

# DELVE!



**FIRST  
ISSUE**

# DELVE! Zine

ISSUE 1

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OSTENSIBLE  
CAT  
DESIGN

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### Dedication:

To my wife Daisey Bingham. Thanks for smiling and nodding for all these many years and accompanying me on my journey into parts unknown. Every day is an adventure and the reality far strips the fantasy. Ich liebe dich.

### Special Thanks:

**Gary Gygax and David Arneson.** If I have to explain, you wouldn't understand.

**Stuart Marshall, Matt Finch, and the Gang at Knights and Knaves Alehouse.** OSRIC is where it all began for me. Thanks for having the vision and seeing it through.

**Joseph Browning and Suzi Yee.** For all of the amazing adventures and taking a chance on an unknown artist.

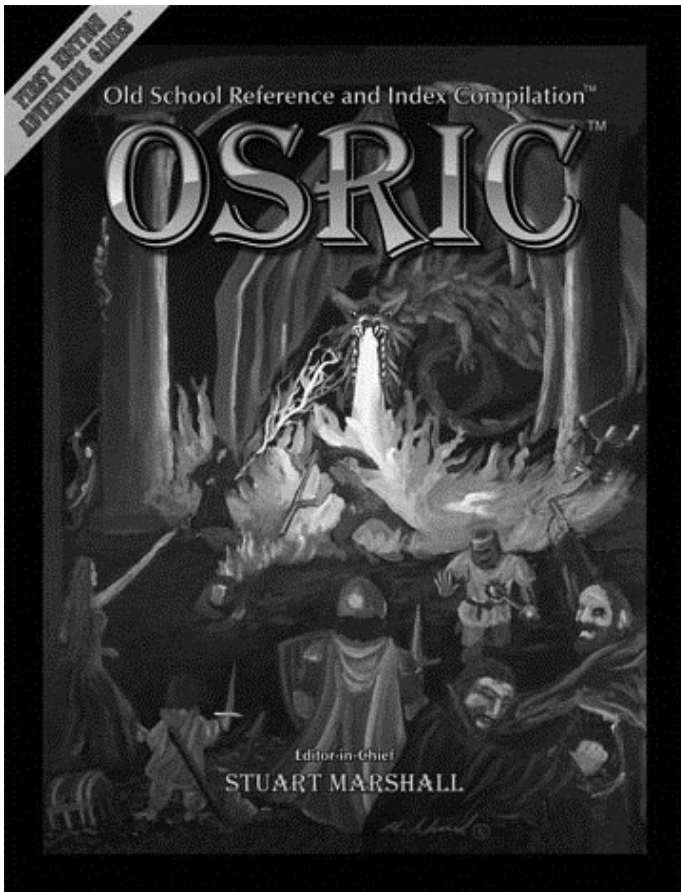
**Christian Walker.** For inspiring me to do this zine in the first place with your excellent Loviatar Zine.

**Trey Causey.** For volunteering to proofread and your thoughtful comments. For *Weird Adventures* and inviting me to participate. For your blog, *From the Sorcerer's Skull*. Just too much goodness to mention.

**Carter Soles.** For stepping up and volunteering to proofread *Delve!* For your *Lands of Ara* Blog and Compilation (and inviting me to do the cover art).

**Tim Shorts.** For volunteering your editorial skill. For *The Manor*, a sweet little zine and *Gothridge Manor* blog. For making me laugh with Sleestak Sundays. And thank you and Ivy for all your encouragement.

**Jody and Jim Garrison.** Much thanks to you both. Wow, *Hereticwerks* blog and all of your other endeavors are truly weird and that is meant as a compliment!



## **DO YOU HAVE THE THIRST FOR ADVENTURE?**

Delve! was primarily designed with the Old School Reference Index and Compilation (OSRIC) Rule set in mind which is based on the First Edition of the world's most popular fantasy role playing game. Go to <http://www.knights-n-knaves.com/osric/>

To download a free pdf copy and learn more.

# Welcome to Delve! Zine

Welcome to *Delve! Zine*, my love letter to Old School gaming. I've been a long time devotee to fantasy fiction, games, movies and the like for something on the order of 30+ years (damn! time flies). I remember being a kid and thrilling to the adventures of King Arthur and his knights. I loved Flash Gordon and his exploits on Earth and on Mongo. I was tantalized by the dark lure of a whispering hellblade wielded by the last emperor of a dying race. I... Well, you get the idea. From an early age, I wanted to participate in such daring exploits (well, from the safe distance of make believe any way!). I spent many an hour daydreaming of different worlds, of magic, of heroes, of dragons...

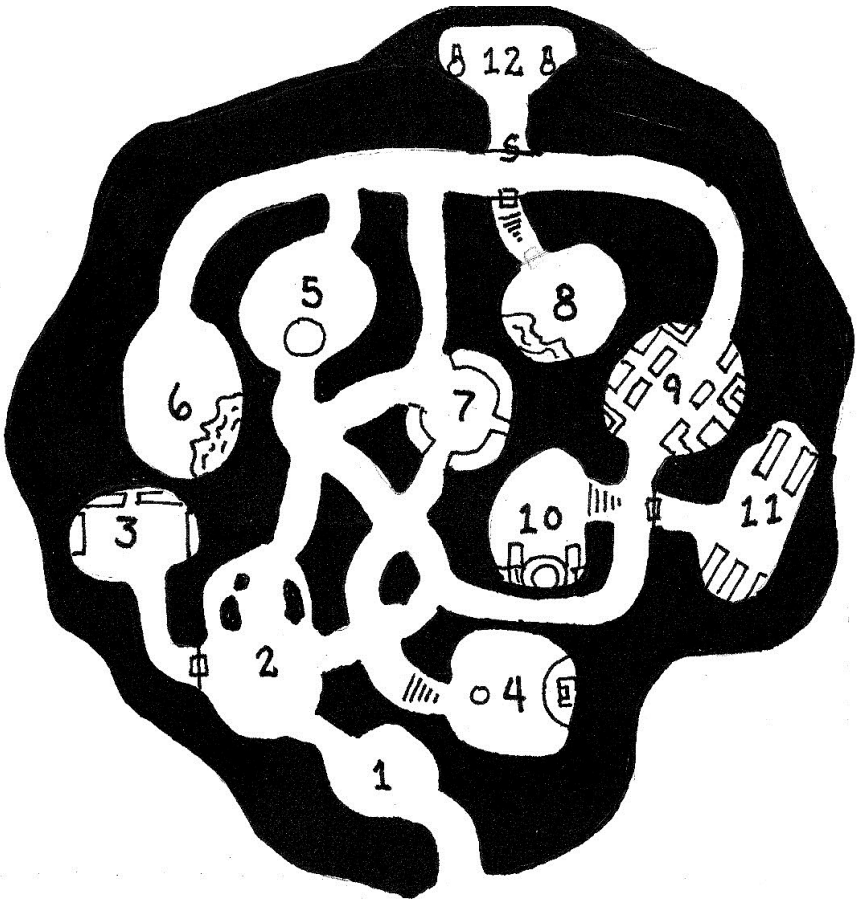
I suppose then if you are reading this, you at least partly share in that thrill. When I first heard about role playing games, I was immediately smitten by the idea. I had never contemplated structured play that had rules that grounded the flights of fantasy into a cohesive framework. My first ever gaming product was the Official Advanced Dungeons and Dragons Coloring Album. Wow, what a place to start! It was a bit difficult to extrapolate any kind of rules structure from that (especially for an eight year old),

but we came up with our own rules. And later, I received the AD&D *Monster Manual* for Christmas. The *Player's Handbook* followed, and thus began an obsession that has remained fairly consistent and continues to this day.

I have been fortunate enough to be able to contribute back the hobby I love so much by doing artwork for various companies and various projects. *Delve!* marks the first time outside my blog (*Ostensible Cat* for those that don't know) that I've done my own project. It is challenging to devise adventures that captivate an audience. I tip my hat to those that can do it. I tend to have a lot of ideas that usually don't get off the ground for one reason or another. I am hoping that *Delve!* Will be a platform to at least expose some of these ideas to the light of day (at least on an irregular basis).

Even though I primarily utilize *OSRIC* as the rule set for the first adventure, most of the rule sets and variants of the world's most popular fantasy role playing game will fit the bill (assuming they are 1st edition or earlier at any rate). This first issue is less of a proper zine and more of a straight ahead adventure, but well... it's a work in progress and it'll develop organically I suppose. So, bear with me, grab some dice, and have fun!

-Johnathan L Bingham



|||| = Stairs (Descending)

⊕ = Door

{ } = Pool

⌞ = Secret Door

## Calmos Vectos Mori I, the Pustulent Lord

Calmos Aethos was once the advisor to Baron Geddon Felin, lord of a relatively peaceful and prosperous agrarian province. Baron Felin refused to side with the usurper Kegos Thegan in an uprising against the king. He feared that war would decimate his province and leave him lord of ashes. An emissary of the usurper's army entreated with Baron Felin only to be told that the Baron would not side with anyone in the war. Calmos, ever seeking advantage, met secretly with the emissary, promising to garrison Kegos' army on the Baron's land if Kegos would depose Felin and install Calmos as the new provincial lord. Calmos need only hold the gates of the Baron's keep open so that the invading army could enter and depose Baron Felin. Calmos drugged the men standing watch then opened the gates. As is the way of such things, the Kegos's army took the castle and betrayed Calmos; exiling him and men loyal to Calmos from the province. Taking refuge in a cave system used by the Sigilis Serpentine, dark mage cultists of Sisirrus, the serpentine God of the Infinite Coil). Calmos sought knowledge to aid his quest for revenge for his betrayal. Calmos quickly installed himself as

the lord of the serpent's Nest. Drawing upon the knowledge of the dark mages, Calmos treated with Gorgomoro the Pustulent, a demon lord from the Abyss. He made a pact with Gorgomoro for power - and more importantly, his revenge on Kegos.

Calmos himself became an adept practitioner of the dark arts. He betrayed the Grand Praetor of the Sigilis Serpentine and amassed a following of unsavory folk willing to throw in with him for a taste of wealth and power. Consolidating his power, Calmos restyled himself Calmos Vectos Mori I, lord of the Dark Diadem.

Seeking a way to free his damned soul of his contract with Gorgomoro, Calmos delved further into the dark arts, secretly seeking entities beyond the known realms in his bid for greater power and the secrets of immortality. His dealings with the denizens from beyond have taken their toll. Calmos has become a being not altogether human. Increasingly few have been his dealings with the outside world. Calmos has built an infernal machine inside the cave system that spews contagions and pestilence into the sky. He seeks to further destabilize and weaken Kegos's rule so that he can claim that which he believes is rightfully his.

