sinuous dragons squirming and clawing over each other. Bits of broken stone and crumbling debris ring the entrance. The dim glimmer of shifting light beckons from deeper within the cave.

This is the Drakery, where young dragons were hatched and raised. The remains of scores of dragon eggs lie petrified and broken throughout the immense cavern. The crystalline structure of the eggs reflects and increases the chamber’s ambient light (provided by a large egg in the center of the cavern), illuminating the interior sufficiently even for characters without low-light vision. The skeletal bodies of several long-dead wyrmlings – and their matching shadows cast among the broken eggs – occupy the chamber now, curled in their shattered shells.

Once the party has explored the cavern leading into the Drakery far enough to view the egg chamber, give them Player Handout J.

Room Conditions: The floor in the center of the chamber is littered with razor-sharp fragments from the broken eggs. The center of the chamber, as indicated on the map, is considered difficult terrain. Each square of difficult terrain counts as 2 squares of movement. Each diagonal move into a difficult terrain square counts as 3 squares. You can’t run or charge across difficult terrain.

The DC for all Balance and Tumble checks are increased by +5. Any character falling prone in the center of the room suffers 1d6 (3) points of slashing damage from the shell fragments. Finally, any character rolling a natural 1 as an attack roll during combat while in the debris field must make a DC 10 Balance check or stumble and fall prone.

The Crystal Egg: A mammoth crystal egg, nearly 6 feet tall, rests in the center of the chamber, pulsing with its own faint light, casting long, slashing shadows across the walls and ceiling. The egg is considered Medium size and occupies



a 5-foot square. The crystal egg empowers the wyrmling skeletons and their shadows. While the pulsing crystal is intact, all the undead in this chamber gain +1 turn resistance and a +1 morale bonus to attack and damage. This bonus is included in the stat blocks.

The egg radiates moderate enchantment magic. A DC 30 Spellcraft check identifies the egg's special powers if viewed with *detect magic* or similar means. During combat, a character can attempt a DC 22 Knowledge (religion) check to notice the undead seem to be slightly more resilient and powerful than expected.

The pulsing egg is also the main source of light in the cavern. If broken, there is a final, brilliant flash of light before it is extinguished. Characters must make a DC 16 Fortitude check or be blinded for 1d4 (2) rounds from the flash. Characters with low-light vision suffer a -2 circumstance penalty to this Fortitude save, while characters with light sensitivity suffer a -4 circumstance bonus to the save.

Crystal Egg: 4-inch shell; hardness 5; hp 40; Break DC 35; sonic attacks inflict double damage; acid, fire, and cold inflict half damage.

The Wyrmlings: The wyrmling skeletons are a mix of chromatic and metallic dragon remains, but use gold dragon wyrmling base statistics for simplicity. The shadows appear as skeletal dragon shadows instead of standard humanoid shadows.

Destroying a wyrmling skeleton also destroys its matching shadow at the *end* of the action. Destroying the shadow by itself does not affect its skeleton. When a turning attempt is used, a skeleton and its shadow are affected at the same time – destroying a skeleton with a sufficiently high turning check does not eliminate its matching shadow until the end of the action. This means the matching shadow is still subject to the turning effects as a separate creature.

Tactics: The skeletons are inert until someone enters the field of egg shards to investigate. While inert, the skeletons are not detectable as undead, nor are they vulnerable to special abilities or spells that affect undead. Once one or more characters are within 5 feet of any of the wyrmling skeleton's starting positions or the large crystal egg in the center of the chamber, they rise and lurch into action.

The skeletal wyrmlings and their accompanying

shadows activate at the same time and move at the same initiative (roll for each and choose the higher result). Each skeleton and its paired shadow attack in concert, combining their attacks on the same target. Until one of the shadows successfully attacks and damages one of the characters, a DC 28 Spot check is required to notice that the shadows' movements do not perfectly mirror the actions of the skeletons. Once the shadows attack, this becomes a DC 20 Spot check.

The skeletons will converge to attack characters closest to the large egg in the center of the chamber or any characters trying to break the egg. Otherwise, each skeleton attacks the nearest available target. The skeletons and their shadows attack until destroyed.

Wyrmling skeletons (6): CR 4; Medium Undead; HD 8d12; 54 hp each; Init +5; Spd 60 ft., swim 60 ft.; AC 13 (+1 Dex, +2 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +4; Grp +8; Atk Bite +9 melee (1d8+5 (9)) or claw +9 melee (1d4+3 (5)); Full Atk Bite +9 melee (1d8+5 (9)) and 2 claws +4 melee (1d4+3 (5)); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA —; SQ DR 5/bludgeoning, darkvision 60 ft., enhanced abilities, immunity to cold, low-light vision, +1 turn resistance, undead traits; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +6; Str 18, Dex 12, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Feats: Improved Initiative.

Enhanced Abilities (Su): As long as the crystal egg in the center of the chamber remains intact, each skeleton gains +1 turn resistance and a +1 morale bonus to hit and damage. This bonus is included in the above stats.

Wyrmling shadows (6): CR 4; Medium Undead (Incorporeal); HD 6d12; 40 hp each; Init +2; Spd fly 40 ft. (good); AC 13 (+2 Dex, +1 deflection), touch 13, flat-footed 11; Base Atk +3; Grp —; Atk/Full Atk Incorporeal touch +6 melee (1d6+1 (4) Str); SA Create spawn, Strength damage; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., incorporeal traits, +3 turn resistance, undead traits; AL CE; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +6; Str —, Dex 14, Con —, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Hide +8 (+4 in bright illumination), Listen +7, Search +4, Spot +7; Alertness, Dodge, Mobility.

Create Spawn (Su): Any creature of the dragon or [reptilian] types reduced to Strength 0 by a wyrmling shadow becomes a shadow under the control of its killer within 1d4 (2) rounds.

Strength Damage (Su): The touch of a shadow deals 1d6 (3 normally, 4 while the egg is intact) points of Strength damage to a living foe. A creature reduced to Strength 0 by a shadow dies. This is a negative energy effect.

Enhanced Abilities (Su): As long as the crystal egg in the center of the chamber remains intact, each shadow gains +1 turn resistance and a +1 morale bonus to hit and damage. This bonus is included in the above stats.

Aftermath: Inside the crystal egg is a large *gem of brightness*, the main source of light in the cavern. The gem is as long as a human's forearm. It otherwise functions as a *gem of brightness*.

A DC 20 Search of the interior of the eggshell also reveals a pair of *bracers of defenselessness* hidden within the crystal inside the base of the shell. The King of the West would reward his minions with a set of these bracers for loyal service, never telling them their true nature. Should his minions ever rebel against him, the cursed bracers made it even easier for the dour Dragon King to defeat them.

The crystallized and petrified bits of dragon egg and remnants of the young dragons could be worth a potential fortune. Each DC 25 Search of the field results in finding 1d6 (3) valuable fragments. A random fragment will be worth 2d6 x 100 (700) gp and weigh 2d10 (11) pounds.

Scoring Suggestions: 800 points possible

100: Identify the crystal egg's abilities (by magic or deduction)

100: Destroy the egg to weaken the creatures (before combat is complete)

200: Retrieve *bracers of defenselessness*

50: Retrieve *gem of brightness*

-200: Wear the *bracers of defenselessness*

50: Discover that defeating a skeleton destroys its paired shadow

25/creature: Per skeleton or shadow destroyed

Area 2-3 – The Shrivening Pool (EL 10)

When the group approaches the pool for a closer look, read the following:

This mammoth pool sits at the very bottom of the valley. The pool is 80 feet long and 60 feet wide, with beveled corners. Wide, steep stairs lead from the valley surface into the depths of the pool along the north and south edges. The pool is fashioned from seamless blocks of polished white marble flecked with streaks of silver and gold.

The surface of the water is 15 feet below the sides of the pool. The water appears 20 feet deep, reaching a total depth of 35 feet below the valley floor. A long, slightly curved tube of some dark metal rests at the bottom of the pool near its center. Dozens of other small, metallic objects line the bottom.

This is the Shrivening Pool, where dragons would ceremonially cleanse themselves before entering the Vault of the Dragon Kings. Characters swimming in the pool must contend with the bitter cold water. The curved metal tube is actually the Copper Dragon Trumpet. Lurking at the very bottom of the pool is a nasty surprise, a transparent, self-aware black pudding.

About the Shrivening Pool: Before dragons could enter the Vault proper and access the Pool of Dreams, they had to be shriven – cleansed of all taints and imperfections. The dragons would ceremonially bathe in this pool in preparation, but the pool also serves a more practical purpose.

The pool itself was once filled with a “diluted” version of a unique, translucent ooze, a magically altered strain of black pudding. The acidic touch of this ooze was still strong enough to thoroughly cleanse the dragon of parasites and grime without harm. Constant agitation by the dragons kept the ooze solution manageable and safe. However, over the decades the ooze has become more and more concentrated as large amounts of its watery makeup have evaporated; its years of dormancy have allowed the more solid components to consolidate at the very bottom of the pool.

The presence of the thickened ooze also distorts the true depth of the pool. From the surface, the water appears to be only 20 feet deep, but the

ooze actually rests below 30 feet of freezing water and occupies the entire bottom of the pool to a depth of 5 feet, for a total pool depth of 50 feet (15-foot space from the stairs to the water’s surface, 30-foot water depth, 5-foot ooze depth).

Special Abilities: The shrivening pool also has several other special qualities. Submerging a paralyzed creature in the waters of the pool removes the paralyzed status condition. Further, any creatures turned to ice by the half-dragon basilisk from area 2-6 can be returned to normal by being completely immersed in the shrivening pool. They are treated as being resurrected, but come back to life fatigued by the ordeal.

Braving the Pool: The surface of the pool, especially near the edges, is slimy and partially congealed. This top layer of gelatinous residue is completely harmless. The water below this thin film is incredibly cold. Characters in contact with the water suffer 1d6 (3) points of nonlethal damage every 5 rounds of exposure from extreme cold. Characters also need to make a DC 15 Fortitude check (+1 for each previous check) for every 5 rounds of physical exertion spent in the water (such as swimming or combat) to avoid becoming fatigued. Note that this save is not a High Altitude save, so it always starts at DC 15 and increases from there.

Tactics: It is likely the PCs will not recognize Oolgluur for what it is as it lays at rest at the bottom of the shrivening pool. At rest, the ooze’s transparent protoplasm looks exactly like a large pool of water. Oolgluur will allow PCs to come very close and then lash out at all within range with its pseudopodia ability.

Once disturbed, the movement of the ooze churns the water into a frothy, freezing whirlpool. The DC for all Swim checks increases by +5, and all characters near the sides of the pool failing Swim checks by 5 or more suffer 1d6 (3) points of bludgeoning damage as they are slammed against the walls or stairs.

Knowing that metallic weapons have very little chance of harming it, Oolgluur focuses his attacks on obvious spellcasters, grabbing and constricting them. Oolgluur is a skilled combatant and may surprise opponents expecting the mindless actions of an ooze. It makes good use of its surroundings by attempting to drag PCs under the icy water to drown, or by slamming grappled PCs into the walls of the pool for an additional

2d6+7 (14) points of damage.

If the battle turns against Oolgluur and the ooze is reduced to 50 or fewer hp, it simply squeezes its fluid bulk into a number of tiny cracks and crevices at the bottom of the shrivening pool, flowing into a small cavern some ten feet below. This small pocket connects to other areas of the Vault via myriad natural channels, allowing Oolgluur to possibly surprise PCs long after they have forgotten about the strange ooze.

Here are some possible opportunities for Oolgluur to reappear to harass the party. Oolgluur could seep into the Drakery in area 2-2, adding extra challenge to a party well equipped against undead. The ooze could also surface in the Halls of History in area 2-4 to block retreat from the tunnels, or in the Great Hall in area 2-6 to split the group's attention from the lizardfolk minions stationed there. Oolgluur fears the King of the North, however, and will not enter area 2-7, the Seat of Judgment.

Keep in mind this means if Oolgluur is encountered before all four items are collected and shriven for the King of the North in area 1-7, characters may need to return to the Shrivening Pool before advancing into the Vault of the Dragon Kings itself. Oolgluur could well be waiting for their return.

Oolgluur, Slithering Black Pudding Id Ooze: CR 10; Gargantuan Ooze (Water); HD 10d10+120; hp 175; Init +0; Spd 40 ft., climb 40 ft.; AC 10 (-4 size, +4 natural), touch 6, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +7; Grp +30; Atk/Full Atk slam +11 melee (3d6+7 (17) plus 3d6 (10) acid); Space/Reach 40 ft./5 ft.; SA Acid, constrict

(3d6+7 (17) plus 3d6 (10) acid), flow, improved grab, pseudopodia; SQ Blindsight 60 ft., diminished space/reach, ooze traits, slick, split, transparent; AL CN; SV Fort +15, Ref +5, Will +3; Str 25, Dex 11, Con 34, Int 10, Wis 7, Cha 7.

Skills and Feats: Climb +19, Listen +7, Move Silently +8, Spot +7; Alertness, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility^B, Weapon Focus (slam).

Acid (Ex): Oolgluur secretes a digestive acid that dissolves organic material and metal quickly, but does not affect stone. Any melee hit or constrict attack deals acid damage, and the opponent's armor and clothing dissolve and become useless immediately unless they succeed on DC 27 Reflex saves. A metal or wooden weapon striking Oolgluur also dissolves immediately unless it succeeds on a DC 27 Reflex save. Oolgluur's acidic touch deals 21 points of damage per round to wooden or metal objects, but it must remain in contact with the object for 1 full round to deal this damage.

Constrict (Ex): Oolgluur deals automatic slam and acid damage with a successful grapple check. The opponent's clothing and armor take a -4 penalty on Reflex saves against the acid.

Flow (Ex): Oolgluur can enter the space of any creature; though doing so provokes an attack of opportunity as normal. Neither Oolgluur nor the other creature takes any penalty for fighting in the same space. Each combatant provokes attacks of opportunity for movement normally.

Pseudopodia (Ex): When making a full round attack, Oolgluur may choose to make a single slam attack against every foe it detects within reach. When Oolgluur uses this ability, he does not get to attempt a grapple against opponents hit by his slam attack. In addition, Oolgluur can make up

Ranged Attacks Underwater

Thrown weapons are ineffective underwater, even when launched from land. Attacks with other ranged weapons take a -2 penalty on attack rolls for every 5 feet of water they pass through, in addition to the normal penalties for range.

Attacks from Land

Characters swimming, floating, treading water on the surface, or wading in water at least chest deep have improved cover (+8 bonus to AC, +4 bonus on Reflex saves) from opponents on land. Landbound opponents who have *freedom of movement* effects ignore this cover when making melee attacks against targets in the water. A completely submerged creature has total cover against opponents on land unless those opponents have *freedom of movement* effects. Magical effects are unaffected except for those that require attack rolls (which are treated like any other effects) and fire effects (which do not affect completely submerged creatures).

to 11 attacks of opportunity in a single round.

Split (Ex): Slashing and piercing weapons deal no damage to Oolgluur. Instead it splits into two identical puddings, each with half of the original's current hit points (round down). A pudding with 10 hit points or less cannot be further split and dies if reduced to 0 hit points.

Diminished Space/Reach (Ex): Oolgluur does not occupy a cube. Instead, it occupies the area within its space like a spread, even sloughing up walls and around corners. Oolgluur is considered to occupy all the squares its body covers in a plane of 5-foot-tall cubes, and it has a maximum vertical reach of 5 feet from where its body pools.

Slick (Ex): The area covered by Oolgluur functions like an area covered by ice for the purpose of movement and Balance checks, and it counts as slippery for the purpose of Climb checks.

Transparent (Ex): Oolgluur is hard to identify, even under ideal conditions, and it takes a DC 20 Spot check to notice that it is not just a large puddle of water. Given the context of its current home in the Shrivening Pool, this increases to a DC 30 Spot check. Creatures who fail to notice Oolgluur and walk into it are automatically hit with a melee attack for slam and acid damage.

Description: The shrivening pool glints with the soft reflection of water, oddly unfrozen in this icy environment. The liquid gently laps against the sides of the pool, even with no wind present. As you approach, your nose is suddenly assaulted by an acrid, chemical stench that stings your sinuses and puts your eyes to watering. You falter, but the liquid in the pool suddenly rises up in a vast tower of undulating slime to crash down in a torrent of burning misery.

Oolgluur is a very unique ooze. It started life as a standard black pudding, but the millennia of its confinement to the shrivening pool as well as the lingering magic of the Dragon Kings have created a unique beast. Oolgluur is sentient and fully aware of itself and its surroundings; in addition, it is a rare type of ooze known as a slithering ooze, which allows it to spread its body over a vast area, although at a depth of only a few inches. Food is scarce in the Vault and Oolgluur takes every opportunity to feed upon the few intruders that brave its icy prison.

Aftermath: Once Oolgluur has been defeated or forced to flee, the water calms after 1d4 (2) rounds. The metal bits glinting along the bottom

of the pool are dragon scales that came loose during cleansing over the years. However, anyone viewing the scales with *detect magic* will notice faint evocation magic from one of the scales. It is a *scale of good luck* which functions exactly like a *stone of good luck*, but is actually a small copper dragon scale.

Clever groups could attempt to collect enough scales from the bottom of the shrivening pool to fashion a cape or cover armor in hopes of fooling traps that detect non-dragonblooded targets. A character can collect 2d10 (11) scales from each 5-foot-square section along the bottom of the pool. GMs should reward creative applications of the dragon scales. A DC 15 Craft (armorsmithing) or Profession (tailor) check is required to successfully fashion such an item. This requires 20 dragon scales per Small item, 40 scales per Medium item, and 60 scales per Large item.

Dragon Choir Clue – The Copper Trumpet: As mentioned above, the curved tube in the pool is actually the Copper Dragon Trumpet. Since it represents the ideals of copper and black dragons (tied to the draconic element of acid) it is immune to Oolgluur's acidic touch. A DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) or Bardic Knowledge check reveals the sculpture represents an idealized dragon which incorporates features of both copper and black dragons, resulting in a perfect combination of the two. A DC 30 Spot or Search check reveals a small hole in the tip of the dragon's tail and another in its mouth. It also reveals minute Draconic runes etched within the delicate dragon scales, which read:

The Blood of True Dragons Flows Strong

Grant Power to Those Who Hear Its Song

Blowing into the dragon tail produces a single clear note that comes from the dragon's mouth. A DC 15 Perform (horn) or Bardic Knowledge check indicates that these notes are perfect. If more than one Dragon Trumpet has been located, the character also knows these notes would work in harmony with each other, increasing the resonance and volume of the resulting notes.

Scoring Suggestions: 1,000 points possible

-100: Each member after the first grappled/drowned by the ooze

50: Taking special precautions to minimize damage from freezing water

100: Luring the ooze from the pool to maximize combat options

50: Sneaking into the pool while the ooze is occupied to search or recover items

300: Defeat Oolgluur

100: Locate the *scale of good luck*

300: Recover the Brass Dragon Trumpet

50: Discover pool's effect on removing paralysis effects

50: Discover pool's effect on returning creatures turned to ice back to normal

Area 2-4 – The Halls of History (EL 11)

When the party approaches this cave for a closer look, read the following:

The entrance to this dark cave is a perfect arch. Wide, stone blocks fit seamlessly along the curve of the arch, their flat, smooth surfaces embossed with deep runes. The stones look untouched by the passage of time.

The light from the valley barely illuminates the cave, but what you can see is impressive. The walls and ceiling are adorned with painstakingly detailed frescoes. The sprawling art depicts the imposing Frosteye Mountain range, the lands surrounding the Vault, and countless dragons. These frescoes extend as far as you can see into the cave, which seems to narrow slightly after 50 feet as it descends further into the mountain-side.

The runes above the cave are Draconic. They read: *To Know the Past Is to Learn the Future*. There is no light in the cavern. This cavern system holds the history of the Dragon Kings, their dragon wards, and the Vault itself. A blind old lizardfolk druid is the Keeper of the Ways, the wizened historian for the Vault. The Keeper of the Ways and his dire polar bear companion keep up the history of the Vault as depicted on the cavern walls. Ever since Myrkjartan has returned to the Vault, the Keeper of the Ways has not left his caves – he's been too busy updating the murals with the events taking place.

The tunnel splits into two different directions deep within the Halls of History, indicating the time of the great rebellion and the schism

between metallic and chromatic dragons. The right fork details the last days of the Dragon Kings, and is nearly complete. The Keeper of the Ways is waiting for the King of the North's death so he can complete that portion of the Vault's history. The left fork reveals what happened to the dragons since the rebellion, including the newest paintings – still fresh – which depict the silver dragon Myrkjartan's arrival to the Vault.

When the Vault was still active, the dragons and Dragon Kings consulted with the Keeper of the Ways often. Before Myrkjartan arrived, the King of the North would visit with him frequently, as they were two of the few denizens remaining in the Valley. The latest information the Keeper has about the return of dragons to the Vault was gained when the Sunscratch-tainted Myrkjartan came to the complex and spoke with the Keeper, convincing the old druid that he was the "heir apparent" of the Vault. The Keeper of the Ways was convinced by Myrkjartan that he is a noble and pure dragon set on restoring the Vault to its former glory. The Keeper of the Ways has no idea that Sunscratch is manipulating Myrkjartan.

Despite his blindness, the Keeper of the Ways is a masterful artist. He has been blind for so long that his other senses have compensated for the loss of his sight. Further, his close ties to nature and the enhanced senses of his faithful animal companion Frore, a dire polar bear, provide the Keeper of the Ways with more than enough sensory information to employ his talents as an artist.

Exploring the Halls of History: A wealth of information can be learned from studying the frescoes in the hall – for those willing to spend the time or clever enough to properly interpret the frescoes and runes. Viewing the frescoes with *detect magic* reveals moderate abjuration magic. A DC 30 Spellcraft check identifies the magic as a permanent *resist energy* spell, protecting the delicate fresco from acid, fire, lightning, and cold.

A DC 18 Appraise or any Profession (artist) check reveals that the fresco is a masterpiece, and painted by a phenomenally gifted individual. The level of detail in the paintings is astonishing – the dragons have small bone teeth added to their features, each individual scale is detailed, etc. A DC 30 Search or Spot check by anyone examining the fresco up close reveals that there are tiny holes, no wider around than a nail, in each dragon's mouth.

Characters can learn about the singular individuals buried in the boneyard, area 2-1. On a DC 24 Spot or Search check, the character notices something interesting enough to grant a +2 circumstance bonus when studying a random headstone for one of the notable bodies listed in area 2-1. If looking for information on a specific individual after visiting the boneyard, the DC is only 18.

At the point where the cavern splits into two paths, the wall connecting the two tunnels depicts a large, swirling miasma of dragons. This is a depiction of the Pool of Dreams found in area 3-8. A DC 25 Spot check of this portion reveals a red dragon's head has been recently added to the fresco, the paint still fresh. The Keeper of the Ways added the head after meeting with Myrkjartan, having learned that Sunscratch's head now lies in the Pool of Dreams.

With a DC 22 Spot or Search check of the right tunnel, characters will note that all four Dragon Kings are shown fighting during the rebellion, and later two of the kings (East and West) are depicted in ceremonial burial regalia. Shortly thereafter, the King of the South is shown being laid to rest. There is a blank portion near the end of the tunnel. The only king not shown being buried is the King of the North, who still lives and can be found in area 2-7.

For every 20-foot stretch of cavern wall a character spends 5 minutes examining, he can attempt a DC 12 Intelligence check. Characters gain a +1 circumstance bonus if they have at least 5 ranks in Knowledge (arcana) or Decipher Script or speak Draconic. These bonuses are cumulative.

On a successful check, the character learns something from the list below. The list is in rough chronologic order, as are the frescoes in the cave. Frescoes near the cave entrance are most likely to reveal items 1-4. Frescoes in the middle of the cave reveal items 4-7. Frescoes near the end of the tunnels reveal items 7-10. The GM can either reveal information based on the location of the search, or can roll 1d10 to determine what information is gained. On a duplicate roll, move to the next item on the list.

For tournament purposes, characters will always start by learning item 1, and proceed down the list for each subsequent success.

- 1 [Tournament Result] The mountain stronghold was once known as the Godspeak. The tallest mountains in the range were believed to reach the heavens where the gods themselves dwelled.
- 2 The Valley was originally known as the Cradle, since the gods chose this location as the birthplace for their precious dragons. The dawn of dragonkind took place more than twenty thousand years ago, before the ages of elf, dwarf, or man.
- 3 The dragons lived for hundreds of years without guide or direction. The gods loved their dragons, but grew tired of watching over them, and thus anointed singular individuals as Dragon Kings to rule over all of dragonkind.
- 4 The Dragon Kings themselves are not gods, but were descendents of the titans, who after countless generations formed the various tribes of giants known today.
- 5 The Dragon Kings were selected for being perfect, iconic representatives of their titan ancestry, embracing the draconic values and beliefs, as well as an affinity to one of the four draconic elements.
- 6 Upon being raised to the status of Dragon King, the Kings were imbued with phenomenal powers, gifted by the gods themselves. They possess incredible strength, intelligence, and many of the characteristics of their dragon charges. (This alludes to the Dragon King's abilities as a Dracomorph.)
- 7 The Vault is relatively new by comparison, being only several thousand years old. It was built by hundreds of lizardfolk slaves under the direction of the brightest dwarven, elven, and human architects, who were offered sanctuary within the complex by the Dragon Kings, but were killed upon its completion by the King of the West so the details behind its construction would remain secret. This created a great deal of friction between the King of the West and the other Dragon Kings.
- 8 As the centuries wore on, some dragons grew restless under the rule of the Dragon Kings and sought freedom. A charismatic red dragon named Sunscratch rallied together those dragons that shared his dreams of a life beyond the Valley.

- 9 A terrible rebellion raged nearly a millennium ago – creating an irreparable schism in draconic society. Sunscratch and his followers rose up against the Dragon Kings and their loyal dragons. This marks the division of dragonkind into metallic and chromatic bloodlines.
- 10 The True Dragon has recently returned to the Vault, and wishes to bring the Vault back to its former glory. The True Dragon is a silver dragon, and has sought an audience with the King of the North to forge an alliance for the glory of all dragonkind. (This fresco is still fresh and reflects events only a few months old.)

The Keeper's Chambers: There is a secret door on the southern wall of the main tunnel leading to the Keeper's chambers, cleverly concealed among the frescoes. A DC 30 Search check is required to locate the door. It is not locked, but the right dragon in the fresco must be pressed to open the door. Near the secret door are eight different dragons – black, red, blue, white, gold, bronze, copper, and silver.

Pressing the white or silver dragon opens the door, a nod to the Keeper's belief in Myrkjartan and affinity to the cold with his dire polar bear companion. The Keeper of the Ways used to regularly change the combination for added security, but has kept it white and silver ever since Myrkjartan's arrival.

Pressing any other dragon triggers a trap – a jet of energy breathes out from the dragons of the same color throughout the entire cavern system. There are enough dragons that every single space in the tunnel is affected, except the last 30 feet down the left tunnel, which is new enough that the Keeper hasn't had time (or need) to integrate the area into the trap. Triggering the trap automatically alerts the Keeper and Frore of intruders.

Dragon Breath Trap: CR 5; magic device; manual trigger (incorrect dragon pressed); automatic reset; supernatural effect (breath weapon, 5d6 [17] fire, acid, or electricity, as dragon type pressed, DC 16 Reflex save half damage); Search DC 32; Disable Device DC 28 (wedge wires around dragon motif so it doesn't move).

Frore, the Keeper's dire polar bear companion, is sleeping in the room. The door makes enough noise when it opens to wake Frore from his slum-

ber. He doesn't take kindly to anyone poking around the Keeper's quarters.

The secret door slides closed after a minute, or by pressing a small lever on the side of the wall, 5 feet off the ground. This lever also opens the door from the inside. Frore is intelligent and adroit enough to manipulate the lever to open the door.

The chambers are sparsely appointed, bearing only a simple cot, several wooden crates holding the Keeper's art supplies, and a pair of potted plants the Keeper tends to. They are small shrubs with twisted branches and wide, blue leaves. The clay pots are lined with stones, and a small set of pruning shears and some wire lie nearby; the Keeper tends to these as one would tend to bonsai trees.

A DC 15 Knowledge (nature) check incorrectly identifies both plants as frostfeather bushes. A DC 20 Knowledge (nature) or Craft (poison) check correctly identifies one of the two plants as blue whinnis, a mild poison – which just happens to look nearly identical to frostfeather.

Frostfeather bushes bear fruit that looks like small, blue ice crystals. These berries act like *goodberries*, and stay fresh for months as long as they're kept below 50 degrees. A character can gather 2d10 (11) ripe berries from the frostfeather bush. Incorrectly identifying the blue whinnis can be dangerous. Anyone eating the berries from the blue whinnis plant must contend with its concentrated poison (DC 17 Fortitude save, 1 Con/1 Con and Unconscious).

A DC 25 Search of the tattered cot reveals an odd lump inside the mattress – a long, golden scepter topped with a flaming ruby has been stashed inside! It is the King of the North's *rod of rulership*, given to him by the gods when he was first raised to the status of Dragon King to ensure the dragons' obedience. Once the King of the North was able to earn their respect and loyalty without the rod's assistance, he gave it to the Keeper of the Ways as a gift for his tireless service – and to keep it from the greedier dragons. However, the rod is very near the end of its life; the *rod of rulership* only has 2d6 (7) minutes of activation remaining!

The Keeper of the Ways: When the party reaches the fork in the cavern, anyone making a DC 25 Listen check hears the soft, muffled sounds of

something wet being scraped along the walls from the left tunnel. This is the Keeper of the Ways working on the frescoes. The Keeper is engrossed in his work, and suffers a -2 penalty on his Listen check to hear the characters approaching. He is currently chronicling the arrival of Myrkjartan on the walls.

The Keeper, well versed in the Old Ways, knows it is forbidden and ruinous to have any but the Dragon Kings or those they deem worthy enter the Vault. He will warn the characters about venturing into the Vault. If they question him about the Vault, the Dragon Kings, or the Valley, he becomes concerned that they mean to enter the Vault, and attacks.

The Keeper of the Ways is a peaceful and benign lover of knowledge and history. He would much rather talk than fight, but he cannot allow the PCs to enter the Vault and will likely attack if the PCs announce that the Vault is their destination. The Keeper of the Ways and Frore share a close bond, and can sense the other within the confines of the Halls of History. If one is attacked, the other responds, moving to aid his friend.

Once the PCs reveal they wish to enter the Vault or mention interest in accessing the Pool of Dreams, the Keeper of the Ways warns them in a raspy voice:

Turn away from the Vault of the Dragon Kings, and dream not of the pool that lies within! It is a sacred place, for those of the dragon's blood alone to step foot. Speak of it no more – it is forbidden!

Tactics: If the PCs attack the Keeper or press him for details about the Vault after issuing his warning, the Keeper of the Ways attacks. The Keeper begins combat by ordering his dire polar bear companion to attack the PCs while he retreats to a safe position away from the group. There he casts a series of spells to aid himself and his animal companion in combat. The Keeper casts *summon nature's ally V* (spontaneously casting in the place of *bane polymorph*), conjuring up 1d3 (2) dire wolverines. In the following round the Keeper casts animal growth upon the dire wolverines (and Frore, if the dire polar bear is within range) and orders them to attack.

If Frore is still in the Keeper's chamber when combat begins, he rumbles through the secret

door to aid the Keeper. Frore positions himself in the center of the tunnel, using his massive girth to make it more difficult for characters to move past him. He blocks their escape, forcing characters back into range of the dire wolverines.

While the PCs are busy with Frore and the dire wolverines, the Keeper casts *bull's strength* and *bear's endurance* on himself, and then moves to fight alongside his animal friends. The Keeper makes good use of his magic club in melee, seeking out humans to smite with the weapon's bane ability. He supports himself and his animal companion throughout the combat with spells like *magic fang*, *poison*, and *rusting grasp*, attempting to use the latter on heavily armored PCs.

If the battle turns against them, the Keeper and Frore flee, covering their escape with *obscuring mist* or *summon nature's ally*. They flee deeper into the Halls of History, seeking a place to heal before rejoining combat with the intruding PCs. If battle is joined a second time, the Keeper and Frore fight to the death.

The Keeper of the Ways, Venerable Lizardfolk Druid 10; CR 11; Medium Humanoid (Reptilian); HD 12d8-12; hp 54; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 22 (+5 natural, +3 +1 *leather armor*, +2 +1 *light wooden shield*, +2 deflection), touch 12, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +8/+2; Grp +7; Atk +1 *human bane club* +9 melee or +11 melee vs. humans (1d6 (3) or 3d6 (10) vs. humans) or claw +7 melee (1d4-1 (1)); Full Atk +1 *human bane club* +9/+4 melee or +11/+6 melee vs. humans (1d6 (3) or 3d6 (10) vs. humans) and bite +2 melee (1d4-1 (1)) or 2 claws +7 melee (1d4-1 (1)) and bite +2 melee (1d4-1 (1)); SA Spells; SQ Animal companion, blind-sense 30 ft., Dragon King vassal, nature sense, resist nature's lure (+4 save vs fey), spontaneous casting (*summon* spells), trackless step, venom immunity, wild empathy, wild shape, woodland stride; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +11; Str 8, Dex 10, Con 9, Int 16, Wis 19, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +3 (+5 traps), Balance +6, Concentration +5, Craft (painting) +9, Craft (trapmaking) +8, Diplomacy +6, Handle Animal +12, Heal +10, Jump +7, Knowledge (history) +13, Knowledge (nature) +15, Listen +12, Ride +2, Spellcraft +8, Survival +10 (+12 in natural environments), Swim +6; Augment Summoning, Blind-Fight, Combat Casting, Spell Focus (conjuration), Weapon Focus (club).

Possessions: *Manbreaker* (+1 *intelligent human bane club*), +1 *leather armor*, +1 *light*

wooden shield, gloves of dexterity +2, ring of protection +2, masterwork artist's tools (paints, brushes), painting smock.

Blindsense 30 ft.: The Keeper of the Ways is blind, but has been without sight for so long that he has developed a limited form of blindsense. This coupled with the Blind-Fight feat allows the Keeper to forgo the penalties normally associated with blindness for melee and movement. Despite his unique sightlessness, the Keeper still cannot effectively target ranged attacks or spells, or use any skills that rely on sight such as Spot or Search. As mentioned earlier, being blind does not hamper the Keeper of the Ways from painting.

Dragon King Vassal: As a loyal servant to the Dragon Kings, the Keeper of the Ways has been gifted with a more powerful animal companion than his druid levels would normally allow. While in the service of the Dragon Kings, the Keeper of the Ways has access to animal companions as a druid 4 levels higher.

Trackless Step (Ex): The Keeper leaves no trail in natural surroundings and cannot be tracked. He may choose to leave a trail if so desired.

Wild Shape (Su): The Keeper can change into a Small, Medium, or Large animal and back again four times per day, as per the *polymorph* spell.

Woodland Stride (Ex): The Keeper may move through any sort of undergrowth (such as natural thorns, briars, overgrown areas, and similar terrain) at his normal speed and without tak-

ing damage or suffering any other impairment. However, thorns, briars, and overgrown areas that have been magically manipulated to impede motion still affect him.

Divine Spells (6/5/5/4/4/2, DC 14 + spell level): 0—*cure minor wounds* (x2), *detect magic*, *know direction*, *resistance*, *virtue*; 1st—*cure light wounds* (9), *endure elements*, *magic fang*, *obscuring mist*, *speak with animals*; 2nd—*barkskin*, *bear's endurance*, *bull's strength*, *resist energy*, *warp wood*; 3rd—*cure moderate wounds* (19), *meld into stone*, *poison* (DC 19 Fort, 1d10 (5) Con/1d10 (5) Con), *spike growth*; 4th—*cure serious wounds* (23), *flame strike* (35 fire), *freedom of movement*, *rusting grasp*; 5th—*animal growth*, *baneful polymorph*.

Frore, Male Dire Polar Bear; CR 8; Huge Animal; HD 14d8+87; hp 150; Init +0; Spd 40 ft., swim 30 ft.; AC 15 (-2 size, +7 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +10; Grp +30; Atk Claw +21 melee (2d6+12 (19)); Full Atk 2 claws +21 melee (2d6+12 (19)) and bite +15 melee (3d8+6 (19)); Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft.; SA Improved grab; SQ Link, scent, share spells; AL N; SV Fort +15, Ref +9, Will +10; Str 35, Dex 11, Con 23, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Hide -5 (+7 in snowy areas), Listen +5, Spot +7, Swim +16; Alertness, Endurance, Run, Track, Weapon Focus (claw).

***Enlarged Frore, Male Dire Polar Bear;** CR 8; Gargantuan Animal; HD 14d8+112; hp 175; Init -1; Spd 40 ft., swim 30 ft.; AC 14 (-4 size, -1 Dex, +9 natural), touch 5, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +10;

Manbreaker

Manbreaker: +1 human bane club; AL N; Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 12; Empathy, 30 ft. vision and hearing; Ego score 5.

Lesser Power: Bless 3/day.

Personality: Created by the renowned lizardfolk druid Thalyk, *Manbreaker* is a human femur bone polished to a high shine. Its haft is wrapped in sharkskin, and the bulbous head of the weapon is adorned with a chaotic scrawl of arcane symbols and glyphs. The club was designed to slay humans, for Thalyk was ever an enemy of the human civilizations encroaching upon his swamp. It is rumored that the femur bone used to make the club came from a powerful human paladin. This paladin sought to rid Thalyk's swamp of its lizardfolk, but disappeared soon after his quest of eradication began. The club can only be wielded by a lizardfolk druid, as it rejects all other wielders. Anyone other than a lizardfolk druid attempting to wield *Manbreaker* automatically receives 2 negative levels as long as he wields the weapon, and *Manbreaker* will attempt to wrest control from its wielder and force him to drop it. *Manbreaker* has a very weak personality and will rarely conflict with a proper wielder who shares his view of humanity.

