

THUNDERHEAD MANSE

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A lone black thunderhead hangs above the thorp of Drist Gors, drenching the warped clapboard and adobe town with rain. The village is abandoned, possessions sit in the muddy streets, evidence of inept looting and half-hearted attempts at arson. The cloud looming over Drist Gors is strange, elegant white buildings cling to it, barely visible through sheets of rain. Former fortress to the warlock who titled himself "The Celestial Hierarch" and claimed the lands East of Drist Gors, the cloud was a weapon for extracting tribute from the farmers of the dusty plains by dominion over destructive lighting and life giving rain. The Hierarch has been gone for two years, but his cloud mansion still makes an unvarying circuit of his former domain, now inhabited by the feral remnants of his Flying Monkey Guard, turned to banditry. Drist Gors offered little when it was inhabited, and its few residents have fled, their tracks washed away by the deluge, leaving the damp buildings of the plundered town denuded of valuables or provisions. The Manse circles calmly 100' above the violent rainstorm punishing Drist Gors and its fields. Magical aid, even a levitation spell and a few hundred feet of rope, is required to reach the cloud mansion, but its lazy residents are unlikely to notice intruders expect in Areas B and C.

THE MANSE

The buildings on the Thunderhead are made of white marble block, finely carved by magic. Interiors are either decorated in green and blue mosaics, or plastered white. The only remaining residents of the Manse are a few guardians and a company of 34 **Flying Monkey** zouaves (*As fighter 2 or hobgoblins – fly 40'*), armed with sabers and lighting gones (hand wound copper and glass rifles, *as Heary Crossbow*). The cloud is immaterial water vapor, and will not support weight.

AREA H – Pinnacle – Bare marble columns surround a windswept circle of magical sigils inlaid in turquoise (600 GP).

AREA G – Library – Black oak shelves line this room, with ladders to allow access to the higher shelves. While many shelves are empty, 300 *basic texts* of magic, astronomy, and alchemy (3,000 GP and 900 lbs) remain as well as scrolls containing *feather fall*, *lightning bolt*, and *control weather*. A scroll emblazoned with a mandala of

Explosive Runes rests on a low shelf, ready

to kill in a blue flash. A *shell inlaid wooden globe* of the constellations (300 GP) sits in the center of the library along with a *few small carved oak tables* (200 GP).

AREA F – Wizard's Lair – *Glass tubes*, filled with trapped lighting (1,000 GP), illuminate this chamber, a musty but ornate bedroom, minimally furnished. The *black oak wardrobe* (200 GP) is empty, and a matching *chest* (100 GP) contains only blue *silk sheets* (100 GP), while the *bronze and shell bed* (600GP) has been stripped to its bare mattress. A *shell inlaid bronze desk* (200 GP) with matching *chair* (100GP) stands against the room's South wall, while a strange organ of glass pipes, crackling with electricity, dominates the Western wall. If a person of musical talent plays on the organ the tone of the piece will determine the violence of the storm outside, from a fury of random bolts to gentle rain. The organ is magically draining and highly addictive, sucking life energy from the musician at the rate of 1HP per turn and requiring a *save v. spells* to stop.

AREA E – Temple – Bronze Statute – This classically styled temple acted as the audience chamber for the Celestial Hierarch. Creamy marble columns and walls set off a gold leafed frieze above the door, depicting a stern bald man glowering outward, and several geometric mosaics in green and blue tile on the floor. The temple is dusty and has been empty for two years, protected by a fierce 10' **Bronze Statute** of a bearded scholar (*as double HP animated iron statue*) acting under order to protect the Temple from any but the Hierarch. The verdigris covered bronze door at the rear of the chamber is too strong to force with normal tools, but locked by a normal, non-magical lock.

AREA D – Reservoir – Water Elemental -(D) An general workroom, filed with broken glassware, rock samples, a *butterfly collection* (15 GP) and several worktables. (Di) Apprentice/servants' quarters containing a pair of bunk beds and four empty foot lockers. (Dii)Looted equipment and regent storage, holding several wooden shelves of broken crockery. A *bag of diamond dust* (500 GP) has slipped into the corner under a pile of shattered teacups. (Diii) Kitchen and panty, ransacked by the monkeys, with a scattering of empty barrels, broken crates and rusting pots remaining. A trapdoor with a rope ladder piled nearby and a well with a bucket fixed to a long chain leads to the reservoir proper. (Div) A 40' deep reservoir of cold clear water, haunted by a tormented, vengeful **Water Elemental** that is constantly refreshing the thundercloud and reservoir. The monster is trapped in

the reservoir basin but will attack any animate creature that enters the water.

AREA C – Barracks/Gun Deck - 12 Flying Monkeys – The barracks have been taken over by the monkey leader, Buffo, and his cronies, (8 **Flying**

Monkeys with maximum HP and slightly [1-2 points] more armor). The room is much like that below, reeking of monkey musk and

besmirched with filth. The quality of furnishings is higher, the jumbled nests made of *silk* (200 GP worth is salvageable) and other fine cloth, as well as a scarred *finely carved oak throne* (600 GP). Like all Flying Monkeys Buffo isn't really evil, he's greedy and has ruled by fear for too long to back down. If the monkeys are losing a fight badly, or frightened by a display of magic, he may be willing to call a truce, hoping that the other perils of the Manse will kill the party. When faced with annihilation, Buffo and his people will flee or surrender. Lost among the detritus of monkey life is a set of *gilded platemail* (human sized - 800 GP), a *pearl necklace* (1,200 GP), 700 GP, 120 PP and

four flying monkey pups. The platform

above the Barracks holds a lightning cannon, operated by four monkeys who Buffo ordered to spy on the town below but who are more likely to be bickering or sleeping. The cannon is a long, delicate assemblage of brass rods and glass tubes that can fire an 8D6 lightning bolt in a 30° arc in front of the cloud. The cannon requires a turn to reload, as two or more Monkeys furiously turn a set of wheels to charge its rubberized dynamo.

AREA B – Armory – 24 Flying Monkeys - The lair of the bulk of the monkey guards. These black furred man-sized apes have the blue feathers of jays and wear breastplates over braided grey uniforms. Hammocks and piles of furs are scattered about beneath old worktables and weapon racks. Normally disciplined and soldierly by nature, the monkeys are turning feral without real leadership, and while they still repair their weapons and armor, they are no longer meticulous about hygiene or cleanliness. The floor is completely covered in cast off uniforms, plundered cloth and damp straw, concealing a **Pit** that drops into the shaft of **AREA A**. Amongst the filthy monkey nests is a variety of plunder: *shell cameo* (125 GP), *12 bent silver place settings* (12 GP), *cracked china teapot* (10 GP), *bolt of embroidered felt* (500 GP), *quartz orb* (90 GP), *platinum vial of floral perfume* (500 GP), 800 SP, 250 GP, 75 PP.

AREA A – Oubliette - A long tube of marble, open at the bottom and used both as trash chute and prison. Several rusted manacles line the walls of the shaft, dangling in the howling wind and lashing rain that boils up from below. Near the bottom a small ledge juts from the side, acting as a landing for a bronze door opening onto an access tunnel to **AREA Div**. A 10' long pole with a hook, and several tin buckets line the tunnel near the door. Anyone falling down the shaft will have a single chance to grab (*Save v. Wands*) one of the manacles or the access ledge before plummeting.