## Random Encounters

Die Roll	Encounter
1	1d4 contagion guards on patrol.
2	1d12 giant rats
3	Blast of contaminated air. Save versus poison or be affected as cause disease spell.
4	2d10 rats
5	10' Swarm of biting insects. All within must save versus disease or be affected by a malarial fever within 1d6 turns that will last for 1d6 hours (-2 on all die rolls).
6	Work party—1d8 slaves. The slaves are part of a chain gang and accompanied by 1d4 contagion guards.
7	Gout of effluence. Those within a 10' diameter of the gout will be afflicted by violent nausea for 1d12 rounds (no save).
8	2d20 bats. Swarm has a 40% chance of creating confusion causing party to drop light sources.
9	Ill wind. Save versus breath weapon or be affected as if by a stinking cloud.
10	1d4 Pustulent beetles
11	1d4 giant centipedes
12	2d4 Giant Flies

Check for random encounters every 6 turns of game time.



1. **Hall of Entry.** A noisome odor greets all that enter the halls of the Pustulent Lord, Calmos Vectos Mori. This room is 25' square. The walls of this chamber weep noxious ooze that congeals in puddles on the floor. Those touching the ooze with exposed skin must save versus poison or become violently nauseous for 1d12 rounds. Pipes of varying shapes and sizes run overhead and disappear through holes in the ceiling. The pipes continuously clatter and blast steam on occasion. The noise serves to distract from the two panthers that dwell in the shadowy recesses of the room and act as a welcoming party of sorts. The panthers appear to be malnourished with matted fur, boils and jaundiced eyes (AC 6, HD 3+2, hp 20, 18; #AT 3, D 1d4/1d4/1d6, SA 15% of disease, MV 150', Save Fighter 5, xp 160, 154). The panthers are diseased and any one bitten or scratched must save versus poison or be infected the victim with a disease as per the cleric spell *Cause Disease*. The panthers have the following treasure: a silver armlet shaped like a snake swallowing its tail (100 gp value) and a moldering leather bag containing a scroll case and a pouch with 20 silver lying among a litter of human bones in the northeastern corner. The coins are of an unusual design with serpentine motif and coiled script. These are known in certain circles as venom chits, the Sigilis Serpentine coin of assassination. Not used as monetary units for trade, they are barter tokens for death. Presented by a knowledgeable person to a Sigilis Serpentine assassin, they can be used to buy an assassination of any one person. To a knowledgeable person, they are worth 100 times their value in silver coinage. The scroll case is made of ivory with serpentine motif carved into the sides (75 gp value) and contains a piece of parchment with the following note:

"The Dark Diadem, symbol of power for Sigilis Serpentine has been stolen. Return the Sigilis Serpentine to the Grand Praetor at the Squamous Sanctum and your reward shall be great. Calmos the Betrayer must be destroyed

-Gratziat Melicum"

A flow stone along the northeastern wall looks disturbingly like a human face contorted in agony. Those walking towards the corridor on the northwestern end of the chamber risk a 50% chance of being caught in gouts of ooze from the mouth of the face (10' x 10' jet). Those so doused, suffer from the violent nausea for 1d12 rounds (no save). In addition, all foodstuffs and water are spoiled and unusable unless kept in air tight containers.



2. **Ooze mounds.** A low hum gives this room a feeling of constant vibration. The walls here do not weep but there are large mounds of flowing ooze at the northern end of the chamber and pipes of varying sizes clatter and run along the walls and ceiling. A door covered in clockwork gears, levers and valves blocks entry to area 3 of the map (see area three for more information). Large bronze braziers in the room give a dim illumination and emit a thick, sickly sweet smoke.

There are six contagion guards here (AC 5, HD 3, hp 21, 20, 18x2, 17x2; #AT 2, D special/1d8, SA cause disease, MV 90', Save Fighter 5, xp 122, 120, 116x2, 114x2). They will immediately rush to attack. They will seek to utilize their contagion spray attacks first and then use their stun rods as their follow up attack. The guards will seek to press the battle towards the oozing mounds. Every 4 rounds the mounds explosively belch forth the noxious ooze (save versus poison or be overcome with nausea for 1d12 rounds). If the battle seems to be going against them, one will retreat to area 7 to summon reinforcements. The contagion guards will not seek to kill, instead, they seek to disable opponents and render them unconscious in order to convert them into more contagion guards. The Contagion guards carry no treasure other than the Brass Sigil they wear, their stun rods, and their armor (see the items section for details).

Three inch long beetles colored a sickly yellow scurried along the oozing mounds. They are content to feed on the effluence, but if anyone is forced onto a mound, the beetles will immediately seek to add a new food source to their diet. Pustulent Beetles 30 (AC 4, hp 1x21, 2x9; #AT 1, D 1/special, SA cause disease, MV 120', Save Fighter 1, xp 6x21, 7x9).

**3. Laboratory.** The door to this chamber is a massive bronze series of clockwork gears and levers. Five levers control the locking mechanism. Arranging them in the proper manner opens the door. Misconfiguration has other, less than desirable effects. The proper arrangement is (from the viewer's left to right): up, up, down, up, down. Any other configuration will result in a flesh eating bacteria being released in the form of a brown cloud being emitted from vents above the door. The bacteria does 1d10 points of damage per round for 10 rounds. *Cure Disease* stops the bacteria however it does not recover the damage done.

Behind the clockwork door is a tunnel that leads to area three. This area is Calmos' laboratory and library. In the entry chamber, there are runes along the floor. Anyone not bearing the Dark Diadem, a contagion guard sigil, or pathogen signet must make a save versus poison or immediately suffer the effects of a wasting illness suffering 1d8 hit points of damage and one point for constitution drain per round for 12 rounds (cure disease stops further damage but does not cure damage already accrued).

The hall extends back 20' to Calmos' laboratory. Above the door to the entrance into Calmos' lab, three tarred heads are mounted on spikes. These are the last remains of Cambert Lethio, Oslian Deganis, and Felian Nejacs. If anyone (or thing) passes beneath the heads and does not possess the Dark Diadem, Pathogen Signet or a Contagion Guard Sigil, the heads will spew forth a foul smelling dark viscous goo (covers a 10' radius). Those covered by the substance must save versus death or immediately dissolve into a puddle of foul smelling ooze.

A large metal table is covered with texts, glass vials containing various liquids and powders, and writing implements. A large tome lays open on the table. It contains a list of measurements and equations. Hand written in the margin it is written:

"Truly there are terrors beyond hell where even the demoniac fear to dabble. The Umbra Palace. Rydekiar is the key."

The tome is entitled the *Glyphic Mysterium of Pedantic Thought*. The text is composed of glyphs that are undecipherable without the proper key. The text is bound in a strange, smooth hide with silver fittings and inlay work. From the craftsmanship alone, it is worth 300 gold though the information it contains regarding planar travel makes it worth vastly more (up to 2500 gp to the right buyer). The book contains a key to the planar mechanism located in area 4 that opens a planar gate to various destinations. If this tome is consulted while operating the planar mechanism in the throne room, the characters should be able to match the patterns to produce the patterns from the table listed in area 4.

There are many books of esoteric knowledge on the shelves that pertain to various scientific and magical studies. On the whole, there are 97 tomes. The value of the collection is about 450 gold. There is one book in particular that is of value. Bound in dust dined dark grey leather, is Calmos' spell book. It contains magics dedicated to plague, famine and pestilence. The book contains the following spells (see entries in spell section for details): Arthritic Word, Bestill thy Heart, Bloat, Bone Spur, Consumption, Cancerous Touch, Evil Eye, Famine, Fever Dream and Jaundiced Eye. In addition, a portfolio of unbound parchment contains what appears to be Calmos' memoirs. It talks of his attempt to oust the unworthy Baron and don the baronial coronet under Kegos Thegan, the would be usurper of the crown. It outlines how Calmos, Cambert Lethio, Oslian Deganis, and Felian Nejac plotted the overthrow of the Baron and were themselves betrayed.

Shelves line the north wall of the library, carved into the living stone of the cavern wall. Indistinct organic shapes are suspended in murky fluids inside the dust covered glass specimen jars that line the shelves. There are twenty jars of various shapes and sizes. The jars are labeled as follows:

1. Gehenis Moth	6. Calcinated Hoary Brekmor	11. Hanler's Great Atropium.	16. Warbling Shuma
2. Spore Worm	7. Deviated Grand Palpinost	12. Bioluminescent Goaliant	17. Tethered Duja Beast
3. Reticulated Verdant Grub	8. Fleshy Untagliaunt	13. Vestinum Rydekiar	18. Burbling fetishistic Vetom
4. Truncated Bothar Vole	9. Diurnal Jaewisp	14. Corbelled Koakum.	19. Haunting Morris
5. Lesser Sanguinated nude Golows	10. Flavonated Gumpsom	15. Viscous Ootium	20. Chitinous Regimented Fermion

The jars are full of a viscous and cloudy substance. Most of the specimens are no longer living, however, the Spore Worm, Vestinum Rydekiar, Warbling Shuma, and Chitinous Regimented Fermion are all still very much alive.

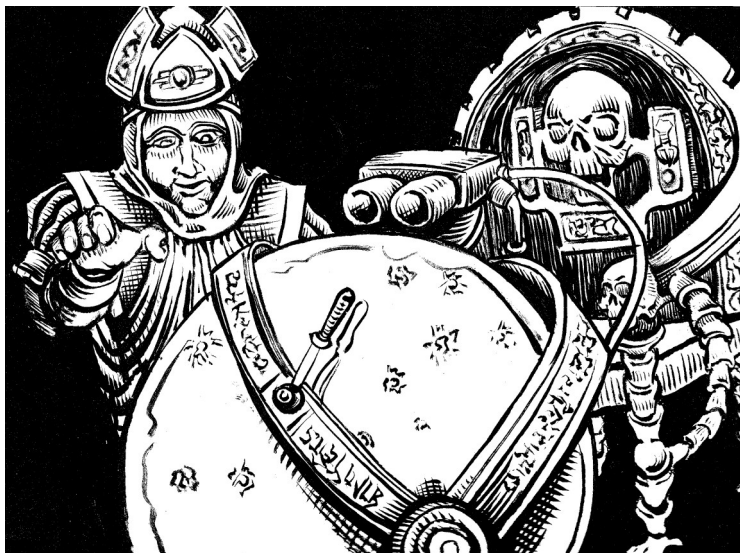
The **Regimented Fermion** is a twelve legged, chitinous creature resembling a beetle with a lobster tail. The Fermion is iridescent night blue in color. If the jar is opened, the fermion will scramble to the opening of the jar and take to the air. It will pulsate with a light from its abdomen creating a brilliant strobe effect (treat as a blindness spell).