Strong Conjuration; CL 15th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor; *bless*; Price 10,300 gp.

Grp +38; Atk Claw +23 melee (3d6+16 (26)); Full Atk 2 claws +23 melee (3d6+16 (26)) and bite 17 melee (4d8+8 (26)); Space/Reach 20 ft./15 ft.; SA Improved grab; SQ DR 10/magic, link, scent, share spells; AL N; SV Fort +21, Ref +12, Will +14; Str 43, Dex 9, Con 27, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Hide -10 (+2 in snowy areas), Listen +8, Spot +8, Swim +28; Alertness, Endurance, Run, Track, Weapon Focus (claw).

*This stat block is used if Frore is affected by the Keeper's *animal growth* spell.

Share Spells (Ex): At the Keeper's option, he may have any spell (but not any spell-like ability) he casts upon himself also affect Frore. Frore must be within 5 feet of him at the time of casting to receive the benefit. If the spell or effect has a duration other than instantaneous, it stops affecting Frore if he moves farther than 5 feet away and will not affect the dire polar bear again, even if he returns to the Keeper before the duration expires. Additionally, the Keeper may cast a spell with a target of "You" on Frore (as a touch range spell) instead of on himself. The Keeper and Frore can share spells even if the spells normally do not affect creatures of the animal type.

Summoned Dire Wolverines: CR —; Large Animal; HD 5d8+33; hp 55 each; Init +3; Spd 30 ft., climb 10 ft.; AC 16 (-1 size, +3 Dex, +4 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +3; Grp +15; Atk Claw +10 melee (1d6+8 (11)); Full Atk 2 claws +10 melee (1d6+8 (11)) and bite +5 melee (1d8+4 (8)); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SA Rage; SQ Low-light vision, scent; AL N; SV Fort +10, Ref +7, Will +5; Str 26, Dex 17, Con 23, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Climb +16, Listen +7, Spot +7; Alertness, Toughness, Track^B.

Rage (Ex): A dire wolverine that takes damage in combat flies into a berserk rage on its next turn, clawing and biting madly until either it or its opponent is dead. An enraged dire wolverine gains +4 Strength, +4 Constitution, and -2 AC. The creature cannot end its rage voluntarily.

***Enlarged Summoned Dire Wolverines:** CR —; Huge Animal; HD 5d8+43; hp 65 each; Init +2; Spd 30 ft., climb 10 ft.; AC 16 (-2 size, +2 Dex, +6 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +3; Grp +23; Atk Claw +13 melee (1d8+12 (16)); Full Atk 2 claws +13 melee (1d8+12 (16)); Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft.; SA Rage; SQ DR 10/magic, low-light vision, scent; AL N; SV Fort +16, Ref +10, Will +9; Str 34, Dex 15, Con 27, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Climb +20, Listen +7, Spot +7; Alertness, Toughness, Track^B.

Rage (Ex): A dire wolverine that takes damage in combat flies into a berserk rage on its next turn, clawing and biting madly until either it or its opponent is dead. An enraged dire wolverine gains +4 Strength, +4 Constitution, and -2 AC. The creature cannot end its rage voluntarily.

*This stat block is used if the dire wolverines are affected by the Keeper's *animal growth* spell.

Description: Before you stands a lizardfolk so ancient he appears to be little more than dust and scales wrapped around a skeleton of dry twigs. His once vibrant green scales are now dull and flat, and his eyes swim with the filmy yellow of cataract blindness. Despite his decrepit appearance, the lizardfolk exudes an aura of power and great wisdom. His armor and the polished bone club in his emaciated hand are of excellent workmanship. Despite his fragile frame, he bears the bone club in such a way there is little doubt he has pressed it into service through the years. A mammoth, white bear stands over the venerable reptilian sage protectively, its massive jaws splitting in a snarl as you approach.

Scoring Suggestions: 1,000 points possible

100: Locate the secret door

-50: Trigger the trap more than once (each time past the first)

25: Per clue gained about the history of the Vault (100 pts max)

50: Research individuals from the boneyard in the frescoes

50: Determine the left fork is new, and represents Myrkjartan's presence

50: Determine the right fork signifies the end of the Dragon Kings, and is missing one King from its history

50: Determine the red dragon head was recently added to the Pool of Dreams

200: Defeat the Keeper of the Ways

200: Defeat Frore

200: Recover the *rod of rulership*

Area 2-5 – The Betrayer’s Bones (EL 10)

When the party comes closer to inspect this area, read the following:

From far away, the skeleton looked immense. But up close, you can barely comprehend the size of the creature. It must have been one of the largest dragons to ever live. On closer inspection, you notice the massive skeleton is headless – the great beast’s skull is nowhere to be seen.

The chill in the air is more pronounced standing in the presence of the colossal skeleton. A thin layer of ice clings to the great creature’s bones. A barbed metal spear, more than 10 feet long, sticks up from the ground, protruding through the beast’s ribs. A thin veil of snow swirls where the spearhead lies lodged into the frozen ground. Near the spear lie a tattered leather sack, a curved sword, and a coil of rope.

A wide, flat stone, eight feet long and several feet high, is set into the ground before the dragon’s bones. A metal placard discolored with patina is mounted on the stone, weathered runes carved across its surface.

The inscription is in Draconic, and reads:

Sunscratch, the Betrayer. May his bones serve as warning. To take the life of another dragon is a grievous crime. To rise up against his brothers and strike at his liege-lords is unforgivable. Look upon this false dragon and know the justice of the Dragon Kings is swift and sure.

The massive skeleton belongs to Sunscratch, the Gargantuan red dragon who led the rebellion against the Dragon Kings which resulted in the ultimate downfall of the Vault and its keepers. Sunscratch’s body was left to rot as a sign to the other dragons of the price of treachery – but instead of serving as a deterrent, it simply strengthened the resolve of the chromatic dragons to leave the Vault and strike out against the world around them. The head was removed during the rebellion and cast into the Pool of Dreams by Sunscratch’s followers as a means to preserve their leader’s lore and experiences.

Scratched into the surface of the sentencing stone, worn away by time, is some graffiti left

behind by some of Sunscratch’s followers after they removed his head. Finding the graffiti requires a DC 16 Spot check when someone moves into a position where they could conceivably view the back of the stone. This clue could help the party determine that Sunscratch’s head is currently at the bottom of the Pool of Dreams in area 3-8, which could come in very handy during the final confrontation. The graffiti is written in Draconic, and reads:

Sunscratch lives on! Even now he sleeps among the dreams – waiting in the depths for those who shall come again to free the Vault!

The bones are preserved with powerful magic runes carved into the dragon’s spine. A clutch of frostsnap lizards makes its home within the skeleton’s great ribs. The gear next to the spear is all that remains of one of Myrkjartan’s human mercenaries who fell while trying to disable the trap, landing in the middle of the trap’s area of effect.

A DC 30 Spot check is required to notice the faint runes carved into the dragon’s bones from the ground. Time and weather have worn them down, but their magic is still potent. If located, a character can attempt to climb the dragon’s spine to disable the trap with a DC 15 Climb check. Failure by 5 or more means falling into the trap’s effect. The effect’s radius is centered on the spear.

Runes of Destruction Trap: CR 8; magic device; proximity trigger (any Medium or larger creature within 30 feet of the spear); automatic reset; spell effect (*destruction*, 13th-level cleric, destroyed unless DC 20 Fortitude save for 10d6 (35) points of damage); Search DC 32; Disable Device DC 32 (deface runes).

Tactics: The frostsnap lizards have excellent camouflage among the bleached bones and frosty background, and are considered to have taken 20 on their Hide checks. Characters need to make a Spot check opposed by the lizards’ 35 Hide result or are flat-footed the first round of combat once the lizards attack.

The frostsnap lizards wait until targets are close enough to encompass several characters with their freezing burst. The lizards stick close together to maximize the effect of their freezing burst, but show no other strategies or tactics. Once four or more lizards have been killed, the remaining lizards must make a DC (15 + total lizards killed)

Will save each round or flee in terror.

Note that the *destruction* rune trap on the skeleton only “recognizes” Medium or larger creatures, allowing the frostsnap lizards to move freely through the area without activating the effect.

Frostsnap Lizard (8): CR 2; Small Magical Beast; HD 2d10+2; 14 hp each; Init +6; Spd 40 ft., climb 20 ft.; AC 16 (+1 size, +2 Dex, +3 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +2; Grp -2; Atk/Full Atk Bite +3 melee (1d4 (2)); SA Chill burst, freezing burst; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., cold sense, immunity to cold, low-light vision; AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 10, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Climb +8, Hide +11 (+15 in white or arctic settings), Jump +5, Listen +5, Spot +5; Alertness, Improved Initiative^B.

Chill Burst (Su): Once per round, a frostsnap lizard can deliver a cold burst to a single opponent within 5 feet. This attack deals 2d8 (9) points of nonlethal cold damage to living opponents (DC 12 Reflex for half).

Freezing Burst (Su): Whenever two or more frostsnap lizards are within 20 feet of each other, they can work together to create a deadly freezing burst. This effect has a radius of 20 feet, centered on any one contributing frostsnap lizard. The burst deals 2d8 (9) points of cold damage for each lizard contributing to it, to a maximum of 12d8 (54^M). A Reflex save (DC 10 + number of lizards contributing) reduces the damage by half.

Secret Treasure: Searching the placard on the stone reveals a hidden cache secreted beneath the placard. This requires a DC 30 Search check of the stone, or a DC 22 Listen check if the stone is struck to determine it is actually hollow. A DC 24 Disable Device or DC 24 Strength check is required to remove the large placard, revealing a deep niche six feet wide and several feet deep.

Within the niche is a *staff of abjuration* with 17 charges. The King of the North placed the staff here during the rebellion as an emergency measure, making it easier for defenders to keep Sunscratch’s followers from recovering the bones of their martyred leader.

Aftermath: The massive spear is *Frozen Star*, a Large +2 *keen icy burst spear*, a prized weapon of the King of the South. When Sunscratch rose up in rebellion, the Kings of the North and South banded together to protect the Vault. While the King of the North and Sunscratch were locked in



combat, the King of the South struck the killing blow against Sunscratch with *Frozen Star*. It remains in the same spot to this day.

Scattered along the ground within the ribs are pieces of equipment from the unfortunate thief – all that remains once he triggered the destruction trap. The equipment includes a Medium +2 *scimitar*, *bag of holding* (type I), and a *rope of entanglement*. Inside the *bag of holding* are a set of masterwork thieves’ tools, 230 gp, four rubies (150 gp each), a *potion of cure moderate wounds*, and a *potion of barkskin* +2.

Scoring Suggestions: 900 points possible

25/lizard: Per frostsnap lizard defeated

100: Discover the *destruction* trap before triggering it

100: Disable the *destruction* trap

50: Think to look inside the *bag of holding* for what the previous owner stored in it

100: Find a way to remove the spear or other items without triggering the trap

200: Recover *Frozen Star*

150: Locate the *staff of abjuration*

Area 2-6 – The Great Hall (EL 10)

When the party approaches the entrance to this area, read the following:

A massive archway yawns before a great hall built into the mountainside. The entrance reminds you of the arch over the gearwalk, a motif of great dragon wings spread out to embrace the curve with a monstrous head leering down into the valley at the top of the arch. But the scale of this arch is much larger; the base is 60 feet wide and curves higher than 40 feet along the top.

The austere design of the smooth floor and walls lies in stark contrast to the hall's vaulted ceiling. Enormous, stone faces are carved into the ceiling, the cold visages of countless unknown gods staring down at you from on high. Colored stones glow in their eyes, bathing the hall in shafts of bright light.

Before you can enter the Hall of Judgment, you must pass through the Great Hall, where the gods of all creation stare down upon you from the ornate ceiling. Several of Myrkjartan's lizardfolk minions are in the hall, deciding on their next course of action, since Myrkjartan has not yet returned from the Pool of Dreams. These lizardfolk have barred the entrance to the Seat of Judgment to keep the King of the North from escaping or calling for aid.

Hidden Treasure: Nestled on top of the dragon head sculpture at the very top of the arch is an eagle's nest. Climbing along the curve of the arch to reach the nest requires a DC 15 Climb check. The climb is 50 feet along the curve, or 40 feet straight up if attaching a rope and grapple to the dragon head sculpture itself. Inside the nest is a withered, desiccated hand with a silver chain tied around the wrist – it is a *hand of glory*. On the ring finger of the *hand of glory* is a *ring of protection* +2.

Special Conditions: The Great Hall echoes loudly, and is very well lit from above. All Move Silently and Hide checks suffer -5 within the hall. Further, the multi-colored light from the ceiling effectively counters invisibility, creating shimmering outlines of color around invisible creatures, as if they were affected by *glitterdust*.

Myrkjartan's minions are discussing their plans quietly. A character making a DC 25 Listen check at the entrance will hear low voices in the depths

of the hall, but will not be able to pinpoint a location. If the Listen check result is 30 or greater, the character will discern 3 distinct voices speaking in Draconic, but can't make out what they're saying.

The Minions: A lizardfolk ranger, cleric, and fighter occupy the Great Hall, taking up residence in the second alcove on the west wall. They are wearing goggles fitted with strange, blue-crystal lenses. Their "pet" is also with them, in the first alcove on the east – a massive ice basilisk, whose gaze turns its victims into ice instead of stone.

The special goggles worn by the lizardfolk give them immunity to the ice basilisk's gaze and provide a +4 bonus to all saves to avoid visual impairment, such as *blindness*, becoming dazed, and other gaze attacks. This is represented in their stat blocks as "protected vision."

Tactics: The lizardfolk try to harass and channel characters during battle to keep them from dispatching the basilisk too quickly— buying time for the pet to freeze some of the PCs.

The cleric holds a lantern containing a *candle of invocation* (neutral evil). His first action is to light the candle, then he buffs his party with *bless* and prayer right away. He will maneuver through battle, taking advantage of *sanctuary* and his high Concentration skill to cast *cure* spells on his companions and the ice basilisk when needed. He avoids melee combat unless out of spells.

The ranger maneuvers to line up shots with Rapid Shot and Manyshot, targeting spellcasters first or any targets among his favored enemies. The ranger has a small, silver whistle around his neck, which gives him a +2 competence bonus to his Handle Animal checks to direct the actions of the basilisk.

The fighter holds back at first, firing his bow. However, once a target has been frozen, he drops his bow and Quick Draws a massive greathammer, wading into battle to shatter the basilisk's victims into bits with Improved Sunder.

The basilisk just wants to eat, preferably ice. The basilisk's low animal cunning leads it to target the smallest or frailest characters first. Once it freezes a target, it starts munching on the creature, ignoring other targets. The basilisk continues munching on a shattered character unless attacked for more than 20 points of damage in a

round, or the ranger succeeds at a DC 15 Handle Animal check to spur the creature back into action.

If a character can get a hold of the ranger's whistle, he can attempt a Handle Animal check, trying to beat the Ranger's skill check total. If he succeeds, the basilisk must make a Will Save (DC equal to the Skill result) or become *confused* for the round. Attempting to command the basilisk without the whistle imposes a -5 penalty on the opposed Handle Animal check.

Hb'kir, Lizardfolk Cleric 4: CR 5; Medium Humanoid (Reptilian); HD 6d8+6; hp 36; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 20 (+5 natural, +4 scale mail, +1 light steel shield), touch 10, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +4; Grp +6; Atk Masterwork heavy mace +7 melee (1d8+2 (6)) or masterwork heavy crossbow +5 ranged (1d10 (5)) or bite +6 melee (1d4+2 (4)); Full Atk Masterwork heavy mace +7 melee (1d8+2 (6)) or masterwork heavy crossbow +5 ranged (1d10 (5)) or bite +6 melee (1d4+2 (4)) and 2 claws +1 melee (1d4+1 (3)); SA Spells; SQ Hold breath, protected vision, rebuke undead, spontaneously cast *inflict wounds*; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +9; Str 14, Dex 11, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Balance +4, Concentration +10, Heal +5, Jump +1, Knowledge (religion) +6, Swim +2; Iron Will, Skill Focus (Concentration), Skill Focus (Swim).

Equipment: Masterwork heavy mace, dagger, masterwork heavy crossbow, 10 bolts, scale mail, light steel shield, unholy symbol, 2 *potions of cure light wounds*, lantern with *candle of invocation* (neutral evil).

Divine Spells Prepared (5/4+1/3+1, DC 13 + spell level; Domains: Animal, Evil): 0 – *cure minor wounds* (x2), *detect magic*, *guidance*, *resistance*; 1st – *cure light wounds* (8), *doom* (x2), *protection from good**, *sanctuary*; 2nd – *cure moderate wounds* (13), *desecrate**, *hold person*, *silence*.

*Domain spell

Description: This lizardfolk is horribly scarred, his short muzzle a maze of scar tissue and missing scales. Dark brown and red ink tattoos curl across his features, turning his face into a grim mask of pure evil. He is heavily armored in a suit of iron scales and clutches a large, round shield in his left hand, while a plain bronze lantern dangles from his right.

Charp, Lizardfolk Ranger 4: CR 5; Medium Humanoid (Reptilian); HD 6d8+12; hp 42; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 22 (+3 Dex, +5 natural, +4 chain shirt), touch 13, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +5; Grp +6; Atk +1 *composite longbow* +9 ranged (1d8+2 (6)) or masterwork longsword +7 melee (1d8+1 (5)) or bite +6 melee (1d4+2 (4)); Full Atk +1 *composite longbow* +7/+7 ranged (1d8+2 (6)) or masterwork longsword +7 melee (1d8+1 (5)) or bite +6 melee (1d4+2 (4)) and 2 claws +1 melee (1d4+1 (3)); SQ Favored enemy (humans +2), hold breath, protected vision, wild empathy; AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +2; Str 12, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Balance +9, Handle Animal +8, Jump +9, Knowledge (nature) +4, Survival +8, Swim +9; Endurance^B, Far Shot, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot^B, Track^B.

Equipment: +1 *composite longbow* (+1 Str), 20 arrows, chain shirt, masterwork longsword, *potion of cat's grace*, silver whistle.

Divine Spell Prepared (1, DC 11 + spell level): 1 – *magic fang*.

Description: Short and wiry, this lizardfolk hides his features beneath the hood of a heavy, green cloak. He moves with a sure, scuttling grace, furtively seeking a vantage point in which to observe his enemies. He grips a finely wrought bow of horn and sinew and is clad in a fine vest of chainmail.

Sle'astakk, Lizardfolk Fighter 4: CR 5; Medium Humanoid (Reptilian); HD 2d8+6 and 4d10+12;

Reminder: *Candle of Invocation*

Burning the *candle* generates a favorable aura for the individual so doing if the *candle's* alignment matches that of the character. Characters of the same alignment as the burning *candle* add a +2 morale bonus on attack rolls, saving throws, and skill checks while within 30 feet of the flame. It is possible to extinguish the *candle* simply by blowing it out, so users often place it in a lantern to protect it from drafts and the like. Doing this doesn't interfere with its magical properties.

Note: The effect of the candle is *not* included in the stat block since it can be extinguished or countered in several ways. If any of the PCs are neutral evil, they'll also benefit from the candle's effects if they're within 30 feet!

hp 51; Init +5; Spd 20 ft.; AC 22 (+1 Dex, +5 natural, +6 banded mail), touch 11, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +5; Grp +8; Atk +1 *greathammer* +10 melee (1d10+7 (12)/19-20) or composite longbow +6 ranged (1d8+2 (6)) or bite +8 melee (1d4+3 (5)); Full Atk +1 *greathammer* +10 melee (1d10+7 (12)/19-20) or composite longbow +6 ranged (1d8+2 (6)) or bite +8 melee (1d4+3 (5)) and 2 claws +3 melee (1d4+1 (3)); SQ Hold breath, protected vision; AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 17, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 9.

Skills and Feats: Balance +3, Jump +2, Swim +2; Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Quick Draw, Weapon Focus (*greathammer*), Weapon Specialization (*greathammer*).

Equipment: +1 *greathammer* (treat as heavy flail), banded mail, composite longbow (+2 Str), 20 arrows, *potion of rage*.

Description: A true brute, this lizardfolk stands nearly seven feet tall, his imposing bulk made all the more intimidating by a massive, overdeveloped jaw. The towering reptilian humanoid bears a shirt of thick, steel bands and an enormous, two-handed *greathammer* made from black steel. A thick, powerful longbow is strapped to his broad back.

Grussk, Advanced Unique Half-Dragon (White) Basilisk: CR 9; Large Dragon (Cold); HD 11d12+55; hp 127; Init -2; Spd 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (clumsy); AC 20 (-1 size, -2 Dex, +13 natural), touch 7, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +11; Grp +25; Atk Bite +20 melee (2d6+10 (17)); Full Atk Bite +20 melee (2d6+10 (17)) and 2 claws +18 melee (1d6+5 (8)); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA Breath weapon, freezing gaze; SQ Darkvision 60 ft, immunities (cold, sleep and paralysis), low-light vision; AL NE; SV Fort +14, Ref +5, Will +4; Str 31, Dex 6, Con 21, Int 4, Wis 12, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Hide +8, Listen +17, Move Silently +5, Spot +17; Alertness, Blind-Fight, Great Fortitude, Multiattack.

Breath Weapon (Su): 60-ft cone, once per day, damage 6d8 (27) cold, Reflex DC 20 for half damage.

Freezing Gaze (Su): Turn to ice permanently, range 30 feet; Fortitude DC 16 negates. Ice has a hardness of 0 and 3 hp/inch of thickness. A creature turned to ice has a "thickness" based on its size and Constitution modifier. Once turned to ice, the creature can only be turned back to its normal form by casting *greater restoration*, *limit-wish*, *miracle*, or *wish*. A creature reduced to 0

hp while in ice form is dead, and is considered *disintegrated* for purposes of resurrection. Special note: Characters turned to ice can be restored to normal form by being immersed in the Shrivening Pool in area 2-3.

Creature Size	Ice Thickness
Fine	1 + Con Modifier
Diminutive	2 + Con Modifier
Tiny	4 + Con Modifier
Small	8 + Con Modifier
Medium	16 + Con Modifier
Large	32 + Con Modifier
Huge	64 + Con Modifier
Gargantuan	128 + Con Modifier
Colossal	256 + Con modifier

Description: The dull scraping of six sets of talons on the ice heralds the appearance of a horrendous, reptilian beast. Armored in thick scales of snowy white, the monster propels its ponderous bulk with the locomotion of six short but powerful legs. Two great, tattered wings lay folded along the monstrosity's back, casting serious doubt on the possibility of it ever climbing aloft. The beast's head bears a long, crocodilian snout lined with row upon row of flesh-shearing daggers, and seemingly out of place on such an abomination, deep set eyes of the purest sky blue. You find yourself drawn into the depths of those ever-blue eyes as they lock unerringly onto your warm, fleshy body. And as you stand entranced, the yawning chill of the grave rises up in a torrent to crash down upon you like an avalanche.

Aftermath: The lizardfolk have set up a small camp in the second alcove on the western wall. There is a large tent, several crates, a few barrels, and four sturdy 10-foot poles leaning up against the wall. A crate has been set up in the center of the tent as a table. On the table are a whetstone, a healer's kit, writing materials, and a large vellum map. The map depicts the Frosteye Mountains, detailing a path through the mountain range to the entrance. The tent also holds three bedrolls, blankets, and cooking equipment. A DC 22 Search of the bedrolls reveals a +1 *dagger* in one of the bedrolls and a second *candle of invocation* (neutral evil) in another.

A DC 15 Search of the barrels and crates outside the tent reveals one barrel filled with fresh water, one barrel half-filled with low quality brandy, a crate full of hard tack and jerky (made from elf flesh), and one crate of supplies – two climber's kits, two hooded lanterns, six flasks of oil, a 100-foot coil of rope with grappling hook, two small



hammers, 20 iron spikes, and five tindertwigs.

The Way is Shut: The door leading to the Seat of Judgment has been blocked with debris. The statues and pillars originally located in the alcoves have been smashed and placed in front of the door to prevent the King of the North from raising an alarm or garnering the support of any of the other denizens of the complex.

The stones must be cleared first, since the doors from the Seat of Judgment swing open into the Great Hall. However, the massive blocks have been precariously positioned to collapse on anyone moving them. The lizardfolk have the 10-foot poles in their camp to activate the trap from a safe distance should they need to enter area 2-7, but thus far have not needed do so.

Collapsing Rubble: CR 6; mechanical; location trigger; no reset; Atk +15 melee (8d6 (28)); multiple targets (strikes all characters adjacent to rubble); Search DC 22; Disable Device DC 25 (trigger remotely or wedge items between unstable blocks).

The debris weighs several tons, but can be cleared to tumble down the stairs and clear a path for the doors in about an hour. However, moving the debris physically is tiring work, and characters involved in clearing the rubble must make a High Altitude Fortitude save or become

fatigued due to the exertion in the thin air.

Scoring Suggestions: 1,000 points possible

200: Locate the eagle's nest perched atop the arch

50/lizardfolk: Per lizardfolk defeated

200: Defeat ice basilisk

50: Discover they might be able to wrest control of the basilisk with a Handle Animal check

+50: Successful use of Handle Animal (with or without whistle) to confuse the basilisk during combat (cumulative with above)

100: Extinguish *candle of invocation* during battle

50: Determine what the lizardfolk's goggles are for

50: Determine odd *glitterdust* effect of the light from the ceiling

50: Locate hidden dagger and candle in the tent

-100: Penalty for being smashed to bits after turning to ice by the basilisk

100: Clear debris from door without falling victim to the trap

Area 2-7 – The Seat of Judgment (EL 14)

Once the party has cleared the debris, they must open the massive doors to the Seat of Judgment. The doors are 30 feet high and are quite heavy. Large metal rings are bound to the door 15 feet above ground level. Each door weighs 1,000 pounds. The doors do not close by themselves, so they only need to be opened slightly to allow characters to slip through into chamber.

When the party enters the Seat of Judgment, read the following:

With a loud groan, the massive door opens. Beyond is a grand chamber with 60-foot-high vaulted ceilings supported by beautifully sculpted dragon pillars. Wide stairs lead up to large platforms built into the west and east walls of the chamber. The stone platforms follow the angled walls and stand 20 feet tall. Enormous thrones decked in precious metals and gems occupy the platforms. Two thrones are positioned on each side, facing the center of the chamber.

Across the chamber, nearly 100 feet from the entrance, is the largest door you've seen in the complex yet. Standing fully 40 feet wide and 50 feet tall, it is a monstrous steel door studded with countless levers, gears, tumblers, and locks.

This is the throne room where the Dragon Kings once held court, passed judgment, and meted out justice among the dragons. The great throne room houses four large, marble thrones, adorned in metallic filigree and colored lacquers. Each throne is fashioned in the likeness of that Dragon King's favored children; the armrests of each throne bear the likeness of the chromatic and metallic dragon associated with that particular Dragon King.

The throne room is empty, except for the King of the North, sitting doubled over, distraught, on his throne. Cobwebs and dust cling to him, and he is only barely aware of his surroundings, having been swallowed by sorrow and fevered by the wounds suffered from Myrkjartan that have yet to heal. The King of the North is seated in the northwest throne. When a character climbs either set of stairs or enters the center of the chamber, a DC 20 Spot check reveals the king.

With a DC 20 Listen check, a character hears the soft clink of metal to the northwest as the King of the North adjusts in his throne. A result of 25 or higher also allows the character to hear the King of the North bemoaning his fate in Draconic, apologizing to someone named Sunscratch, and murmuring about the New Betrayer, the False Dragon who has come to claim the Vault.

An Audience with the King: Upon noticing the party, the King of the North asks if they are with the New Betrayer, or still hold faithful to the True Dragons. He studies them intently, sizing up the group.

If the party has uncovered enough clues to be suspicious about their original goal – thinking that the King of the North couldn't possibly be the threat they were led to believe – they might be able to parlay with the king. This requires a DC 15 Diplomacy check, adjusted based on the strength of their argument or evidence.

If they are successful, the King of the North confides the following to the group:

I am old and grown foolish. I was tricked by the silver dragon, but should have seen through the ruse. I do not know how, but I fear that somehow Sunscratch is behind this. My once favored son. The Betrayer. And this new dragon, the New Betrayer, bears Sunscratch's ill intent.

I have done my best to seal his madness in the Vault, but I am too weak to put an end to his plans. Bring to me the regalia of office from my brothers, cleansed in the holy waters of the Shrivening Pool found at the base of the valley, and I shall grant you access to the Vault. Perhaps you will succeed where I have failed. I can only pray that you stop the Betrayer once and for all, for the sake of all the races of earth.

He is referring to either the four items secreted throughout the Valley of the Fallen or the corresponding Dragon Trumpets from the Dragon Choir:

- The King of the East's ceremonial +2 heavy steel shield of arrow deflection from the reliquary in area 2-1 or the Bronze Dragon Trumpet from the skeleton's watchtower in area 1-4b
- The King of the West's bracers of defenseless-

ness from the crystal egg in area 2-2 or the Copper Dragon Trumpet from the bottom of the pool in area 2-3

- The King of the North's *rod of rulership* from the Keeper's quarters in area 2-4 or the Gold Dragon Trumpet from the grave of Vestus Aundorill from the boneyard in area 2-1
- The King of the South's *+2 keen icy burst spear* from the skeletal remains in 2-5 or the Silver Dragon Trumpet from the secret chamber in area 1-9

Once the party returns with the required items, the King will tell them how to open the Vault door and enter the Vault of the Dragon Kings. Then, with a touch of sadness, he tells the party:

And so passes the rule of the Dragon Kings. The fate of man and dragon now lies in your hands. My pulse quickens, and while my last breath draws near, the legend of the Dragon Kings shall endure forever. Let those legends mark this battle as a glorious end to my life – or should you fall, the moment when the fate of all humanity was doomed forever.

With that, the King of the North attacks.

A King's Rage: If the characters insist that they are here to end his tyranny or rescue Myrkjartan, he grows angry. The King of the North will twist their words, hear only what he wishes, and

assume they are with Myrkjartan, here to defile the Vault or slay him. In fury, he will draw himself up, proclaiming loudly to the group:

I was foolish to sit idly by while this Usurper, the New Betrayer, attempted to wrest the Vault from the Dragon Kings. While I still draw breath, you shall never defile the Vault or loose Sunscratch's madness upon the world. The Vault shall never be yours!

Tactics: The King of the North is considered *sickened* from the grievous wounds he received during his battle from Myrkjartan, which never healed properly. This is reflected in his stat block.

There's a small chink in his armor, near his right pauldron, where Myrkjartan's powerful claws tore through the metal. A character engaged with or observing the King of the North can attempt a DC 24 Spot or Sense Motive check to notice he's favoring his right arm. Characters get a +1 cumulative circumstance bonus to this check each round.

His right shoulder is a tender target for combat. Characters targeting the King of the North's right shoulder suffer –4 on their attack roll, but any weapon that successfully hits inflicts an additional 2d6 points of damage. Ranged weapons or weapons with reach can target the location without further risk, but targeting the location with a standard melee weapon without reach provokes an attack of opportunity from the King of the North.

Convincing a King

While GMs are encouraged to weigh the value of the PCs' arguments based on role-playing or creativity, some guidelines are helpful. Here are some arguments or buzzwords that may appeal to the King of the North's senses. As a general rule, feel free to provide a +1 bonus to the Diplomacy check for each of these (or comparable) arguments the PCs use:

- A conversation with the Keeper of the Ways has shown them the King of the North is a noble and good leader
- The characters have learned the King of the North is the only King remaining, and currently rules over an empty Vault
- The characters grow suspicious that Sunscratch may somehow be involved – his missing head from area 2-5, the inclusion of his head in the fresco in area 2-4, etc.
- The Castellan from area 1-4 mentioned Sunscratch by name, alluding to some agreement or pact between the two
- The group is looking for a silver dragon, whom they fear needs help, and hopes the King of the North may be able to help
- If there is a hidden evil lurking deeper within the Vault, the group can appeal to the King of the North's sense of justice by vowing to destroy the evil

The King of the North uses Improved Trip to knock down nearby foes, or Improved Bull Rush to push characters off the platform. He focuses on melee combatants first, but shifts attention to characters taking advantage of his weak spot. If the PCs are not within immediate melee range, the king hurls boulders at them as they attempt to draw near. He gathers his missiles from the crumbling masonry littering the floor of the throne room or tears sections from the great stone pillars supporting the room. He relies on his spell resistance and strong saves to defend him from spellcasters.

When reduced to 75 hp or less, the King of the North unleashes a fearsome bellow and transforms into his dragon hybrid form. Transforming heals a portion of his damage, as detailed in the hybrid stat block. Keep in mind that when the Dragon King assumes the dragon hybrid form, his size increases from Large to Huge. Any creatures adjacent to the King of the North when he transforms must make a DC 20 Balance check or fall prone as they are pushed aside to make room for his increased space.

Once transformed, The King of the North opens with his breath weapon, doing his best to catch as many PCs in the fiery blast as possible. The King of the North takes to the air only to gain a better position on the field of battle or to pursue fleeing PCs. He will under no circumstance flee himself, fighting to the death in his final duty, deluded as it is, as the last remaining Dragon King.

The King of the North, Ancient Fire Giant Dracomorph (Red) (Giant Form): CR 14; Large Dragon (Shapechanger); HD 15d8+45 plus 6d12+18; hp 169; Init -2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 25 (-1 size, -2 Dex, +12 natural, +6 +2 *scale mail*), touch 7, flat-footed 25; Base Atk +17; Grp +29; Atk +2 *keen flaming burst falchion* +25 melee (2d6+12 (19) and 1d6 (3) fire/15-20) or slam +22 melee (1d4+8 (10)) or rock +13 ranged (2d6+6 (13)); Full Atk +2 *keen flaming burst falchion* +25/+20/+15 melee (2d6+12 (19) and 1d6 (3) fire/15-20) or 2 slams +22 melee (1d4+8 (10)) or rock +13 ranged (2d6+6 (13)); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA Rock throwing; SQ Alternate form, DR 10/dragon glass, darkvision 120 ft., draconic empathy, immunities (fire, sleep and paralysis), keen senses, SR 26, vulnerability to cold, weakness; AL LN; SV Fort +15, Ref +6, Will +13; Str 26, Dex 7, Con 16, Int 17, Wis 20, Cha 15.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +3 (+5 weapons),

Bluff +12 (+16 draconic creatures), Climb +25, Craft (weaponsmith) +23, Diplomacy +16 (+20 draconic creatures), Disguise +2 (+4 acting), Gather Information +2 (+6 draconic creatures), Intimidate +24 (+28 draconic creatures), Jump +25, Knowledge (history) +13, Listen +15, Search +11, Sense Motive +15, Spot +25; Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Trip, Leadership, Multiattack, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (falchion).

Equipment: Large +2 *keen flaming burst falchion*, Large +2 *scale mail*.

Rock Throwing (Ex): The range increment is 120 feet for the King of the North's thrown rocks.

Alternate Form (Su): The King of the North can assume a draconic hybrid form 5/day as a standard action. Gear and equipment adjust with him, as if treated by *enlarge person*.

Draconic Empathy (Ex): The King of the North can communicate and empathize with true dragons or creatures of the dragon type. This gives him a +4 racial bonus on Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, and Intimidate checks when using these skills to influence draconic creatures.

Keen Senses (Ex): The King of the North sees four times as well as a human in shadowy illumination and twice as well in normal light. He also has darkvision out to 120 ft.

Weakness (Ex): The King of the North suffered terrible wounds in his battle with Sunscorch. These wounds cause a dreadful fever and have never fully healed. Because of this affliction, the King of the North is considered to always be *sickened* (modifiers already in stat block). In addition, his extreme age has only further reduced his physical capabilities.

Description: Before you lingers an icon of degradation and faded glory, a crumbling relic of a once majestic being. The King of the North sits slumped in his massive throne, his face a haggard mask of weariness and sorrow. His once vibrant red hair and beard have turned completely white, and the near limitless might of his body has long since fled, leaving little more than a scarecrow of cobwebs and dust.

The King of the North, Ancient Fire Giant Dracomorph (Red) (Hybrid Form): CR 14; Huge Dragon (Shapechanger); HD 15d8+75 plus 6d12+30; hp 211; Init -3; Spd 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (average); AC 25 (-2 size, -3 Dex, +14 natural, +6 +2 *scale mail*), touch 5, flat-footed 25; Base Atk +17; Grp +37; Atk +2 *keen flaming burst falchion* +28 melee (3d6+18 (28) and 1d6 (3) fire/15-20) or bite

+25 melee (2d8+12 (21)) or rock +12 ranged (2d6+10 (17)); Full Atk +2 *keen flaming burst falchion* +28/+23/+18 melee (3d6+18 (28) and 1d6 (3) fire/15-20) or bite +25 melee (2d8+12 (21)) and 2 claws +23 melee (2d6+6 (13)) and 2 wing buffets +23 melee (1d8+6 (10)) or rock +12 ranged (2d6+12 (19)); Space/Reach 15 ft./15 ft.; SA Breath of the Dragon Kings, Majesty of the Dragon Kings, rock throwing; SQ Alternate form, DR 10/mithral, darkvision 120 ft. draconic empathy, immunities (fire, sleep and paralysis), keen senses, SR 26, vulnerability to cold, weakness; AL LE; SV Fort +17, Ref +5, Will +13; Str 34, Dex 5, Con 20, Int 17, Wis 20, Cha 15.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +3 (+5 weapons), Bluff +12 (+16 draconic creatures), Climb +29, Craft (weaponsmith) +23, Diplomacy +16 (+20 draconic creatures), Disguise +2 (+4 acting), Gather Information +2 (+6 draconic creatures), Intimidate +24 (+28 draconic creatures), Jump +29, Knowledge (history) +13, Listen +15, Search +11, Sense Motive +15, Spot +25; Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Trip, Leadership, Multiattack, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (falchion).