The **Spore Worm** is a brownish-orange segmented worm 12 inches long with a large bulbous head (AC 9, hp 2, #AT 1, D special, MV 10', Save Fighter 0, xp 10). The head is featureless aside from several pinhole sized orifices. If removed from the oily substance in which it is suspended, the spore worm will emit a 5 foot diameter cloud of dark spores when it is in the vicinity of organic creature. A character within the vicinity of the spore cloud fails a save versus poison, they will fall unconscious and within 1d6 rounds, 1d20 new spore worms will begin to form within the respiratory tract of the afflicted victim. As the young spore worms begin to feed, the affected character will take 1 point of damage each round from each of the spore worms.

The **Vestinum Rydekiar** appears as a fibrous mass with many thin filaments dangling from the main mass. It is a translucent pearly blue in color and occasional flashes of light play amongst the lengths of the filaments and from within the fibrous mass. If the jar is opened, the Rydekiar will extend several filaments to attach to the flesh of the character opening the jar (succeeds on a 1-4 on a d6). Once attached, the character must make a save versus paralyzation or take 2d6 points of damage and be stunned for 1d6 turns. The character's eyes will turn dark red. The Rydekiar allows those affected by the meld with the Rydekiar to perceive into higher dimensions. This perception acts as being under the effect of a True Seeing spell.

The **Warbling Shuma** appears as a delicate, frilled mass of rust red and blue. The Shuma undulates rhythmically while suspended in the fluid inside its jar. If the jar is opened, the Shuma will unfurl and begin to undulate more rapidly and produce a distinctive vibrational warbling sound. This sound is not unpleasant and will instill a sense of ease in all within 30'. Those within 10' must save versus magic or be affected as a sleep spell.

A nondescript clay jug sits on the metal table. It's unremarkable nature belies its potent magical properties. It is an Alchemy Jug used by Calmos in his various experiments. On top of a portfolio of human anatomy sits a large figurine of a fly carved in exacting detail of a fly. This is a figurine of wondrous power that Calmos would use as his steed when traversing the countryside. The Fly is activated by speaking the activation word "verminous" which is carved into the bottom of the fly. There are eight sludgy brown vials on a stand on the table. If opened, they have an earthy aroma, not entirely unpleasant. These are potions of cure disease. While they have a thick sludge-like consistency and earthy flavor, they have no adverse effect.



4. **Throne Room.** It is quite evident that exile did not harm Calmos's pride nor curb his ambitions. A set of steps carved into the rock leads down ten feet into a large chamber. There is a large throne of serpentine and ivory along the eastern wall. It is intricately carved with scenes of plague and pestilence. Anyone sitting upon the throne must save versus poison or become afflicted by a fast acting flesh eating virus. Those afflicted will suffer 1d8 points of damage each round for 12 rounds and lose 1d4 points of both charisma and constitution (cure disease will stop the virus but not heal the damage done).

A three foot diameter crystal sphere sits on an ornate black iron stand in the center of the hall. There is a brass viewfinder attached to the stand. The sphere occasionally flashes with multicolored brilliance and wispy points of light fade in and out as they swirl about the inside of the globe in seemingly random directions.

Characters will find that the lights will respond to movements of anyone touching the sphere and will follow a characters touch across the surface of the orb. These symbols are a key that activates the portal outside area 8 (the secret door keyed on the map). There are nine floating lights inside the globe. Anyone that has come into physical contact with the Rydekiar will see the symbols as numbers (three sets from 1-3). If any character looks through the viewfinder, they will see a set of three calibrated slots in their field of vision. If the numbers are arranged in a particular pattern within the slots of the viewfinder, the area beyond the portal will become a gateway to a particular plane or place. The GM should roll a d6 (1-2=1, 3-4=2, 4-5=3) three times to generate the plane on the following chart.

Die Roll	Die Roll	Die Roll	Portal location
1	1	1	Baronial Palace Cellars
1	1	2	The Cancerous pits of Elemonth
1	1	3	Verdant Gardens of Duke Nebehemith
1	2	1	Golden shores of the Kelmish Sea
1	2	2	Dark cells of the Ferund Gaol
1	2	3	Opiate dens of Khan Ferajawi
1	3	1	Festering halls of the palace of Gorgomoro
1	3	2	Palace Regal of Efreet Marshal Qajii
1	3	3	Tea room of the wanton Empress Rissa
2	1	1	Blood pits of the third ethereal coliseum
2	1	2	Shifting sands of Abba Wod Maesar
2	1	3	Bottom of the Abyssal Pustulent Sea
2	2	1	341st circle of the grand maze of Graz
2	2	2	Foredeck of the Astral Barge of Ji iji So
2	2	3	Foci tower on the plane of sound
2	3	1	Heart of a Red Giant Star
2	3	2	Black Dougal Alley in the City
2	3	3	Stone tower of infinite sorrow
3	1	1	Living halls of the ice worm
3	1	2	Mental abstraction of babbling newts
3	1	3	Flowering staircase of infinite distance
3	2	1	Stone plinth of the azure god
3	2	2	Corpulent tracts of writhing pestilence
3	2	3	Bestial castle of Gammon Rei
3	3	1	Court of duplicitous splendors
3	3	2	Fetid chambers of the carrion lords
3	3	3	Grand Library of Archmagus Abbeth hep Yeddek

**5. Gong Room.** Bronze braziers give off a diffuse glow. A large bronze gong is suspended in midair at the center of this chamber. The gong is a larger replica of the sigils that the Contagion Guard wear affixed to their chests. If the battle was going against the guards in area two, one of them will have retreated here to sound the gong. This alerts all other denizens of interlopers. All further encounters will be with readied opponents. The gong radiates magic and hovers steadily three feet above the ground. It cannot be moved from its spot by any means short of a wish spell. The gong acts as a synchronization device for the contagion guards in the complex. It requires the use of a Contagion Guard Stun Rod to activate. Otherwise, touching the gong will result in an electric shock that does 2d10 points of damage. Once it has been rung, all contagion guards will psychically synchronize and become aware of the whereabouts, activities and current status of every other contagion guard for the period of 2d6 rounds. This is a magical effect of the gong and the bronze sigils that the contagion guards wear. If any character is in possession of a contagion guard sigil and has successfully synchronized with it (see the description of the contagion guard sigil for details); they will become aware of the same information about the contagion guards. However, the guards will also become aware of that character's whereabouts and status as well. The contagion guards will attempt to find and eliminate the character (and companions) so synched. If the gong is struck again while the sigils are synchronized, the synchronization will be disrupted and not be able to be activated for another 6 turns.





**6. Chamber of the Plague Wraiths.** This chamber is dark aside from a diffuse aquamarine glow emanating from a large pool of water along the southeastern portion of the wall. Three dark lumps lie on the ground in the center of the chamber. This is the final earthly prison of Cambert Lethio, Oslian Deganis, and Felian Nejacs (AC 4, HD 5+3, hp 46, 45, 44; #AT 1, D 1d6 + disease; SA disease, MV 120'/240' flying, Save Fighter 6, xp 826, 824, 818), three members of the aristocracy that joined Calmos in his treachery against the Baron. Calmos promised the three power and wealth and did deliver after his treacherous fashion. The three now are bound to this chamber in Calmos' demesne, prisoners forever shackled to this dismal chamber.

The three will immediately rise to attack anyone entering the chamber. Their desire for revenge upon Calmos will cause them to pause and consider any parley that would seem to offer a good chance to avenge themselves upon the duplicitous Calmos. Returning the three tarred heads is a powerful incentive as this destroys the binding that traps the three to this chamber. If this is accomplished, the wraiths will immediately leave the chamber, seeking out Calmos to exact their revenge. They will attack anything in their way. If the party does not entreat with the wraiths, the three will push the attack with a furor in an effort to create zombies in which they can control as a physical means to harry Calmos.

As a sort of taunt to his former cohorts, Calmos has left a chest of gold coins (1000), various gems (800 gp worth); a token of the worldly wealth that was denied to the three conspirators in life and now forever denied to them in death. The chest is open and not trapped as a constant reminder to the wraiths of Calmos' mocking. Further, three weapons are amongst the scattered wealth: a Falchion, a Spear, and a heavy mace. These three weapons were wielded by the three conspirators during the treacherous overthrow of Baron Felin. The Falchion has an ornate hilt and cross guard fashioned in the likeness of an eagle. The words "*Lethio adis aquila voliantis*" are inscribed on the blade. If the phrase is spoke aloud by the wielder, treat as if affected by as by a haste spell (without the aging effect) for four rounds up to 3 times per day. The falchion is a +1 weapon (1d6+2 vs Small or Medium opponents 2d4 +1 vs Large). The spear is a +1 weapon and has a dragon coiled around the haft and the jaws open and the tongue forms the blade. "*Deganis Drago fuoco imolare*" is inscribed in gold inlay amongst the coils. If spoken aloud by the wielder, it causes the tip of the spear to ignite doing 1d4 points of additional flame damage to targets for up to six rounds, three times per day. The Mace head is fashioned into a stylized female head wearing a crown of spikes. The mace is a +1 weapon and has the words "*Nejacs peiova sanguinus corpae*" engraved into the haft. When this phrase is spoken aloud by the wielder, the eyes on the mace head will weep a blood like liquid and the mace will do an additional 1d8 points of damage for three rounds.



Submerged in the pool at the southeastern corner of the chamber of the plague wraiths lies the source of the dim illumination for the chamber. The maze work of pipes that run along the walls and ceilings plunge into the pool. The pool is 20 feet deep and glows with an unnatural aquamarine light. Gently undulating in the depths of the pool is a mass of incandescent orbs and fibrous membranes. The entity periodically gives of waves that temporarily affect the fabric of reality (every 1d20 turns). All those within 10' of the pool will experience a reality warping pulse in which they temporarily "blink" out of the current reality and enter the dimension of the creature of a fraction of a second and then return. Characters so affected must save versus magic or roll on the table below:

Die Roll	Effect
1	Lose 1 point of constitution, hair turns white
2	Feeble minded for 2d12 turns
3	Unconscious for 3d6 turns. Gain one point of wisdom upon awakening.
4	Immediately attack nearest character. Will be in an uncontrolled frenzy for 3d6 rounds.
5	Will open wound on hand, inscribe sigils in blood on every surface for 2d4 rounds and then be violently ill for 1d12 rounds
6	Blind, deaf and dumb for 1d10 turns

The reality warping effects of the entity do not affect the plague wraiths. The entity in the pool is collocated with the pool in area 8 (though the pools appear separate they are actually the same pool manifesting in two locations). Calmos was able to successfully trap the entity partially in this reality (or so he believes) and use it to further his ends, gleanings insights into the nature of reality (see key for area 8 for more).

7. **Guard Chambers.** large glass tubes rising vertically from floor to ceiling line the walls of this chamber. There are eight tubes arranged in two rows of four in the center of the chamber. The tubes are filled with a dark fluid. Upon investigation, humanoid forms with tubes attached can be identified suspended within five of the tubes, the remaining tubes are empty. A maze of pipe works run along the ceiling and disappear into the dark recesses above. Metal ladders and scaffolding run into the dark recesses of machinery ominously crouched overhead. These are the shaping vats for the Contagion Guards. Calmos utilizes the strongest of his human captives to convert into Contagion Guards. The process completely destroys the persona of the victim, leaving behind only a husk that is subject to Calmos' will. Lurking above in small chambers off the scaffolding above the tubes are ten contagion guards (AC 5, HD 3, hp 21, 20, 19x 2, 18x3, 17x3; #AT 2, D special/1d8, SA cause disease, MV 90', Save Fighter 5, xp 122, 120, 118x2, 116x3, 114x3). The Contagion guards carry no treasure other than the Brass Sigil they wear, their stun rods, and their armor (see the items section for details).

Further investigation will reveal that there are meters attached to a console on each tube. The meters are numbered from one to ten with a needle that moves along the numbered area. Three of the meters are at two, while the remaining tubes are metered at eight. On the console there is also a heavy bronze lever and a valve. If the valve is turned, it drains the fluid in the tube. The lever causes a series of gears and pulleys to retract the glass tube into a ceiling recess. Once the fluid is drained from the tubes and the tubes raised, the five human males will be revealed. The two that were metered at eight will be almost completely mindless vegetables. The three that were metered at two are sickly and disoriented but will be grateful for their release. Ivar Gresslin and Terrik Mouroun are young field hands that were abducted in a raid by contagion guards. Werron Grelish is a seasoned mercenary that was abducted in a caravan raid. Ivar and Terrik are not skilled at arms and do not relish the thought of going up against Calmos' minions. Ivar and Terrik will seek to be reunited with the other abductees in area 11. Werron is a fourth level fighter with the following statistics: Human 16 Str 11 Dex 15 Con 10 Int 9 Wis 14 Cha; 36 Hp; AI NG. He will gladly accompany the party to assist in freeing the prisoners. He does not possess any equipment and will need to be provided with arms and armor.

**8. Calmos's Chambers.** A heavy wooden door banded in iron denies entry into this chamber. The door opens outwards into the corridor. Behind the door is another iron door. This chamber is dimly lit by a diffuse glow originating from a pool of water at the southwest corner of the room. A large baroque canopy bed, wardrobe, chest, desk, and high back chair are in the southeastern corner of the room. There is an strong odor of sickness and decay in the room. The chair is facing away from the entrance. Upon further investigation, a gruesome sight will greet the viewer: the corpse of a man dressed in tattered finery sits in the chair. Pallid beetles scabble over wasted flesh, the face is fixed in a rictus grin and the eyes are gone with runnels of puss oozing from the empty sockets. Weeping open sores are evident on the jaundiced skin. There is a slender diadem of onyx fashioned into the shape of a serpent swallowing its tail resting on the corpse's brow. The corpse will not respond to being touched or spoken to. However, if the characters attempt to remove the Dark Diadem, the "corpse" will reveal itself to be very much alive and will emit a dark cloud 15' in diameter from its mouth. All within the radius must save versus poison or be affected as if by a confusion spell cast by a 9th level magic user. Strange memories, thoughts and feelings will flood their consciousness as Calmos' personality infects them. At the end of the confusion, the affected characters must make another save against poison or change their alignment to Chaotic Evil. After 1d10 rounds, anyone who failed the second save, must make a third and final save or immediately become an NPC and fully take on the personality of Calmos (a self serving, twisted sociopath who is only out for his own gain). The infected characters retain their physical attributes (Strength, Dexterity, Constitution scores and hp) but their remaining attributes change as follows: Intelligence 18, Wisdom 8, Charisma 16. Calmos is a ninth level mage (although the Dark Diadem has given him power in excess of this, in effect making him an 11th level magic user). Those infected with Calmos' personality attempt to kill off the other member's of the party. If successful, they then attempt to kill each other (there can be only one and one is more than enough). The remaining Contagion Guards in the complex will immediately respond to an attack on Calmos and move to his location to aid him.

Aside from the Dark Diadem, Calmos is wearing robes of resistance that give him a +2 on all saves and has the Pathogen Signet (see new item descriptions) on his right ring finger, a ring of armor on his left index finger (+2 AC), Bracers of Armor (+5 to AC) and a Wand of Cancerous Consumption with eight charges (see new item description). He has the following spells memorized: 1st Level (Cancerous Touch x 2, Shield , Bone Spur); Level 2 (Bloat, Jaundiced Eye, Mirror Image, Stinking Cloud); Level 3 (Arthritic Word, Evil Eye, Fireball, Hold Person); Level 4 (Fear, Minor Globe of Invulnerability, Polymorph Self); Level 5 (Consumption x 2, Famine).



The pool in the southwest corner is the same as the one in the chamber of the plague wraiths. However, the dimensional warp effects here are stronger (perhaps amplified by Calmos’s use of the Dark Diadem). Calmos’s efforts to cheat his demonic “allies” opened a dimensional rift to a reality beyond the known planes of existence and brought forth the entity in the pool. Calmos main goal was to find secrets of immortality, and these he found after a fashion (see his character description for more information). Calmos has gleaned much about the nature of the planes beyond from the entity but never succeeded in grasping the nature of the entity itself. For it’s part, the entity interacts little with the wider world. Though Calmos believed he had trapped it on this plane of existence by utilizing magically irradiated crystals suspended in the water; the truth is that the entity has gained a foothold in this reality and is learning what it can through its interactions with Calmos and his minions.

The reality warping effects are stronger here and more frequent (every 1d10 turns). The effects are listed on the table below:

Die Roll	Effect
1	Lose 2 points of constitution and charisma, hair turns white and teeth fall out. Develop dry, scaly skin.
2	Feeble minded for 24 hours. Permanently lose one point of intelligence and wisdom.
3	Unconscious for 3d6 turns. Gain one point of wisdom upon awakening and lose two points of constitution. Develop oozing sores over entire body.
4	Immediately attack nearest character. Will be in an uncontrolled frenzy for 3d6 rounds.
5	Seek to join with entity in pool. The radiation from the pool causes 1d12 points of damage per round.
6	Permanently blind and deaf

Any attempt to attack the creature in the pool results in the attacker(s) disappear along with the entity. For all intents and purposes, the attacker(s) are dead, having been transported to extraspatial dimensions beyond the realms of men.

**9. Infernal Infection Machine.** This chamber is filled with monstrous pistons, pipes, gears and furnaces. Steam and smoke occlude vision so that visibility is limited to a 10' radius. Lit by hellish flames from the furnaces, shadows dart amongst the plunging pistons and churning gears. Machinery fills the entirety of this chamber with a narrow 5' alley that runs from north to south. There are small tunnels that penetrate into the interior of the mechanism. Two contagion guards are posted at both the northern and southern entrances to the chamber (AC 5, HD 3, hp 21, 20, 18x2; #AT 2, D special/1d8, SA cause disease, MV 90', Save Fighter 5, xp 122, 120, 116x2). Hunched and huddled human forms scurry with the rats amid the machinery and smoke. These slaves (20 zero level human males) constantly work the machinery and tend to its mechanisms. They will pay no heed to anyone other than the Contagion Guards, from who they will cower. Anyone attempting to stop one of the slaves from working will notice that the people are gaunt, jaundiced, and filthy. They will initially be unresponsive to any interaction from anyone. If stopped, they will see to continue about their duties. If either Ivar Gresslin, Terrik Mouroun, or Werron Grelish is present, the people will be wary but will answer inquiries. They will indicate that they must continue to maintain and feed Calmos' hellish machine lest they become fuel for the Upper Works. They will not join any open revolt unless the women and children in area 11 have been freed.

**10. Upper Works.** A set of steps ascends ten feet to the chamber of the upper works of Calmos' mechanism. The hellish machine is constantly fed from above here, filling the skies above the once prosperous province with pestilence. Several stooped men (11 zero level human males) feed large bundles from a large stack into a blazing furnace. There are six Contagion Guards here overseeing operations (AC 5, HD 3, hp 21x2, 20x2, 18x2; #AT 2, D special/1d8, SA cause disease, MV 90', Save Fighter 5, xp 122x2, 120x2, 116x2). In addition, a large, bloated humanoid figure bellows, belches and cajoles the slaves. The figure is 7' and has oozing sores on its body. It wields a large wooden club that is banded and studded with Iron. This is Gogmuth the Corpulent, a minor unique demon in service to Gorgomoro the Pustulent, summoned forth by Calmos to oversee operations. Gogmuth's stats are: AC 1, HD 8, hp 42, #AT 2, D 1d12/special, SA Spew Bile, SD +1 or better weapons to hit, MV 60', Magic Resistance 30%, Save Fighter 9, xp 1100). Gogmuth's club is a +2 weapon that inflicts 1d12 points of crushing damage. It requires a minimum of 16 strength to wield. In addition, three times per day, it can cause magical internal hemorrhaging upon a successful strike that will inflict an additional 1d4 points of damage per round for 8 rounds.



11. **Slave Quarters.** Two Contagion Guards stand outside this door (AC 5, HD 3, hp 21, 20; #AT 2, D special/1d8, SA cause disease, MV 90', Save Fighter 5, xp 122, 120). This chamber is barred from the outside. Floor to ceiling mass bunks fill this chamber. The fetid smell is beyond description. Women and children huddle together in large bunks. Filthy and scared, they are initially frightened of anyone entering the chamber. If they can be convinced that they are to be freed and reunited with the men, they will follow the instructions of their liberators. There are twelve women and sixteen children of varying ages present. The contagion guards have stripped the slaves of anything of value and they have only the rags on their body. However, if the bunks are searched, they will turn up a folded parchment. It is a map of the Squamous Sanctum of the Sigilis Serpentine.

12. **Planar Portal.** This chamber is only accessible if the planar portal has been activated via the mechanism in the throne room (area 4). Two large bronze columns topped by pearlescent globes are located on the east and west sides of the room. The cavern walls appear to be made of polished onyx. A dimensional gate to extra planar realms will appear between the two columns when the portal is active. The portal remains active for six hours once a destination has been selected. The portal is two way so that anyone entering to the realm beyond, will see the portal from the other side and be able to return. However, once the six hours is up, the portal will close and anyone that ventured through will be trapped and must find an alternate method of return (unless of course someone reactivates the portal to the same plane).