Breath of the Dragon Kings (Su): Once every six rounds, the King of the North can breathe forth a 40-ft. cone of flame. Those caught in the cone take 8d8 (36) points of fire damage. A DC 25 Reflex save halves this damage.

Majesty of the Dragon Kings (Ex): In his hybrid form, the King of the North can unsettle foes with his mere presence. The ability takes effect whenever the King of the North changes into his hybrid form, attacks, charges, or flies overhead. Creatures within a 60-ft. radius are subject to the effect if they have fewer HD than the King of the North.

A potentially affected creature that succeeds on a DC 22 Will save is immune to the King of the North's Majesty of the Dragon Kings ability for 24 hours. On a failure, creatures with 4 or less HD become panicked for 2d6 (7) rounds and those with 5 or more HD become shaken for 1d8 (4) rounds.

Description: The ancient fire giant suddenly leaps to his feet, his face a rictus snarl of rage and defiance. The air in the room suddenly grows hot, and the King of the North unleashes a howl of pure bestial rage. Before your eyes his skin writhes, and his bones crackle as they grow and change in shape. The transformation takes mere seconds, leaving in its wake a towering, scaled nightmare, a horrific union of fire giant and red



dragon. Gone is the decrepit warder, mired in his sorrow. He has been replaced by a being of draconic majesty, fueled by the echoing wrath of the long departed Dragon Kings.

Examining the Thrones: Many valuable jewels have been carefully worked into each throne. Removing a jewel requires a DC 28 Disable Device or DC 24 Strength check. Up to 2d10 (11) jewels can be removed from each throne. Each jewel is worth 2d6 x 500 (3,500) gp.

Each throne also has a hidden compartment beneath the seat. The compartments require a DC 30 Search check to locate. Once one compartment has been located, a character receives a +2 circumstance bonus to locate the others. Each compartment is trapped and locked. Opening the compartments requires a DC 28 Open Lock check.

King of the North throne trap – Slashing poisoned blades: CR 6; mechanical; automatic reset; hidden button bypass (Search DC 40, gem on right hand rest); Atk +12 melee (1d4+4 (6)/19-20 plus poison, dagger); poison (death-blade poison, DC 20 Fortitude save resists, 1d6 (3) Con/2d6 (7) Con); multiple targets (all targets adjacent to throne); Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 22 (jam spring mechanism).

Inside the King of the North's throne are a *potion of lesser restoration*, a *potion of bull's strength*, and a *ring of evasion*.

King of the East throne trap – Insanity mist vapors: CR 6; mechanical; location trigger; repair reset; gas; multiple targets (all targets within 10 feet of throne); poison (concentrated insanity mist, DC 17 Fortitude save resists, 1d4 (2) Wis/2d6 (7) Wis); Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 23 (plug openings venting gas).

Inside the King of the East's throne are a *potion of cure serious wounds*, a *potion of haste*, and a *wand of lightning bolts* (CL 6, Reflex 17 for half, 6 charges).

King of the South throne trap – Icy burst scythe trap: CR 6; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset; Atk +21 melee (2d6+9 (16) and 1d6 (3) cold/19-20/x4, Large +1 *keen icy burst scythe* blade); multiple targets (3 targets in front of throne); Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 22 (jam spring mechanism).

Inside the King of the South's throne is a *potion of resist energy (fire) 20* and a *rod of flame extinguishing*.

King of the West throne trap – Improved acid arrow trap: CR 6; magic device; location trigger; automatic reset; Atk +5 ranged touch; spell effect (empowered, extended *acid arrow*, 6th-level wizard, 3d4 (7) acid/round for 6 rounds); Search DC 27; Disable Device DC 28 (seal aperture).

Inside the King of the West's throne is a Large *rod of withering*. It functions in all regards as a standard *rod of withering*, except that it is Large size.

Opening the Vault Door: The great doors have countless holes, gears, and bars. On the right side of the door is a large plate with four holes arranged in a circle – North, South, East, and West. To open the door, the characters must put the corresponding King's regalia in the proper opening – but the door will only open if the items have been properly sanctified in the Shrivening Pool in area 2-3. Alternatively, if the party has collected all four Dragon Trumpets, playing all four trumpets at the same time (requiring a DC 10 Perform check) also opens the door.

Once the party finally opens the Vault door, read the following aloud:

With a deafening rumble, dozens of cogs and levers start to shift and rotate across the sur-

face of the immense Vault door. The floor of the chamber vibrates underfoot as the gears and tumblers thunder into place. After one final crash, the door and chamber turn silent. Without so much as a whisper, the gigantic door slides into the western wall, revealing a long corridor leading deeper into the mountain.

You braved the dangers of the Valley, bested the King of the North, and have accomplished a great deal so far. But now your quest has taken on even greater significance. The next leg of this harrowing journey lies ahead, hidden within the depths of the Vault of the Dragon Kings itself.

This ends Round 2 of the tournament.

Scoring Suggestions: 1,500 points total

150: Determine the King of the North is not the real culprit

50: Attempt to parlay with the King of the North, and plead your case (whether or not it is successful)

+50 Bonus: Gain the trust of the King of the North and hear his speech about reclaiming the items to learn how to open the Vault door (bonus in addition to above)

100: Discover the King of the North favors his right shoulder

100: Exploit the King's weakness during combat

25/throne: Per secret compartment located among the thrones

25/throne: Opening secret compartments without triggering the trap

400: Defeat the King of the North

300: Open the Vault doors

+50 Bonus: for having the right items, properly shriven, the first time group attempts opening the door

+100 Bonus: Use the Dragon Choir to open the Vault doors

Vault of the Dragon Kings Round 3: Inside the Vault

Area 3-1: The Long Stair is adjacent to area 2-7: The Seat of Judgment. These two areas connect via the large vault door shown at the far end of area 2-7.

Lighting: Areas 3-3 and 3-4 provide strong enough illumination that any characters with low-light vision can see adequately along the main corridors. Characters with standard vision will need a light source to explore the eastern section of the main corridor or suffer -4 on all Spot and Search checks. Other sources of illumination are noted in the individual room descriptions.

The Dragon Choir: Hidden throughout the different levels of this adventure are the four pieces of a mysterious dragon relic: the dragon choir. A single dragon's voice is a magical thing – it can invoke magic, breath fire or lightning, create fear, or calm nerves. Combining the voices of many dragons is a powerful source of ancient magic lore.

The Dragon Kings crafted four peerless dragon trumpets, each one producing a perfect note, resonating with the power and majesty of a particular dragon. Collecting all four dragon trumpets and using them in certain areas has some interesting results. Using the choir of trumpets in area 3-8 will have special results.

Scoring Bonus – Exploration: Teams earn bonus points for the number of rooms they explore on each level. A room is considered “explored” if the room has been entered by one or more party members and searched or the creatures/traps encountered (regardless of whether or not the encounter was overcome). Simply walking into a room and turning around again does not qualify. Consult the table below to determine how many points the team earns each round. These are not cumulative awards.

Rooms Explored	Bonus Points
1-3	0
4	200
5	400
6	600
7	800
8	1,000

Hewn stone walls: 5 ft. thick; hardness 8; hp 900; Break DC 80; Climb DC 22.

Worked stone doors: 1 ft. thick; hardness 8; hp 180; Break DC 40; Climb DC 22.

High Altitude Reminder

Don't forget the dangers the high altitude present to the party. Before running this round, you should skim The Perils of High Altitude on page 8.

Areas of the Map

Area 3-1 – The Long Stair (EL 8)

When the party is ready to start round 3 of the tournament, read the following:

With the King of the North now dead, there are no more Dragon Kings left to rule the Vault. Or to protect it. Knowing that your quarry lies ahead, you check over your gear one last time before moving past the massive doors. Passing the threshold, you now stand within the Vault of the Dragon Kings.

The Vault doors open into a long corridor, heading due north from the Dragon Kings' throne room. Draconic runes carved along the bottom of the wall fill the hall with a faint, golden hue. The hallway is 40 feet wide and 50 feet tall with rigid corners. There are no features other than the golden runes.

The corridor extends 200 feet north before you notice a soft white light ahead. The corridor transitions into an enormous stone stairway. The steps are steep, each almost three feet high, and extend more than 100 feet into a sprawling room below. A sculpted banister 10 feet high runs along the side of the stairs. On each step, a gaping dragon maw yawns menacingly.

Once the characters descend halfway down the stairwell, the Maw from area 3-2 is visible. Read the following aloud:

From your vantage, you can see a humungous dragon head fashioned of stone and precious metals protruding from the wall opposite the stairs. The head is more than 20 feet wide and easily 40 feet tall, its yawning mouth leading into a dark corridor further north. Two great amethysts, each the size of a giant's fist, sit in the great stone eye sockets, staring across the room and up the stairwell.

This stairwell is the only means to access area



3-2 and explore the Vault proper. The dragon faces etched into the sides of the banister are perfect renditions of the great maw staring at them from the lower level. They stand several feet tall, their mouths open to meet the floor along the width of each stair.

The stairwell is doubly trapped. First, anyone walking down the center of the stairwell, in a line with the massive dragon maw at area 3-2, is spotted by the gems set into the dragon's eyes. If the intruder is not dragonblooded or one of the jann defenders from area 3-5, a pulse of negative energy shoots from each eye. The pulses can reach the full length of the stairs. The eyes shoot a pulse each round until there are no longer any targets inside its sensory range. Moving aside allows characters to avoid the pulses of negative energy, but they risk triggering the second trap.

Anyone walking down the sides of the stairwell nearest the dragon-hewn banister triggers the smaller dragon maws adorning the walls. Razor-sharp poisoned spikes protrude from the dragon mouths like wicked tongues, jabbing at passers-by unless they step into the center of the stairwell – putting them back in the path of the first trap.

Enervation Dragon Eyes: CR 6; magic device; proximity trigger (*detect non-dragonblooded* along path); automatic reset; Atk 2 rays +8 ranged touch; spell effect (*enervation*, 7th-level wizard, 1d4 (2) negative levels); Multiple targets (each eye can shoot at a separate target in path); Target restriction (40-foot-wide path from maw, cannot target a creature within 10 feet of the maw if the target is below 30 feet – the surface of the dragon head restricts line of sight); Search DC 25 (automatic if triggered); Disable Device DC 28 (remove amethysts from eye sockets).

Poisoned Dragon Spikes: CR 6; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; Atk 1d4 (2) spikes +12 melee (1d8+4 (8) plus poison); multiple targets (all targets adjacent to banister); poison (Deadly viper venom, DC 15 Fortitude save resists, 1d6 (3) Con/1d6 (3) Con); Search DC 18; Disable Device DC 22 (jam apertures shut/remove spikes).

This may seem like a “damned if you do, damned if you don’t sort of situation” but there are ways around this. By this time, if the party has discovered that being seen as dragonblooded can possibly protect them, they might be able to come up with some other clever ways to bypass the trap.

Otherwise, magic modes of movement, such as *fly* or *spider climb*, provide means to travel down the stairs and avoid the traps. Further, the banister is only 10 feet high and 5 feet wide. Climbing the banister and walking down the gigantic handrail is a sensible option, and requires a DC 12 Climb check. A climber is attacked by the dragon spikes on that section each round spent climbing.

Scoring Suggestions: 700 points possible

400: Trigger neither trap

200: Trigger only one of the 2 traps

100: Disable portions of the dragon spike traps on the stairwell for easier descent

100: Climb atop the banister to avoid the dragon spikes

100: Determine targeting/range limitations of *enervation* rays

-100: Additional penalty for dying by level loss from the *enervation* rays

Area 3-2 – The Maw (EL 12)

When the party descends the stairs or enters the main section of the room and can see the entire chamber, read the following:

The Vault's entryway is an imposing chamber of ornate stonework and twisting metal sculptures. The high arching ceiling soars 80 feet overhead, the great stone dragon maw stretching halfway to the ceiling. The chamber spans 100 feet east to west, with 30-foot-wide corridors plunging deeper into the complex at opposite ends of the room.

Across from the bottom of the stairwell is a black aperture fashioned in the gullet of the great dragon mouth. The top of the open maw serves as a canopy, covering the entrance to that darkened hallway. The room curves 50 feet behind the point where the stairs meet the floor, eventually meeting up flush to the sides of the stairwell.

The walls of the chamber are meticulously decorated with an exquisite mosaic of myriad dragons in their glory – it is a majestic, awe-inspiring work of art. The highly polished floor is covered with ornate stonework and metal sculptures flush with the smooth surface, depicting dragons intertwined throughout the course of the entire room. Thousands of such dragons adorn the floor.

Certain areas marked on the map trigger the razor sharp dragon wings to flash upward, like scythes, cutting at the legs and feet of passersby. Runes with cryptic warnings about area 3-3 adorn the maw, which also houses the amethysts shooting *enervation* rays at the party. Stationed beneath the stairwell, one on each side of the base against the walls, two Zelekhut guardians stand at attention.

Studying the Maw: A DC 25 Spot check, reduced to DC 20 for anyone actively studying the great Maw, reveals fine runes and scrollwork carved into the northern wall around the great maw, written in Draconic.

Salvation Begins Anew at the End of Dreams

When Twilight Fades to Dark, the Dawn Draws Near

Set Aside Your Fears, for Peace Lies Ahead

These are all warnings as to what lies ahead in

area 3-3: The End of Dreams. These phrases remind dragons of what awaits them should they break the laws of the Dragon Kings, or decide to shuffle off this mortal coil. Some unfortunate players may think this leads to the Pool of Dreams.

There is no door within the maw, just a large open portal. The surface of the portal shimmers and swirls, like some cosmic rotating view of the heavens. Casting *detect magic* on the portal reveals this is an illusion – merely a vivid artistic display.

Traps: Until the dragon eyes are disabled, the *enervation* trap continues to target characters, as long as they are not within the small “safe zone” afforded by the cover beneath the dragon maw itself. The left eye has a clear line of sight down the eastern corridor, while the right eye can target characters down the western corridor. The eyes also target characters during combat with the Zelekhut.

The grey areas marked on the map represent 10-foot squares where the floor is trapped with the scythe blades. When any part of the area is entered, the scythes slash out along the entire surface of the trapped area before retracting back into the floor. This means that a single character may be attacked several times if other characters move in and activate the trap. Each 5-foot square of the floor must be disabled separately.

Enervation Dragon Eyes: CR 6; magic device; proximity trigger (*detect non-dragonblooded* along path); automatic reset; Atk 2 rays +8 ranged touch; spell effect (*enervation*, 7th-level wizard, 1d4 (2) negative levels); Multiple targets (each eye can shoot at a separate target in path); Target restriction (40-foot-wide path from maw, cannot target a creature within 10 feet of the maw if the target is below 30 feet – the surface of the dragon head restricts line of sight); Search DC 25 (automatic if triggered); Disable Device DC 28 (remove amethysts from eye sockets).

Slashing Dragon Blades: CR 4; mechanical; proximity trigger; automatic reset; Atk 1d4 (2) blades +10 melee (1d6+4 (7)/19–20, short-sword); multiple targets (each target in shaded zones); Search DC 25 (DC 20 once triggered); Disable Device DC 22 (jam spring mechanisms in a single 5-foot square).

Exploring the Room: The mosaic in the room

contains a great deal of information about the dragonkin of the Vault. The Keepers of the Ways throughout the course of the history of the Vault created this mosaic as another archive of the Vault's past. Along the western wall, all the chromatic dragons that fought, died, or fled during the rebellion are depicted. The eastern wall depicts the metallic dragons in the same way. There are several sections with missing stones or broken tile, and some portions are in poor repair.

A DC 25 Search or Spot check of the art adorning the western wall reveals Sunscratch, a Colossal red dragon much larger than any of the other dragons depicted. It looks like the stones used to fashion that portion of the mosaic have been recently cleaned and repaired. When Myrkjartan returned to the Vault, Sunscratch saw himself depicted on the wall, and ordered his lizardfolk minions to fix the mosaic, as befitted a dragon of his stature.

Careful examination of the mosaic near the southern edges, closest to the stairwell, may reveal some odd discrepancies. A DC 28 Search, Spot, or Knowledge (the planes) check reveals that two of the dragon figures on either side of the stairwell do not match the same style or motif as the others, appearing more like mechanical centaurs with draconic features than true dragons. They are in fact the zelekhut constructs cleverly disguised as portions of the wall.

Tactics: The zelekhut are intelligent, calculating foes, created to protect the Vault from interlopers. They will not attack a creature of the dragon type due to their programming, but are not otherwise fooled like the *detect non-dragonblooded* traps of the complex.

The zelekhut remain motionless in place until characters come to examine them more closely or split up to explore the room. The zelekhut take advantage of the traps in the room, maneuvering during combat to try to force characters into the path of the *enervation* rays or trapped floor sections. The zelekhut use their *lesser geas* ability on the most dangerous foes, forcing them to “explore the mysteries of the Maw” and enter area 3-3 – preferably by a route which exposes them to the traps.

When the zelekhut activate, read the following aloud:

The sound of metal scraping across metal

catches your attention. Before your eyes, the hard, fixed lines of the elaborate dragon mosaic start to shift and pull away from the wall. Small bits of glass and tile clatter to the floor as a large, draconic automaton loosens itself from a recess in the wall. It is an imposing composition of harsh angles and wide, flat planes. Four stout legs support a gleaming draconic chassis, reminiscent of a bizarre, metallic centaur.

The zelekhut do not trigger the enervation trap, but can trigger the trapped floors. If multiple targets are standing on trapped floor sections, a zelekhut will move through a trapped area to trigger the blades, letting the trap attack characters while it shrugs off the effects with its high damage resistance.

When joining melee, the zelekhut prefer to charge, taking advantage of their Ride-By Attack and Spirited Charge feats. They will change targets to charge if necessary, even opening themselves to attacks of opportunity. Once one zelekhut attacks, the other joins the following round. The zelekhut guardians fight to destruction.

Zelekhut Guardians (2): CR 9; Large Construct (Extraplanar, Lawful); HD 8d10+30; 75 hp each; Init +0; Spd 35 ft., fly 40 ft. (average); AC 27 (-1 size, +10 natural, +8 plate barding), touch 9, flat-footed 27; Base Atk +6; Grp +15; Atk Lance +10 melee (2d6+5 (12) plus 1d6 (3) electricity) or longsword +10 melee (2d6+5 (12) plus 1d6 (3) electricity); Full Atk 2 Lances +10 melee (2d6+5 (12) plus 1d6 (3) electricity) or 2 longswords +10 melee (2d6+5 (12) plus 1d6 (3) electricity); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA Spell-like abilities; SQ Body transformation, construct traits, DR 10/chaotic, darkvision 60 ft., fast healing 5, low-light vision, spell resistance 20; AL LN; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +5; Str 21, Dex 11, Con –, Int 10, Wis 17, Cha 15.

Skills and Feats: Diplomacy +4, Listen +9, Search +9, Sense Motive +12, Spot +9, Survival +3 (+5 following tracks); Great Fortitude, Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge.

Body Transformation (Ex): A zelekhut may initially appear rather non-threatening—but when it is about to enter combat, it can cause a lance or longsword to spring forth from its forearms as a free action. In similar fashion, it can cause a pair of golden metallic wings to emerge from its back. Retracting the weapons or the wings is

also a free action.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*clairaudience/clairvoyance, dimensional anchor, dispel magic, fear* (DC 16), *hold person* (DC 15), *locate creature, true seeing*; 3/day—*hold monster* (DC 17), *mark of justice*; 1/week—*lesser geas* (DC 16). Caster level 8th.

Aftermath: Climbing the dragon head to reach the amethyst eyes requires a DC 12 Climb check. A character must succeed at a DC 15 Balance check atop the dragon head to keep out of the path of the dragon eyes and avoid triggering the *enervation* ray trap as outlined in area 3-1. Once removed, each amethyst is worth 3,500 gp and functions as a *wand of enervation* (CL 7) with 1d6 (3) charges.

Once the zelekhut have been defeated, a crafty character can attempt to open the bizarre, mechanical armature of the creature to access their lance and longsword devices. A DC 24 Open Lock check, followed by a DC 28 Disable Device check removes one of the Large lances or longswords from a Zelekhut, which function as +1 *weapons of shock*. Failure by more than 5, however, triggers a mild jolt of electricity from the inevitable's failing power source and the character suffers 1d8 (4) points of electrical damage.

Scoring Suggestions: 900 points possible

100: Disable the *enervation* trap

100: Discover gems can be used as *wands of enervation*

200/creature: Per zelekhut defeated

100: Noticing special treatment of Sunscratch on the mosaic

50: Discover zelekhut before combat begins

50: Disable sections of floor traps for easier maneuvering

50: Attempt to recover items from zelekhut bodies

50: Catch on to the zelekhut tactics and avoid being forced into the traps during combat

Area 3-3 – The End of Dreams (EL 10)

Once the group passes through the surface of the Maw from area 3-2 and enters the long, shadowy corridor, read the following aloud:

Passing through the swirling miasma feels like walking through a frigid waterfall. The intense cold lasts only a moment, but your breath catches nonetheless. On this side of the star-filled filter, you can see faint, swirling star patterns on the wall of the shadowy corridor. No light from the grand entranceway penetrates the hallway, only the dim illumination provided by the celestial depictions on the walls.

The walls, floor, and ceiling are all perfectly smooth and polished, and the dim light sparkles along the surfaces of the corridor like a grand view of the cosmos. You feel like you're standing amidst the heavens themselves.

Soft yellow runes glow along the top of the walls and the ceiling immediately overhead. You can barely see more runes carved further down the hall, but can't make them out from here.

If any of the characters in the corridor can read Draconic, they make out the runes. These are the same cryptic phrases found outside the corridor on the wall surrounding the Maw.

Salvation Begins Anew at the End of Dreams

When Twilight Fades to Dark, the Dawn Draws Near

Set Aside Your Fears, for Peace Lies Ahead

This area is extremely dangerous. The hallway is filled with runes tied to a geas, beckoning drag-



ons to head further down the corridor – and eventually to the end of the tunnel where a *sphere of annihilation* awaits. This area served as a means to safely dispose of the bodies of dead dragons, or to execute dragons that broke the most sacred laws of the Dragon Kings.

Traveling Down the Corridor: Once the party has moved at least 20 feet down the corridor, a DC 22 Bardic Knowledge check or a DC 28 Knowledge (arcana) or Knowledge (nature) check allows a character to identify several of the constellations found on the walls – constellations rumored to be the spirits of great dragons cast into the heavens to watch down on humanity.

If characters recognize the constellations, they can attempt a DC 22 Bardic Knowledge or Knowledge (arcana) check to realize that coupled with the inscriptions through the hall, these seem to be part of a draconic burial or veneration ritual referred to as *The End of Dreams*.

Anyone reading the runes or watching the swirling patterns of lights must make a DC 25 Will save or become sedate and calm as they come under the effect of a powerful *geas*, compelling them to reach the end of the tunnel. Normally a *geas* does not allow a save, but since this *geas* has been specifically set up to compel dragons, all non-dragon or targets without the (reptilian) subtype can attempt a save. (Poor kobolds!)

The runes are meant to calm dragons who head into the tunnel; think of it as dragon catnip for the dragon about to meet his doom.

Reaching the End of Dreams: After 50 feet the tunnel dips to a 45-degree angle. The slick surface and sharp angle require a DC 15 Balance check, or the character falls prone and rolls down the corridor. Climbing up the smooth floor along the incline requires a DC 18 Climb check. After a 30-foot decline, the tunnel dips again, perpendicular to ground level. 50 feet down this chute is a slightly modified *sphere of annihilation*.

After the *sphere* has annihilated anything coming into contact with it, it distills and extracts all the potential *dragon ether* from creatures and funnels the dragon ether into the cylinder in area 3-4. Any creature with the dragon type or (reptilian) subtype has a certain amount of *dragon ether* coursing through them. Full-blooded dragons hold a great deal of *dragon ether*, which holds the pure essence of a dragon's spirit and affinity to its draconic element. Reptilian creatures and some

other singular individuals (such as powerful mages or druids) may yield a trace amount of *dragon ether*, but it is enough to resurrect them.

Scoring Suggestions: 900 points possible

50: Locate the cryptic warnings around the Maw

50: Save someone under the effects of the *geas*, keeping them from the *sphere of annihilation*

100: Discover the constellations on the walls

50/PC (200 max): Per character resisting the effects of the *geas*

200: Make the connection to the veneration ritual

300: Discover/determine what lay at the end of the corridor

-100: Each additional person, past the first, destroyed by the *sphere of annihilation*

Area 3-4 – Spirits from the Past (EL 12)

When the group enters the long, winding halls leading to area 3-4, read the following aloud:

The wide, expansive hall leads off to the west before angling sharply to the south. The walls bear the same sort of draconic stonework that adorns the banister on the great stairwell leading to the Vault's entryway, but here the great draconic mouths stretch and yawn to nearly the full height of the 50-foot ceiling. The faces snarl and leer at you from the entire length of the twisting walls.

The mouths are not trapped, and there is nothing of interest in the hallway. Groups that waste time examining the walls find nothing. Once they make their way through the hall and can see into area 3-4, read the following:

Carved ivory pillars flank the wide archway leading into a large room at the end of the corridor. The room appears to be 60 feet east to west and nearly 100 feet wide. Similar ivory pillars are stationed at each corner of the octagonal room, supporting the ceiling 50 feet overhead.

A large, glass cylinder, nearly 30 feet in diameter and stretching from floor to ceiling, dominates this room. Only a portion of the cylin-

der is exposed in the room, approximately half its circumference sealed in the western wall. Wide metal struts are bolted along the face of the cylinder every few feet, providing some structural integrity to the enormous container.

The glass cylinder is filled with a turbulent miasma of different colors, cycling between flashes of different elemental natures – at one moment it appears to be filled with surging electricity, another moment swirling with ice and snow, the next roiling in flames and lava, and then awash in turgid green and yellow water.

The substance is *dragon ether* – the very essence of the true dragon nature, a volatile mixture of all four draconic elements. The *dragon ether* can provide quite useful in opening the Pool of Dreams in area 3-8. Floating amidst the ether is the restless ghost of the King of the South.

When dragons are destroyed by the *sphere of annihilation* at the End of Dreams in area 3-3, the only remaining trace of their existence is the

amount of *dragon ether* extracted and funneled into this cylinder via a complex of tubes leading from area 3-3 to the top of the cylinder.

Hidden Details – The Top: Curious characters can scale the cylinder to examine the top. From ground level, it appears to fully extend to the ceiling, but there is a 5-foot gap at the top of the cylinder. The cylinder is 45 feet high, requiring a DC 16 Climb check. Once on top of the cylinder, a character finds dozens of pipes and tubes leading into the ceiling and wall.

A DC 18 Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check determines from the angle and construction of the tubes that the tubes are leading into the cylinder from the north and east. Panels from the ceiling can be broken out to confirm the direction of the tubes. The pipes themselves are constructed from thin copper heavy with patina.

Ether Pipes: 3 inches thick; hardness 5; hp 45; Break DC 25.

A DC 25 Search of the top of the cylinder locates a small, copper band threaded with dragon scales cinched around one of the pipe fittings –

Dragon Ether

The *dragon ether* is a potent mix of draconic elements siphoned from the very life force of powerful dragons through the history of the Vault. Aside from the refined and distilled elemental qualities, the *dragon ether* is a pseudo-sentient force. Individual personalities and identities are replaced with a sort of collective consciousness created by the merging of so many varied dragon spirits over the centuries. It is also a key to opening the Pool of Dreams in area 3-8.

Handling *dragon ether* is very difficult, as it is a volatile and unstable force. Mithral, adamantine, dragon scales, and dragon ivory are all immune to the energy damage from *dragon ether*. It is quite potent, but evaporates quickly when exposed to air – a gallon of *dragon ether* dissipates in only a minute or two.

Dragon ether is strong enough that it destroys most other common materials on contact, requiring a DC 16 Fortitude save to resist destruction. Items can be prepared and treated to become resistant to *dragon ether* with applications of an *unguent of timelessness*, *universal solvent*, or being washed with *potions of resist energy* of the appropriate types.

Any roll of 1 on an attack roll or skill check involving handling *dragon ether* results in the user being exposed, suffering 2d6 points of damage from a random element. Exposure to larger amounts of *dragon ether* increases the damage, with immersion inflicting up to 10d6 points of damage. For every 2d6 points of damage inflicted, roll 1d4 to determine the energy type for that cluster of damage: 1 = fire, 2 = electricity, 3 = cold, 4 = acid.

A treated bottle or flask filled with dragon ether can be hurled as a splash weapon. Treat this attack as a ranged touch attack with a range increment of 10 feet. A direct hit deals 2d6 points of random elemental damage. Roll 1d4 to determine what type of energy damage a particular flask inflicts upon impact. Every creature within 5 feet of the point of impact takes 2 points of the appropriate energy damage from the splash.

as if placed there as a temporary fix to a missing bolt or clamp. The dragonscale band is an *amulet of natural armor* +3, but it is tightly secured. A DC 22 Disable Device or DC 20 Strength check is required to remove the amulet.

However, removing the amulet breaks the seal, sending a searing jet of *dragon ether* from the pipe as it adjusts to the pressure difference. The character removing the amulet suffers 1d6 (3) points each of fire, electrical, cold, and acid damage. A DC 18 Reflex save halves the damage.

Examining the Cylinder: 10 feet off the ground to either side of the cylinder, large, metal spigots in the shape of dragon mouths are fixed to the glass, leading into ivory basins carved to look like open dragon wings. Draconic carvings on the ivory basins read:

*From Dragons of Yore, the Way Shall Open,
Drink Deeply the Dreams*

This line holds an important clue – the dragon ether can be used to access the Pool of Dreams in area 3-8. However, some players may misinterpret this to mean the great cylinder is the pool, and the ether is what imparts the knowledge.

A DC 20 Search check of the cylinder reveals a series of very fine cracks along its eastern face. This is where Sunscratch forced Myrkjartan to try to break into the cylinder so he could lash out at the ghostly King of the South, who slew him during his mortal life. The cylinder is still fairly well intact, but large area effect spells or direct attacks could damage it sufficiently, causing it to break. If the cylinder breaks, the change in pressure forces the *dragon ether* violently into the chamber, in a 60-foot cone from the point of the break. The massive volume of *dragon ether* inflicts 8d6 points of damage, 2d6 (7) points each of fire, cold, lightning, and acid damage. A DC 23 Reflex save halves this damage.

Reinforced Glass Cylinder: 6 inches thick; hardness 2; hp 30; Break DC 25.

Turning the spigots requires a DC 12 Strength check, and *dragon ether* pours from the spigots into the basin. A small hole at the bottom of each basin connects to the tube and pipe system, pouring unused ether back into the cylinder.

A DC 28 Search of the northern basin reveals a ring has been dropped down the drain. To retrieve the ring manually, a character must make

a DC 18 Escape Artist check to reach 2 feet down the narrow drain. Failing the roll by more than 5 indicates the character's arm has become stuck, and he suffers 1d6 (3) points of nonlethal damage from wrenching his shoulder. While stuck, a character is considered flat-footed. The ring at the bottom of the drain is a *ring of counterspells*, currently charged with *confusion*.

Anyone examining the contents of the cylinder is allowed a Spot check. A DC 25 Spot check reveals a large figure suspended in the swirling contents. If the check is 30 or higher, the character also notes that the figure is clad in ornate plate armor, but appears to be bobbing gently inside the miasma, untouched by the torrents of energy around it.

Hidden Details – The Secret Room: A secret door is hidden along the northern wall of the chamber, requiring a DC 30 Search check to locate. The door is opened by pressing in one of the large bricks by the base of the door – usually kicked or pushed in with the foot of one of the Vault's lizardfolk attendants when his hands are full of supplies. This trigger requires a separate DC 24 Search or Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check to locate.

The walls of the small room are lined with shelves and cupboards filled with clay pitchers, ceramic pots, leather wineskins, and numerous metal plates, cups, bowls and saucers, and jugs. A DC 30 Search check on the western wall uncovers an adamantite pitcher on a top shelf, which can hold about a gallon (or 4 “doses”) of *dragon ether* at a time. A DC 24 Search check of the northern shelves uncovers the following potions: two *potions of cure moderate wounds*, one *potion of resist energy (electricity)* 10, one *potion of resist energy (acid)* 10, and one *unguent of timelessness*.

Tactics: Hethvarag, the King of the South, allows the PCs to tamper with the great glass cylinder in which he rests, becoming aware of them as soon as they enter the room. Once they breach the cylinder or siphon off any *dragon ether* (possibly harming themselves in the process), Hethvarag makes his presence known, manifesting and putting his horrific appearance to good use. He follows his manifestation by loosing his death wail upon the most potent looking spellcaster, choosing clerics over mages.

Once his horrific appearance and death wail

have taken their toll, Hethvarag enters melee with *Aggashok*, using 5-10 points of Power Attack each round, depending on his target. A savvy veteran of countless battles, Hethvarag uses his abilities and combat prowess smartly, not allowing opponents to flank him or force him to fight on their terms. Hethvarag makes use of Improved Sunder, smashing the weapons and shields of melee fighters to splinters with his mighty mace.

If the battle begins to turn against him, Hethvarag changes his tactics, becoming invisible and drifting silently to the ceiling to plan his next move. He waits for his death wail to recharge before re-entering combat, unleashing the deadly cry as soon as it is ready. Following the death wail, Hethvarag uses *telekinesis* to hurl one PC into the ceiling, dealing falling damage to the PC on the way up (50 feet for 5d6 (17) points of damage), and once again as the PC falls to the ground. When Hethvarag enters melee again, he uses his incorporeal touch, attempting to drain enough Strength from the PCs to heal some of his own wounds. Once healed back to 75 hp or more, Hethvarag switches back to his mace.

Hethvarag pursues characters as far as necessary. He passes through the walls in the hallway leading back to area 3-2, possibly cutting off retreat as the corporeal characters must navigate the twists and turns of the corridor. Hethvarag repeats the above tactics until turned or destroyed.

Hethvarag, The King of the South, Frost Giant Dread Ghost: CR 12; Large Undead (Augmented Giant, Incorporeal); HD 14d12; hp 105; Init +0; Spd fly 80 ft. (perfect); AC 14 (-1 size, +5 deflection) or 24 (-1 size, +9 natural, +4 chain shirt, +2 heavy steel shield) (manifested), touch 14 or 9 (manifested), flat-footed 14 or 24 (manifested); Base Atk +10; Grp +24; Atk Large +2 *ghost touch icy burst heavy mace* +22 melee (2d6+12 (19) plus 1d6 (3) cold) or incorporeal touch +9 melee or +19 melee against ethereal opponents (1d6 (3) plus Str drain or 1d6+10 (13) against ethereal foes); Full Atk Large +2 *ghost touch icy burst heavy mace* +22/+17 melee (2d6+12 (19) plus 1d6 (3) cold) or incorporeal touch +9 melee or +19 melee against ethereal opponents (1d6 (3) plus Str drain or 1d6+10 (13) against ethereal foes); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA Corrupting touch, death wail, draining touch, horrific appearance, manifestation, telekinesis; SQ Immunity to cold, incorporeal traits, *invisibili-*

ty (at will), rejuvenation, spell resistance 24, +4 turn resistance, undead traits, vulnerability to fire; AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +6; Str 31, Dex 10, Con –, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 20.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +1 (+3 armor), Craft (armorsmithing) +12, Hide +4, Intimidate +15, Listen +20, Search +19, Spot +20, Survival +2 (+4 following tracks); Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (heavy mace).

Equipment: *Aggashok* (Large +2 *ghost touch icy burst heavy mace*), chain shirt, Large heavy steel shield.

Corrupting Touch (Su): When Hethvarag hits a living target with his incorporeal touch attack, he deals 1d6 (3) points of damage. Against ethereal opponents, he gets his Strength modifier to attack and damage rolls.

Death Wail (Su): Once every 1d4 (2) rounds, Hethvarag can loose a terrible wail as a full-round action, targeting a single creature within 100 feet. If the target can hear the death wail it must make a DC 22 Fortitude save or die instantly. Any other creature within 100 feet that can hear the wail must make a DC 22 Fortitude save or gain 1 negative level. A creature that succeeds on the save against Hethvarag's death wail cannot be affected by it for 24 hours.

Draining Touch (Su): When Hethvarag hits a living target with his incorporeal touch attack; he drains 1d4 (2) points of Strength in addition to any physical damage he causes. On each such successful attack, Hethvarag heals 5 points of damage to himself.

Horrific Appearance (Su): Any living creature within 60 feet that views Hethvarag must make a DC 22 Fortitude save or immediately take 1d4 (2) points of Strength damage, 1d4 (2) points of Dexterity damage, and 1d4 (2) points of Constitution damage. A creature that successfully saves against this effect cannot be affected by the Hethvarag's horrific appearance for 24 hours.