### NOTES

This adventure is meant to be open ended. As such, there are not any defined victory conditions. Or rather, the victory conditions should be defined by the Game Master and players. An obvious goal would be to free the prisoners. Or to release the plague wraiths, or perhaps take out Calmos more directly. Calmos is a tough and canny opponent, quite willing to use his magics to flee and perhaps turn up later to plague (pun intended) the party. In any case, it isn't necessarily about completely clearing the complex, but more about encountering the strange. In addition, there are several hooks here for Game Masters to further develop. The bottom line is that it should be about fun. Feel free to change, add, delete, or mine this for ideas. After all, that is perhaps the most fun part of this hobby. Happy gaming!

## Characters

### Calmos Vectos Mori—The Pustulent Lord

Level 9 Human Male Magic User

**Strength:** 8

**Dexterity:** 12

**Constitution:** 9

**Intelligence:** 18

**Wisdom:** 8

**Charisma:** 16

**Hit Points:** 27

**Armor Class:** 3

**Alignment:** Chaotic Evil

**Saves:**

**Wands:** 9 **Breath Weapon:** 13 **Death/Paralysis/Poison:** 13 **Petrefaction/**

**Polymorph:** 11 **Spells:** 10

**Spells per day:** 4/4/4/3/3

**Items:**

Bracers of Armor +5

Dark Diadem

Ring of Armor +2

Robes of Resistance (+2 to all saves)

Wand of Cancerous Consumption

**Notes:** Cunning and manipulative, Calmos seeks to turn every situation to his advantage. He will not seek to engage directly in combat, however, will utilize his infectious personality ability to try and claim a new host body for himself. If in trouble, he will utilize his signet ring to transport himself to his Laboratory or if all looks lost, to his throne room to calibrate his planar portal and then seek to escape via the planar portal in area 12.

**Infectious Personality:** In his bid to free his soul from eternal damnation, Calmos learned a method of transferring his personality to another (unwilling) host via a viral agent from the entity in the pool. The viral agent requires the host to make three saves vs. poison. The first against the initial infection (success negates further checks). The second transposes the new personality over the old. A successful save at this point negates further saves but the victim will retain memories of the infecting personality. The third check is against the infecting personality totally consuming the host personality. A successful save negates but the host will partially retain the infecting personality. Unless a cure disease is applied, there is a 50% chance of the infecting personality assuming control in stressful situations.

## Werron Grelish

Level 4 Human Male Fighter

**Strength:** 16

**Dexterity:** 11

**Constitution:** 15

**Intelligence:** 10

**Wisdom:** 9

**Charisma:** 14

**Hit Points:** 36

**Armor Class:** 10

**Alignment:** Neutral Good

**Saves:**

**Wands:** 15 **Breath Weapon:** 16 **Death/Paralysis/Poison:** 13 **Petrefaction/**

**Polymorph:** 14 **Spells:** 16

**Items:** Initially none

**Notes:** Werron is a competent leader and confident in his fighting ability. He does chastise himself for not being able to stop Calmos' minions from taking captives. His main goal is to seek the freedom of the captives more than re-vening himself on Calmos. Once this objective is met, he then seeks to destroy the infection machine before taking on Calmos. He is very aware of Calmos' reputation and rumored power and thus seeks to destabilize Calmos' plans first. If the party seeks to take on Calmos before freeing the captives, Werron will attempt to persuade them into waiting until the innocent captives are clear of the complex for fear that Calmos will attempt to kill the slaves in retribution.

## Ivar Gresslin and Terrik Mouroun

Zero Level Human field hands

	Ivar	Terrik
<b>Strength:</b>	16	17
<b>Dexterity:</b>	11	12
<b>Constitution:</b>	15	13
<b>Intelligence:</b>	10	8
<b>Wisdom:</b>	9	9
<b>Charisma:</b>	10	10
<b>Hit Points:</b>	6	6

**Armor Class:** 10

**Alignment:** Neutral Good

**Saves:**

**Wands:** 18 **Breath Weapon:** 20 **Death/Paralysis/Poison:** 16 **Petrefaction/**

**Polymorph:** 17 **Spells:** 19

## New Monsters

Note: The New Monster section is hereby designated Open Game Content

### Contagion Guard

Frequency: Rare

No. Encountered: 2d4

Size: Medium

Move: 90 ft

Armor Class: 5

Hit Dice: 3

Attacks: 2 (SA/Stun Rod)

Damage: (special/1d8)

Special Attacks: See Below

Special Damage: See Below

Magic Resistance: Standard

Lair Probability: 70%

Intelligence: Average

Alignment: Neutral

Level/XP: 80+2/hp



Calmos has made it his mission to exact his vengeance upon the citizens of the land he considers his. He takes pride in twisting persons and places to his warped view of things. He is most pleased with his contagion guards. Calmos has utilized his study of the dark arks to devise a way to corrupt the human form into a mindless, disease carrying foot soldier.

Contagion Guards wear armored suits made of a light mesh material that gives them an armor class of 5 but is only slightly heavier than normal clothing (15 lbs and max move rate of 120'). They bear the dreaded stun rods and possess a deadly contagion attack. Brass tanks are attached to their backs and a system of hoses and nozzles run to the wrists. From these devices, the Contagion Guards are able to spray a pathogen in a 20' cloud. The fast acting pathogen will take effect within 1d6 rounds. Victims will suffer 1d4 points of damage per round and lose one point of strength per round until they have reached 10% of their hit points (or cure disease is cast on the victim).

The Contagion Guards goal is not to kill, but to incapacitate victims in order to create more slaves for Calmos or to convert to more Contagion Guards.

## Gogmuth the Corpulent

Frequency: Unique  
No. Encountered: Unique  
Size: Medium  
Move: 90 ft  
Armor Class: 1  
Hit Dice: 8 (42 hp)  
Attacks: 2  
Damage: (1d12/special)  
Special Attacks: See Below  
Special Damage: See Below  
Magic Resistance: Standard  
Lair Probability: 70%  
Intelligence: Average  
Alignment: Chaotic Evil  
Level/XP: 8/1100



Foul in the extreme, Gogmuth is in service to Gorgomoro the Pustulent. Standing 7' high (and almost as broad), Gogmuth is covered in weeping sores that continually exude pus. Those touching Gogmuth with exposed flesh must save versus poison or become violently nauseous for 1d12 rounds. Gogmuth possesses the standard powers of demon kind (infravision, darkness, gate, etc). Three times per day, Gogmuth can vomit forth a stream of bile in a 20' cone. Those struck by the bile are immediately violently nauseous (no save) and must make a save versus poison or contract a wasting illness.

Gogmuth's club is a +2 weapon that inflicts 1d12 points of crushing damage. It requires a minimum of 16 strength to wield. In addition, three times per day, it can cause magical internal hemorrhaging upon a successful strike that will inflict an additional 1d4 points of damage per round for 8 rounds.

Calmos is not naive enough to think that Gogmuth is here to assist him in his plots. He knows all too well that Gorgomoro suspects duplicity on Calmos's part. However, Gogmuth does prove to be useful in keeping the slaves in line and ensuring that the infection machine is working. So for the time being, Calmos is willing to keep up his charade. Gogmuth enjoys the simple pleasures of torturing the slaves and feeding the corpses to the infection machine. He is not bright enough to fully understand the depths of Calmos's duplicitous nature. However, demons being demons, Gogmuth has no loyalty to any mortal and might very well betray Calmos if he thought that it would profit himself and not anger Gorgomoro to do so.

## Plague Wraith

Frequency: Very Rare  
No. Encountered: 1-3  
Size: Medium  
Move: 120 ft. or 240 ft. flying  
Armor Class: 4  
Hit Dice: 5+3  
Attacks: 1  
Damage: 1d6 + Disease  
Special Attacks: Disease  
Special Damage: Silver or magic weapons to hit  
Magic Resistance: Standard  
Lair Probability: 70%  
Intelligence: Average  
Alignment: Lawful Evil  
Level/XP:6/550 + 6/hp

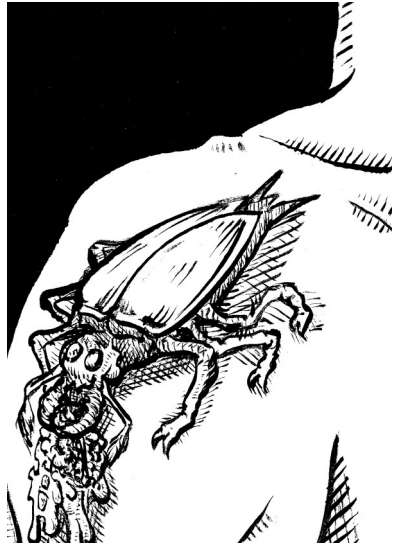


Damned for their loyalty to Calmos' mad pursuits and betrayed by his ambition; Cambert Lethio, Oslan Deganis, and Felian Nejacs are three aristocrats that hitched their dreams to a malign star and are now forever doomed to be in its orbit. Bound to their chamber, there is no release for them save through the return of their heads. The three writhe in impotent rage at Calmos' daily visits to their chamber, dreaming of a revenge that they cannot affect directly upon him.

Much like normal wraiths, the three are all but impotent in sunlight. However, they are fearsome indeed in the darkened chamber in which they are bound. Silvered weapons only inflict half damage and the grim trio is only truly affected by magic weapons. Unlike traditional wraiths, the plague wraiths do not cause level drain upon their victim. Instead, their touch is as a burning plague that causes 1d6 points of damage to those affected. Further, with each successful hit they cause a magical wasting illness that drains one point of constitution from the victim. Anyone slain by a plague wraith will rise as a zombie in thrall to the trio.

## Pustulent Beetle

Frequency: Very Rare  
No. Encountered: 2d10  
Size: Small  
Move: 120 ft.  
Armor Class: 4  
Hit Dice: 1-2hp  
Attacks: 1  
Damage: 1 hp + Disease  
Special Attacks: Disease  
Special Damage: nil  
Magic Resistance: Standard  
Lair Probability: 90%  
Intelligence: Non  
Alignment: Neutral  
Level/XP:1/5 + 1/hp



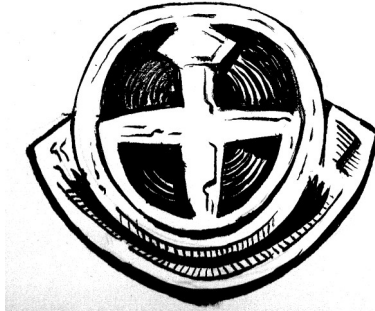
Sickly pale yellow in color, these 3" long beetles are redolent with the scent of putrefaction. The initial bite only inflicts 1 point of damage, but the victim must make a successful save versus poison or be affected by a necrotic flesh eating disease. This disease causes the flesh around the bite to putrefy causing 1-2 points of damage each round for 4 rounds. During this time, the beetle feeds upon the pustulent flesh.

These vermin also lay their eggs in the necrotic flesh resulting from their putrefying bite. There is a 10% chance that anyone bitten will harbor 1d10 eggs. The eggs incubate over the course of 48 hours and will hatch, causing further 1d2 points of damage each round as the larvae feed. They will move to the surface of the skin in 2d4 rounds where they erupt from pus filled boils.

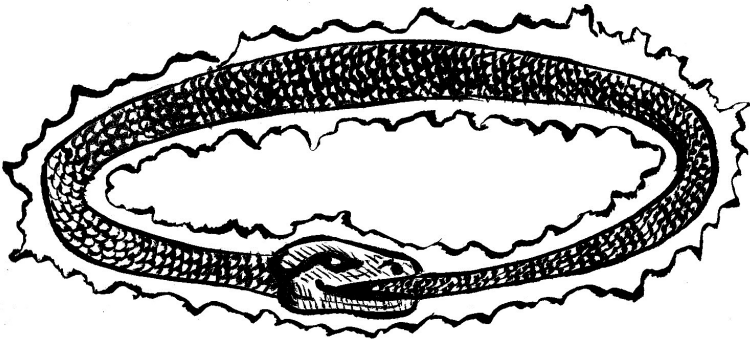
Cure disease kills the larvae and eggs on one victim. The lesions caused by the necrotic flesh will be itchy and painful and slowly heal over the course of 1d4 days.

## New Items

Note: The New Items section is hereby designated Open Game Content

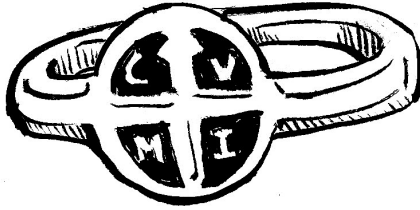


**Contagion Guard Sigil** Bronze disks inscribed with spidery markings; these sigils are worn by the Contagion Guards as part symbol of their affiliation and bond with Calmos, but also as a pass key to the areas within Calmos' demesne. Further, and most importantly, the sigils act as a synchronizer for all of the contagion guards once the central gong has been rung. This enables all contagion guards within the complex to become aware of every other bearer of a sigil for 2d6 rounds.

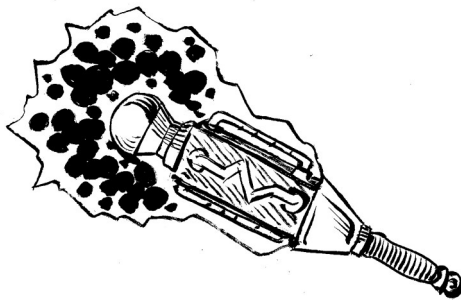


**Dark Diadem** Originally crafted in the dark sanctum of the Sigilis Serpentine, a cult of worshipers of Sisisirrus, the serpentine god, this item of great power was stolen by Calmos' early into his investigations of the dark arts. The Dark Diadem adds two caster levels to the wearer (gains two spell casting levels for any magic using class). Any non-magic user must save versus death or be rendered insane. A successful save causes 3d10 points of damage. The wearer is immune to poisons of any type and is granted True Seeing at will. Finally, the wearer is granted the ability to speak with serpents.





**Pathogen Signet** This large signet ring is crafted of an unknown opaque material that is a mottled red in color and uncannily warm to the touch (as the brow of a victim of fever). This symbol of Calmos' station, the Pathogen Signet grants the wearer access to all areas within Calmos' cavern demesne. In addition, it allows the wearer to teleport without error up to three times per day to any location within Calmos' complex. Much like the Contagion Guard Sigils, it enables the wearer to become aware of the Contagion Guards whereabouts. This does not require activation of the bronze synchronization gong.



**Stun Rod** Symbol and weapon of the dreaded Contagion Guard, these devices are designed not to kill, but inflict pain and misery. Stun rods are three feet long and emit a crackling dark energy. The Stun rods inflict 1d8 points of damage per strike and have a 25% of stunning the victim for 1d4 rounds. When the victim reaches 0 hit points, they fall unconscious. Further hits from a stun rod will not kill the victim, but further incapacitate them for 1d8 rounds.

**Wand of Cancerous Consumption** This wand is a gnarled brown and black shaft of unknown material of two feet in length. When activated, it casts a cone of 10 feet in diameter for up to 50 feet that lasts for one round. All those in the target range suffer 2d10 points of damage and lose one point of constitution.

## New Spells

Note: The New Spells section is hereby designated Open Game Content

### Arthritic Word

*Arcane Pathognomancy*

**Level:** Magic User 3

**Range:** 5 ft/level

**Duration:** 1 round/level

**Area of Effect:** One person

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 4 Segments

**Saving Throw:** Half

This spell causes the victim to be subject to crippling pain in all joints for one round per caster level (1d10 points of damage per round per caster level). If reduced to 0 hit points, the victim will be rendered unconscious but will not die. Instead, they will remain unconscious until the spell's duration has expired. In addition to the pain, the victim's to hit rolls are reduced by 2 for the duration of the spell.

### Bestill thy Heart

*Arcane Pathognomancy*

**Level:** Magic User 7

**Range:** 10 ft/level

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Area of Effect:** One person

**Components:** V, S

**Casting Time:** 4 Segments

**Saving Throw:** None

This spell will immediately stop the heart of one selected victim within the spell's range (assuming the victim has a cardiovascular system). The spell will instantaneously kill one creature of up to 50 hit points. Unlike other instant death spells, the damage cannot be divided among many opponents.

## **Bloat**

*Arcane Pathognomancy*

**Level:** Magic User 2

**Range:** 40 ft

**Duration:** 6 rounds

**Area of Effect:** One Person

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 4 Segments

**Saving Throw:** None

This spell causes the victim to bloat, gaining an additional 20 lbs for every round (suffering the encumbrance effects). After the second round, characters wearing forged armors such as plate or banded must remove their armor or become immobile. By the third round, the character suffers a –1 penalty to dexterity (or –1 to hit rolls and saves). By the fourth round, any armor other than padded must be removed or the character will become immobile. By the fifth round, the character suffers –2 to dexterity (or –1 to hit rolls and saves). By the sixth round, the victim is unable to wear any item of clothing other than loose fitting garments.

## **Bone Spur**

*Arcane Pathognomancy*

**Level:** Magic User 1

**Range:** 30 ft + 10 ft/level

**Duration:** 5 rounds/level

**Area of Effect:** 30 ft radius

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 Segment

**Saving Throw:** None

By means of this spell, all creatures in the area of effect (within the hit dice limit) will be affected by painful bone spurs. This reduces the initiative and to hit rolls of all victims of less than nine hit dice by –1 for the duration of the spell. Creatures of over five hit dice can save versus magic to negate and creatures over nine hit dice are not affected by the spell.

## **Consumption**

*Arcane Pathognomancy*

**Level:** Magic user 5

**Range:** 10 ft

**Duration:** 1 round/2 levels

**Area of Effect:** 20 ft radius cloud

**Components:** V,S

**Casting Time:** 4 Segments

**Saving Throw:** Negates

By means of this spell, the caster creates a miasmal cloud that roils along the ground with a 10 ft/round movement rate. During the first round of exposure, anyone caught in the cloud must save versus poison or the blood vessels in the lungs begin to rupture causing 1d20 points of damage (creatures of three or fewer HD die instantly). The second through fifth rounds, the lungs begin to fill with blood causing 1d8 points of damage per round (creatures of four through six hit die have a cumulative 20% per round of drowning in their own blood and dying). The cloud will dissipate in four rounds under a strong wind.

## **Cancerous Touch**

*Arcane Pathognomancy*

**Level:** Magic user 1

**Range:** Caster

**Duration:** 1 round

**Area of Effect:** One creature

**Components:** V,S

**Casting Time:** 2 Segments

**Saving Throw:** None

The caster inflicts a wasting sickness with this touch. The touch inflicts 2 points of damage per caster level and the victim will be weakened for 1d6 rounds thereafter (-1 to saving throws and to hit and damage rolls).

## **Evil Eye**

*Arcane Pathognomancy*

**Level:** Magic user 3

**Range:** 10 ft/level

**Duration:** 6 rounds + 1 level

**Area of Effect:** One creature

**Components:** V,S

**Casting Time:** 1 Segments

**Saving Throw:** Negates

The victim of this spell must make a save versus death at  $-3$  or lapse into a catatonic state that mimics death so closely that for all intents and purposes, the victim appears dead to all save by magical detection. In this state, the victim is completely helpless and may be truly killed as per those subject to a sleep spell. It otherwise functions as the Feign Death spell.

## **Famine**

*Arcane Pathognomancy*

**Level:** Magic user 5

**Range:** 360 ft

**Duration:** 6 turns

**Area of Effect:** 180ft radius

**Components:** V,S, M

**Casting Time:** 7 Segments

**Saving Throw:** Negates

The caster causes in intense hunger and wasting sickness in the victims of this spell. For the first turn, all victims in the affected area suffer  $-1$  to all die rolls due to their weakened condition. The second turn, the victims are consumed by the need to eat and will stop all action to eat any food in their possession. The third turn, victims will suffer  $-2$  to all die rolls. The fourth turn, consumed by hunger, victims will attack the nearest creature in order to procure food. The fifth and sixth turns, victims suffer  $-3$  to all rolls.

## **Fever Dream**

*Arcane Pathognomancy*

**Level:** Magic user 5

**Range:** Caster

**Duration:** 1 round/2 levels

**Area of Effect:** Caster

**Components:** V

**Casting Time:** 1 Turn

**Saving Throw:** None

By means of this spell, the caster induces a magical fever upon himself in order to benefit from the fever induced visions this spell provides. During the period of effect of this spell, the caster is completely unresponsive to outside stimuli. While in the state, the caster may contact extra dimensional beings in order to receive information as per the Clerical Spell Communion (there is a 25% chance that the entities so contacted will give false information or the fever will distort the message). The effort involved to utilize this spell will leave the caster weakened and all die rolls will be at -2 for the period of 12 hours afterwards.

## **Jaundiced Eye**

*Arcane Pathognomancy*

**Level:** Magic user 2

**Range:** One creature

**Duration:** 4 rounds + 1 level

**Area of Effect:** One creature

**Components:** V,S

**Casting Time:** 1 Segment

**Saving Throw:** Negates

The victim of this spell must save at -2 or be overcome by an overwhelming lethargy for the duration of the spell. The victim can only move and act at half the normal rate. On the victim's action round, there is a 50% chance that a state of apathy will cause them to take no action at all that round.