Manifestation (Su): Hethvarag dwells on the Ethereal Plane and, as an ethereal creature; he cannot affect or be affected by anything in the material world. When Hethvarag manifests, he partly enters the Material Plane and becomes visible but incorporeal on the Material Plane. When manifested, all of the following conditions apply: Hethvarag can be harmed only by other incorporeal creatures, magic weapons, or spells and he gains a 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source. He can pass through solid objects at will, and his own attacks

pass through armor. Hethvarag always moves silently. Hethvarag can strike with his touch attack or with *Aggashok*. Hethvarag remains partially on the Ethereal Plane, where he is not incorporeal. Hethvarag can be attacked by opponents on either the Material Plane or the Ethereal Plane.

Telekinesis (Su): Once every 1d4 (2) rounds Hethvarag can use *telekinesis* as the spell as a 14th-level caster.

Rejuvenation (Su): Hethvarag cannot be permanently destroyed through simple combat: his “destroyed” spirit restores itself in 2d4 (5) days. Even the most powerful spells are usually only temporary solutions.

Description: The swirling eddies of multihued dragon ether part before the coming of a terrifying visage. The milky blue hair and beard and the mammoth physique of the apparition hint to its giantish origins, although its form is insubstantial and horrific. As it draws near, you catch a glimpse of the spirit’s features, and your soul goes numb from that one fleeting look into the depths of true anguish and eternal damnation. You feel the strength drain from your body as the ghost rushes forward, swishing the air with a titanic mace of sky blue metal, a weapon gleaming with the dread weight of damned souls.

Scoring Suggestions: 900 points possible

100: Search top of cylinder and discover network of tubes

100: Locate the *amulet of natural armor* on top of cylinder

100: Locate the secret chamber to the north

50: Find items in chamber to safely transport *dragon ether*

100: Find the *ring of counterspells* hidden in the drain of the sink

50: Locate the King of the South in the cylinder before he attacks

400: Defeat the ghostly King of the South

-100: Allow cylinder of *dragon ether* to break

-50: Spend more than 5 minutes searching the hallway leading to the chamber (convinced the walls or dragon mouths are trapped)

Area 3-5 – The Kings’ Guard (EL 10)

The wide double doors leading to this room are not locked or trapped. Each door weighs 300 pounds, but there are two sets of ring handles on the door – one set 5 feet above the ground, and another set 10 feet above the ground. The lower set of handles is the right height for the room’s main occupants, the Vault’s jann defenders.

Once the party opens the doors to this area, read the following:

The door silently swings out into the hallway, revealing a large, square room 60 feet wide and 50 feet deep. The room is filled with several large, wooden tables, plain chairs stacked neatly around them. Several maps are rolled out on the tables and even more hang from the otherwise drab walls.

A short hallway leads further north from the northwest corner of the room. The scent of metal, leather, and oil is strong in the room.

This is the room housing the non-draconic “defenders” of the Vault, four steely jann commanders. They remain in this chamber until pressed into service in defense of the Vault or the mountain stronghold itself. This room once housed a sizable garrison of jann warriors, but most were slain during the great rebellion or abandoned the Vault long ago. Now only the four commanders remain – one tied to each of the four draconic elements. Their strong ties to the various elements make them perfect soldiers for the Dragon Kings.

The jann are trained to obey the Dragon Kings and protect the Vault. Even after the demise of the Dragon Kings, they remain loyal to their original calling, serving the Vault and its former rulers unerringly. The jann commanders also obey dragons, so long as the orders do not conflict with the will of the Dragon Kings or their sworn service to protect the Vault. They have ignored Myrkjartan and his minions so far, since the King of the North never issued direct commands to the jann to stop Myrkjartan. This was unfortunate, as Myrkjartan commanded the jann to leave him in peace and remain in their quarters unless summoned.

The Staging Area: The southern half of the room is a military tactician’s dream. The maps are large, detailed military maps depicting the Frosteye Mountain range and surrounding territo-

ries. There are pewter cast figures representing ships, armies, dragons, and various military units assembled on the tables. A DC 22 Knowledge (history) or Bardic Knowledge check reveals several of the maps are set up to reflect the time of the great dragon rebellion, and show the exodus of dragons from the Vault into the world.

A second map, on a table along the northern wall, shows an overview of the Outer Holdings and the Valley of the Fallen. The map is magical, enchanted with limited divination ability that allows the jann commanders to know the whereabouts and track the movement of the Vault's dragonblooded denizens. A DC 30 Use Magic Device check allows a character to determine the map's ability and sense the location of the Castellan, Keeper of the Ways, or King of the North.

Pewter figures are placed along the map representing different individuals in those locations – notably the Castellan, the Keeper of the Ways, and the King of the North. If these individuals have been defeated by the party, the corresponding figures have been knocked over. A DC 22 Spot or Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check reveals any secret doors or rooms from the Outer Holdings or Valley of the Fallen the group overlooked the first time through. This knowledge provides a +4 insight bonus to locate the corresponding features the next time that area is visited.

A GM looking to link this adventure into a future adventure may wish to include an interesting map in this room leading the party to an exciting new location.

The Barracks: The jann commanders are in the northern half of the room, which serves as the garrison's barracks. Unless the characters are being especially careful about the noise they make as they shuffle through the room, the jann will likely hear them and prepare for battle. Each jann gets to make a Listen check opposed by the party's worst Move Silently check, modified by the circumstances. If the jann hear intruders, they silence their discussion and turn invisible, waiting to see what the party does.

If the jann do not hear the characters approaching, the PCs may hear their hushed conversation with a DC 20 Listen check. They are speaking in Celestial about whether or not they should enter the Seat of Judgment (area 2-7) to see to the



King of the North, whom they have not heard from in several weeks, but noticed moving recently by using their magic map (this was triggered by the interaction between the King of the North and the PCs). They saw his return to stillness after battling the PCs and fear he is now dead.

There are beds and basic supplies here to house a garrison of 50 jann soldiers. The bunks are stripped bare and all the footlockers have been emptied. A weapons stand on the eastern wall holds the commanders' additional gear – four masterwork spears, four masterwork scimitars, and four masterwork halberds.

Tactics: The jann commanders do not suffer intruders into their room. Since defending themselves and their chambers does not conflict with their solemn duties to serve the Vault, they are fiercely protective of the barracks. The jann commanders speak in unison, their loud voices echoing off the walls. Each round of combat, the jann reveal something about their nature, their orders, the presence of Myrkjartan, or what lies in the armory, etc. When all the comments have been revealed, they repeat the list in order again.

Round 1: *The Dragon Kings do not suffer*

such insolence. Your very presence taints this sacred Vault. Interlopers must be destroyed!

Round 2: *The King of the North has forbidden access to the Vault and the Pool of Dreams to the likes of you. The punishment is death!*

Round 3: *The Silver Wyrm has charged us to secure this location; you are trespassing and will be destroyed!*

Round 4: *Destroy them before they reach the Armory! They must not be allowed to threaten the Silver Wyrm!*

The jann commanders are cunning warriors and excellent tacticians. They maneuver to flank opponents, enlarge themselves with *change size* to improve their reach and weapon damage and gang up on separated party members to whittle down numbers as quickly as possible. They regularly use Power Attack or Combat Expertise equal to any tactical advantage gained (such as +2 when flanking). Unless compelled or persuaded to cease their attack (see below) the jann commanders fight to the death.

Jann Commanders, Fighter 2 (4): CR 6; Medium Outsider (Native); HD 6d8+12 and 2d10+4; 65 hp each; Init +7; Spd 20 ft., fly 15 ft. (perfect); AC 20 (+3 Dex, +1 natural, +5 breastplate, +1 deflection), touch 14, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +8; Grp +12; Atk +1 *keen scimitar* +13 melee (1d6+7 (10)/15–20) or +1 *longbow* +12 ranged (1d8+1 (5)/x3); Full Atk +1 *keen scimitar* +13/+8 melee (1d6+7 (10)/15–20) or +1 *longbow* +12/+7 ranged (1d8+1 (5)/x3); SA *Change size*, spell-like abilities; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., elemental endurance, plane shift, resistance to fire 10, telepathy 100 ft.; AL LN; SV Fort +10, Ref +8, Will +7; Str 18, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +12 (+14 armor, weapons), Concentration +11, Craft (armor-smithing) +11, Craft (weaponsmithing) +12, Diplomacy +3, Escape Artist +9, Listen +12, Move Silently +9, Ride +13, Sense Motive +11, Spot +12, Use Rope +3 (+5 with bindings); Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative^B, Mobility, Power Attack.

Equipment: Masterwork breastplate, +1 *keen scimitar*, +1 *longbow*, 20 arrows, *ring of protection* +1.

Change Size (Sp): Twice per day, a janni can magically change a creature's size. This works

just like an *enlarge person* or *reduce person* spell (the janni chooses when using the ability), except that the ability can work on the janni. A DC 13 Fortitude save negates the effect. This is the equivalent of a 2nd-level spell.

Spell-Like Abilities: 3/day—*invisibility* (self only), *speak with animals*. Caster level 12th. Once per day a janni can *create food and water* (caster level 7th) and can use *ethereal jaunt* (caster level 12th) for 1 hour.

Elemental Endurance (Ex): Jann can survive on the Elemental Planes of Air, Earth, Fire, or Water for up to 48 hours. Failure to return to the Material Plane before that time expires causes a janni to take 1 point of damage per additional hour spent on the Elemental Plane, until it dies or returns to the Material Plane.

Description: Four identical men, clad in burnished breastplates, bear an unnatural grace and confidence. Cool, blue eyes look out from their dark, handsome features. Each man is clean shaven, his long hair tied back in an oiled top knot. The unmistakable mark of military training can be seen in their stance, the polished armor, and the exquisite scimitars held at their sides.

Creative Conflict Resolution: Clever groups may be able to persuade the jann commanders not to attack, if they can prove they have been sent by the King of the North to dispatch Myrkjartan. It's unlikely, but compelling argument and a bit of evidence (if the group has been thinking ahead that far) might do the trick. An argument along these lines can succeed with a DC 22 Diplomacy check, modified by the strength of the argument or supporting evidence.

If both the King of the North and the ghostly remains of the King of the South have been destroyed (and therefore permanently laid to rest) and the jann are made aware of this, their service to the Dragon Kings and the Vault comes to an end and they are no longer bound to service. They immediately *plane shift* back to their native planes, taking their arms and armament with them. The group will no longer have to fight them, but they'll miss the opportunity to loot the commanders.

Scoring Suggestions: 800 points possible

100: Per janni defeated/dismissed

100: Convincing jann their service has ended or that the party works on behest of the Dragon Kings

100: Discover maps of Outer Holdings and Valley of the Fallen

100: Examine maps closely for clues to features missed on previous levels

50/clue: Learn clues from jann about their commitments and duties within the Vault (100 max)

-50: Spend more than 5 minutes examining the door leading into the room (thinking the odd handles were a trap of some sort)

Area 3-6 – Reflection Chamber (EL 10)

The wide double doors leading to this room are not locked or trapped. The doors open easily and there are two sets of ring handles on the door – one set 5 feet above the ground, and another set 10 feet above the ground. The lower set of handles is the right height for the room's keeper, a lizardfolk loremaster.

A DC 30 Spot check of the high vaulted ceiling in the corridor reveals the presence of a small bat hanging overhead. The bat is the familiar of Deryn the Black, a loathsome evoker in the service of Sunscratch who waits here.

Once the party opens the doors to this area, read the following:

The door opens with surprising ease, revealing a brightly lit room 60 feet wide and nearly 50 feet across. The actual depth is difficult to determine, as the back half of the room appears to be a large, convex curve. The ceiling, 40 feet overhead, curves at the seams along the walls. Aside from where the northern wall meets the floor, there are no perfect right angles in the room – every other corner is rounded off in a soft curve.

The walls, floor, and ceiling feature another oddity – they are all polished to a lustrous sheen, each surface a perfect mirror. There's a soft glow overhead, from some unseen light source possibly nestled behind the mirrored ceiling. The light is amplified through the chamber and the entire room is very well lit.

This room serves as a contemplation chamber for dragons seeking wisdom from the Pool of Dreams, to help focus their thoughts before visiting the pool or reflect on what they have learned



after visiting it. The faceted surfaces are peerless, highly polished, and nigh indestructible.

A human wizard, one of Myrkjartan's minions, is currently using the room to meditate and figure out a way to light the braziers and release Myrkjartan from the sealed Pool of Dreams. He knows what must be done, but is trying to figure out a way to extract the dragon ether from area 3-3 without having to fight the ghost of the King of the South.

Special Room Conditions: The surfaces of the Reflection Chamber are augmented with a special sort of *spell turning* to prevent them from being damaged. This means any touch spell that misses its target will turn back to affect the caster. However, any spell that is turned is imbued with the Empower Spell metamagic feat. Viewing the room with *detect magic* reveals moderate abjuration magic.

Once the door closes, the surfaces match up so perfectly with the rest of the wall and the room is so utterly featureless that a DC 25 Search check is required to locate the door again.

The final quirk of this particular mirrored room is that any casting of *mirror image* is always maximized.

Tactics: Deryn the Black is a thoroughly evil and spiteful man; his one joy is the crackling hiss of flame, especially when that flame can be set onto the flesh of his enemies. He has been studying the mirrored room and its effects on spells for quite some time, divining many of its secrets. Deryn likely senses the PCs' approach thanks to

his familiar, a small bat currently hanging from the ceiling outside the mirrored room. If given enough warning, Deryn cast the following spells in this order: *mirror image*, *shield*, and *mage armor*. Then he waits for the PCs to confront him, unleashing fiery hell upon them.

Thanks to a powerful magic item given to him by Myrkjartan, Deryn no longer fears the flames he loves so much. *Farguul's fiery finger* grants the evil evoker powerful resistance to fire, as well as a host of other abilities. Because of this, Deryn will not hesitate to drop *fireballs* at his feet to catch as many PCs in the blast as possible.

Deryn has also learned how to exploit the room's mirrored walls to gain their empowering effect upon his spells, banking his *scorching rays* and *magic missiles* off of their polished surface to deadly effect. Deryn can take a -4 attack penalty for ranged touch attacks to deliver Empowered versions of these spells (notably *scorching rays*). *Magic missiles*, since they strike where directed, are automatically enhanced by someone who has "learned the trick" about the mirrored surfaces.

Arrogant and a little unhinged, Deryn is overly confident in his abilities and continues to fight even if the battle appears to be going badly for him. Only if reduced to 15 or fewer hit points will he consider fleeing, using *invisibility* and *expeditious retreat* to make a quick getaway.

Trick shots: Characters observing Deryn the Black's spellcasting will note something odd in his mechanics. A DC 20 Spellcraft check reveals he is "overshooting" the intended targets, and actually aiming for the wall. Once this is realized, a DC 15 Intelligence check or DC 25 Spellcraft or Knowledge (arcana) check allows the character to learn the trick and use the mirrored surfaces in the same way.

Deryn the Black, Human Evoker 10: CR 10; Medium Humanoid (Human); HD 10d4+20; hp 48; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+1 Dex, +2 *bracers of armor*, +1 deflection, +1 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +5; Grp +5; Atk/Full Atk Masterwork dagger +6 melee (1d4 (2)) or light crossbow +6 ranged (1d8 (4)); SA Spells; SQ Acid resistance 10, familiar, fire resistance 30; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +8; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 19, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +15, Decipher Script +17, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +15, Knowledge (history) +14, Listen +1*, Spellcraft +17 (+19 for evocation spells), Spot +1*, Survival +1 (+3 underground); Combat Casting, Craft Wand^B, Greater Spell Focus (evocation), Improved Initiative, Maximize Spell^B, Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll^B, Spell Focus (evocation).

*These increase to +3 when Deryn's bat familiar is within arm's reach.

Equipment: *Headband of intellect* +2, *Farguul's fiery finger*, *bracers of armor* +2, *ring of protection* +1, *dragonskin cloak (black)*, *wand of scorching rays* (CL 8, 11 charges), masterwork dagger, light crossbow, 20 bolts.

Arcane Spells Prepared (5/6/6/5/5/3, DC 14 + spell level, 16 + spell level for evocation spells (annotated with an "°")): 0—*detect magic* (x2), *flare*°, *ray of frost*°, *read magic*; 1st—*burning hands*° (x2) (12 fire), *expeditious retreat*, *mage armor*, *magic missile*° (5 missiles, 3 damage/missile), *shield*; 2nd—*darkness*°, *gust of wind*°, *invisibility*, ~~*mirror image*~~ (spent), *scorching ray*° (x2) (+6 to hit, 2 rays, 14 fire damage/ray); 3rd—*fireball*° (x2) (35 fire), *fly*, *haste*, *windwall*; 4th—*fire shield*°, *magic missile* (maximized)° (5 missiles, 5 damage/missile), *scorching ray* (empowered)° (x2) (+6 to hit, 2 rays, 21 fire damage/ray), *stone-skin*; 5th—*burning hands* (quicken)° (15 fire),

Farguul's Fiery Finger

This powerful evocation item appears as a hollow, metal index finger crafted of red-tinged steel. Originally created by the mad evoker Farguul, *Farguul's fiery finger* has been copied by other enterprising evokers over the years since his death at the hands of a great red dragon. The finger fits over the index finger of any humanoid creature (taking up a ring slot), bestowing the following abilities:

- Fire resistance 30
- As a free action, the wearer can augment any spell with the [fire] descriptor with Empower Spell 3/day
- Cast *scorching ray* 1/day

Strong evocation; CL 12th; Craft Wondrous Item, *protection from energy*, *scorching ray*; Price 80,500 gp.

scorching ray (maximized)* (+6 to hit, 2 rays, 24 fire damage/ray), *wall of force**.

Banned Schools: Enchantment, Necromancy.

Dragonskin cloak: Deryn's black dragonskin cloak provides the following benefits: Acid resistance 10, +1 natural armor, *darkness* (1/day, 5th-level caster).

Description: Before you stands an army of red and black cloaked men, all of evil mien and villainous appearance. They are, in fact, perfect reflections of the same man, filling a room mirrored from floor to ceiling. The man is tall, gaunt, and bears a face that has known the intimate caress of fire, for it has left its lurid kiss on his scarred flesh. He smiles foully as you approach, his lips and hands moving in the unmistakable patterns of spellcraft.

Bat Familiar: CR –; Diminutive Magical Beast (Augmented Animal); HD 10d8; hp 24; Init +2; Spd 5 ft., 40 ft. (good); AC 21 (+4 size, +2 Dex, +5 natural), touch 16, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +5; Grp -12; Atk/Full Atk –; SA Deliver touch spells; SQ Blindsight 20 ft., empathic link, improved evasion, low-light vision, share spells, speak with master; AL CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +9; Str 1, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 4.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +13, Decipher Script +13, Hide +14, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +11, Knowledge (history) +10, Listen +8*, Move Silently +6, Spellcraft +15, Spot +8*, Survival +2 (+4 underground); Alertness.

*A bat has a +4 racial bonus on Listen and Spot checks. These bonuses are lost if its blindsense is negated.

Hidden Clues – The Library: A well-hidden door rests in the center of the western wall. The mirrored surfaces are so featureless and smooth that a DC 30 Search check is required to locate the door. The door is not locked or trapped. To enter, someone must simply knock twice on the door, and it slides into the wall.

The door leads to a small library with a collection of myriad introspective, philosophical texts, as well as detailed histories of the Vault, the Dragon Kings, and the rebellion. It also contains a small collection of various divination and scrying items. These resources are very large and cumbersome.

When the players enter the library, read the following aloud:

The door slides noiselessly into the wall of the mirrored chamber, revealing a square room 30 feet wide. The walls are lined with heavy, wooden shelves of various sizes, with several free standing bookshelves scattered about the room. The shelves are cluttered with books, scrolls, and tablets.

Some of the tracts are carved into giant dragon scales, bound together with fine silk ropes. Others are written on scrolls made from molted dragonskins. Still more defy description, being comprised of unidentifiable bits and pieces you can only assume are draconic in origin.

In the center of the chamber is a large book, easily 3 feet wide and 5 feet tall. It must weigh several hundred pounds. The book appears to be fashioned from thick sheets of pressed dragon scales. Four wide, silk ribbons are bound along the spine, doubling as bookmarks – one red, one white, one black, and one blue.

Each silk ribbon tied to the large dragon scale book is fixed in a page of the book detailing the corresponding dragons – red and gold dragons by the red silk ribbon, white and silver dragons by the white silk ribbon, and so on. On a DC 25 Knowledge (arcana) or Decipher Script check, a character learns that the marked pages list the recent deaths and births for dragons of that element throughout the land. The book of dragon lore radiates strong abjuration magic and is trapped with *explosive runes*.

Magically Enhanced Book of Dragon Lore: 24 inches thick; hardness 10; hp 60; Damage from *explosive runes* trap reduced by 10 points.

Explosive Runes Trap: CR 4; spell; spell trigger; no reset; spell effect (*explosive runes*, 7th-level wizard, 6d6 (21) points of damage adjacent, DC 16 Reflex save within 10 feet for half); Search DC 28; Disable Device DC 28 (erase runes).

GMs should include details on dragons found in their campaigns, or other dragons found in the *Dungeon Crawl Classics* line of modules. For example, Tarfoot, the black dragon found in *DCC #14: Dungeon Interludes* is listed on the page with the black ribbon.

A large, polished brass shield is mounted on the wall, bearing dozens of engraved names. A DC 24 Bardic Knowledge or Knowledge (the planes)



check identifies them as djinn names. It is a roster of the jann defenders who have served the Vault over the ages, indicating if the jann was killed in the line of duty or left the service of the Vault. There are four names which do not bear a final line resolving their status: Jerras, N'Oliar and the twins Endir and Emir – the four jann commanders found in area 3-5. Identifying the shield allows a +2 circumstance bonus on any Diplomacy or Bluff checks when dealing with the jann commanders.

A DC 26 Search check of the shelves on the southern wall reveals two *scrolls of comprehend languages*, two *scrolls of erase*, one *scroll of locate object*, one *scroll of silence*, and one *scroll of secret page*.

Hidden Clues – The Second Secret: A large shelf on the northwest wall of the library conceals a secret door leading directly into the loremaster's quarters. The secret door is well disguised behind the bookshelf, and requires a DC 30 Search check to locate, reduced to DC 25 if the party specifically states they are moving the bookshelves around. The bookshelf is hinged and slides aside to reveal the next room.

These are the living quarters for the Vault's librar-

ian, a lizardfolk loremaster named Slysska. A looking glass in her living quarters gives her a perfect view of several areas of the third level: the Maw's eyes from area 3-2, the surface of the *dragon ether* cylinder in area 3-4, a gem set into a compass in area 3-5, and the mirrored surfaces in the Reflection Chamber outside.

When the party reaches Slysska's chambers, read the following:

The secret door slides aside, revealing a small room, possibly 20 feet to a side. It's hard to determine for sure, as the room is cramped and cluttered. Stacks of books crowd the floor, and a dozen more lie open on a disheveled table along the north wall. A small bureau lies open to the west; a simple bed unmade to the south. The smell of moldering books and mildew pervades the room.

Slysska's Dilemma: Through her research and scrying, Slysska has learned the terrible truth about Myrkjartan – that the silver dragon is indeed coerced by the spirit of Sunscratch. Slysska reviles the red dragon for his role in the rebellion and the death of her patron, the King of the South. If the party slew Hethvarag's ghost in area 3-4, Slysska is more inclined to fight, seeking revenge for the death of her beloved Dragon King.

However, if the party is looking for a way to free the King of the South, or can prove beyond a doubt they are here to stop Myrkjartan once and for all, a DC 18 Diplomacy check convinces her to assist them. She is frightened of Myrkjartan and will not leave her chambers or the library, but will tell them how they can use the *dragon ether* to open the Pool of Dreams, and tell them that a small number of *dragon bane* weapons are locked in the armory in area 3-7. In this case, she will not attack the group unless they attack her, defile the library, or return later after slaying Hethvarag.

Tactics: Slysska watched the PCs battle Deryn through the magical looking glass in her quarters and is quite prepared for their arrival. She has the following spells in effect when encountered: *mage armor*, *cat's grace (extended)*, and *expeditious retreat*.

The lizardfolk loremaster would prefer not to fight, but she will defend her library if the PCs

attempt to remove anything. If forced into combat, Slysska opens with her empowered *scorching ray*, targeting the most likely spellcaster. Slysska is fearful of damaging any books, though, and does not fire *scorching ray* at targets standing in the doorway to the library or near the table on the north wall of her chamber. She follows up with *ray of enfeeblement* upon the most powerful looking warrior, and then simply lays down a withering barrage of *cones of cold* from her staff. She only resorts to melee if pressed.

Slysska is very intelligent and does not allow herself to be cornered. If the battle does not go her way, she barricades herself in her chambers with a *wall of force*. Behind her wall, Slysska will simply wait for the PCs to leave, or if they have the ability to bypass the *wall of force*, *teleport* away. If at any time the PCs damage any of the books or scrolls in the library, they earn Slysska's undying enmity, and if she escapes the PCs she will turn up later to seek her revenge.

Slysska, Lizardfolk Wizard 7/Loremaster 3: CR 11; Medium Humanoid (Reptilian); HD 2d8+6 plus 10d4+30; hp 71; Init +1; Spd 60 ft.; AC 22 (+1 Dex, +5 natural, +2 deflection, +4 *mage armor*), touch 13, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +5; Grp +7; Atk *staff of frost* +7 melee (1d6+3 (6)) or claw +7 melee (1d4+2 (4)); Full Atk *staff of frost* +7 melee (1d6+3 (6)) and bite +2 melee (1d4+1 (3)) or 2 claws +7 melee (1d4+2 (4)) and bite +2 melee (1d4+1 (3)); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA Spells; SQ Hold breath (64 rounds), lore, secrets; AL N; SV Fort +10, Ref +9, Will +14; Str 15, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Balance +8, Concentration +12, Decipher Script +14, Jump +11, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +15, Knowledge (history) +18, Spellcraft +17, Survival +2 (+4 underground), Swim +11; Combat Casting, Craft Staff, Craft Wondrous Item^B, Empower Spell, Extend Spell, Scribe Scroll^B, Skill Focus (Knowledge [history]).

Equipment: *Staff of frost* (22 charges, *ice storm* 10 bludgeoning and 7 cold, *cone of cold* 35 cold damage), *ring of protection* +2, *cloak of resistance* +2, *amulet of health* +2.

Lore: Slysska has the ability to know legends or information regarding various topics, just as a bard does with bardic knowledge. She adds +6 to the lore check, which functions otherwise exactly like a bardic knowledge check.

Secrets: Slysska has learned the secret of inner strength (+2 on Will saves) and the lore of

true stamina (+2 on Fort saves).

Arcane Spells Prepared (4/5/5/4/3/2, DC 13 + spell level): 0—*detect magic*, *flare*, *ray of frost*, *read magic*; 1st—*enlarge person*, ~~*expeditious retreat*~~, ~~*mage armor*~~, *magic missile*, *ray of enfeeblement*; 2nd—*detect thoughts*, *hideous laughter*, *invisibility*, *touch of idiocy*, *web*; 3rd—~~*cat's grace (extended)*~~, *dispel magic*, *hold person*, *lightning bolt* (35 electricity damage); 4th—*black tentacles*, *scorching ray* (empowered) (+6 to hit, 2 rays, 21 fire damage/ray), *stoneskin*; 5th —*teleport*, *wall of force*.

Note: The crossed out spells Slysska has already cast; they are already factored into her stat block.

Description: A cloaked, female lizardfolk stands before you, clutching a staff of dark red wood matching the dark scales along her face and arms. She regards you with narrow suspicion, her eyes darting protectively to the heavily laden bookshelves lining the room. There is a quiet strength about her, and you feel that she is more than capable of defending her library if the need arises.

Scoring Suggestions: 1,100 points possible

50: Discover Deryn's bat familiar outside room

50: Learn the trick behind reflecting spells on the mirrored surfaces

50: Use the trick to your advantage during battle with Deryn the Black

300: Defeat Deryn the Black

100: Find the secret door to library

50: Determine the nature of the book of dragon lore

50: Avoid/disarm the *explosive runes* trap on the book of dragon lore

50: Locate/determine the plaque chronicling the jann defenders of the Vault

100: Find the secret door to Slysska's chambers

200: Earn Slysska's trust/assistance

100: Defeat Slysska

Area 3-7 – The Armory (EL 12)

When the party approaches the doors to this area, read the following aloud:

Two massive stone doors, each 15 feet wide and 30 feet tall, are sealed shut. A heavy chain is coiled through the four large, steel rings set into the doors. There is no lock on the chain, but the thick links are each the size of a giant's fist. The chain must weigh several hundred pounds. A bitter, acrid smell fills your nostrils, something foul and musky you can't quite put your finger on. Carved into the stone doors above the rings is a Draconic inscription reading "In Defense of Our Great Vault."

This is the Vault's armory, where the Dragon Kings keep their ceremonial garb and weapons when not on their person. The armory also houses some special weapons for the jann guardians from area 3-5. The scent was left behind by the troglodyte barbarians in area 3-8, who fastened the chain in place. The chain has been coated with a dangerous poison. Inside, the restless zombie bodies of the Kings of the East and the West stir, roused from death by the taint of Sunscratch's spirit within the Pool of Dreams. The heavy chain was set through the door to keep the undead Dragon Kings from interfering with Sunscratch's plans.

A DC 20 Knowledge (nature) or Knowledge (dungeoneering) check identifies the musky odor as the lingering stench of a troglodyte.

Removing the chain is an arduous and time consuming task. It's not just the weight, but the awkward placement and height of the rings that creates problems. Pulling the chain out requires a separate DC 20 Strength check for each of the four rings the chain is drawn through. Otherwise, the chain or the rings can be sundered.

Sturdy chain links: 4 inches thick; hardness 10; 120 hp; Break DC 30.

Steel door rings: 3 inches thick; hardness 10, 90 hp; Break DC 28.

Trap, Heavy Chain Smeared with Contact Poison: CR 9; mechanical; touch trigger (attached); manual reset; poison (black lotus extract, DC 20 Fortitude save resists, 3d6 (10) Con/3d6 (10) Con); Search DC 20; Knowledge (nature) DC 25 to identify poison; Disable Device DC 26.

One the party finds a way to open the doors, read the following:

The great doors swing open to reveal a long chamber filled with enormous shelves carved deep into the stone walls themselves. There must be over a hundred crates, barrels, and urns in this massive storehouse. But the glint of sharpened blades and armor reveals that this must also be the Vault's armory.

Four large sarcophagi flank the room, two on each side. The marble sepulchers appear hewn into the very walls and stand nearly 20 feet high. Intricate carvings on the surfaces depict four titanic warriors clad in armor and bearing great weapons – obviously representing the Dragon Kings.

The heavy musky odor still lingers, but is mixed with the fetid stench of death and decay.

There is no light in the armory. A great many types of weapon, armor, and gear can be found here, to those who wish to spend the time and effort to thoroughly search the room.

Three troglodyte corpses are rotting in the chamber, not far from the eastern sarcophagus where they were plundering goods from the armory when the doomtwitch zombie kings attacked. Anyone coming within 10 feet of the troglodyte bodies (such as to search them) must succeed on a DC 14 Fortitude save or be sickened for 10 rounds.

The doomtwitch zombie Kings of the East and West are in the sarcophagi as marked on the map. The sarcophagus for the King of the South holds Hethvarag's withered mortal remains. The northern sarcophagus houses a few *dragon bane* weapons.

Tactics: Myrkjartan's desecration of the Pool of Dreams has caused the Kings of the East and West to rise from the dead. But the crazed dragon's madness has tainted their rebirth, and the former Dragon Kings have arisen as doomtwitch zombies.

Both Gnarga and Orgak are aware of the horrid transformation that has befallen them, and they are filled with anguish and rage. They attack intruders with the will of the damned, in the vain hope that the PCs will end their misery and return them to the grave.

The two undead giants are not mindless, but lack the military sophistication they had in life. The doomtwitch zombies use only the simplest combat tactics. They open combat with Orgak racing forward to engage the PCs in melee while Gnarga hangs back and hurls chunks of his broken sarcophagus at them. They continue this routine until Orgak has been reduced to 40 or fewer hit points, at which time Gnarga ceases throwing rocks and joins the fray.

In melee the two giant zombies use their reach whenever possible, attempting to pin the PCs between them to gain flanking bonuses as well as multiple attacks of opportunity. Both use Power Attack whenever they gain an advantage, devoting up to 10 points to each attack.

The two giants attack the PCs indiscriminately, rending the closest target regardless of character class or combat effectiveness. Both Gnarga and Orgak fight until they or the PCs are destroyed, and pursue fleeing PCs tirelessly through the Vault.

If the PCs flee or maneuver out of the room, there is a flicker of recognition as the undead Dragon Kings realize they actually have access to the entire Vault, and are not trapped just in the armory. At this point, they grapple the nearest PC and drag the PC back to the Maw in area 3-2, toward the entrance to the End of Dreams. The giants lumber down the path to the End of Dreams in area 3-3 to end their undeath by hurling themselves into the *sphere of annihilation* that lies at the end of the chamber – taking any grappled PCs with them.

Gnarga, The King of the West, Stone Giant Doomtwitch Zombie: CR 11; Large Undead; HD 14d12; hp 111; Init +5; Spd 50 ft.; AC 27 (-1 size, +5 Dex, +13 natural), touch 14, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +10; Grp +24; Atk Claw +19 melee (2d6+10 (17) plus curse) or rock +14 ranged (2d8+15 (24)); Full Atk 2 claws +19 melee (2d6+10 (17) plus curse) or rock +14 ranged (2d8+15 (24)); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA Curse of the quickened, rock throwing; SQ DR 10/slashing, darkvision 60 ft., deathly speed, low-light vision, rock catching, spell vulnerability, writhing concealment; AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +9, Will +3; Str 31, Dex 21, Con –, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Climb +14, Hide +5 (+13 in rocky terrain), Jump +18, Spot +8; Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Dodge^B, Mobility^B, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Spring Attack^B.



Curse of the Quickened (Su): Any creature struck by Gnarga's claw attack must make an immediate DC 18 Fortitude saving throw or fall under a deadly curse. On a failed saving throw a creature's metabolism and heart rate speed up to deadly heights. The curse proceeds for four rounds, with the following effects for each round listed below.

Round 1: The target is considered to be under the effects of a *haste* spell. There are no other ill effects, although he will feel his heart begin to race.

Round 2: The target suffers 2d6 (7) points of damage from the strain on his heart and becomes fatigued. The target still benefits from the effects of a *haste* spell.

Round 3: The target suffers another 4d6 (14) points of damage and becomes exhausted, but still benefits from the effects of a *haste* spell. At this point the target's body quakes and spasms horribly, and he is barely able to control his own limbs from flailing about.

Round 4: In the final round of the curse, the victim must make another DC 18 Fortitude save or his heart explodes in his chest, killing him instantly. If the Fortitude save is made successfully, the target instead suffers an additional

6d6 (21) points of damage and is permanently exhausted until the curse is broken.

The curse can be removed any time with the application of a *remove curse* spell. A *slow* spell halts the progress of the curse and ends the *haste* effect, but leaves the victim permanently fatigued or exhausted depending on when the spell is administered. Curse of the quickened does not affect constructs, elementals, oozes, plants, or undead.

Rock Throwing (Ex): The range increment for Gnarga's thrown rocks is 180 ft. He uses both hands when throwing a rock.

Deathly Speed (Ex): Gnarga is supernaturally quick and can take one extra attack or move action every round.

Spell Vulnerability: Gnarga takes 1d6 points of damage per caster level, up to a maximum of 10d6, from a *slow* spell. In addition, he loses the ability to use curse of the quickened or writhing concealment for the duration of the spell.

Writhing Concealment (Ex): Gnarga's body quakes and shudders so much that he is difficult to target with ranged weapons. This awful writhing gives all ranged attacks a flat 20% miss chance.

Orgak, The King of the East, Hill Giant Doomtwitch Zombie: CR 10; Large Undead; HD 12d12; hp 94; Init +2; Spd 50 ft.; AC 22 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +11 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +9; Grp +21; Atk Claw +16 melee (2d6+8 (15) plus curse); Full Atk 2 claws +16 melee (2d6+8 (15) plus curse); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA Curse of the quickened, rock throwing; SQ DR 10/slashing, darkvision 60 ft., deathly speed, low-light vision, spell vulnerability, writhing concealment; AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 27, Dex 14, Con –, Int 6, Wis 8, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Climb +12, Jump +21, Listen +2, Spot +2; Awesome Blow, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Dodge^B, Improved Bull Rush, Mobility^B, Power Attack, Spring Attack^B.

Curse of the Quickened (Su): This works exactly like the ability of the same name found in Gnarga's stat block, but requires a DC 16 Fortitude save.

Rock Throwing (Ex): The range increment for Orgak's thrown rocks is 120 feet.

Deathly Speed (Ex): Orgak is supernaturally quick and can take one extra attack or move action every round.

Spell Vulnerability: Orgak takes 1d6 points of

damage per caster level, up to a maximum of 10d6, from a *slow* spell. In addition, he loses the ability to use curse of the quickened or writhing concealment for the duration of the spell.

Writhing Concealment (Ex): Orgak's body quakes and shudders so much that he is difficult to target with ranged weapons. This awful writhing gives all ranged attacks a flat 20% miss chance.

Description: Two hulking figures stir in the gloom, their outlines seeming to waver and twitch as they draw near. As the pair leaves the merciful cloak of shadows that bathe the room, your eyes are treated to their first glimpse of true, unmitigated awfulness. They both are, or were, giants, but a terrible transformation has taken hold of their bodies. The spasmodic, writhing nightmares standing before you are but shattered husks of their former glory. Your eyes have trouble tracing the outline of the two behemoths, for their bodies seem to vibrate with a frenzied energy that is mind-numbingly hideous to behold. You discern but one telling feature: the eyes of the two wretched giants shine through their ceaseless twitching with the bright edge of anguish and unbridled rage.