## Afterword

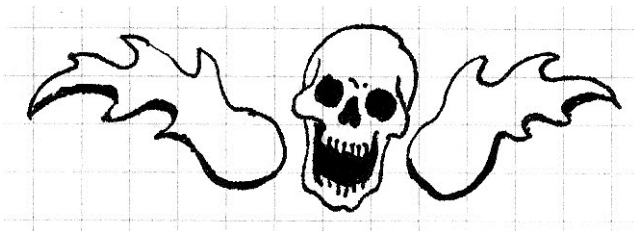
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If you like what you've seen here, drop by my blog *Ostensible Cat* ([xyanthon.blogspot.com](http://xyanthon.blogspot.com)) and keep up with what I'm doing or feel free to email me. I welcome all comments and would love to hear your thoughts. I highly encourage constructive criticism!! I hope *Delve!* Proves to be useful and fun for you. If, however, you find it lacking, please let me know. All I ask is that you articulate your criticisms to tell me what you did not care for or what you felt needed work. Comments such as "you suck", "this is crap", etc. are not helpful. Please let me know WHY I suck and I'll work on fixing that. I can't and won't strive to please everyone, but I do want to make this more than just a vanity project.

In the forthcoming issues, I'll have more articles on gaming topics (I plan on expanding the pathogen mage into a full class), discussions of my campaign world Gaehoen, maybe some guest articles, and if I can manage my creative A.D.D. enough, a comic and some reviews. I have many ideas to be sure! I hope that you join me on the adventure!





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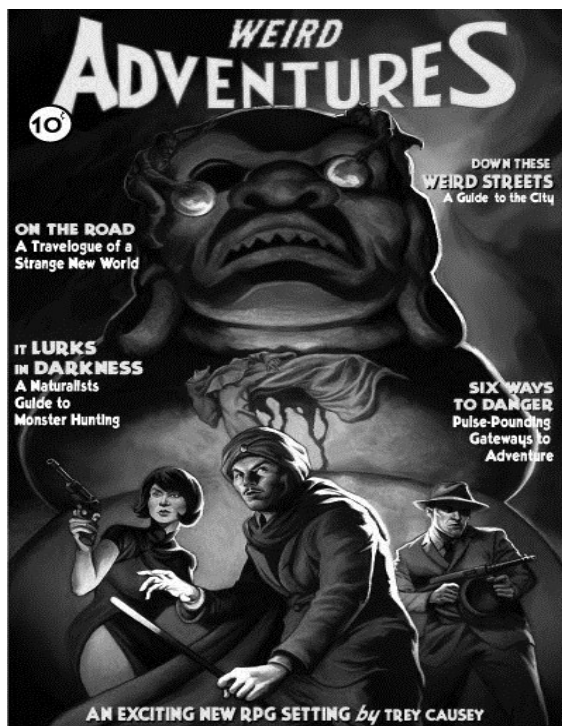
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# DELVE! Zine

ISSUE 1

July 2012



Johnathan L. Bingham takes full responsibility for releasing this on an unsuspecting public. Please direct all rants, raves, fever induced delirious ramblings and the like to:

[Johnathan.bingham@gmail.com](mailto:Johnathan.bingham@gmail.com)

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#### Dedication:

To my wife Daisey Bingham. Thanks for smiling and nodding for all these many years and accompanying me on my journey into parts unknown. Every day is an adventure and the reality far strips the fantasy. Ich liebe dich.

#### Special Thanks:

**Gary Gygax and David Arneson.** If I have to explain, you wouldn't understand.

**Stuart Marshall, Matt Finch, and the Gang at Knights and Knaves Alehouse.** OSRIC is where it all began for me. Thanks for having the vision and seeing it through.

**Joseph Browning and Suzi Yee.** For all of the amazing adventures and taking a chance on an unknown artist.

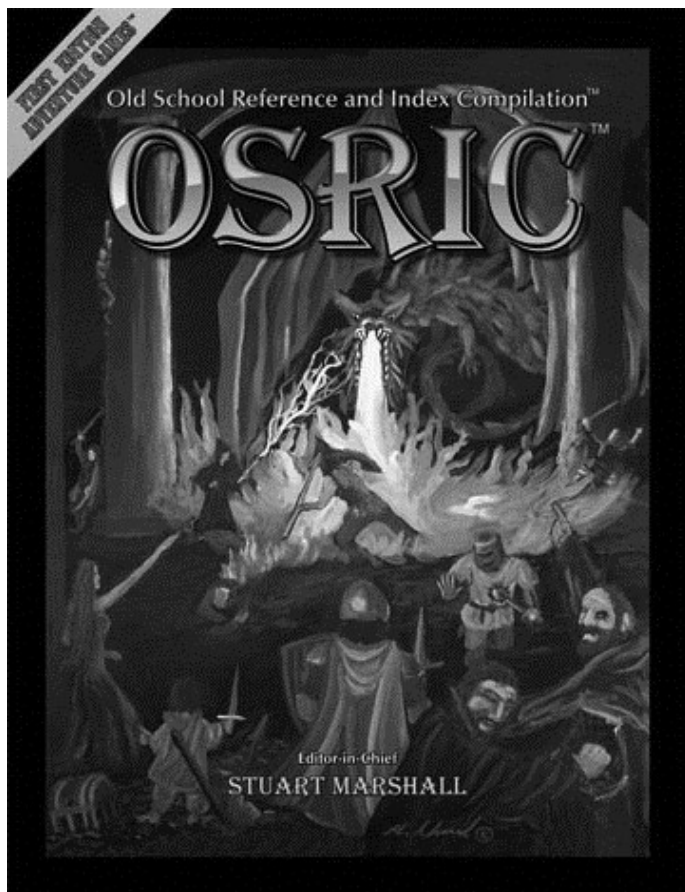
**Christian Walker.** For inspiring me to do this zine in the first place with your excellent Loviatar Zine.

**Trey Causey.** For volunteering to proofread and your thoughtful comments. For *Weird Adventures* and inviting me to participate. For your blog, *From the Sorcerer's Skull*. Just too much goodness to mention.

**Carter Soles.** For stepping up and volunteering to proofread *Delve!* For your *Lands of Ara* Blog and Compilation (and inviting me to do the cover art).

**Tim Shorts.** For volunteering your editorial skill. For *The Manor*, a sweet little zine and *Gothridge Manor* blog. For making me laugh with Sleestak Sundays. And thank you and Ivy for all your encouragement.

**Jody and Jim Garrison.** Much thanks to you both. Wow, *Hereticwerks* blog and all of your other endeavors are truly weird and that is meant as a compliment!



## DO YOU HAVE THE THIRST FOR ADVENTURE?

Delve! was primarily designed with the Old School Reference Index and Compilation (OSRIC) Rule set in mind which is based on the First Edition of the world's most popular fantasy role playing game. Go to <http://www.knights-n-knaves.com/osric/>

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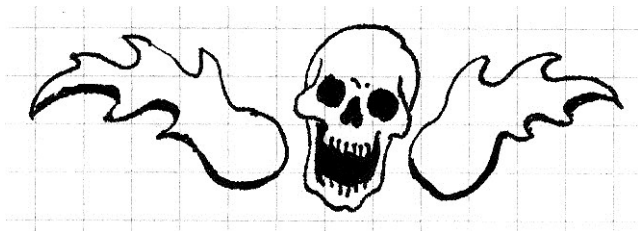
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# Welcome to Delve! Zine

but we came up with our own rules. And later, I received the AD&D *Monster Manual* for Christmas. The *Player's Handbook* followed, and thus began an obsession that has remained fairly consistent and continues to this day.

Welcome to *Delve! Zine*, my love letter to Old School gaming. I've been a long time devotee to fantasy fiction, games, movies and the like for something on the order of 30+ years (damn! time flies). I remember being a kid and thrilling to the adventures of King Arthur and his knights. I loved Flash Gordon and his exploits on Earth and on Mongo. I was tantalized by the dark lure of a whispering hellblade wielded by the last emperor of a dying race. I... Well, you get the idea. From an early age, I wanted to participate in such daring exploits (well, from the safe distance of make believe any way!). I spent many an hour daydreaming of different worlds, of magic, of heroes, of dragons...

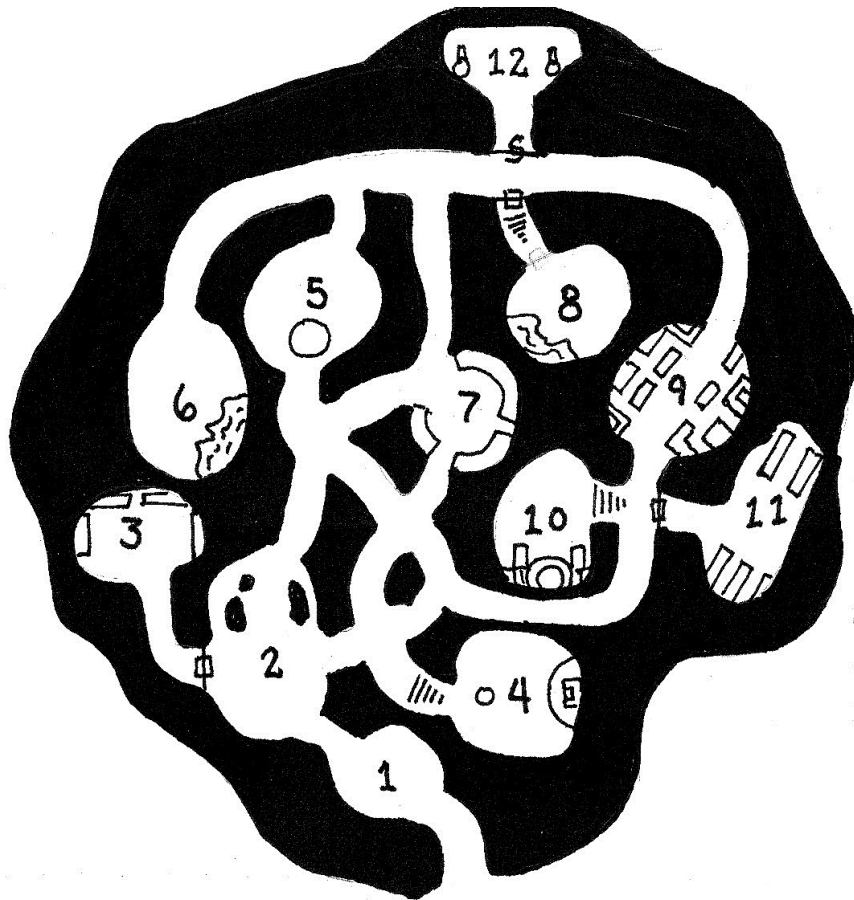
I have been fortunate enough to be able to contribute back the hobby I love so much by doing artwork for various companies and various projects. *Delve!* marks the first time outside my blog (*Ostensible Cat* for those that don't know) that I've done my own project. It is challenging to devise adventures that captivate an audience. I tip my hat to those that can do it. I tend to have a lot of ideas that usually don't get off the ground for one reason or another. I am hoping that *Delve!* Will be a platform to at least expose some of these ideas to the light of day (at least on an irregular basis).