Aftermath: Anyone touching the bodies of the dead troglodytes risks becoming sickened, as described earlier. The troglodytes have hide armor, daggers, and greatclubs.

For every five minutes spent searching the crates, barrels, or shelves in this room, allow a DC 24 Search check. If successful, roll 1d10 on the chart to see what is located. Each result can be discovered once. Duplicate results mean nothing useful was found.

- 1d6 (3) chain shirts
- 1d4 (2) masterwork large metal shields
- 2d6 (7) masterwork daggers and 2d6 (7) masterwork light maces
- 1d6 (3) heavy crossbows, and 10 bolts per crossbow
- 1d6 (3) masterwork scimitars and 1d4 (2) masterwork bucklers
- 2d6 (7) spears and 2d10 (11) darts
- 2d6 (7) coils of rope, 50 feet per coil
- 2d6 (7) tindertwigs, 1d4 (2) sunrods, and 1d4 (2) flasks of alchemist's fire

- 1d4 (2) masterwork tool sets (armorsmithing or weaponsmithing)
- 1d8 (4) *potions of cure light wounds*, and 1d4 (2) *potions of cure moderate wounds*

There is a small cache of *dragon bane* weapons inside the King of the North's sarcophagus. The great stone lid is incredibly heavy, requiring a DC 22 Strength test to open, modified by clever planning or finding something to use for leverage. Alternatively, the lid can be smashed open, but this automatically triggers the trap inside. Stacked inside are a +2 *dragon bane longsword* and a +1 *keen dragon bane halberd*. Both items are of Large size. The items are stacked very precisely; removing the items triggers a trap.

Stone Sarcophagus Lid: 5 inches thick; hardness 8; hp 75; Break DC 28.

Poisoned Dart Trap: CR 5; mechanical; location trigger (or automatic if the lid is smashed); manual reset; Atk 1d6 (3) darts +15 ranged (1d4+4 (6) plus poison); multiple targets (up to 2 darts per target in a 10-ft.-by-10-ft. area); poison (Huge monstrous centipede poison, DC 14 Fortitude save resists, 1d6 (3) Dex/1d6 (3) Dex); Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 22 (cut wires connected to darts).

Scoring Suggestions: 900 points possible

200: Defeat Orgak, King of the East

300: Defeat Gnarga, King of the West

100: Open the door to the armory

+50: Open the door without exposure to the contact poison

100: Locate the *dragon bane* weapons

50: Avoid/disarm the poison needle trap

-100: Each character grappled and dragged into the *sphere of annihilation* back in area 3-3 by the Kings

100: Attempt to use *slow* to harm the zombies or reverse the curse

-100: Spend more than 10 minutes rummaging/looting the room

Area 3-8 – The Pool of Dreams (EL 15)

When the party approaches this door, read the following:

Two massive, stone doors, each 15 feet wide and 30 feet tall, stand closed. Four large, steel rings are set into the doors. Carved into the stone doors are four great dragons, flying in a circle, each chasing the next dragon's tail. In the center of the carving is a large, swirling vortex.

This massive room houses the Pool of Dreams, which is currently sealed. The doors are not locked or trapped, only heavy. On a DC 22 Listen check, a character hears the sounds of ringing metal, as if something large and hollow is being struck. When the doors are open, read the following:

An enormous chamber sprawls before you. The room is more than 120 feet wide and stretches easily as far, but the back half follows a long curve like some grand stage, drawing your attention to the enormous contraption in the center of the room.

A square metal seal, easily 50 feet to a side, dominates the floor. A large, metal brazier sits at each corner, fashioned like a large dragon mouth snarling toward the ceiling. Two sinuous lines criss-cross the metal, where great notched teeth line up along the polished surface. You get a vague sense that the notched line indicates where the great doors to this portal would swing back, revealing whatever secrets are sealed beneath.

Two brutish, reptilian humanoids armed with stout, ironshod clubs bang away at the surface of the contraption. With each blow, a thunderous ringing echoes in the chamber.

Two troglodyte barbarians have given up trying to pry open the portal. Their heavy iron bars lie off to the side, discarded. Now they are venting their frustration and lack of progress by trying to break the seal open. Not only are they ineffective at opening the seal, they are infuriating Myrkjartan, who is trapped beneath and forced to suffer the maddening noise.

Tactics: The troglodyte barbarians are strong, not smart. Once disrupted from their smashing, or if attacked, they join battle in earnest. They fly

into a rage, charge into combat, and lay about with healthy doses of Power Attack. They are frenzied and foolish, paying no heed to targets or positioning, each striking off on his own. The troglodytes fight to the death.

Troglodyte Barbarian 6 (2): CR 7; Medium Humanoid (Reptilian); HD 2d8+8 and 6d12+24; 88 hp each; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 20 (+1 Dex, +6 natural, +3 hide armor), touch 11, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +7; Grp +11; Atk +1 *greatclub of thundering* +12 melee (1d10+7 (12) and special) or bite +11 melee (1d4+4 (6)) or javelin +8 ranged (1d6+4 (7)); Full Atk +1 *greatclub of thundering* +12/+7 melee (1d10+7 (12) and special) or bite +11 melee (1d4+4 (6)) and 2 claws +9 melee (1d4+2 (4)) or javelin +8 ranged (1d6+4 (7)); SA Rage 2/day, stench; SQ Darkvision 90 ft, fast movement, illiteracy, improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +2, uncanny dodge; AL NE; SV Fort +12, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 18, Dex 13, Con 19, Int 9, Wis 12, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Climb +5, Hide +5 (+9 in rocky/underground settings), Knowledge (nature) +1, Listen +10, Spot +4, Survival +6; Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Multiattack^B, Power Attack.

Equipment: Masterwork hide armor, +1 *greatclub of thundering*, javelin.

Rage 2/day (Ex): The troglodyte barbarians' stats change as follows when raging: Str 22, Con 23; AC 18, touch 9, flat-footed 18; Grp +13; Atk +1 *greatclub of thundering* +14 melee (1d10+10 (15) and special) or bite +13 melee (1d4+6 (8)) or javelin +8 ranged (1d6+6 (9)); Full Atk +1 *greatclub of thundering* +14/+9 melee (1d10+10 (15) and special) or bite +13 melee (1d4+6 (8)) and 2 claws +11 melee (1d4+3 (5)), or javelin +8 ranged (1d6+6 (9)); Will +5; Climb +7.

Stench (Ex): When a troglodyte is angry or frightened, it secretes an oily, musklike chemical that nearly every form of animal life finds offensive. All living creatures (except troglodytes) within 30 feet of a troglodyte must succeed on a DC 15 Fortitude save or be sickened for 10 rounds. The save DC is Constitution-based, meaning the DC becomes more difficult when the troglodyte barbarians are raging. Creatures that successfully save cannot be affected by the same troglodyte's stench for 24 hours. A *delay poison* or *neutralize poison* spell removes the effect from the sickened creature. Creatures with immunity to poison are unaffected, and creatures resistant to poison receive their normal bonus on their saving throws.

Thundering Weapon (Sp): A thundering weapon creates a cacophonous roar like thunder upon striking a successful critical hit. The sonic energy does not harm the wielder. A thundering weapon deals an extra 1d8 (4) points of sonic damage on a successful critical hit. Subjects dealt a critical hit by a thundering weapon must make a DC 14 Fortitude save or be deafened permanently.

Opening the Pool of Dreams: To open the portal, the braziers at the four compass points along the perimeter of the Pool of Dreams must be filled with the corresponding element: fire in the northern brazier, electricity in the east, cold in the south, and acid in the west. Once a brazier has been activated, it remains activated for 30 minutes. There are several ways this can be accomplished:

- *Dragon ether* from area 3-4 can be used, for any brazier.
- Any bones from dragons of the proper element that had been properly shrivened in area 2-3 can be placed in the corresponding brazier.
- An elemental weapon from any of the Dragon Kings (*Frozen Star* from area 2-5, the King of the North's +2 *keen flaming burst falchion* from area 2-7, or Hethvarag's Large +2 *ghost touch icy burst heavy mace* from area 3-4) will light the corresponding brazier by touch.
- Dragon breath of the proper element will light the corresponding brazier automatically, regardless of quantity or damage inflicted.
- At least 30 points of "damage" by the appropriate element applied in a single or consecutive rounds (such as a *fireball* or *lightning bolt*).

Releasing the Betrayer: Once the braziers have been lit, the doors of the portal retract and Myrkjartan bursts forth, full of rage and fury. Further, the characters now notice that the Pool of Dreams lies frozen!

Killing Myrkjartan is a formidable task in itself, but to get the ultimate "true death" kill and set things back into equilibrium, he must be killed and his remains swallowed back up by the pool – which means the pool must be thawed out. The pool can be thawed out by inflicting 100 points of fire damage or by applying 5 gallons of *dragon ether*.

The Sunken Skull: The great skull of Sunscratch lies at the bottom of the pool. If the pool is

thawed, it is possible to retrieve the skull.

If the dragon's skull is brought to the surface, Myrkjartan becomes enraged, but gets a new Will save to try to shake off Sunscratch's influence. Swimming in the Pool of Dreams requires a DC 15 Swim check. The pool is 20 feet deep, and the water is thick and cloudy.

Once reaching the bottom, the skull can be spotted through the cloudy waters with a DC 25 Spot check. Otherwise, characters feeling around the bottom of the pool have a 25% chance per round of simply bumping against the skull. The skull weighs 50 pounds – be sure to factor its weight into the swimming character's encumbrance to see if it impacts his Swim skill.

If the skull is retrieved from the pool, Myrkjartan must make a DC 25 Will save or become shaken, reflecting the fact that he is unsure of himself; the dragon grows troubled by the distant memory of his true personality suppressed by Sunscratch's dominant spirit. If the skull is shattered or broken, Myrkjartan writhes in agony, takes 10d6 (35) points of divine damage, and becomes dazed for 1 turn. If he succeeds at a DC 25 Will save, Myrkjartan suffers only half damage and does not become dazed.

His madness-induced abilities slowly slip away once the skull has been shattered, as Myrkjartan struggles to reject Sunscratch's spirit. The effects are outlined below:

Round Effect

- 1 Loses idiot's caress supernatural ability
- 2 Loses prescient madness supernatural ability
- 3 Loses spell-like abilities, may attempt DC 26 Will save to break Sunscratch's control, reverting to Neutral Good alignment
- 4 May attempt DC 22 Will save to break Sunscratch's control, reverting to Neutral Good alignment
- 5+ May attempt DC 18 Will save to break Sunscratch's control, reverting to Neutral Good alignment

If Myrkjartan is freed from Sunscratch's control, he shifts to a defensive mode, trying to determine the reason the PCs are here. If they press the attack, he destroys them, but if they relent, realizing that Myrkjartan is no longer under the rebel-



lious red dragon's control, he stops.

The Dragon Choir: If all four dragon trumpets have been assembled and are played at the same time while Myrkjartan is within the chamber, the restless spirits of the dragons bound to the Pool of Dreams surge forward, answering the call of the Dragon Choir. A geyser of essence from the Pool of Dreams bursts forth, enveloping Myrkjartan and any characters within 10 feet of the dragon.

The spiritual geyser inflicts 10d6 (35) points of divine damage, but targets are allowed a DC 25 Reflex save for half damage. The geyser automatically grapples Myrkjartan, but all other targets in the area of effect may attempt a grapple or Escape Artist check opposed by the geyser's +15 grapple check. Failure results in being dragged back into the pool the following round, along with Myrkjartan, and suffering an additional 6d6 (21) points of divine damage each turn until the character flees the pool or drowns. Swimming out of the surging, spiritually awakened pool requires a DC 20 Swim check.

The waters become still and peaceful again once Myrkjartan has been destroyed.

Tactics: Myrkjartan has been driven insane by Sunscratch's domination and his time spent locked within the Pool of Dreams. But his madness does not hinder him as it might others. In fact, it is a special gift that grants him extraordinary powers at the price of his sanity. His prescient madness warns him a few rounds in advance of the PCs' arrival, even if his keen senses fail to notice their approach. In either case, Myrkjartan has the following spells cast upon his person: *mage armor*, *shield*, and *protection from good*.

Myrkjartan begins combat by unleashing his psychotic burble as he bursts from the Pool of Dreams, hoping to incapacitate as many PCs as possible with confusion. He follows this attack with his breath weapon, and then leaps into the air, hovering directly over the PCs. Myrkjartan hovers just high enough to allow him to reach the PCs with his natural attacks, but deny them the same opportunity. He uses a full attack routine on a single PC, preferably a spellcaster, in an attempt to slay the unfortunate party member in a single round. Myrkjartan repeats this process on another PC the following round, testing the party's defensive and offensive capabilities.

If the PCs seem resistant to physical damage or are able to inflict noticeable harm upon Myrkjartan, he flies up near the ceiling, hovers, and blasts the PCs with his spell-like abilities. Favorites include *crushing despair*, *hideous laughter*, *feeblemind*, and *symbol of insanity*. Myrkjartan uses *displacement* only if the PCs are well equipped with ranged weapons.

After his fusillade of spells and spell-like abilities, Myrkjartan returns to his previous position and engages the PCs in melee once more. At this point, it is likely that one or more of the PCs will have been neutralized by one of Myrkjartan's myriad incapacitating spells, and the dragon will be able to simply mop up what little resistance remains.

Myrkjartan will not leave the room that houses the Pool of Dreams, not even to chase fleeing PCs or flee himself, unless Sunscratch's skull has been removed. In that case, he will go to whatever lengths are necessary to retrieve the skull, and bring all his strength to bear against any trying to carry off or destroy the skull.

Myrkjartan, The Mad Dragon, Mature Adult Silver Dragon Mad Savant: CR 20; Huge

Dragon (Cold); HD 25d12+125; hp 287; Init +4; Spd 40 ft., fly 150 ft. (poor); AC 42 (-2 size, +24 natural, +2 insight, +4 *mage armor*, +4 *shield*), touch 10, flat-footed 40; Base Atk +25; Grp +42; Atk Bite +33 melee (2d8+9 (18) and 1 Wis); Full Atk Bite +33 melee (2d8+9 (18) and 1 Wis) and 2 claws +31 melee (2d6+4 (11) and 1 Wis) and 2 wings +31 melee (1d8+4 (8) and 1 Wis) and tail slap +31 melee (2d6+13 (20) and 1 Wis); Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft. (15 ft. with bite); SA Breath weapon, crush, frightful presence, idiot's caress, psychotic burble, spell-like abilities, spells; SQ Alternate form, cloudwalking, DR 10/magic, darkvision 120 ft., immunities (acid, cold, *sleep*, paralysis and all mind affecting spells and effects), low-light vision, prescient madness, SR 24, vulnerability to fire; AL NE; SV Fort +19, Ref +18, Will +16; Str 29, Dex 10, Con 21, Int 26, Wis 15, Cha 24.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +33, Diplomacy +37, Hide +6, Intimidate +35, Knowledge (history) +36, Listen +32, Move Silently +14, Search +36, Sense Motive +30, Spot +32, Swim +23; Alertness, Cleave, Flyby Attack, Great Cleave, Hover, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Multiattack, Power Attack.

Breath Weapon (Su): 50-ft. cone, damage 14d8 cold, Reflex DC 27 half; or 50-ft. cone, paralyzing gas, Fortitude save DC 27 or be paralyzed for 1d6+7 (10) rounds.

Crush (Ex): Area 15 ft. by 15 ft., Small or smaller opponents take 2d8+13 (22) points of bludgeoning damage, and must succeed on a DC 27 Reflex save or be pinned; grapple bonus +42.

Frightful Presence (Ex): 210-ft. radius, HD 24 or less, Will DC 29 negates.

Idiot's Caress (Su): Any creature struck with any of the Myrkjartan's natural attacks must make a DC 29 Will save or take 1 point of temporary Wisdom damage. The save is Charisma-based.

Psychotic Burble (Su): Once per day, as a standard action, Myrkjartan can unleash a writhing stream of insanity upon his enemies, giving them a taste of the true madness that lives within his head. The psychotic burble bursts in a 60-ft. radius centered on Myrkjartan and all within the area of effect must make a DC 29 Will save or be confused as the spell, for 7 rounds.

Spell-Like Abilities: 3/day—*confusion*, *daze*, *fog cloud*, *hideous laughter*; 2/day—*feather fall*; 1/day—*crushing despair*, *displacement*, *entropic shield*, *feeblemind*, *insanity*, *symbol of insanity*, *touch of idiocy*.

Spells (6/8/8/8/5, DC 17 + spell level): 0—acid splash, arcane mark, dancing lights, daze, detect magic, ray of frost, read magic, resistance; 1st—chill touch, comprehend languages, ~~mage armor, protection from good, shield~~; 2nd—arcane lock, detect thoughts, knock, see invisibility; 3rd—dispel magic, nondetection, sleet storm; 4—solid fog, wall of ice.

Prescient Madness (Su): Myrkjartan's madness allows him to continually see a few moments into the future. This bizarre ability increases his combat effectiveness by letting him see his opponents' tactics a few seconds in advance. Myrkjartan receives a +1 insight bonus on attack rolls and a +2 insight bonus to AC and Reflex saves. This has already been factored into Myrkjartan's stat block.

Description: The silver wyrm's oppressive majesty crashes down like a hammer as you the pool springs open, ripping your courage from you like a bully rips a toy from a child. You falter, and it is here that you catch the dragon's eyes and realize there is far more than rapacious greed driving this beast. A frothing madness spirals out from the wyrm's steely gaze, its white eyes glazed over with swirling, red flames. The sheer madness of his glare fills your head with a cacophony of shrieking voices which are suddenly drowned by the dragon's own shattering roar.

Scoring Suggestions: 2,500 points possible

100/barbarian: Per troglodyte barbarian defeated

75/brazier: Per brazier lit

800: Eliminate Myrkjartan as a threat (death or freedom)

+400: Use Dragon Choir to defeat Myrkjartan

+200: Free Myrkjartan from Sunscratch's domination

200: Thaw out the Pool of Dreams

200: Recover Sunscratch's skull from Pool of Dreams

200: Destroy Sunscratch's skull

-100: Per PC dragged into the Pool of Dreams and drowned

Appendix 1: New Creatures & Templates

DIRE POLAR BEAR

Huge Animal

Hit Dice:	14d8+87 (150 hp)
Initiative:	+0
Speed:	40 ft. (8 squares), swim 30 ft.
Armor Class:	15 (-2 size, +7 natural), touch 8, flat-footed 15 Base
Base Atk/Grpl:	+10/+30
Attack:	Claw +21 melee (2d6+12)
Full Attack:	2 claws +21 melee (2d6+12) and bite +15 melee (3d8+6)
Space/Reach:	15 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks:	Improved Grab
Special Qualities:	Low-light vision, scent
Saves:	Fort +15, Ref +9, Will +10
Abilities:	Str 35, Dex 11, Con 23, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 10
Skills:	Hide -5*, Listen +5, Spot +7, Swim +16
Feats:	Alertness, Endurance, Run, Track, Weapon Focus (claw)
Environment:	Cold plains
Organization:	Solitary or pair
Challenge Rating:	8
Treasure:	None
Alignment:	Always neutral
Advancement:	15-28 HD (Huge), 29-42 HD (Gargantuan)
Level Adjustment:	—

This enormous white bear towers above you as it rears on its hind legs. Gigantic fangs and swordlike claws make it a terrifying sight to behold.

Living in extremely cold and frigid climates, the towering dire polar bear is thankfully a rare creature. The omnivorous dire polar bear is usually content to mind its own business, but is a truly fearsome foe when aggravated. A dire polar bear ferociously protects its food and its cubs. If hungry, it becomes aggressive and destructive as it searches for something to eat. A typical dire polar bear is 18 feet long and weighs as much as 18,000 pounds.

COMBAT

Dire polar bears attack with massive claws.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a dire polar bear must hit with a claw attack. It can then attempt to grapple as a free action without provoking an

attack of opportunity.

Skills: A dire polar bear has a +8 racial bonus on any Swim check to perform some special action or avoid a hazard. It can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even if distracted or endangered. It can use the run action while swimming, provided it swims in a straight line.

*A dire polar bear's white coat bestows a +12 racial bonus on Hide checks in snowy areas.

DOOMTWITCH ZOMBIE

Doomtwitch zombies are a rare form of undead, supernaturally quickened by an obscure necromantic process. They are immediately noticeable among a group of normal zombies, as their bodies constantly twitch and spasm, possessed with a terrible frenzied energy that is terrifying to behold. Doomtwitch zombies are not mindless and do retain some of the intelligence they possessed in life, although this is normally just enough for the poor creature to fully realize the horror of its own cursed existence. In appearance, doomtwitch zombies are gaunt and emaciated, with cracked, dry flesh stretched taut over their bones and skull, but any real detail is hard to make out thanks to the creatures' constant writhing motion. All doomtwitch zombies have unnaturally large hands with long, bony talons, which jerk and jump at their sides, spasmodically clenching and unclenching.

"Doomtwitch Zombie" is an acquired template that can be added to any corporeal humanoid, giant, or monstrous humanoid.

Size and Type: The creature's type changes to undead. Do not recalculate base attack bonuses, saves, or skill points. Size is unchanged.

Hit Dice: Increase all current and future Hit Dice to d12s.

Speed: The doomtwitch zombie's land speed increases by 10 ft. over that of the base creature.

Armor Class: The base creature's natural armor bonus increases by +2.

Attacks: A doomtwitch zombie has two claw attacks.

Damage: If the base creature does not have claw attacks, use the damage values in the table below. Otherwise, use the values below or the base creature's damage values, whichever are greater.

Size	Claw Damage
Fine	1d2
Diminutive	1d3
Tiny	1d4
Small	1d6
Medium	1d8
Large	2d6
Huge	3d6
Gargantuan	4d6
Colossal	6d6

Special Attacks: A doomtwitch zombie retains all the special attacks of the base creature and gains the following special attack.

Curse of the Quickened (Su): Any creature struck by a doomtwitch zombie's claw attack must make an immediate Fortitude saving throw (DC 10 + 1/2 doomtwitch zombie's Hit Dice + doomtwitch zombie's Cha modifier) or fall under a deadly curse. On a failed saving throw, a creature's metabolism and heart rate speed up to deadly heights. The curse proceeds for four rounds, with the following effects for each round listed below.

Round 1: The target is considered to be under the effects of a *haste* spell. There are no other ill effects, although he will feel his heart begin to race.

Round 2: The target suffers 2d6 points of damage from the strain on his heart and becomes fatigued. The target still benefits from the effects of a *haste* spell.

Round 3: The target suffers another 4d6 points of damage and becomes exhausted, but still benefits from the effects of a *haste* spell. At this point the target's body quakes and spasms horribly, and he is barely able to control his own limbs from flailing about.

Round 4: In the final round of the curse the victim must make another Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 doomtwitch zombie's Hit Dice + doomtwitch zombie's Cha modifier), or his heart explodes in his chest, killing him instantly. If the Fortitude save is made successfully, the target instead suffers an additional 6d6 points of damage, and is permanently exhausted.

The curse can be removed anytime before round 4, or after round four if the victim makes the necessary Fortitude save and survives, with the application of a *remove curse* spell. A *slow* spell halts the progress of the curse but leaves the victim permanently fatigued or exhausted depending on when the spell is administered. Curse of the quickened does not affect constructs, elementals, oozes, plants, or undead.

Special Qualities: A doomtwitch zombie retains all the special qualities of the base creature and gains the following special qualities.

Damage Reduction: Doomtwitch zombies have damage reduction 10/slashing.

Deathly Speed (Ex): Doomtwitch zombies are supernaturally quick and can take one extra attack or move action every round.

Spell Vulnerability: A doomtwitch zombie takes 1d6 points of damage per caster level, up to a maximum of 10d6, from a *slow* spell. In addition, it loses the ability to use curse of the quickened or writhing concealment for the duration of the spell.

Writhing Concealment (Ex): The body of a doomtwitch zombie quakes and shudders so much that it is difficult to target with ranged weapons. This awful writhing gives all ranged attacks a flat 20% miss chance.

Abilities: Increase from the base creature as follows: Str +2, Dex +6, Int –4, Wis –4, Cha +2. As an undead creature, a doomtwitch zombie has no Constitution score.

Feats: Doomtwitch zombies gain Dodge, Mobility, and Spring Attack as bonus feats.

Alignment: Always chaotic evil.

Challenge Rating: As base creature +3.

Level Adjustment: –.

DRACOMORPH

Descended from the mighty Dragon Kings of legend, dracomorphs combine the most favorable features of half-dragons and lycanthropes. They are shapechangers with the ability to suffuse their blood with draconic power, taking on aspects of individual dragon types and gaining a host of powerful abilities. Most dracomorphs are kings or rulers in their own right, letting the majesty in their blood dictate their regal actions.

“Dracomorph” is an inherited template that can be added to any giant, humanoid, or monstrous humanoid (referred to hereafter as the base creature) of at least Small size. A dracomorph uses all the base creature’s statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Size and Type: The creature’s type changes to dragon and it gains the shapechanger subtype. Size is unchanged. Do not recalculate base attack bonus

and saves.

Hit Dice: Same as base creature plus the dracomorph gains a number of 12-sided Hit Dice based upon its size. These bonus Hit Dice are considered to be of the dragon type and add a corresponding +1 BAB per Hit Die.

Size	Added Hit Dice
Small	+1
Medium	+3
Large	+6
Huge	+9
Gargantuan	+12
Colossal	+15

Speed: Dracomorphs have wings in their hybrid form, gaining a fly speed equal to twice the base creature’s land speed (average maneuverability).

Armor Class: Natural armor improves by +4 over that of the base creature and may improve again in hybrid form based on the dracomorph’s new size.

Base Attack/Grapple: Add the base attack bonus for the base creature to the base attack bonus for the creature’s bonus dragon Hit Dice. The dracomorph’s grapple bonus uses its attack bonus and modifiers for Strength and size depending on the dracomorph’s form.

Attacks: Same as the base creature, depending on which form the dracomorph is using. A dracomorph in hybrid form gains a bite attack, two claw attacks, and two wing buffet attacks.

These weapons deal damage based on the hybrid form’s size. A hybrid may attack with a weapon and a bite, or may attack with its natural weapons. The claw and wing buffet attacks of a hybrid are secondary attacks.

Size	Bite	Claw	Wing Buffet
Medium	1d8	1d6	1d4
Large	2d6	1d8	1d6
Huge	2d8	2d6	1d8
Gargantuan	4d6	2d8	2d6
Colossal	4d8	4d6	2d8

Special Attacks: A dracomorph retains the special attacks of the base creature, depending on which form it is using, and also gains the special attacks described below.

Breath of the Dragon Kings (Su): A dracomorph gains a breath weapon based upon the type of dragon it is descended from. A dracomorph’s breath weapon is usable every 1d6 rounds and deals 8d8 points of damage. A successful Reflex saving throw

(DC 10 + 1/2 dracomorph's HD + dracomorph's Con modifier) reduces the damage by half. Breath of the Dragon Kings can only be used in the dracomorph's hybrid form.

Dragon Variety	Breath Weapon
Black	80-foot line of acid
Blue	80-foot line of lightning
Green	40-foot cone of corrosive (acid) gas
Red	40-foot cone of fire
White	40-foot cone of cold
Brass	80-foot line of fire
Bronze	80-foot line of lightning
Copper	80-foot line of acid
Gold	40-foot cone of fire
Silver	40-foot cone of cold

Majesty of the Dragon Kings (Ex): In its hybrid form the dracomorph can unsettle foes with its mere presence. The ability takes effect whenever the dracomorph changes into its hybrid form, attacks, charges, or flies overhead. Creatures within a 60-ft. radius are subject to the effect if they have fewer HD than the dracomorph.

A potentially affected creature that succeeds on a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 dracomorph's HD + dracomorph's Cha modifier) remains immune to that dracomorph's Majesty of the Dragon Kings ability for 24 hours. On a failure, creatures with 4 or less HD become panicked for 2d6 rounds and those with 5 or more HD become shaken for 1d8 rounds. True dragons ignore the Majesty of the Dragon Kings ability.

Special Qualities: A dracomorph retains all the special qualities of the base creature and also gains those described below.

Alternate Form (Su): A dracomorph can assume a hybrid form, which combines the traits of the base creature with those of a particular type of dragon.

The hybrid form is one size category larger than the base creature, bipedal, and has prehensile hands and pronounced draconic features. These features include scales, wings, a lashing tail, and powerful claws and teeth. The hybrid form also allows the dracomorph to gain access to a number of potent abilities unusable in its humanoid or giant form.

This ability functions like the *polymorph* spell except as noted here. The effect last for 1 hour per Hit Die, or until the dracomorph changes back to his base form. Changing form (to hybrid or back) is a standard action and doesn't provoke an attack of opportunity. Upon changing, the subject regains lost hit points as if it had rested for a night (though this healing does not restore temporary ability damage and provide other benefits of resting, and changing back does not heal the subject further). If slain, the subject reverts to its original form, though it remains dead. A dracomorph can transform a number of times each day based on its Hit Dice:

Hit Dice	Hybrid Form
5 HD or less	1/day
6-8 HD	2/day
9-12 HD	3/day
13-16 HD	4/day
17 HD or more	5/day

The change from the base creature to the hybrid form is an awe inspiring event, and all creatures witnessing the transformation are subject to the dracomorph's Majesty of the Dragon Kings ability.

Damage Reduction (Ex): A dracomorph has damage reduction of 10/dragon glass (see sidebar) in any form.

Draconic Empathy (Ex): In any form, a dracomorph can communicate and empathize with true dragons or creatures of the dragon type. This gives it a +4 racial bonus on Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information,

Dragon Glass

Dragon glass is magically treated obsidian, created in a now obscure process, which grants it strength and an edge like no other. Weapons made of dragon glass are considered masterwork items and are naturally keen, doubling the threat range of the weapon. Although much tougher than normal obsidian, dragon glass is still brittle compared to steel or iron. Weapons made of dragon glass have 1/3 less hit points than normal. The additional cost of a dragon glass weapon depends on the weapon's size. The cost for ammunition is per shot.

Weapon size	Additional Cost
Ammunition	+25 gp
Light weapon	+400 gp
One-handed weapon	+600 gp
Two-handed weapon	+900 gp

and Intimidate checks when using these skills to influence draconic creatures.

Immunities (Ex): In any form, a dracomorph is immune to sleep and paralysis effects. In addition it gains an immunity based upon its draconic heritage, as shown in the table below.

Dragon Variety	Immunity	Dragon Variety	Immunity
Black	Acid	Brass	Fire
Blue	Electricity	Bronze	Electricity
Green	Acid	Copper	Acid
Red	Fire	Gold	Fire
White	Cold	Silver	Cold

Keen Senses (Ex): In any form, a dracomorph sees four times as well as a human in shadowy illumination and twice as well in normal light. It also has dark-vision out to 120 ft.

Spell Resistance (Ex): A dracomorph has spell resistance equal to 5 + HD in any form.

Abilities: A dracomorph gains a +4 to Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma in any form. In addition, when in hybrid form, a dracomorph's physical statistics increase from moving up one size category, as detailed in the table below.

Old Size	New Size	Str	Dex	Con	Natural Armor	AC/Attack
Small	Medium	+4	-2	+2	Same	-1
Medium	Large	+8	-2	+4	+2	-1
Large	Huge	+8	-2	+4	+3	-1
Huge	Gargantuan	+8	Same	+4	+4	-2
Gargantuan	Colossal	+8	Same	+4	+5	-4

Base Save Bonuses: Calculate the base creature's saves as normal using only its standard racial Hit Dice. To this add saving throw bonuses for the bonus dragon Hit Dice it receives related to its size. These bonus dragon Hit Dice confer all good saves. For example: A fifth-level human fighter is a Medium creature and gains 3 bonus Hit Dice from the dracomorph template. The total saving throw bonuses for the fifth-level fighter dracomorph would be calculated by taking the base saves for a fifth-level fighter (Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +1) and then adding the base saving throw bonuses for three Hit Dice of dragon (Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +3) for a total base saving throw bonus of Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +4, which would then be further modified by the creature's Constitution, Dexterity, and Wisdom modifiers and appropriate feats as normal.

Skills: A dracomorph gains skill points as a dragon and has skill points equal to (6 + Int modifier) x 1/2(HD + 3). Do not include Hit Dice from class levels in this calculation—the dracomorph gains dragon

skill points only for its racial Hit Dice, and gains the normal amount of skill points for its class levels. Treat skills from the base creature's list as class skills, and other skills as cross-class.

Environment: Same as either the base creature or the dragon variety.

Challenge Rating: HD 5 or less, as base creature +2; HD 6 to 10, as base creature +3; HD 11 to 15, as base creature +4; HD 16 to 20, as base creature +5; HD 21 or more, as base creature +6.

Alignment: Same as the dragon variety.

Level Adjustment: Same as base creature +3.

DREAD GHOST

Like normal ghosts, dread ghosts are restless spirits that exist on both the Material and the Ethereal Planes. Unlike many other dread undead, dread ghosts have no special power over others of their kind, but some mystery of their creation makes them more powerful than standard ghosts.

The appearance of dread ghosts is as varied as that of standard ghosts. Some exhibit telltale signs of their causes of death; others simply appear as rotting or skeletal as their corpses. A few appear as they did in life, or as idealized versions of themselves.

"Dread ghost" is an acquired template that can be added to any living creature with an Intelligence score (referred to hereafter as the base creature).

A dread ghost uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities, except as noted here.

Size and Type: The creature's type changes to undead with the appropriate augmented subtype, plus the incorporeal subtype if the base creature did not already have it. Do not recalculate base attack bonuses, saves, or skill points. Size is unchanged.

Hit Dice: Increase all current and future Hit Dice to d12s.

Speed: A dread ghost gains a fly speed equal to double the base creature's highest speed, with perfect maneuverability. If the base creature already has a fly speed, it increases to double the base creature's highest speed, and its maneuverability class becomes perfect. Its other speeds apply only on the Ethereal Plane.

Armor Class: Natural armor is the same as the base creature's but applies only to ethereal encounters. When the dread ghost manifests (see Manifestation

on page 99), its natural armor bonus is +0, but it gains a deflection bonus equal to its Charisma modifier or +1, whichever is higher.

Attacks: A dread ghost retains all the attacks of the base creature, although those relying on physical contact do not affect creatures that are not ethereal.

Damage: Against ethereal creatures, the dread ghost uses the base creature's damage values. Against nonethereal creatures, it usually cannot deal physical damage at all, but it can use its special attacks, if any, when it manifests.

Special Attacks: The dread ghost retains all the special attacks of the base creature, although those relying on physical contact do not affect nonethereal creatures. The dread ghost gains the manifestation ability and five other special attacks chosen from the list given here.

Aligned Attacks (Su): All the dread ghost's attacks are considered magic and aligned for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction. The alignment matches one component (dread ghost's choice at the time of creation) of its own alignment. In addition, each of its attacks deals +1d6 points of extra damage to creatures of the opposing alignment. This bonus damage applies to incorporeal touch attacks as well as to melee and ranged attacks made against ethereal opponents. If the dread ghost lacks the corrupting touch ability, its incorporeal touch attack still deals 1d6 points of damage to a creature of the opposing alignment.

Chilling Aura (Su): When a dread ghost manifests, it emits a deadly chill in a 20-foot radius around itself, on both the Material and the Ethereal Planes. Each creature within this area takes 3d6 points of cold damage per round. A successful Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 dread ghost's Hit Dice + dread ghost's Cha modifier) halves the damage. Although the dread ghost is not immune to cold damage (unless the base creature is), it is not affected by its own chilling aura or that of other dread ghosts.

Corrupting Gaze (Su): A dread ghost can blast living beings with a glance, at a range of up to 30 feet. Any creature that meets the dread ghost's gaze must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 dread ghost's Hit Dice + dread ghost's Cha modifier) or take 2d10 points of damage and 1d4 points of Charisma damage.

Corrupting Touch (Su): A dread ghost that hits an incorporeal target with its incorporeal touch attack deals 1d6 points of damage. Against ethereal oppo-

nents, it adds its Strength modifier to attack and damage rolls. Against nonethereal opponents, it adds its Dexterity modifier to attack rolls only.

Death Wail (Su): Once every 1d4 rounds, the dread ghost can loose a terrible wail as a full-round action, targeting it against one creature within 100 feet of it. If the target creature can hear the death wail, it must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 dread ghost's Hit Dice + dread ghost's Cha modifier) or die instantly. Any other creature within 100 feet that can hear the wail must succeed on a Fortitude save at the same DC or gain 1 negative level. A creature that succeeds on the save cannot be affected by that dread ghost's death wail for 24 hours. The death wail is a sonic death effect.

Draining Touch (Su): A dread ghost that hits a living target with its incorporeal touch attack drains 1d4 points from any one ability score it selects. On each such successful attack, the dread ghost heals 5 points of damage to itself. Against ethereal opponents, it adds its Strength modifier to attack and damage rolls. Against nonethereal opponents, it adds its Dexterity modifier to attack rolls only.

Frightful Moan (Su): A dread ghost can emit a frightful moan as a standard action. Every living creature within a 30-foot spread must succeed on a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 dread ghost's Hit Dice + dread ghost's Cha modifier) or become panicked for 2d4 rounds. Frightful moan is a sonic necromantic mind-affecting fear effect. A creature that successfully saves against the moan cannot be affected by the same dread ghost's moan for 24 hours.

Horrific Appearance (Su): Any living creature within 60 feet that views a dread ghost must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 dread ghost's Hit Dice + dread ghost's Cha modifier) or immediately take 1d4 points of Strength damage, 1d4 points of Dexterity damage, and 1d4 points of Constitution damage. A creature that successfully saves against this effect cannot be affected by the same dread ghost's horrific appearance for 24 hours.

Malevolence (Su): Once per round, an ethereal dread ghost can merge its body with a creature on the Material Plane. This ability is similar to a *magic jar* spell (caster level 10th or the dread ghost's Hit Dice, whichever is higher), except that it does not require a receptacle. To use this ability, the dread ghost must be manifested and it must try to move into the target's space; moving into the target's space to use the malevolence ability does not provoke attacks of opportunity. The target can resist the attack with a

successful Will save (DC 15 + dread ghost's Cha modifier). A creature that successfully saves is immune to that same dread ghost's malevolence for 24 hours, and the dread ghost cannot enter the target's space. If the save fails, the dread ghost vanishes into the target's body.

Manifestation (Su): A dread ghost dwells upon the Ethereal Plane and, as an ethereal creature, it cannot affect or be affected by anything in the material world. When a dread ghost manifests, it partly enters the Material Plane and becomes visible but incorporeal on the Material Plane. A manifested dread ghost can be harmed only by other incorporeal creatures, magic weapons, or spells and has a 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source. It can also pass through solid objects at will, and its own attacks pass through armor. A manifested dread ghost always moves silently.

A manifested dread ghost can strike with its touch attack or with a ghost touch weapon. When manifested, the dread ghost remains partially on the Ethereal Plane, where it is not incorporeal. It can be attacked by opponents on either the Material Plane or the Ethereal Plane. The dread ghost's incorporeality helps protect it from foes on the Material Plane, but not from those on the Ethereal Plane.

When a spellcasting dread ghost is not manifested and is on the Ethereal Plane, its spells cannot affect targets on the Material Plane, though they work normally against ethereal targets. When a spellcasting dread ghost manifests, its spells continue to affect ethereal targets and can affect targets on the Material Plane normally unless the spells rely on touch. Its touch spells don't work on nonethereal targets.

A dread ghost has two home planes: the Material Plane and the Ethereal Plane. It is not considered extraplanar when on either of these planes.

Rebuke Undead (Su): The dread ghost can rebuke and command undead as an evil cleric of a level equal to its Hit Dice.

Shattering Presence (Su): Once per round as a free action, the dread ghost can shatter all nonmagical objects made of crystal, glass, ceramic, or porcelain (such as vials, bottles, flasks, jugs, windows, mirrors, and the like) within 30 feet. Any object weighing more than 5 pounds per Hit Dice the dread ghost possesses are not affected. A magic item made of any of the above materials must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 dread ghost's Hit Dice + dread ghost's

Cha modifier) or be destroyed. A crystalline creature within the area takes 1d6 points of damage per Hit Dice the dread ghost possesses (to a maximum of 10d6). Every creature within 5 feet of a shattering object must succeed on a DC 20 Reflex save or take 1d6 points of slashing damage. A creature wearing or carrying an object when it shatters takes 2d6 points of slashing damage (no save). Shattering presence is not a sonic effect.

Telekinesis (Su): A dread ghost can use *telekinesis* as a standard action (caster level 12th or equal to the dread ghost's Hit Dice, whichever is higher). When a dread ghost uses this power, it must wait 1d4 rounds before using it again.

Special Qualities: The dread ghost retains all the base creature's special qualities and also gains rejuvenation and turn resistance. It also gains two other special qualities chosen from the list below.

Energy Immunity (Su): The dread ghost is immune to one type of energy (acid, cold, electricity, fire, or sonic) chosen at the time of its creation.

Ethereal Armor (Su): The dread ghost gains a deflection bonus to Armor Class equal to its Charisma bonus or +1, whichever is greater, even when not manifested and existing wholly on the Ethereal Plane.

Greater Turn Resistance (Ex): The dread ghost has turn resistance +8. This benefit does not stack with any other turn resistance the base creature has.

Improved Manifestation (Su): A dread ghost can switch from being wholly ethereal to manifesting on the Material Plane and vice versa as a move action.

Improved Rejuvenation (Su): The dread ghost rejuvenates in just 1d4 hours rather than the standard 2d4 days. This ability replaces the standard dread ghost's rejuvenation ability.

Invisibility (Su): The dread ghost can benefit from *improved invisibility* at will.

Rejuvenation (Su): In most cases, it's difficult to destroy a dread ghost through simple combat. The "destroyed" spirit often restores itself in 2d4 days. Even the most powerful spells are usually only temporary solutions. A dread ghost that would otherwise be destroyed returns to its old haunts with a successful level check (1d20 + dread ghost's Hit Dice) against DC 16. As a rule, the only way to get rid of a dread ghost for sure is to determine the reason for its existence and set right whatever prevents it from resting in peace. The exact means varies with each

spirit and may require a good deal of research.

Spell Resistance (Su): A dread ghost has spell resistance equal to 10 plus its character level.

Turn Resistance (Ex): A dread ghost has turn resistance +4.

Abilities: Increase from the base creature as follows: Cha +8. As an undead creature, a dread ghost has no Constitution score.

Skills: A dread ghost has a +8 racial bonus on Hide, Listen, Search, and Spot checks.

Environment: Any, often as the base creature.

Organization: Solitary, pair, gang (3–4), or mob (7–12).

Challenge Rating: Same as the base creature +3.

Treasure: Ghostly equipment.

Alignment: Any.

Level Adjustment: Same as the base creature +6.

DREAD SPECTRE

Like ghosts, dread spectres are the incorporeal spirits of living beings that continue to act after death. They haunt the places they frequented in life, seeking to grant their loved ones the same tortured existence that they now endure.

A dread spectre appears much as it did in life, except that its face is twisted into a mask of hatred and despair.

“Dread spectre” is an acquired template that can be added to any living, intelligent creature killed by a spectre or a dread spectre (referred to hereafter as the base creature).

A dread spectre uses all the base creature’s statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Size and Type: The creature’s type changes to undead with the appropriate augmented subtype, plus the incorporeal subtype if the base creature did not already have it. Do not recalculate base attack bonuses, saves, or skill points. Size is unchanged.

Hit Dice: Increase all current and future Hit Dice to d12s.

Speed: A dread spectre loses all the base creature’s speeds and gains a fly speed equal to double the base creature’s highest speed, with perfect maneuverability.

Armor Class: The base creature’s armor, shield, and natural armor bonuses no longer apply, but the dread spectre gains a deflection bonus to Armor Class equal to its Charisma bonus or +1, whichever is higher. Dread spectres cannot use or carry equipment of any kind.

Attack: The dread spectre retains all the base creature’s natural attacks, as well as its weapon and armor proficiencies. However, all its attacks become incorporeal touch attacks, retaining the same primary or secondary status they had for the base creature. The dread spectre gains a primary incorporeal touch attack if it has no other natural attacks.

A dread spectre uses its primary incorporeal touch attack when making an attack action. Because an incorporeal creature has no Strength score, its Dexterity modifier rather than its Strength modifier applies to all its attack rolls.

Full Attack: A dread spectre uses all its incorporeal touch attacks during a full attack.

Damage: The dread spectre’s incorporeal touch attacks deal normal damage unmodified by Strength and also energy drain (see Energy Drain, 101). If the dread spectre gained an incorporeal touch attack from the application of this template, its damage is as given on the following table.

Size	Incorporeal Touch Damage
Fine	1d2
Diminutive	1d3
Tiny	1d4
Small	1d6
Medium	1d8
Large	2d6
Huge	2d8
Gargantuan	4d6
Colossal	4d8

Special Attacks: The dread spectre loses all special attacks that require corporeal contact but gains those described here. A dread spectre cannot cast spells that require material components unless it has the Eschew Materials feat.

Command Spectres (Su): A dread spectre can automatically command all normal spectres within 30 feet as a free action. Normal spectres never attack a dread spectre unless compelled.

Create Spawn (Su): Any creature with a Charisma score of 16 or higher killed by a dread spectre rises as a dread spectre in 1d4 rounds. Any other creature slain by a dread spectre instead rises as a normal

spectre in 1d4 rounds. A spectre or dread spectre created in this manner is under the command of its creator and remains so until either it or the creator is destroyed. A standard spectre from the MM can be advanced in HD to represent a more powerful creature, and this template can be used to create a normal spectre (see the Creating a Normal Spectre sidebar).

Energy Drain (Su): Any creature struck by a dread spectre's incorporeal touch attack gains 2 negative levels. The Fortitude save to remove a negative level has a DC of 10 + 1/2 dread spectre's Hit Dice + dread spectre's Cha modifier. For each such negative level bestowed the dread spectre gains 5 temporary hit points.

Frightful Presence (Ex): Any creature within 60 feet that witnesses a dread spectre's attack must succeed on a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 dread spectre's Hit Dice + dread spectre's Cha modifier) or become frightened for 5d6 rounds. This ability affects only creatures with fewer character levels than the dread spectre. A creature that successfully saves is immune to that dread spectre's frightful presence for 1 day.

Special Qualities: The dread spectre retains all the base creature's special qualities that do not require corporeal contact with another creature and gains those described here.

Daylight Vulnerability (Ex): A dread spectre is not powerless in natural daylight and does not flee from it like a normal spectre, but it does take a –4 penalty on all attack rolls, checks, and saves when in natural sunlight (but not within the radius of a *daylight* spell).

Turn Resistance (Ex): A dread spectre has turn resistance +4.

Unnatural Aura (Su): Any creature of the animal type

within 30 feet of a dread spectre automatically becomes panicked and remains so until the distance between it and the dread spectre is at least 30 feet. See the DMG for a description of the panicked condition.

Abilities: Increase from the base creature as follows: Dex +6, Int +4, Wis +4, Cha +4. As an incorporeal creature, a dread spectre lacks a Strength score, and as an undead creature, it has no Constitution score.

Environment: Any.

Organization: Solitary, pair, or gang (3–5).

Challenge Rating: Same as the base creature +3.

Treasure: None. Dread spectres cannot use equipment.

Alignment: Always neutral evil.

Level Adjustment: Same as the base creature +7.

Dread Spectre Characters: A dread spectre favors whichever class the base creature does. A GM allowing players to play dread spectres despite their evil nature should be aware that an incorporeal spellcaster can wreak havoc on a campaign. A level adjustment of +8 or +9 might be more appropriate for a character who is primarily a spellcaster. Since a dread spectre cannot wield equipment, it may be unsuitable for use as a PC race.

FLAME PARAGON

Like living infernos, flame paragons burn with the withering heat of pure elemental fire, and have access to a number of special abilities related to flame and heat. Most flame paragons hail from deep within the Elemental Plane of Fire, but occasionally terrestrial fire creatures, such as fire giants or red dragons, are born with the kiss of the inferno.

Creating a Normal Spectre

You can use the dread spectre template to create a creature that closely mimics the standard spectre from the MM. To do so, simply alter the features of the dread spectre template in the following ways.

- The spectre does not gain the command spectre or frightful presence abilities.
- The spectre's create spawn ability creates only normal spectres.
- Reduce the turn resistance to +2.
- Replace the template's sunlight vulnerability special quality with sunlight powerlessness, as detailed for the spectre in the MM.
- The CR increase is +2 instead of +3.

“Flame paragon” is an inherited template that can be added to any living, corporeal creature with the fire subtype (referred to hereafter as the base creature).

Size and Type: Size and type are unchanged.

Special Attacks: A flame paragon retains all the special attacks of the base creature and gains the following special attacks.

Aura of Fatigue (Ex): The flame paragon radiates an aura of oppressive heat that can fatigue nearby opponents. All creatures not of the fire subtype within 10 ft. of a flame paragon must make a successful Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 flame paragon’s racial HD + flame paragon’s Con modifier) or become fatigued. Creatures in the area of effect must make a Fortitude saving throw each round to avoid becoming fatigued. Fatigued creatures remain so for as long as they stay within 10 ft. of the flame paragon and for 1 round per flame paragon HD after that. Any type of fire or heat resistance renders a creature immune to the aura of fatigue.

Burning Touch (Ex): Each of the flame paragon’s natural attacks deal additional fire damage based on its size, detailed in the table below. Creatures that already deal additional fire damage in this way burn hotter, increasing the damage dealt by one step. For example, a Medium fire elemental with the flame paragon template inflicts 1d8 points of extra fire damage with its slam attack, as opposed to the standard 1d6.

Size	Additional Fire Damage
Fine	1
Diminutive	1d2
Tiny	1d3
Small	1d4
Medium	1d6
Large	1d8
Huge	2d6
Gargantuan	3d6
Colossal	4d6

Spell-Like Abilities: A flame paragon with an Intelligence or Wisdom score of 8 or higher has spell-like abilities depending on its Hit Dice, as indicated on the table below. The abilities are cumulative. Unless otherwise noted, an ability is usable once per day. Caster level equals the creature’s HD, and the save DC is Charisma-based.

Hit Dice	Abilities
1-2	<i>Burning hands</i> 3/day
3-4	<i>Heat metal</i>
5-6	<i>Scorching ray</i>

7-8	<i>Fireball</i> 3/day
9-10	<i>Protection from energy</i> (cold)
11-12	<i>Wall of fire</i>
13-14	<i>Fire shield</i> 3/day
15-16	<i>Fire storm</i>
17-18	<i>Summon monster IX</i> (fire subtype only)
19-20	<i>Incendiary cloud</i>

Special Qualities: A flame paragon retains all the special qualities of the base creature and gains the following special qualities.

Increased Cold Vulnerability (Ex): Flame paragons are incredibly vulnerable to cold-based attacks, even more so than a standard fiery creature. Flame paragons take double damage from cold effects, regardless of whether a saving throw is allowed, or if the save is a success or failure.

Melt Weapons (Ex): The intense heat of a flame paragon’s body can melt or char weapons. Any melee weapon that strikes a flame paragon is allowed a Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 flame paragon’s racial HD + flame paragon’s Con modifier) to avoid destruction.

Abilities: Increase from the base creature as follows: Str +4, Con +4, Cha +2.

Alignment: Same as base creature.

Challenge Rating: HD 4 or less, as base creature +1; HD 5 to 10, as base creature +2; HD 11 or more, as base creature +3.

Level Adjustment: +4.

HALF-GIANT

Most true giants view their ability to procreate with other races and other kinds of giants as a curse upon their kind. A few kinds of giants, however, view the ability to breed with other races as a gift. In particular, ogre mages often polymorph into giants of various kinds in order to mate with them. Through such trickery, they hope to produce children who can act as their spies and assassins among the other giant races.

No matter how an individual giant feels about mating with other races, the fact remains that they are physically capable of procreating with nearly any creature of naturally humanoid form. Such a union produces a child with most of the traits of its nongiant parent, or of the mother if both parents are giants. Giant parentage often results in increased size and strength, and it bestows the giants’ famous knack for throwing boulders. Half-giant blood dilutes in just one genera-

tion, however; the children of nongiant/half-giant pairs display no trace of giant heritage except perhaps strangely colored hair, skin, or eyes. Similarly, the children of a giant and a half-giant show few signs of the nongiant grandparent's blood.

In addition to their strength and size, half-giants often exhibit other traces of their giant parent's heritage. A cloud half-giant has white hair throughout its life, and an ettin half-giant always has two heads. A fire half-giant's body is coal-black, and a hill half-giant tends toward fat even when perfectly fit. A frost half-giant has yellow eyes, hair, and teeth, and a storm half-giant's hair is dark green. An ogre half-giant usually has overly long arms and large hands, while an ogre mage half-giant possesses light green skin and black nails. A troll half-giant has the warty green skin common to that race.

Troll and ogre half-giants are by far the most common specimens; other half-giants are born only rarely. Though usually encountered singly, half-giants might be encountered in droves in areas where they are deliberately fostered. For example, an exiled hill giant might rule a tribe of orcs, or a colony of grimlocks might be allied with stone giants.

"Half-giant" is an inherited template that can be added to any living, corporeal creature of at least Small size and naturally humanoid shape (referred to hereafter as the base creature). Creatures that do not reproduce in the same manner as giants cannot receive this template. Furthermore, mating between giants of the same kind does not produce half-giants.

A half-giant uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Size and Type: Type is unchanged, but the creature gains the giantkin subtype if the base creature does not already have it.

If the base creature's size category is not equal to or larger than that of the giant parent, the half-giant gains one size category (maximum Colossal). This change affects its ability scores, AC, attack bonus, and natural armor, as detailed in the following sections.

Giantkin Subtype: The half-giant is considered both a giant and a creature of its normal type for the purpose of spells, abilities, and effects that affect those types. If its type renders it immune to an effect that would normally affect a giant, it remains immune unless the effect specifically targets creatures of the giant type. In addition, the half-giant may use magic items with racially specific qualities as though it were

of the giant type.

Speed: If the half-giant gains a size category, each of its speeds increase by +10 feet over that of the base creature.

Armor Class: The half-giant's natural armor bonus improves by +1 over that of the base creature. It might also increase further because of a size change, as given in the following table. In addition, the half-giant might take a greater size penalty to AC than the base creature did. If the creature gained a size category, replace the old size modifier with the appropriate value from the following table.

New Size	Natural Armor Bonus Increase	New Size Modifier to AC
Medium	None	None
Large	+2	−1
Huge	+3	−2
Gargantuan	+4	−4
Colossal	+5	−8

Attack: The half-giant retains all the base creature's attacks, as well as its weapon and armor proficiencies. Its bonus on attack rolls changes based on its new base attack bonus, its new Strength modifier, and its new size modifier (if any), as given on the following table.

Half-Giant Size	Size Modifier for Attack Rolls
Medium	+0
Large	−1
Huge	−2
Gargantuan	−4
Colossal	−8

Damage: The half-giant's increased Strength increases its damage modifier accordingly. Furthermore, if the half-giant gains a size category, it may use correspondingly larger weapons, so the base damage for each of its natural and weapon attacks increases by one step, according to the following table.

Old Damage	New Damage
1	1d2
1d2	1d3
1d3	1d4
1d4	1d6
1d6	1d8
1d8	2d6
1d10	2d8
2d6	3d6
2d8	3d8
4d6	6d6
4d8	6d8

Space/Reach: Same as the base creature unless the half-giant gained a size category. In that case, the half-giant has a space and reach appropriate for its new size, as described in the following table. If the base creature had greater than normal reach for its size, add 5 feet to the reach indicated on the table.

New Size	Space/Reach
Medium	5 ft./5 ft.
Large	10 ft./10 ft.
Huge	15 ft./15 ft.
Gargantuan	20 ft./20 ft.
Colossal	30 ft./30 ft.

Special Attacks: The half-giant retains all the base creature's special attacks and also gains the one described here.

Rock Throwing (Ex): A half-giant has a +1 racial bonus on attack rolls made to throw rocks. It can throw rocks weighing up to the amount given in the following table five range increments, assuming it has the Strength to lift a rock of that size. The size of the range increment depends on the half-giant's size category, as given in the table. If the base creature has a better rock throwing ability, use its values instead. The half-giant gains its Strength bonus (if any) on damage rolls when it strikes a foe with a thrown rock. The half-giant gains this special attack even if its giant parent did not have it.

Half-Giant's Size	Rock Weight	Base Rock Damage	Range Increment
Medium	10 lb.	1d8	60 ft.
Large	50 lb.	2d6	120 ft.
Huge	80 lb.	2d8	140 ft.
Gargantuan	120 lb.	3d6	180 ft.
Colossal	180 lb.	4d6	220 ft.

Special Qualities: The half-giant retains all the base creature's special qualities and also gains those described here.

Giant Quality: The exact giant quality bestowed depends on the giant parent, as follows.

Cloud Giant

Scent (Ex): A cloud half-giant can detect approaching enemies and sniff out hidden foes by sense of smell alone. See the MM for details of this quality.

Ettin

Second Head (Ex): Because of its second head, the half-ettin/half-giant gains a +2 bonus on all Listen, Spot, and Search checks. If the base creature has a bite attack, the second head grants the half-giant a

second bite attack with the same attack modifier and base damage. Otherwise, the half-giant gains the Two-Weapon Fighting feat or the Multiattack feat as a bonus feat, whichever is more appropriate.

Fire Giant

Fire Resistance (Ex): The fire half-giant gains fire resistance 10.

Frost Giant

Cold Resistance (Ex): The frost half-giant gains cold resistance 10.

Hill Giant

Hill's Strength (Su): Whenever the hill half-giant is in contact with solid ground (not the deck of a ship or a house's floor above a basement), it gains a +2 enhancement bonus to Strength.

Ogre, Merrow, or Ogre Mage

Darkvision (Ex): The half-giant gains darkvision to a range of 60 ft.

Stone Giant

Stony Soul (Ex): A stone half-giant's natural armor bonus improves by +2 in addition to the +1 increase normally provided by this template. In addition, the stone half-giant throws rocks with two hands, applying 1-1/2 times its Strength bonus to damage rolls.

Storm Giant

Electricity Resistance (Ex): The storm half-giant gains electricity resistance 10.

Troll

Fast Healing (Ex): A half-troll/half-giant has fast healing 2.

Any Other Giant

Giant's Blood (Ex): The blood of the giant grants the half-giant a +2 competence bonus on Spot checks and a +2 bonus on Fortitude saves.

Rock Catching (Ex): Once per round, a half-giant that would normally be hit by a rock of Small, Medium, or Large size can make a Reflex save to catch it as a free action. The DC is 15 for a Small rock, 20 for a Medium one, and 25 for a Large one. (If the projectile provides a magical bonus on attack rolls, the DC increases by that amount.) The half-giant must be ready for and aware of the attack in order to make a rock catching attempt. The half-giant gains this special quality even if its giant parent did not have it.

Abilities: The half-giant's abilities change based on its size, as shown in the following table.

Half-Giant Size	Str	Dex	Con
Medium	+6	−2 (minimum 1)	+2
Large	+10	−2 (minimum 1)	+4
Huge	+10	−2 (minimum 1)	+4
Gargantuan	+8	+0	+4
Colossal	+10	+0	+4

Skills: If the creature increased in size, replace the base creature's size modifier on Hide checks with the appropriate one for its new size.

Challenge Rating: Same as the base creature +1.

Level Adjustment: Same as the base creature +3.

Half-Giant Characters: A half-giant character favors whichever class the base creature does. A starting half-giant character may choose Giant as a bonus language.

ICY CREATURE

Icy creatures are elemental beings of deadly cold. Ice replaces muscle and bone in their bodies, and frost forms where normal creatures would have hair or feathers. Icy creatures exude a deathly chill that freezes small creatures solid in an instant and wards away more powerful beings. Icy creatures are masters of ice and never slip or lose purchase on an icy surface.

Icy creatures often mirror the forms and powers of other beings—particularly those native to the Elemental Planes of Air and Water, and any cold climes. They often settle in the same areas as the creatures they mimic, eventually driving the original creatures out of their normal habitats. Those creatures that do not leave are eradicated or enslaved but never befriended, since icy creatures view them as lesser reflections of themselves.

"Icy creature" is an inherited template that can be added to any living, corporeal creature (referred to hereafter as the base creature) with the air, water, or cold subtype, as long as it does not have the fire subtype.

An icy creature uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Size and Type: The creature's type changes to elemental with the appropriate augmented subtype, plus the cold, extraplanar, and water subtypes if the base creature did not already have them. Do not recalculate base attack bonuses, saves, or skill points. Size is unchanged.

Hit Dice: Change all racial HD to d8s.

Special Attacks: The icy creature retains all the base creature's special attacks and gains those described here.

Cold Aura (Ex): An icy creature emits an aura of cold that can wound nearby creatures. Any creature within 10 feet of it takes 2d6 points of cold damage per round within range. A successful Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 icy creature's Hit Dice + icy creature's Con modifier) halves the damage for that round. An icy creature can suppress or resume the use of this ability as a free action.

Exude Ice (Su): At will as a full-round action, an icy creature can exude a circle of slippery ice in a 20-foot-diameter spread centered on its body. This ice remains in the affected area, melting away as normal for the ambient temperature. Creatures walking on the ice must spend 2 squares of movement to enter any square covered by it. The DC for any Balance, Climb, or Tumble check made in the area increases by +5.

Icy Touch (Ex): An icy creature is chilling to the touch. Any creature that makes a successful touch attack against it takes 1d6 points of cold damage. Each of the icy creature's natural melee attacks (including successful grapple checks made during its turn) and attacks with metallic melee weapons deals +1d6 points of cold damage. Any creature damaged by the icy creature's icy touch must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 icy creature's Hit Dice + icy creature's Con modifier) or be paralyzed for 1d4 rounds.

Special Qualities: The icy creature retains all the base creature's special qualities and gains those described here.

Other Icy Creatures

If you wish, you can expand the range of creatures that qualify for this template by simply ignoring the subtype restrictions. Alternatively, you can make it an acquired template, using only the subtypes, special attacks, special qualities, skill adjustments, ability adjustments, CR adjustment, and level adjustment portions of the template.

Ice Mastery (Ex): An icy creature gains a +1 morale bonus on attack and damage rolls if its foe is touching ice. In addition, the icy creature never slips or slides on natural or supernatural ice unless it wishes, and it can always climb ice and icy surfaces as though affected by a *spider climb* spell.

Resistance to Cold 15 (Ex): Icy creatures ignore the first 15 points of cold damage each round.

Sonic Vulnerability (Ex): Due to the ice-based construction of their bodies, icy creatures take half again as much damage as normal from sonic attacks, regardless of whether a saving throw is allowed, or if the save is a success or a failure.

Abilities: Change from the base creature as follows: Dex -2 (minimum 1), Con +4.

Skills: An icy creature gains a +5 racial bonus on Balance and Climb checks.

Languages: If the icy creature can speak, it gains the ability to speak Aquan in addition to any other languages the base creature knows.

Environment: Same as the base creature plus cold.

Challenge Rating: Same as the base creature +1.

Level Adjustment: Same as the base creature +4.

Icy Creature Characters: An icy creature favors whichever class the base creature does. The GM may wish to allow an icy PC to negate or resume its icy extraordinary attacks as a standard action in order to travel with a party more easily.

ID OOZE

Every adventurer worthy of the moniker knows that oozes are unthinking blobs of protoplasm. If spotted early, these dangerous creatures can be avoided quite easily. Yet a few oozes do have the ability to think, albeit in an alien way. These “id oozes,” as adventurers have come to call them, seem to be aberrant spawn of typical oozes rather than a race in their own right.

Id oozes are ruled by impulse. Although they are intelligent, their understanding of the world is guided by instinct rather than reasoning. Consequences and thoughts of the future are as alien to them as their thought processes are to most other creatures. Consequently, many id oozes behave as rashly as any unintelligent ooze, attacking any targets they notice. The difference between id oozes and normal oozes becomes apparent only when an id ooze chooses to attack.

“Id ooze” is an inherited template that can be added to any unintelligent ooze (referred to hereafter as the base creature).

An id ooze uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Armor Class: An id ooze can use a shield. If it has just one natural attack, using a shield prevents it from making attacks at all.

Attack: An id ooze retains all the base creature's attacks, but not its weapon and armor proficiencies. These attacks retain the same primary or secondary status they had for the base creature. In lieu of making natural attacks, however, it can wield a weapon appropriate for its size. The id ooze can use a pseudopod to wield or manipulate any object that can be held in one hand. If the base creature has more than one natural attack, the id ooze can use two pseudopods to wield objects, functioning like a creature using a weapon with two hands. It does not, however, gain proficiency with these items unless it takes the appropriate feats (see Feats, below). Wielding objects with two pseudopods prevents it from using any of its natural attacks.

Damage: The id ooze deals damage normally with its natural attacks and any weapons it wields. If it wields a weapon, shield, or any other object, and it normally deals energy damage with its touch or a slam attack, the object takes the indicated damage once per round at the end of the id ooze's turn. Certain materials, however, take no damage from acid and other types of energy.

Abilities: Increase from the base creature as follows: Dex +6, Con +6, Wis +6, Cha +6. Furthermore, the id ooze gains an Intelligence score of 10.

Skills: Because it is intelligent, the id ooze has skills. It gains a number of skill points equal to 2 per HD after the first, with 8 skill points at 1st level. An id ooze's class skills are Hide, Listen, Move Silently, and Spot. If the base creature has a climb speed, Climb is also a class skill, and if it has a swim speed, Swim is also a class skill.

Languages: Id oozes cannot speak and do not communicate.

Feats: An id ooze has a number of feats appropriate for a creature of its HD. If it often uses a shield or wields a weapon, it must take feats that give it proficiency with those items or take nonproficiency penalties.

Challenge Rating: Same as the base creature +1.

Treasure: Same as the base creature plus any items carried.

Alignment: Always chaotic neutral.

Advancement: Same as the base creature or by character class.

Level Adjustment: —.

Id Ooze Characters: The strange abilities and forms of oozes make them poor choices for player characters. NPC id oozes favor the barbarian class.

KOSTKORIAN (FROST DEMON)

Medium Outsider (Chaotic, Cold, Extraplanar, Evil)

Hit Dice: 7d8+21 (52 hp)

Initiative: +1

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

AC: 17 (+1 Dex, +6 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 16

Base Atk/Grpl: +7/+13

Attack: Ice maul +13 melee (2d6+9 plus 1d6 cold) or slam +13 melee (1d8+9 plus 2d6 cold)

Full Attack: Ice maul +13/+8 melee (2d6+9 plus 1d6 cold) or slam (1d8+9 plus 2d6 cold)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Breath weapon, chill, spell-like abilities, *summon demon*

Special Qualities: Damage reduction 10/cold iron or good, cold mastery, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to cold, electricity, and poison, resistance to acid 10, spell resistance 14, vulnerability to fire

Saves: Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +7

Abilities: Str 23, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 8, Wis 15, Cha 12

Skills: Appraise -1 (+1 weapons), Climb +16, Craft (weaponsmithing) +9, Intimidate +11, Jump +16, Knowledge (nature) +1, Listen +12, Spot +12, Survival +12

Feats: Cleave, Improved Sunder, Power Attack

Environment: Chaotic evil planes

Organization: Solitary or gang (3-6)

Challenge Rating: 6

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 8-14 HD (Large); 15-21 HD (Huge)

Level Adjustment: —

This tall, ill-shaped humanoid seems to be made entirely of ice. Its body is crude and angular, containing none of the soft contours of more attractive humanoid forms. Like its body, the creature's face is roughly formed, lacking a nose but with a wide, ugly slash of a mouth. Two tiny pits of inky black are set deep into the creature's head, from which the unmistakable glare of malevolent evil exudes in oppressive waves.

The kostkorian are lesser servants of the demon lord Kostchtchie, enforcing his will upon his own frozen layer of one of the outer planes. Their evil is petty and bullying, and they spend most of their time tormenting lesser demons and trying to avoid the attention of those more powerful. They are rarely encountered alone and seem to be most effective in large numbers. Kostkorian can occasionally be found on the Prime Material Plane serving mortal allies of Kostchtchie.

A kostkorian stands about 7 feet tall and weighs nearly 300 pounds.

COMBAT

Unsubtle and brutish, kostkorian favor uncomplicated tactics involving crushing their opponents with their fists or heavy bludgeoning weapons made of hardened ice. They are crafty enough to use simple tactics such as flanking, and often soften up foes at a distance with their breath weapon or spell-like abilities before closing to melee range.

A kostkorian's natural attacks, as well as any weapon it wields, are considered chaos- and evil-aligned for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Breath Weapon (Ex): 1/day, 15-ft. cone of frost, damage 3d6 cold, Reflex DC 16 half. The save DC is Constitution based.

Chill (Ex): The kostkorian radiates an aura of deadly cold. Its natural attacks, as well as any weapon it wields, deal an additional 1d6 points of cold damage.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will — *chill metal*, *dispel magic*, *ray of frost*, *teleport* (self plus 50 pounds of objects only). Caster level 7th.

Summon Demon (Sp): Once per day a kostkorian can attempt to summon 1 kostkorian with a 35% chance of success. This ability is the equivalent of a 3rd-level spell.

Cold Mastery (Ex): A kostkorian gains a +1 bonus on attack and damage rolls when it is in an environment featuring sub-freezing temperatures (below 32

degrees Fahrenheit). It takes a –4 penalty on attack and damage rolls in environments above 50 degrees Fahrenheit.

Vulnerability to Fire: Kostkorian suffer half again as much from fire effects, regardless of whether a saving throw is allowed, or if the save is a success or failure.

MAD SAVANT

Beings of pure insanity, mad savants are paragons of derangement, living in harmony with their affliction and gaining in strength as a result. Mad savants are often born with their bizarre gifts, but occasionally creatures that have undergone mind-breaking levels of stress may develop into mad savants. In appearance, mad savants look very much like their normal (sane) brethren, although they often display traits of various psychoses, such as nervous tics, psychotic episodes, and hearing and responding to mysterious voices.

“Mad Savant” is an acquired or inherited template that can be added to any corporeal creature with an Intelligence score of 3 or higher (referred to hereafter as the base creature).

Special Attacks: A mad savant retains all the special attacks of the base creature and gains the following special attacks.

Idiot’s Caress (Su): The mere touch of a mad savant can drain the sanity away from rational creatures. Any creature touched or struck with any of the mad savant’s natural attacks must make a successful Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 mad savant’s HD + mad savant’s Cha modifier) or take 1 point of temporary Wisdom damage.

Psychotic Burble (Su): Once per day, as a standard action, a mad savant can unleash a bubbling torrent of insanity upon his enemies, giving them a taste of the true madness that lives within his head. The psychotic burble bursts in a 60-ft. radius centered on the mad savant and all within the area of effect must make a successful Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 mad savant’s HD + mad savant’s Cha modifier) or be *confused* as the spell for 1 round per point of Charisma bonus the mad savant possesses. Psychotic burble is a sonic mind-affecting compulsion effect.

Spell-Like Abilities: A mad savant with an Intelligence of 8 or higher has one or more spell-like abilities, depending on its Hit Dice, as indicated on the table below. The abilities are cumulative. Unless otherwise noted, an ability is usable once per day.

Caster level equals the creature’s HD, and the save DC is Charisma-based.

Hit Dice	Abilities
1-2	<i>Daze</i> 3/day
3-4	<i>Entropic shield</i>
5-6	<i>Touch of idiocy</i>
7-8	<i>Hideous laughter</i> 3/day
9-10	<i>Displacement</i>
11-12	<i>Crushing despair</i>
13-14	<i>Confusion</i> 3/day
15-16	<i>Feeblemind</i>
17-18	<i>Insanity</i>
19-20	<i>Symbol of insanity</i>

Special Qualities: A mad savant retains all the special qualities of the base creature and also gains the following special qualities.

Incomprehensible Mind (Ex): A mad savant is immune to all mind affecting spells and effects.

Prescient Madness (Su): The strange psychosis of the mad savant allows him to continually see a few moments into the future. This bizarre ability does not allow for any grandiose prognostications but does increase the combat effectiveness of the mad savant by letting him see his opponents’ tactics a few seconds in advance. The mad savant receives a constant +1 insight bonus on attack rolls, a +2 insight bonus to AC, and a +2 insight bonus to Reflex saving throws.

Abilities: Increase from the base creature as follows: Int +6, Wis -6, Cha +4.

Alignment: Always chaotic (any).

Challenge Rating: Up to 8 HD, as base creature +1; HD 9 or more, as base creature +2.

Level Adjustment: +4.

SLITHERING OOZE

Not all oozes look like puddles of liquid at rest. One of the most bizarre creatures known is the slithering ooze, which often looks more like a coating of slime than a true creature. Less than 2 inches thick at most times, a slithering ooze moves like water over surfaces and climbs them as quickly as a wave splashing up the side of a ship.

“Slithering ooze” is an inherited template that can be added to any ooze (referred to hereafter as the base creature).

A slithering ooze uses all the base creature’s statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Size and Type: Type is unchanged, but the slithering ooze's size increases by one category over that of the base creature (maximum Colossal). The size change can affect AC, attack bonus, natural armor, Constitution, Strength, Dexterity, Hide checks, and grapple checks. Most of these changes are noted in the following sections.

Speed: Each of a slithering ooze's speeds is double the corresponding speed of the base creature. If the base creature lacks a climb speed, it gains a climb speed equal to its highest speed.

Armor Class: The base creature's size modifier to AC is replaced by one based on the slithering ooze's new size, as given in the following table. In addition, its natural armor bonus increases over that of the base creature by the amount indicated.

New Size	Natural Armor Bonus Change	Size Modifier
Diminutive	+0	+4
Tiny	+0	+2
Small	+0	+1
Medium	+0	+0
Large	+2	-1
Huge	+3	-2
Gargantuan	+4	-4
Colossal	+5	-8

Grapple: The slithering ooze's size modifier on grapple checks increases by +4 over that of the base creature.

Attack: The slithering ooze retains all the base creature's attacks, as well as its weapon and armor proficiencies. Its bonus on attack rolls changes based on its new Strength modifier and its new size modifier, as given on the following table.

Slithering Ooze Size	Size Modifier for Attacks
Diminutive	+4
Tiny	+2
Small	+1
Medium	+0
Large	-1
Huge	-2
Gargantuan	-4
Colossal	-8

Full Attack: A slithering ooze fighting without weapons uses all its natural weapons when making a full attack. With its pseudopodia attack, it may attempt one attack against every creature within reach.

Damage: The base damage for each of the slithering ooze's natural or weapon attacks increases by one step, as given in the following table.

Old Damage	New Damage
1	1d2
1d2	1d3
1d3	1d4
1d4	1d6
1d6	1d8
1d8	2d6
1d10	2d8
2d6	3d6
2d8	3d8
4d6	6d6
4d8	6d8

Space/Reach: Because the slithering ooze's body is a few inches thick at most, it covers a vast area – a larger space than usual for a creature its size, as given on the following table. However, it has a very short reach.

New Size	New Space/Reach
Diminutive	5 ft./0 ft.
Tiny	5 ft./0 ft.
Small	10 ft./0 ft.
Medium	15 ft./5 ft.
Large	20 ft./5 ft.
Huge	30 ft./5 ft.
Gargantuan	40 ft./5 ft.
Colossal	60 ft./5 ft.

A slithering ooze can fit into any space, and its body is as flowing and mutable as water. It takes no penalties for squeezing into a space smaller than its own space rating, and it can pass through any hole, crack, or barrier through which liquid can pass.

Special Attacks: A slithering ooze retains all of the base creature's special attacks except engulf and also gains those described here.

Flow (Ex): A slithering ooze can enter the space of any creature, though doing so provokes an attack of opportunity as normal. Neither the slithering ooze nor the other creature takes any penalty for fighting in the same space. Each provokes attacks of opportunity for movement normally.

Pseudopodia (Ex): When making a full attack, a slithering ooze may choose to make a single melee attack against every foe it detects within reach. In addition, it can make a number of attacks of opportunity equal to its Dexterity score in a single round.

Special Qualities: The slithering ooze retains all the base

creature's special qualities and also gains those described here.

Diminished Space/Reach (Ex): A slithering ooze does not occupy a cube. Instead, it covers the area within its space like a spread, even sloughing up walls and around corners. A slithering ooze is considered to occupy all the squares its body covers in a plane of 5-foot-tall cubes, and it has a maximum vertical reach of 5 feet from where its body pools. If the slithering ooze is not on a surface (when it is swimming underwater or flying, for example), it naturally orients itself as a plane of ooze.

Slick (Ex): An area covered by a slithering ooze functions like an area covered by ice for the purpose of movement and Balance checks, and it counts as slippery for the purpose of Climb checks. See the skill descriptions in the PHB and The Environment in the DMG for details. Furthermore, if the base creature has the engulf attack, the slithering ooze can make an attack of opportunity against any creature that rises from prone within its space.

Abilities: The slithering ooze's abilities change based on its size, as shown in the chart below:

Old Size	New Size	Str	Dex	Con
Fine	Diminutive	+0	+6	+2
Diminutive	Tiny	+2	+6	+2
Tiny	Small	+4	+6	+2
Small	Medium	+4	+6	+2
Medium	Large	+8	+6	+4
Large	Huge	+8	+6	+6
Huge	Gargantuan	+8	+4	+6
Gargantuan	Colossal	+8	+4	+6
Colossal	Colossal	+0	+4	+2

Skills: If the slithering ooze gained a climb speed from the application of this template, it receives a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened.

Feats: A slithering ooze gains Mobility as a bonus feat if the base creature did not already have it.

Challenge Rating: Same as the base creature +1.

Level Adjustment: —.

Appendix 2: Vault of the Dragon Kings Session Report Contest

Grand Prize Winner: Dustin Short

Runners Up: Mark Charke, Ben "Superfan" Waxman

Winning Entry: Tales from a Kobold's Tail

Written by: Dustin Short

Group: OCR Bunny Killers

Character Played: Ynnen the Kobold Rogue

It was cold, very cold. We had traveled many miles only to come to the base of a very tall mountain. There, thousands of feet up from the base, was a statue of one of my mighty ancestors carved out of the mountain. It appeared to be protecting the entrance to a cave, maybe the exact cave that has brought us this far.

We gave the big yet small crazy fighter guy the rope and had him climb to the entrance all the way up. Then I, Ynnen, climbed up behind him. Then I climbed back down so I could tie up the healer kinda fella and help him up, and then tied up our magicky guy and then followed them on up.

Once I climbed over the ledge, I saw the rest of the group standing there in amazement as they took in the sight of four statues of my mighty ancestors, the Dragon Kings. Upon closer inspection by me and the healer guy, we found there were no traps on the statues, only a strange groove in the floor. Ynnen did not know what that was for, but we soon found out. The healer fella, later found out his name was Veri or Vera something, stepped over the line and the tail of the mighty dragon statue came to life and started swinging, trying to knock him off.

Our search for the off switch included me climbing all the way to the mouth of the statue carved into the mountain. Ynnen didn't find a way to shut it off but did find some really nice items, including two really big rubies that were the dragon's eyes. Finally Ynnen decided he would try to ride the dragon's tail to the end and get through that way. It didn't work. So I just squeezed behind one of the Dragon King statues while the rest of the party climbed over.

Once we got past the nasty dragon's tail, we found an entryway with four dragon switch thingies set in

the wall. It appeared to be a puzzly thing of some sort and Ynnen is not so good with those so he let the magicky guy, Glyn, and the big yet small crazy guy figure that one out. They eventually did a really good job of it and we went through a great big door.

Once in the room some zombie things in a tower attacked us. After Glyn the magicky guy webbed them, the healer guy showed him his pretty symbol and they all went poof! While we were focused on the zombies, a big, two-headed thing came out of another room attacking us! The big yet small crazy guy got crazier and ran right up to beat on the two-headed thing and got his fancy sword smashed on the first hit. The rest of us proceeded with a proper beat down!

After winning the fight with the two-headed monster, we proceeded searching and found a nifty horn that made a "soft melodic sound" whenever we blew it. On the body of the two-headed thing we found a key that fit into the lock for the door out of this room. After we got that door open we discovered other doors behind it. We searched the four other rooms and discovered various puzzles that would open the other doors. In the first room there were stuffed dragons, and when Ynnen got too close they turned and spit acid on him! Not nice of them!

We found the acid room, an ice room, one with storm clouds, and one with a fire pit thingy all in the forms of altars. All of the rooms had these empty little grooves in front of the altar areas except the frozen room; the groove in there was filled in with ice. So the healer guy tried an idea and threw a lit torch into the fire room groove. It opened one of the doors, but also set free a giant fire creature. We shut the door real quick. It must have worked 'cause it didn't come through.

We then used this invisible helper from Glyn the magicky guy and carried a vial over and used it to scoop acid out of a fountain and pour it into the groove in the acid room. Another door opened. Then Glyn went to the storm cloud room and fired a lightning bolt into the groove and electricity shot around the wall but fizzled out and nothing happened. He then went into the room with the small yet big crazy guy and closed the door. Not sure what they did, but the third door started spinning and through a hole we could see a fourth door frozen in place. We quickly pulled the door open for Glyn the magicky guy and the big yet small crazy guy who came running out. The healer guy used a spell he called *heat metal* to get it unfrozen. It opened.

After timing the hole in the third door and after the ice

was melted away on the fourth door, we went through. As we cautiously moved forward, a big, blue wormlike thing dropped out of the frozen ceiling and attacked us! Again the big yet small crazy guy got crazier and stepped to do battle with the big hammers we had taken off the two-headed guy. He got eaten! Well, scooped up into the thing's mouth anyway.

So then I, Ynnen, stepped up and proceeded to do my thing and stab it for lots of damage, 'cause Ynnen knows just where to hit these things, and my sword melted! Not good. The healer guy sacrificed himself so our big yet small crazy guy could fight the monster with me. And he did it so I could stand back and do lots of damage with my mighty bow!

Sniff. No one has ever done anything like that for Ynnen before.

Then he got eaten!

Then time stopped!

Appendix 3: Pregenerated PCs

The following PCs were the ones available for use during the Second Annual Dungeon Crawl Classics Open Tournament at Gen Con Indy 2005, and are provided for use with this adventure.

Glyn Trollbane, Human Sorcerer

Those unused to Glyn Trollbane's taciturn, stoic manner may find him callous and cold, but that is hardly how those who have come to trust his counsel would define the steely sorcerer. Calculating, direct, brutally honest, and unwaveringly straightforward would be more appropriate. Despite his youth, Glyn Trollbane is already a formidable sorcerer, manipulating the raw power of arcane magic many of his more esteemed wizard counterparts could only dream of. And with such power comes dreadful knowledge of how that very power manipulates, corrupts, and destroys.

Several of Glyn's traveling companions say the young mage has an "old man's soul" and the savvy presence and experience of a veteran twice his age. His chiseled features and commanding voice provide sound wisdom, calculated advice, and objective observations. Glyn is not one to use flowery language or wax philosophic about mundane affairs — he has no time to mince words. His mind is set to contemplate higher things.

Glyn Trollbane does cut an imposing figure. His frame is lean and short for a human, but Glyn's handsome bearing and piercing gaze are captivating. A large, milk-white scar traces a wicked path along his jaw line. While the scar would prove a terrible flaw to some, it adds an air of command and resolve to Glyn Trollbane's otherwise pleasant features.

The scar is a constant reminder of the encounter in which Glyn earned his adopted surname, Trollbane. Just a few short years ago, a small band of trolls began to terrorize a fishing village called Shyette. None stirred to aid the besieged village, but Glyn realized the impact this seemingly insignificant fishing community had on its neighbors. When not even the sellswords would respond to Glyn's pleas or gold, the young sorcerer went to Shyette himself. Few know the true details of what happened, save for Glyn single-handedly defeating five trolls. Tales of his bravery and derring-do swelled, and the name Trollbane started to appear in the bards' songs of his deeds.

The true tale is one that Glyn will never repeat. The exaggerated tales of bards and performers only tell part of the story. Glyn Dewys entered Shyette and a fierce battle raged, to be certain. But Glyn Trollbane is the one who emerged from the encounter. Something dire happened in Shyette, something Glyn Trollbane will not speak of.

Glyn Trollbane, Human Sor10: CR 10; Medium Humanoid; HD 10d4+30; hp 60; Init +8; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+4 Dex, +1 natural), touch 14, flat-footed 11; Base Atk +5; Grp +4; Atk/Full Atk cold iron longspear +4 melee (1d8-1) or cold iron dagger +4 melee (1d4-1) or masterwork light crossbow +10 ranged (1d8); SA Spells; SQ Familiar (rat), spells, spontaneous casting; AL N; SV Fort +10, Ref +9, Will +9; Str 9, Dex 18, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 11, Cha 18.

Languages: Common, Draconic, Ignan.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +10, Concentration +15, Craft (alchemy) +2, Decipher Script +2, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Open Lock +5, Sleight of Hand +7, Spellcraft +16, Tumble +5, Use Magic Device +5; Alertness, Empower Spell, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Spell Penetration.

Equipment: orange prism ioun stone, +2 amulet of health, +2 gloves of dexterity, +2 belt of resistance, handy haversack, dragonskin cloak (red), cold iron longspear, cold iron dagger, cold weather gear, masterwork light crossbow, 10 bolts, 2 sticks of chalk, writing kit and paper, 50-ft. silk rope, wand of ray of enfeeblement (5 charges), wand of mage armor (5 charges), wand of dispel magic (5 charges), two potions of cure moderate wounds, potion of eagle's

splendor, two scrolls of jump (CL 6), two scrolls of slow (CL 6), scroll of obscuring mist (CL 6), scroll of levitate (CL 6), scroll of resilient sphere (CL 10), scroll of break enchantment (CL 10), scroll of spider climb (CL 3).

Arcane Spells (6/7/7/6/3, Save DC = 14 + spell level): 0 – dancing lights, detect magic, ghost sound, light, mage hand, mending, message, open/close, prestidigitation; 1st – feather fall, grease, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement, shield; 2nd – glitterdust, scorching ray, touch of idiocy, web; 3rd – haste, lightning bolt, ray of exhaustion; 4th – enervation, ice storm; 5th – wall of force.

Dragonskin cloak: Glyn's red dragonskin cloak provides the following benefits: Energy resistance 10 (fire), +1 natural armor, locate object (1/day, 5th-level caster).

Ynnen “Chitter-Chatter,” Kobold Rogue

While most of the party members don't completely trust their kobold guide, they can't deny the small creature's formidable skills. While the kobold introduces himself as Ynnenarcturas, descendent of the True Dragons, others have gone to calling him “Chitter Chatter” for the near endless stream of barely audible mumbling that issues from the kobold's mouth. Ynnen is always lost in private conversations with himself. The kobold also has the annoying habit of clicking and scraping his teeth when he talks, which unnerves some people when they see the rogue's sharp teeth.

Even for a kobold, Ynnen is small and wiry. His wide, flat scales are deep, brick red, growing slightly lighter orange under his throat and along his chest. The tip of his left ear is missing, a constant reminder of his careless youth. Despite the kobold's impatience and hyperactive nature most of the time, he has learned his lesson and is meticulous when it comes to searching for traps or other hidden dangers. Ynnen's recklessness in the past proved beyond a doubt that what you don't know certainly can kill you.

Ynnen is an unending supply of energy, but tends not to be very extroverted or gregarious. The stigma others place on him for being a kobold is bothersome, but Ynnen has learned to accept it after a fashion – after all, he doesn't trust humans or elves much himself. The long journey to reach the entrance to the Vault has already garnered more than its fair share of unwanted attention and mistrust, and Ynnen has serious doubts any of his newfound “allies” would come rushing to his aid should some hazard befall him.

His enthusiasm for adventure and the promises of riches are tempered only by his instinct of self-preservation. He yearns to find some clues to the history of dragonkind and his own family's bloodline. While he takes his role as a guide and trailblazer quite seriously, there is never a question about his most important task – protect his own scales. Despite his skill at keeping the rest of the party alive, he can't help but feel the others see the diminutive kobold as "expendable."

Ynnen "Chitter-Chatter," Kobold Rgr8/Rgr2: CR 10; Small Humanoid [reptilian]; HD 8d6+8 and 2d8+2; hp 63; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 23 (+1 size, +7 Dex, +3 +2 *padded armor*, +1 natural, +1 deflection), touch 19, flat-footed 23; Base Atk +8; Grp +4; Atk +1 *sword of subtlety* +17 melee (1d4+1) or +1 *construct bane dagger* +17 melee (1d3+1) or light mace +16 melee (1d4) or longbow +16 ranged (1d6); Full Atk +1 *sword of subtlety* +15/+10 melee (1d4+1) and +1 *construct bane dagger* +15 melee (1d3+1) or longbow +16/+11 ranged (1d6); SA Sneak attack +4d6, two-weapon fighting style; SQ Darkvision (60 feet), evasion, favored enemy (constructs +2), improved uncanny dodge, kobold traits, light sensitivity, trapfinding, trap sense +2, wild empathy; AL N; SV Fort +8, Ref +18, Will +4; Str 10, Dex 24, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 9.

Languages: Common, Draconic, Goblin.

Skills and Feats: Balance +10, Climb +5, Craft (trapmaking) +3, Decipher Script +6, Disable Device +15, Hide +19, Jump +7, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +3, Listen +10, Move Silently +20, Open Lock +20, Search +20, Sleight of Hand +12, Spot +10, Tumble +18, Use Magic Device +4, Use Rope +12; Dodge, Mobility, Spring Attack, Track, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse.

Equipment: Small +1 *sword of subtlety*, Small +1 *construct bane dagger*, +2 *padded armor*, *gloves of dexterity* +2, *cloak of resistance* +2, *lens of detection*, *boots of elvenkind*, +1 *ring of protection*, masterwork thieves' tools, Small light mace, Small longbow and 40 arrows, cold weather outfit, *potion of invisibility*, *potion of bull's strength*, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of expeditious retreat*.

Loros Truebow, Holy Ranger

Loros began his adventuring career a bit later than most. The son of a minor trade merchant, Loros grew up with a silver spoon in his mouth, and never wanted for food, finery, or entertainment. Upon reaching his twenty-third nameday, his father realized that Loros would never take over the family business. Seeking to find balance and purpose, Loros entered the holy orders and became a cleric. While Loros

excelled at his studies, he grew restless in the confines of the temple grounds.

Seeing that wanderlust had struck him fiercely, Loros' superiors opened to him a new path – the study and worship of the manifold aspects of the great outdoors, the thrill of the journey. As Loros' eager mind embraced these teachings, he soon found that training as a ranger meshed well with his religious upbringing. But Loros soon found that life beyond the temples and cities was not as coddling and soft as Loros had so foolishly thought, and the young man's education to the real world was blunt and harsh.

But Loros persevered, and eventually grew to love the outdoors. He never felt as at home anywhere as he did in the midst of the great forests of the realm. He was a quick study with a bow, and became an excellent tracker, as well. Loros soon found reliable employment – and perhaps his true calling – as an escort guiding clergy between holy sites secreted within the heart of the forest. But the forest was thick with dangers, and one day his charges were accosted by a pride of krenshar.

Despite Loros' impressive skills with the bow, the acolytes were overcome. Loros himself took serious wounds, but was able to drive the beasts off. Loros dragged himself to the shrine that had been their destination. He collapsed within the sanctuary, exhausted, whispering prayers to gods he had relied upon during his time with the church. When he awoke, Loros Truebow found himself whole and unmarked, save for a newfound perspective on life and an awakening to a source of strength deep within his soul. Ever since that encounter, Loros has striven to find balance between his study and devotion to both religious matters and the laws of nature.

Now Loros travels the realm, savoring freedom. His attitude and decisions may seem chaotic or unpredictable, but Loros has always been one to rely on his luck as well as his aim. Loros is laid back and pleasant, but usually keeps to himself and offers opinions only when they are sought. He is far more at ease in wide open spaces, especially out of doors, and becomes anxious and impatient when cramped in close quarters.

Loros Truebow, Human Rgr6/Clr4: CR 10; Medium Humanoid; HD 10d8+10; hp 77; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 21 (+5 Dex, +5 +2 *studded leather*, +1 natural), touch 15, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +9; Grp +11; Atk +1 *falchion* +12 melee (2d4+3) or mithral light hammer +12 melee (1d4+2) or masterwork composite long-

bow +18 ranged (1d8+3); Full Atk +1 *falchion* +12/+7 melee (2d4+3) or mithral light hammer +12/+7 melee (1d4+2) or masterwork composite longbow +18/+13 ranged (1d8+3); SA Rapid shot (+16/+16/+11); SQ Favored enemy (magical beasts +4, dragons +2), spontaneous casting (*cure wounds*), turn undead (3/day, +2 turn check), wild empathy; AL CG; SV Fort +10, Ref +11, Will +7; Str 14, Dex 20, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 10.

Language: Common.

Skills and Feats: Climb +5, Concentration +6, Handle Animal +5, Heal +6, Hide +10, Jump +4, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +5, Knowledge (nature) +7, Knowledge (religion) +5, Listen +6, Move Silently +10, Search +6, Spot +9, Survival +10, Swim +4; Endurance, Far Shot, Improved Critical (longbow), Many Shot, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Track, Weapon Focus (longbow).

Divine Cleric Spells (5/4+1/2+1, Save DC = 11 + spell level; Domains: Luck, Travel): 0 – create water, detect *poison* (x2), *light* (x2); 1st – *endure elements* (x2), *entropic shield*, *longstrider**, *obscuring mist*; 2nd – *aid**, *bull's strength*, *lesser restoration*. *Indicates domain spell

Divine Ranger Spells (2, Save DC = 11 + spell level): 1st – *jump*, *resist energy*.

Equipment: greater bracers of archery, +2 *studied leather*, *gloves of dexterity* +2, *amulet of natural armor* +1, +1 *falchion*, *efficient quiver*, +1 *monstrous humanoid bane arrows* (x10), +1 *construct bane arrows* (x10), +1 *dragon bane arrows* (x10), +1 *undead bane arrows* (x10), +2 *arrows* (x10), masterwork composite longbow (+2 Str), mithral light hammer, cold weather gear, climber's kit, 50-ft. silk rope, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of neutralize poison*, *elixir of swimming*, *potion of resist electricity* (20), *potion of lesser restoration*, *potion of heroism*, *wand of cure light wounds* (15 charges).

Oddwit Silverheel, Gnome Fighter-Bard

Odveck Silverheel, of the High March Silverheels, is the greatest hero of the gnomish people – or so he'd have you believe. The scrappy gnomish warrior is called Oddwit by those who know him, a testament to his bizarre sense of humor, love of practical jokes, and frequent lack of common sense. Oddwit takes pride in the moniker and relishes the opportunity to share his stories, fictional and otherwise, with any willing to lend an ear.

Beneath the devil-may-care attitude and mischievous grin, though, lies the heavy heart of a veteran. Oddwit makes light of the situation, regardless of

how dire it may be, but deep inside he knows the dangers that face adventurers as himself. Despite his short stature and carefree demeanor, Oddwit sees himself as a surrogate father of sorts to some of the younger adventurers, and has found himself assuming responsibility for their well-being. Oddwit may very well be one of the better read and educated warriors encountered, and sometimes he curses his upbringing for making him abundantly aware of just how dangerous life can be – but his cunning and intelligence serve him well on the field of battle.

His myriad talents sometime make it difficult for Oddwit Silverheel to decide how he can best serve the group. He is a savvy fighter and proudly bears the sword Searing Kiss, a gift from his father. While backing down from a challenge has never been his strong suit, Oddwit is experienced enough to know that sometimes caution truly is the better part of valor, and he looks for opportunities to use his inspirational chants and hymns to bolster his party's abilities.

Oddwit is sturdily built, and were it not for his clean-shaven face, might be mistaken for a skinny dwarf instead of a well-muscled gnome. His thick, black hair is curly, but already wisps of grey are creeping into his temples. Oddwit's eyes glint of mischief, and he's always turning something over in his mind – numbers, dates, historical events, or tactical maneuvers.

Oddwit Silverheel, Gnome Brd4/Ftr6: CR 10; Small Humanoid; HD 4d6+8 and 6d10+12; hp 88; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 23 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +7 +3 *chain shirt*, +4 +2 *heavy mithral shield*), touch 12, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +9; Grp +8; Atk +2 *flaming longsword* +16 melee (1d6+7 and 1d6 fire) or mithral flail +14 melee (1d6+3) or masterwork dagger +14 melee (1d3+3) or +1 *composite longbow* +12 ranged (1d6+4); Full Atk +2 *flaming longsword* +16/+11 melee (1d6+7 and 1d6 fire) or mithral flail +14/+9 melee (1d6+3) or masterwork dagger +14/+9 melee (1d3+3) or +1 *composite longbow* +12/+7 ranged (1d6+4); SQ bardic knowledge (+7), bardic music, gnome traits, low-light vision, spell-like abilities, spontaneous spell casting; AL NG; SV Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +6; Str 16, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 11, Cha 16.

Languages: Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnome, Giant.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +8, Climb +7, Craft (alchemy) +8, Diplomacy +11, Handle Animal +5, Intimidate +7, Jump +1, Knowledge (history) +6, Knowledge (nobility) +6, Listen +4, Perform +10, Ride +2, Sleight of Hand +3, Swim +4, Tumble +8, Use Magic Device +10; Combat Expertise, Dodge, Endurance, Improved Critical (longsword), Mobility, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon

Specialization (longsword).

Spell-Like Abilities: As a gnome, Oddwit can cast each of the following spells once per day, as a 1st-level caster: *dancing lights*, *ghost sound*, *prestidigitiation*, *speak with animals* (burrowing mammal only).

Arcane Spells (3/3/1, Save DC = 13 + spell level): 0 – *detect magic*, *flare*, *light*, *know direction*, *message*, *summon instrument*; 1st – *animate rope*, *expeditious retreat*, *remove fear*; 2nd – *heroism*, *invisibility*.

Equipment: Small +2 flaming longsword, +3 chain shirt of light fortification, +2 heavy mithral shield, gauntlets of ogre power, ring of feather fall, Small +1 composite longbow (+3 str), 40 arrows, Small mithral flail, Small masterwork dagger, masterwork small lute, cold weather gear, backpack, climber's kit, 4 tinder-twigs, 4 flasks of alchemist's fire, 2 thunderstones, *potion of blur*, *potion of bear's endurance*, *potion of resist cold*, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, two scrolls of light, two scrolls of identify.

Ubo Gutrot, Dwarf Barbarian

The surly dwarf known as Ubo Gutrot has a long and storied past – one he's not likely to share with you until he's seen how you handle yourself in battle. Ubo is as thick as a tree stump, and some would argue not quite as bright. His face and arms are heavily scarred from endless years of fighting for survival in the wilds or raising his sword in service of those he deems worthy. While it may be difficult to earn Ubo Gutrot's trust, once gained it is even more difficult to lose – Ubo is willing to die for those he considers friends, and has risked his own life countless times to help those he trusts.

A thick matt of greasy hair sits atop his wide, flat head – once remarked to look like an anvil by a boisterous drunkard (who, much to the drunkard's chagrin, soon realized just how hard-headed Ubo could be). Several simple rings adorn Ubo's nose and ears, with more intricate rings and jewelry woven into his thick, shaggy moustache and beard. A large tattoo of a cat's eye covers the back of each of his gnarled hands, which Ubo swears help him sense danger a split second earlier than his comrades – and the dwarf's uncanny reactions quell any thoughts otherwise.

Ubo prides himself on his unusual armor – made from the thick, calloused hide of a dire rhinoceros he slew with naught but a simple handaxe, to hear him tell the tale. He swears the moon and stars bore witness to his great feat, and blessed him with a hide that was near impenetrable, and which bore a portion of the rhinoceros' own fury. His favorite tactic in combat is

much like that of the animal whose hide he wears – charge into the heart of the fray, and once there, let lay a swath of deadly steel among his enemies.

And deadly steel it truly is. The greatsword Ubo Gutrot wields is a massive weapon with wicked, barbed serrations and numerous blood channels forged along its blade. No one knows how the sword came to earn its name *Forsaken*, nor how the sword came into Ubo's possession. Of all his exploits and adventures, which can be bribed from the dwarf with sizeable amounts of strong ale, the tale of his *Forsaken* blade is one he has yet to share.

Ubo Gutrot, Dwarf Bbn10: CR 10; Medium Humanoid; HD 10d12+50; hp 145; Init +5; Spd 40 ft.; AC 18 (+1 Dex, +5 +2 *rhino hide armor*, +2 deflection), touch 13, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +10; Grp +14; Atk +1 *vicious keen greatsword* +15 melee (4d6+7, 1d6 to Ubo) or +1 *warhammer* +15 melee (1d8+5) or cold iron throwing axe +11 ranged (1d6+4); Full Atk +1 *vicious keen greatsword* +15/+10 melee (4d6+7, 1d6 to Ubo) or +1 *warhammer* +15/+10 melee (1d8+5) or cold iron throwing axe +11/+6 ranged (1d6+4); SQ Darkvision (60 ft), DR 2/–, dwarf traits, illiteracy, improved uncanny dodge, rage (3/day), stability, trap sense +3; AL CG; SV Fort +12, Ref +4, Will +3; Str 18, Dex 12, Con 20, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 8.

Languages: Common, Dwarven.

Skills and Feats: Climb +15, Intimidate +3, Jump +20, Knowledge (nature) +3, Listen +8, Survival +12, Swim +8; Blind Fight, Cleave, Improved Initiative, Power Attack.

Equipment: +1 *keen vicious greatsword*, +1 *warhammer*, +2 *rhino hide armor*, *gauntlet of rust*, *ring of protection* +2, *boots of striding and springing*, 6 cold iron throwing axes, backpack, climber's kit, bedroll, 4 tindertwigs, 4 flasks of oil, cold weather gear, 50-ft. silk rope, three *potions of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of enlarge person*, *potion of barkskin* (+3 natural armor), *potion of expeditious retreat*.

Veriander Lyras, Half-Elf Cleric-Rogue

Veriander is a relatively young adventurer, but has made considerable progress in her short career. The half-elf's genial nature and charming smile have allowed her to win over even the most seasoned, grizzled veterans. In addition, her healing skills and devotion to the causes of good have proven invaluable. Veriander is proud of her mixed heritage. She has the slender, attractive elven features of her mother, and the stubborn resolve and determination of her father. Long, auburn curls highlight a smooth, age-

less face. She is outgoing, friendly, and has the exuberance of youth.

Veriander Lyras may lapse into moments of immaturity or childish behavior, but she's always focused and serious when it comes to dealing with darkness and death – or more directly, undeath. While Veriander spent a portion of her youth getting into trouble and earning a living through skullduggery, a brush with undead changed her life forever. After returning to her home near the town's cemetery several years ago, she came upon a horrible scene – her family had been savagely overcome by zombies risen from the nearby graves!

Not knowing what else to do, Veriander reached into her backpack (ripe with ill-gotten gains from a night of burglary) and pulled out the first thing her hands fell upon – a golden sunburst she had filched from the temple. Praying to gods she barely believed in, Veriander was overcome with a rush of euphoria. Divine power channeled through the young half-elf, and the zombies fell before the blazing sunburst held in her outstretched hand.

Ever since that fateful night, Veriander has dedicated her life to the ideals and values she discounted in her youth. Her strong faith in the power of good and the radiance of the sun brought a touch of maturity and focus that had been lacking. Veriander is earnest, hopeful, and optimistic – but at times her lack of experience makes her appear gullible or impractical.

Veriander Lyras, Half-elf Clr7/Rog3: CR 10; Medium Humanoid; HD 7d8+14 and 3d6+6; hp 80; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 22 (+2 Dex, +7 +3 mithral shirt, +2 +1 *light metal shield*, +1 deflection), touch 13, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +7; Grp +8; Atk +1 *morningstar of shock* +9 melee (1d8+2 and 1d6 electricity) or masterwork silver rapier +9 melee (1d6) or mithral dagger +9 melee (1d4+1) or +1 *light crossbow* +10 ranged

(1d8+1); Full Atk +1 *morningstar of shock* +9/+4 melee (1d8+2 and 1d6 electricity) or masterwork silver rapier +9/+4 melee (1d6) or mithral dagger +9/+4 melee (1d4+1) or +1 *light crossbow* +10/+5 ranged (1d8+1); SA Sneak attack +2d6; SQ Evasion, half-elf traits, immunities (sleep and sleep effects), low-light vision, spontaneous casting (cure wounds), trapfinding, trap sense +1, turn undead (9/day, +2 turning roll, turn as 12th level cleric); AL NG; SV Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +10; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 18, Cha 14.

Languages: Common, Elven.

Skills and Feats: Balance +9, Bluff +7, Concentration +6, Disable Device +6, Heal +10, Knowledge (religion) +7, Listen +12, Open Lock +8, Search +7, Sleight of Hand +5, Spot +12, Tumble +8; Alertness, Extra Turning, Improved Turning, Rapid Reload (light crossbow).

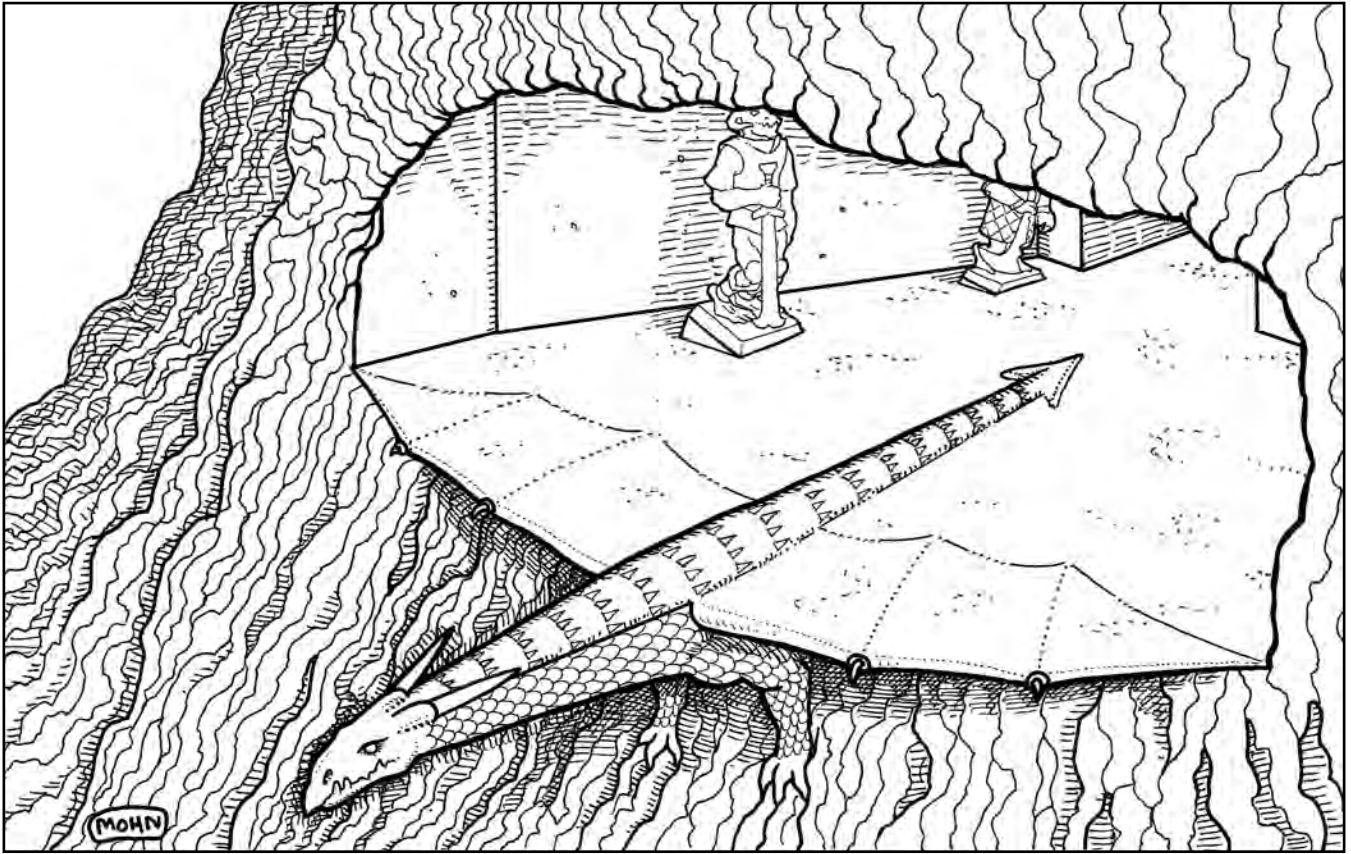
Divine Spells (6/5+1/4+1/3+1/2+1, Save DC = 14 + spell level; Domains: Sun, Good): 0 – *create water*, *detect magic* (x2), *detect poison*, *light*, *read magic*; 1st – *bleed*, *detect evil*, *divine favor*, *protection from evil*†*, *remove fear*, *shield of faith*; 2nd – *consecrate**, *heat metal*†, *lesser restoration*, *resist energy*, *silence*; 3rd – *daylight*, *magic circle against evil*†, *prayer*, *searing light*†; 4th – *holy smite*†*, *restoration* (x2). †Indicates domain spell, *indicates good spell.

Equipment: +3 *mithral shirt*, +1 *morningstar of shock*, +1 *light crossbow*, 30 bolts, +1 *light metal shield*, masterwork silver rapier, mithral dagger, *phylactery of undead turning*, *ring of protection* +1, *bracers of health* +2, *periapt of wisdom* +2, cold weather gear, *wand of cure serious wounds* (15 charges), *potion of displacement*, *potion of neutralize poison*, *potion of owl's wisdom*, two *potions of cure moderate wounds*, two *scrolls of dispel magic* (CL 6), two *scrolls of lesser restoration*, *scroll of neutralize poison*, *scroll of remove paralysis*.



Pewter miniatures of the pregenerated characters are available from Goodman Games. From left to right, the pictured heroes are: Ynnen, Veriander Lyras, Glyn Trollbane, Loros Truebow, Ubo Gutrot, and Oddwit Silverheel. See page 123 or www.goodman-games.com for more details.

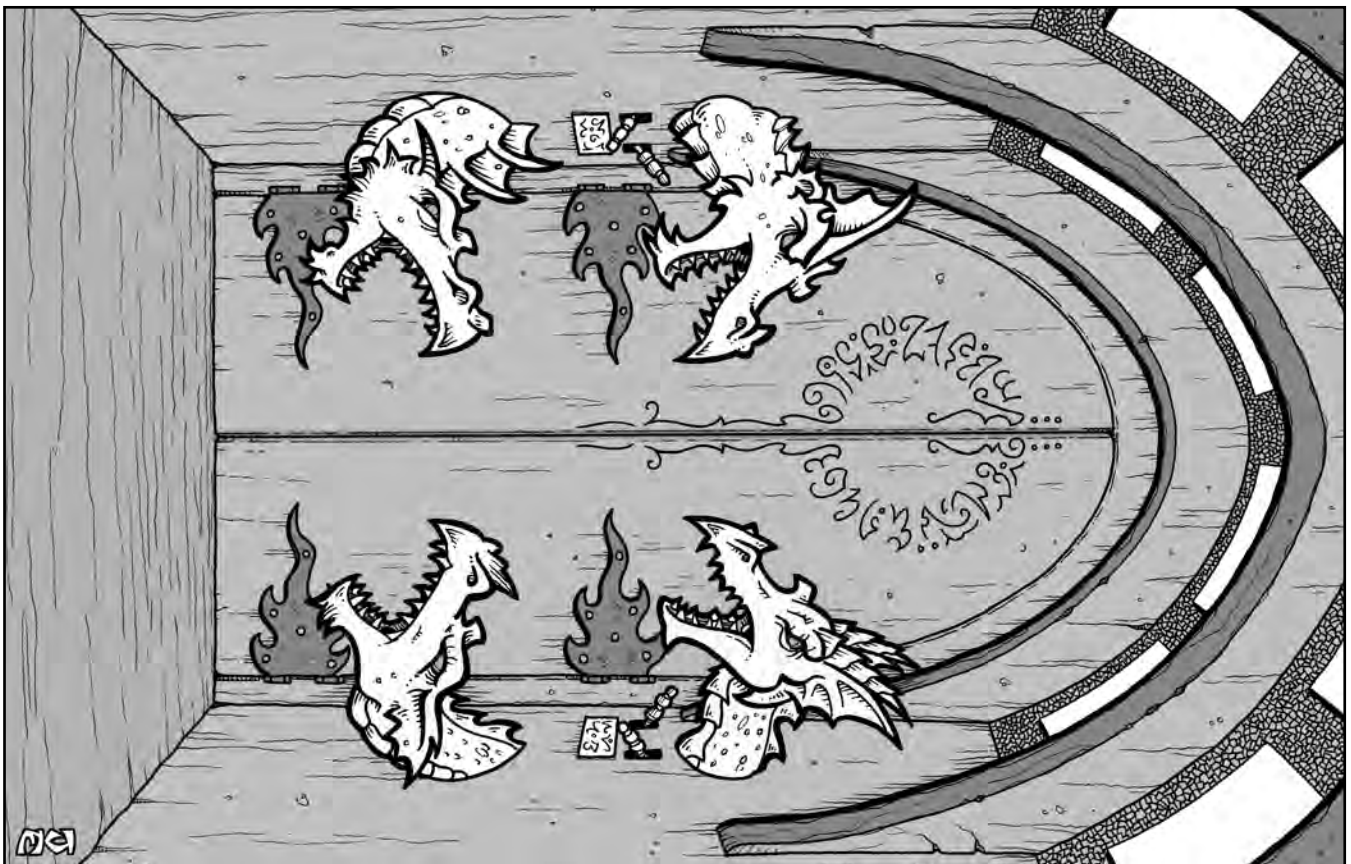
Player Handout A



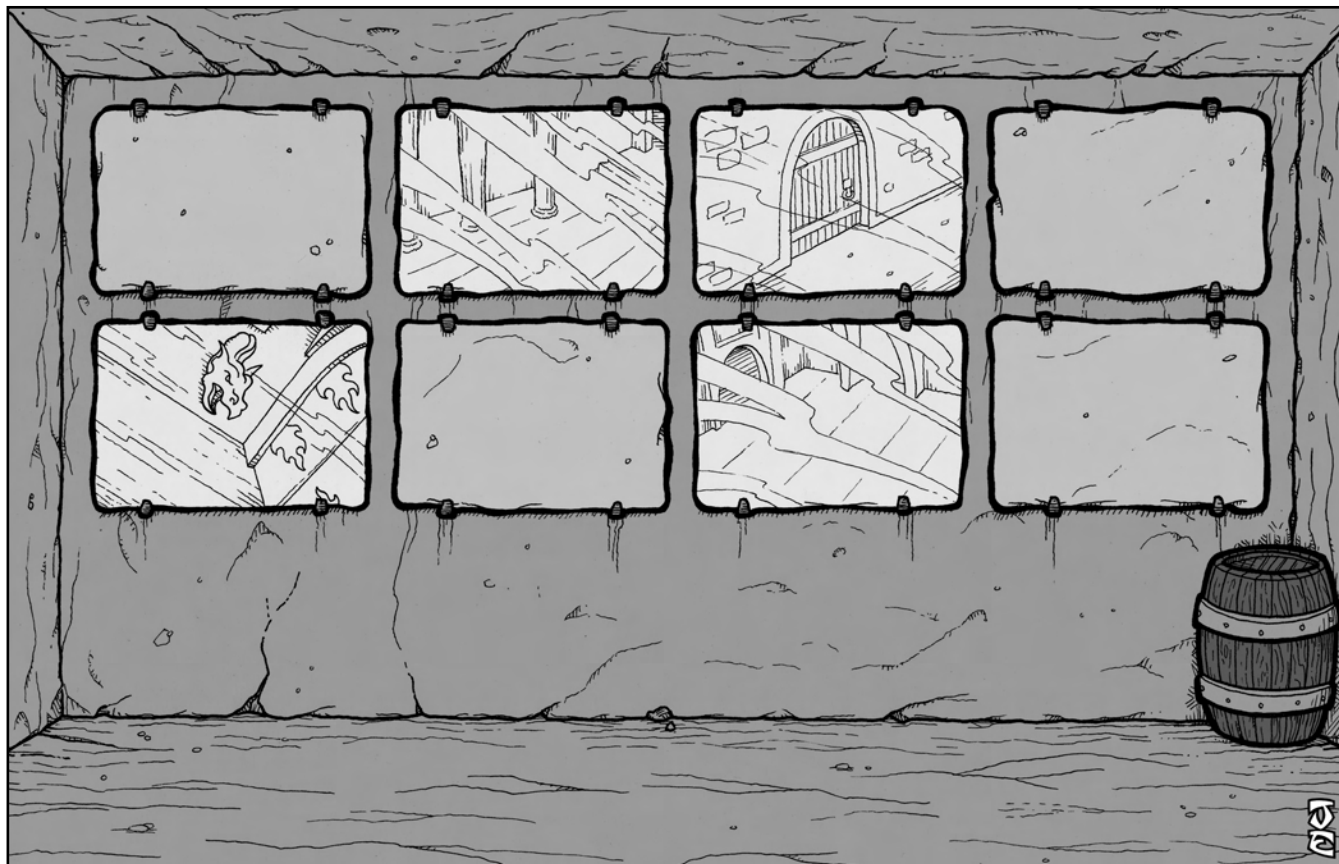
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Player Handout B



Player Handout D



Player Handout C

TO FACE TRUE DRAGONS IS TO BURN
AND BLAZE

BE HUMBLE, GREAT KINGS, AVOID
THEIR GAZE

THE KING OF THE WEST SET STERNLY
HIS WAY

YET WHEN THE WEST SPEAKS, THE
OTHER KINGS SWAY

THE KING OF THE NORTH SPOKE
TRUTH VERY PLAIN

BUT HIS WORDS MADE EAST AND
SOUTH QUITE VAIN

THE KING OF THE EAST WAS QUICK-
ENED TO ACT

BUT HIS KINGLY BROTHERS IGNORED
THIS FACT

THE KING OF THE SOUTH WAS PATIENT
AND WISE

AND NORTH PAID HEED TO THIS KING'S
ADVICE

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Player Handout E

1. *Clean out the entrance. Some birds have been crapping on the Kings. We can't have that now, can we?*
2. *Replace the tiles above the watchtower already; they've been out for a year now!*
3. *Finally finish that book. It's supposed to have a great ending....*
4. *Thelias mumbled something about keeping the darkness at bay if I ever choose to visit, but I can't remember what he said... Refuge? Sanctuary? Shelter?*

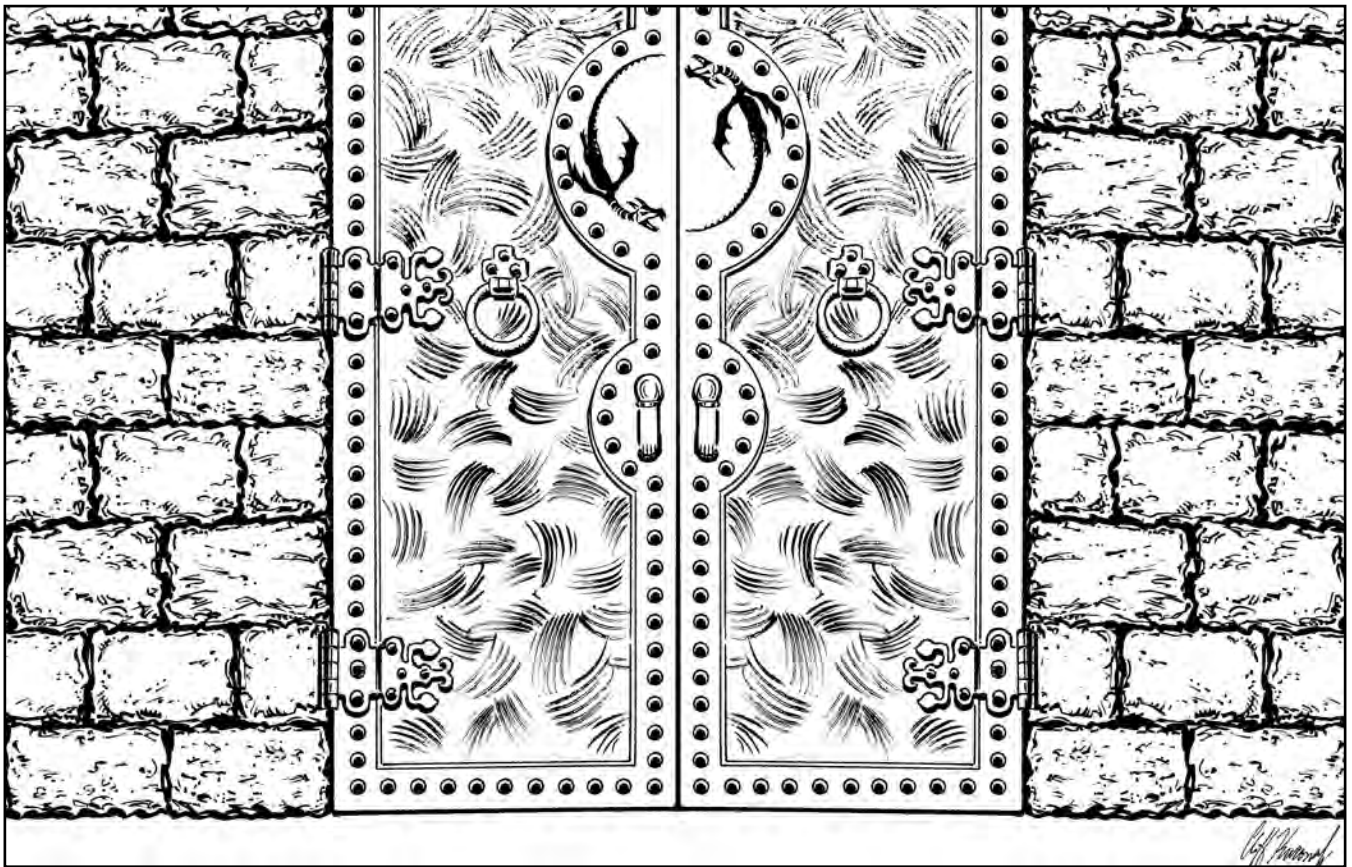
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Player Handout F



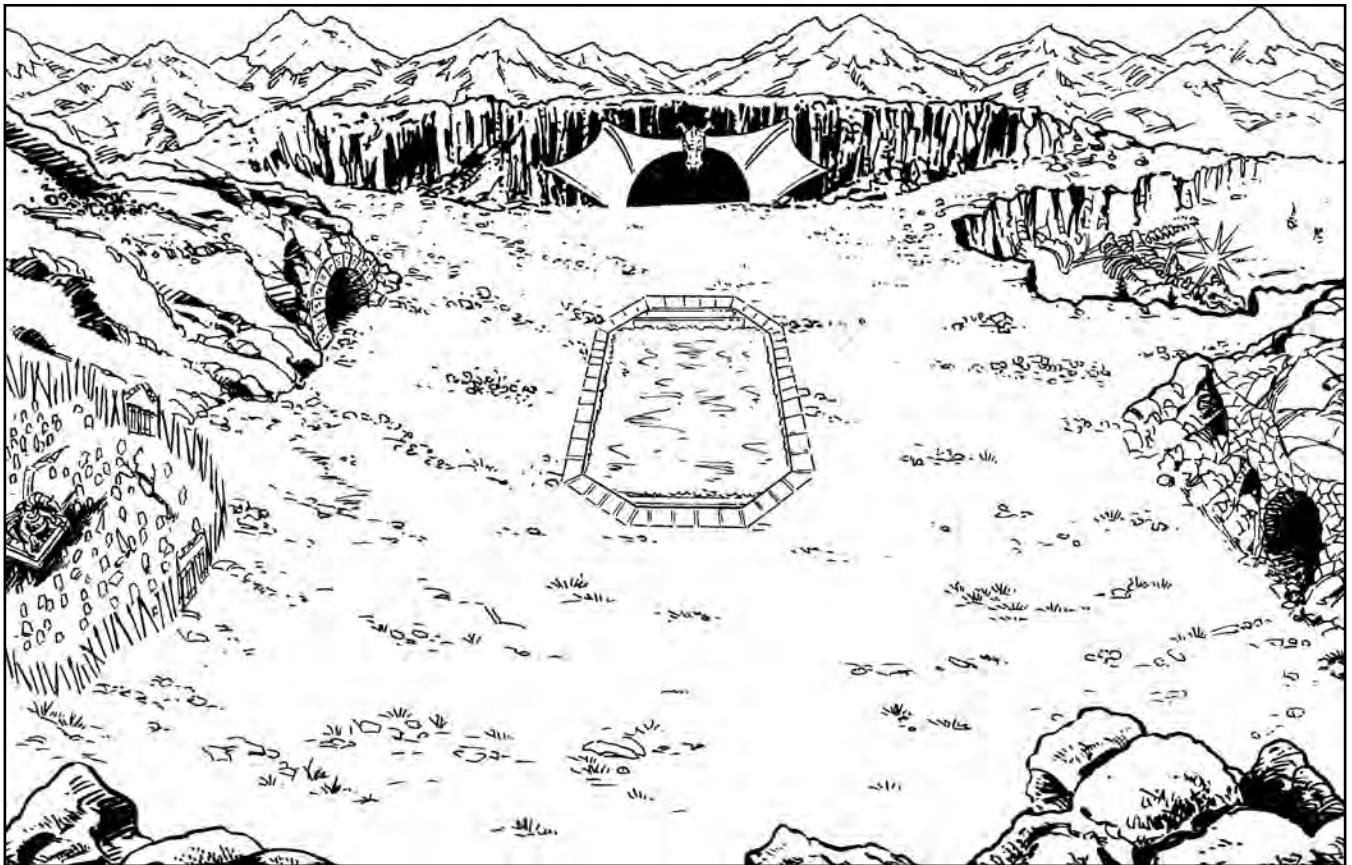
Player Handout G



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Player Handout H





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1-3	#1: Idylls of the Rat King #24: Legend of the Ripper * #28: Into the Wilds
1-13	#14: Dungeon Interludes
2	#11: The Dragonfiend Pact
3-5	#3: The Mysterious Tower
4-6	#17: Legacy of the Savage Kings #26: The Scaly God #27: Revenge of the Rat King *
5-7	#7: Secret of Smuggler's Cove † #23: The Sunken Ziggurat
6-8	#10: The Sunless Garden #16: Curse of the Emerald Cobra #20: Shadows in Freeport *
7-8	#5: Aerie of the Crow God
7-9	#8: Mysteries of the Drow #19: The Volcano Caves
8-10	#6: Temple of the Dragon Cult
9-11	#12: The Blackguard's Revenge #25: Dread Crypt of Srihoz
10	#30: Vault of the Dragon Kings
10-12	#4: Bloody Jack's Gold †
11-13	#12.5: The Iron Crypt of the Heretics
12-13	#18: Citadel of the Demon Prince
12-14	#21: Assault on Stormbringer Castle
14-15	#15: Lost Tomb of the Sphinx Queen **
14-16	#22: The Stormbringer Juggernaut †
15	#13: Crypt of the Devil Lich

* Urban

** Desert

† Aquatic/Coastal

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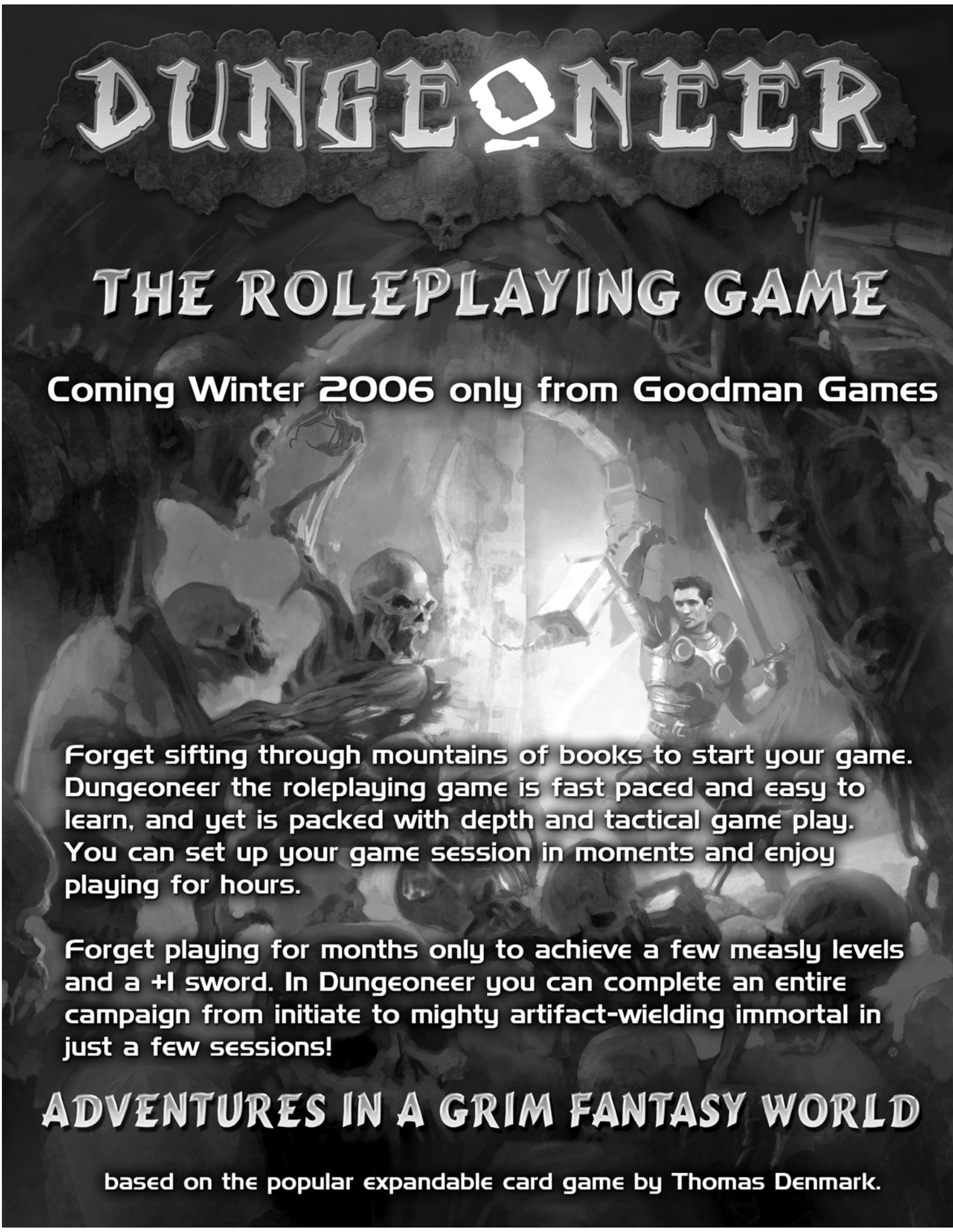
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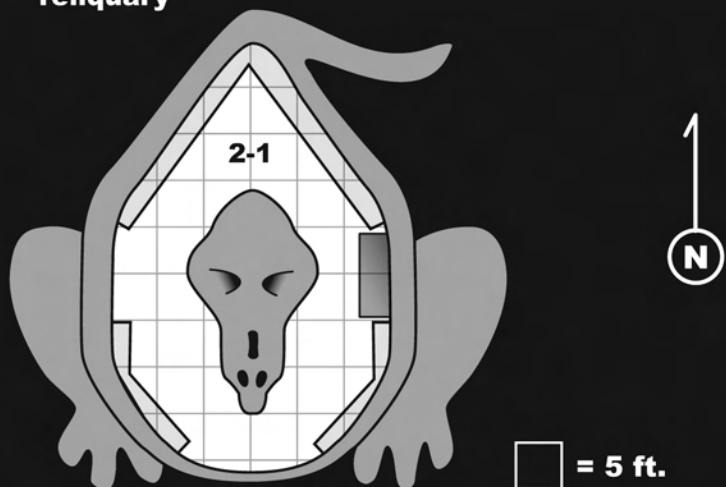
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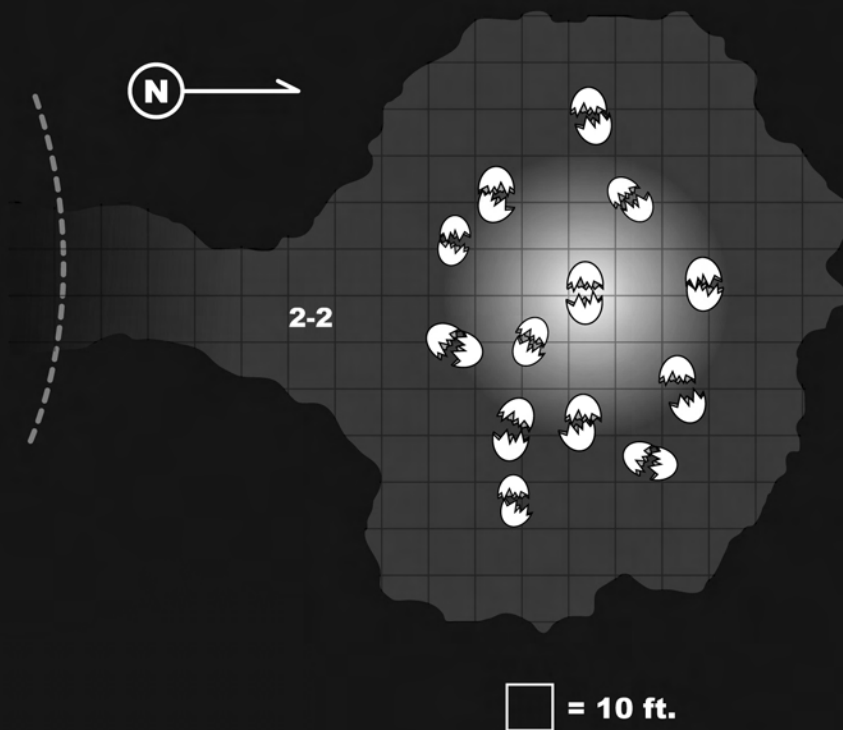
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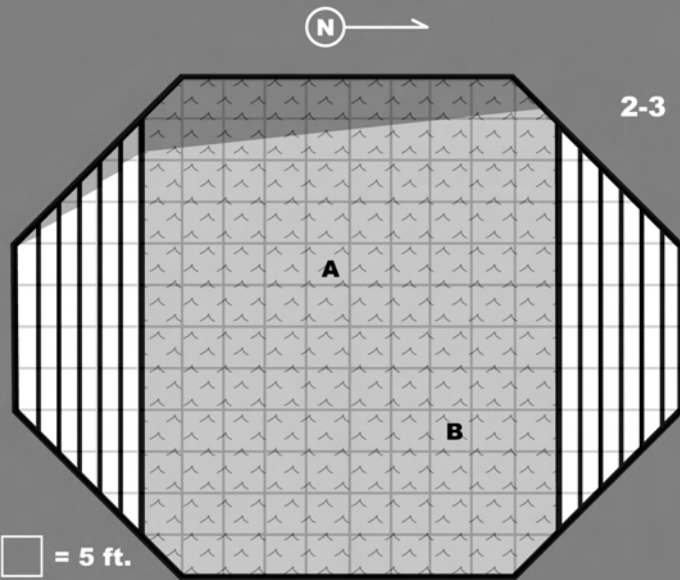
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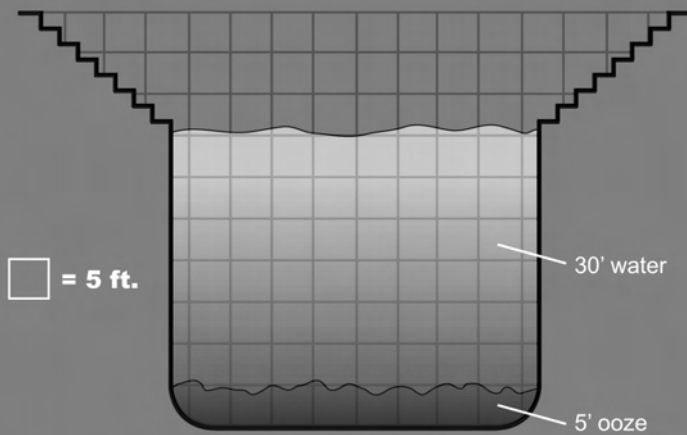


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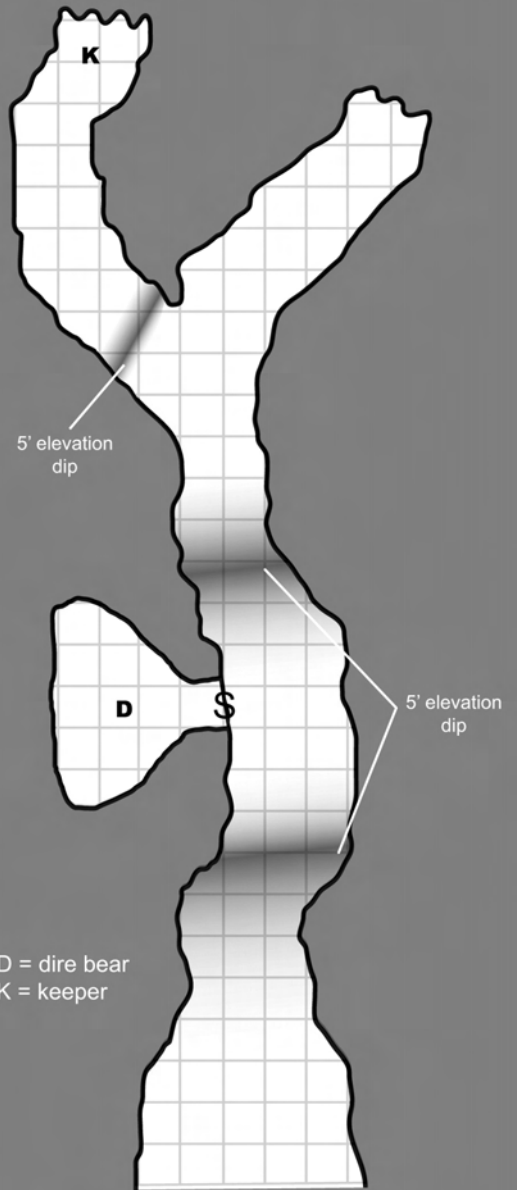
the shrivening pool



cross-section - shrivening pool

Halls of History

2-4

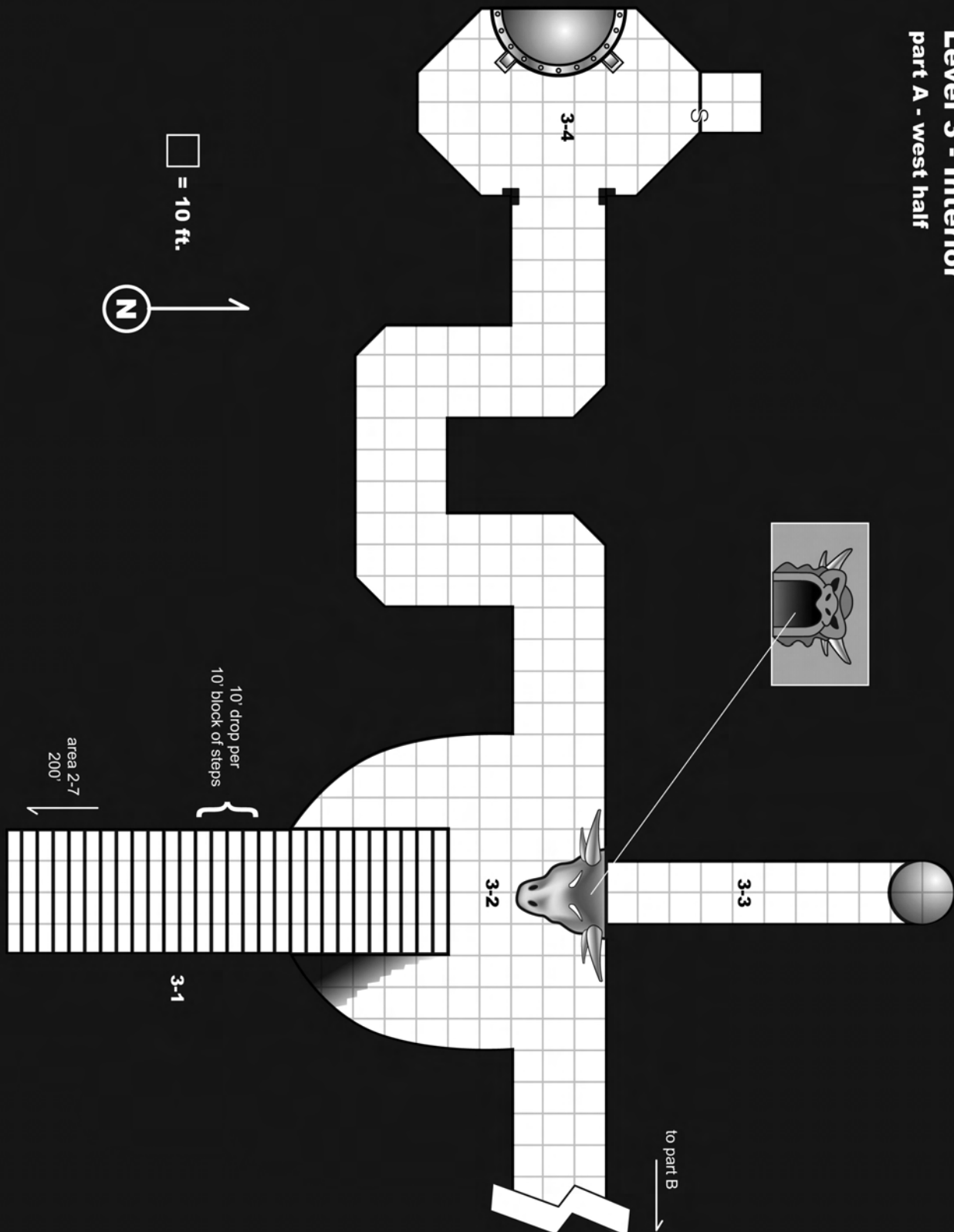


D = dire bear
K = keeper

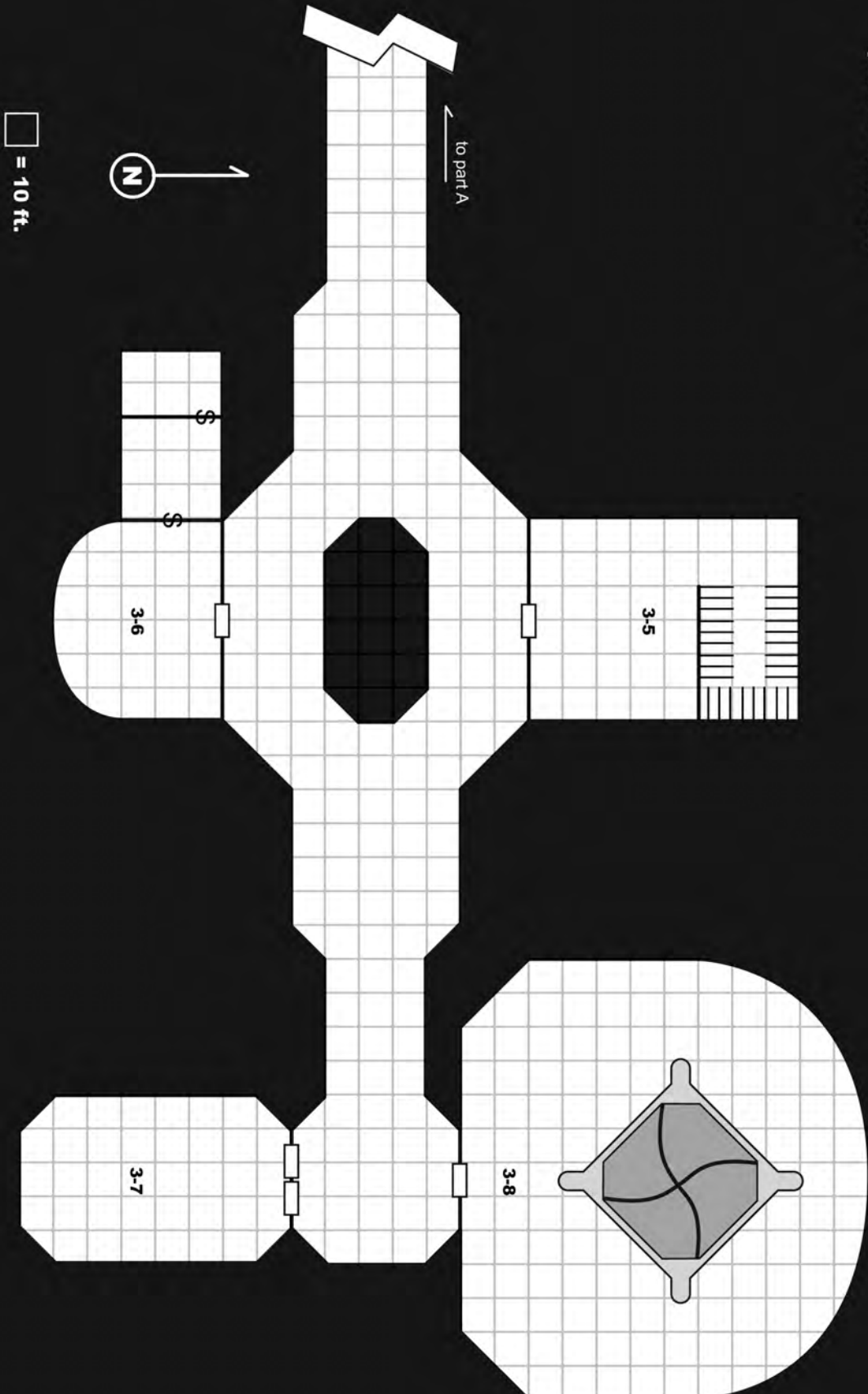
□ = 10 ft.



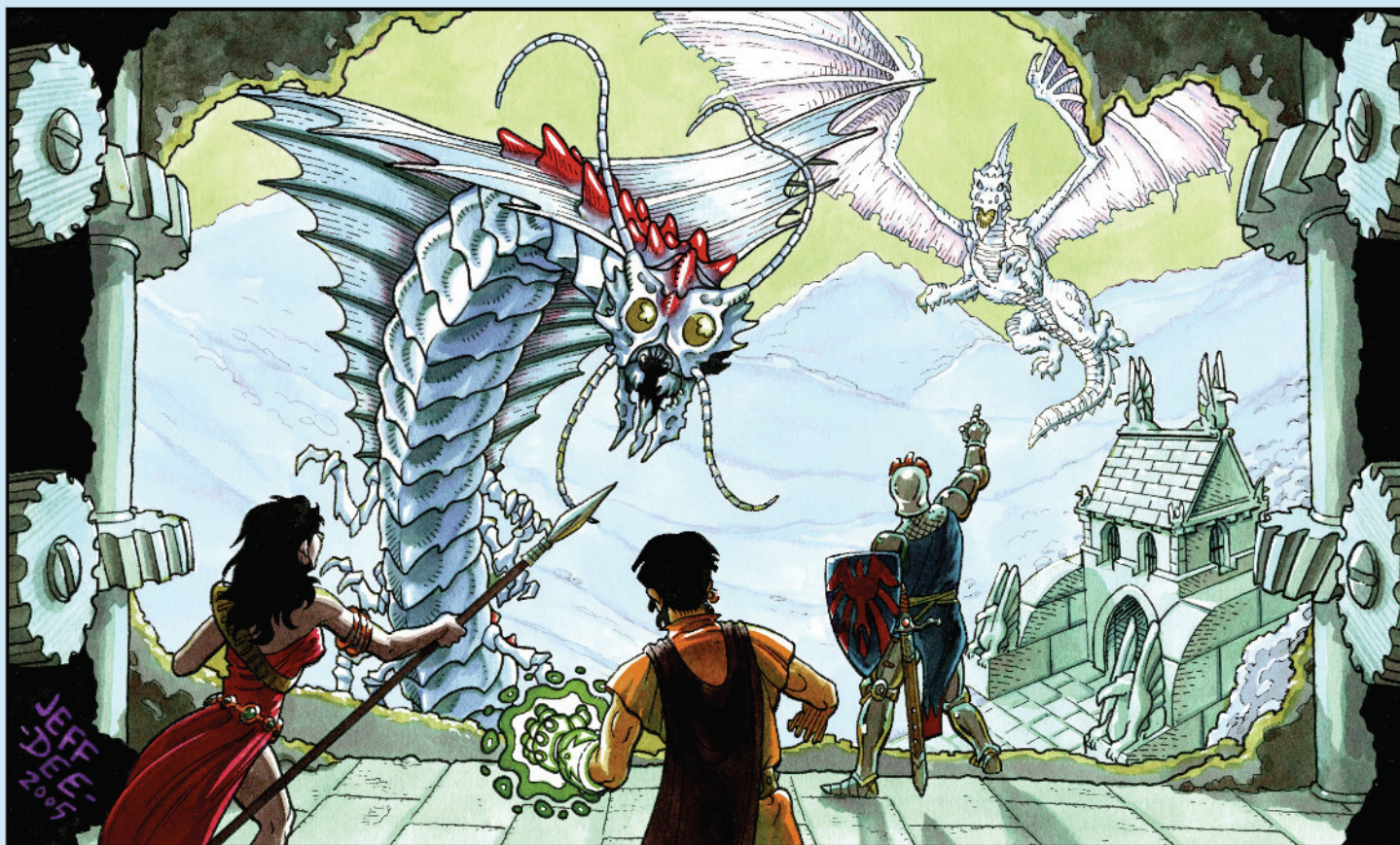
Level 3 - Interior **part A - west half**



Level 3 - Interior **part B - east half**



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