I suppose then if you are reading this, you at least partly share in that thrill. When I first heard about role playing games, I was immediately smitten by the idea. I had never contemplated structured play that had rules that grounded the flights of fantasy into a cohesive framework. My first ever gaming product was the Official Advanced Dungeons and Dragons Coloring Album. Wow, what a place to start! It was a bit difficult to extrapolate any kind of rules structure from that (especially for an eight year old),

Even though I primarily utilize *OSRIC* as the rule set for the first adventure, most of the rule sets and variants of the world's most popular fantasy role playing game will fit the bill (assuming they are 1st edition or earlier at any rate). This first issue is less of a proper zine and more of a straight ahead adventure, but well... it's a work in progress and it'll develop organically I suppose. So, bear with me, grab some dice, and have fun!

-Johnathan L Bingham

## Afterword



||| = Stairs (Descending)

⊕ = Door

{ = Pool

⌞ = Secret Door

Wow, it has taken me quite some time to get here! I've been actively involved with this OSR thing for quite some time. Originally encountering likeminded gamers back in 2003 through the magic of the Internet (and \*GASP\* EN-World), I was excited to see folks like Troll Lords, Necromancer Games and Goodman Games bringing out stuff with old school sensibilities. Then I followed the rumblings of the Old School Reference Index and Compilation (OSRIC) over at the Knights and Knaves Alehouse Forums around 2005 and becoming an active participant with my artwork in 2006. I was born again into the Old School and have been happily creating stuff for or supporting Old School gaming stuff ever since.

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### **Fever Dream**

*Arcane Pathognomancy*

**Level:** Magic user 5

**Range:** Caster

**Duration:** 1 round/2 levels

**Area of Effect:** Caster

**Components:** V

**Casting Time:** 1 Turn

**Saving Throw:** None

By means of this spell, the caster induces a magical fever upon himself in order to benefit from the fever induced visions this spell provides. During the period of effect of this spell, the caster is completely unresponsive to outside stimuli. While in the state, the caster may contact extra dimensional beings in order to receive information as per the Clerical Spell Communion (there is a 25% chance that the entities so contacted will give false information or the fever will distort the message). The effort involved to utilize this spell will leave the caster weakened and all die rolls will be at -2 for the period of 12 hours afterwards.

### **Jaundiced Eye**

*Arcane Pathognomancy*

**Level:** Magic user 2

**Range:** One creature

**Duration:** 4 rounds + 1 level

**Area of Effect:** One creature

**Components:** V,S

**Casting Time:** 1 Segment

**Saving Throw:** Negates

The victim of this spell must save at -2 or be overcome by an overwhelming lethargy for the duration of the spell. The victim can only move and act at half the normal rate. On the victim's action round, there is a 50% chance that a state of apathy will cause them to take no action at all that round.

## **Calmos Vectos Mori I, the Pustulent Lord**

Calmos Aethos was once the advisor to Baron Geddon Felin, lord of a relatively peaceful and prosperous agrarian province. Baron Felin refused to side with the usurper Kegos Thegan in an uprising against the king. He feared that war would decimate his province and leave him lord of ashes. An emissary of the usurper's army entreated with Baron Felin only to be told that the Baron would not side with anyone in the war. Calmos, ever seeking advantage, met secretly with the emissary, promising to garrison Kegos' army on the Baron's land if Kegos would depose Felin and install Calmos as the new provincial lord. Calmos need only hold the gates of the Baron's keep open so that the invading army could enter and depose Baron Felin. Calmos drugged the men standing watch then opened the gates. As is the way of such things, the Kegos's army took the castle and betrayed Calmos; exiling him and men loyal to Calmos from the province. Taking refuge in a cave system used by the Sigilis Serpentine, dark mage cultists of Sisisirrus, the serpentine God of the Infinite Coil). Calmos sought knowledge to aid his quest for revenge for his betrayal. Calmos quickly installed himself as

the lord of the serpent's Nest. Drawing upon the knowledge of the dark mages, Calmos treated with Gorgomoro the Pustulent, a demon lord from the Abyss. He made a pact with Gorgomoro for power - and more importantly, his revenge on Kegos.

Calmos himself became an adept practitioner of the dark arts. He betrayed the Grand Praetor of the Sigilis Serpentine and amassed a following of unsavory folk willing to throw in with him for a taste of wealth and power. Consolidating his power, Calmos restyled himself Calmos Vectos Mori I, lord of the Dark Diadem.

Seeking a way to free his damned soul of his contract with Gorgomoro, Calmos delved further into the dark arts, secretly seeking entities beyond the known realms in his bid for greater power and the secrets of immortality. His dealings with the denizens from beyond have taken their toll. Calmos has become a being not altogether human. Increasingly few have been his dealings with the outside world. Calmos has built an infernal machine inside the cave system that spews contagions and pestilence into the sky. He seeks to further destabilize and weaken Kegos's rule so that he can claim that which he believes is rightfully his.

## Random Encounters

Die Roll	Encounter
1	1d4 contagion guards on patrol.
2	1d12 giant rats
3	Blast of contaminated air. Save versus poison or be affected as cause disease spell.
4	2d10 rats
5	10' Swarm of biting insects. All within must save versus disease or be affected by a malarial fever within 1d6 turns that will last for 1d6 hours (-2 on all die rolls).
6	Work party—1d8 slaves. The slaves are part of a chain gang and accompanied by 1d4 contagion guards.
7	Gout of effluence. Those within a 10' diameter of the gout will be afflicted by violent nausea for 1d12 rounds (no save).
8	2d20 bats. Swarm has a 40% chance of creating confusion causing party to drop light sources.
9	Ill wind. Save versus breath weapon or be affected as if by a stinking cloud.
10	1d4 Pustulent beetles
11	1d4 giant centipedes
12	2d4 Giant Flies

Check for random encounters every 6 turns of game time.

## Evil Eye

*Arcane Pathognomancy*

**Level:** Magic user 3

**Range:** 10 ft/level

**Duration:** 6 rounds + 1 level

**Area of Effect:** One creature

**Components:** V,S

**Casting Time:** 1 Segments

**Saving Throw:** Negates

The victim of this spell must make a save versus death at -3 or lapse into a catatonic state that mimics death so closely that for all intents and purposes, the victim appears dead to all save by magical detection. In this state, the victim is completely helpless and may be truly killed as per those subject to a sleep spell. It otherwise functions as the Feign Death spell.

## Famine

*Arcane Pathognomancy*

**Level:** Magic user 5

**Range:** 360 ft

**Duration:** 6 turns

**Area of Effect:** 180ft radius

**Components:** V,S, M

**Casting Time:** 7 Segments

**Saving Throw:** Negates

The caster causes in intense hunger and wasting sickness in the victims of this spell. For the first turn, all victims in the affected area suffer -1 to all die rolls due to their weakened condition. The second turn, the victims are consumed by the need to eat and will stop all action to eat any food in their possession. The third turn, victims will suffer -2 to all die rolls. The fourth turn, consumed by hunger, victims will attack the nearest creature in order to procure food. The fifth and sixth turns, victims suffer -3 to all rolls.

## Consumption

*Arcane Pathognomancy*

**Level:** Magic user 5

**Range:** 10 ft

**Duration:** 1 round/2 levels

**Area of Effect:** 20 ft radius cloud

**Components:** V,S

**Casting Time:** 4 Segments

**Saving Throw:** Negates

By means of this spell, the caster creates a miasmal cloud that roils along the ground with a 10 ft/round movement rate. During the first round of exposure, anyone caught in the cloud must save versus poison or the blood vessels in the lungs begin to rupture causing 1d20 points of damage (creatures of three or fewer HD die instantly). The second through fifth rounds, the lungs begin to fill with blood causing 1d8 points of damage per round (creatures of four through six hit die have a cumulative 20% per round of drowning in their own blood and dying). The cloud will dissipate in four rounds under a strong wind.

## Cancerous Touch

*Arcane Pathognomancy*

**Level:** Magic user 1

**Range:** Caster

**Duration:** 1 round

**Area of Effect:** One creature

**Components:** V,S

**Casting Time:** 2 Segments

**Saving Throw:** None

The caster inflicts a wasting sickness with this touch. The touch inflicts 2 points of damage per caster level and the victim will be weakened for 1d6 rounds thereafter (-1 to saving throws and to hit and damage rolls).

1. **Hall of Entry.** A noisome odor greets all that enter the halls of the Pustulent Lord, Calmos Vectos Mori. This room is 25' square. The walls of this chamber weep noxious ooze that congeals in puddles on the floor. Those touching the ooze with exposed skin must save versus poison or become violently nauseous for 1d12 rounds. Pipes of varying shapes and sizes run overhead and disappear through holes in the ceiling. The pipes continuously clatter and blast steam on occasion. The noise serves to distract from the two panthers that dwell in the shadowy recesses of the room and act as a welcoming party of sorts. The panthers appear to be malnourished with matted fur, boils and jaundiced eyes (AC 6, HD 3+2, hp 20, 18; #AT 3, D 1d4/1d4/1d6, SA 15% of disease, MV 150', Save Fighter 5, xp 160, 154). The panthers are diseased and any one bitten or scratched must save versus poison or be infected the victim with a disease as per the cleric spell *Cause Disease*. The panthers have the following treasure: a silver armband shaped like a snake swallowing its tail (100 gp value) and a moldering leather bag containing a scroll case and a pouch with 20 silver lying among a litter of human bones in the northeastern corner. The coins are of an unusual design with serpentine motif and coiled script. These are known in certain circles as venom chits, the Sigilis Serpentine coin of assassination. Not used as monetary units for trade, they are barter tokens for death. Presented by a knowledgeable person to a Sigilis Serpentine assassin, they can be used to buy an assassination of any one person. To a knowledgeable person, they are worth 100 times their value in silver coinage. The scroll case is made of ivory with serpentine motif carved into the sides (75 gp value) and contains a piece of parchment with the following note:

"The Dark Diadem, symbol of power for Sigilis Serpentine has been stolen. Return the Sigilis Serpentine to the Grand Praetor at the Squamous Sanctum and your reward shall be great. Calmos the Betrayer must be destroyed

-Gratziat Melicum"

A flow stone along the northeastern wall looks disturbingly like a human face contorted in agony. Those walking towards the corridor on the northwestern end of the chamber risk a 50% chance of being caught in gouts of ooze from the mouth of the face (10' x 10' jet). Those so doused, suffer from the violent nausea for 1d12 rounds (no save). In addition, all foodstuffs and water are spoiled and unusable unless kept in air tight containers.



2. **Ooze mounds.** A low hum gives this room a feeling of constant vibration. The walls here do not weep but there are large mounds of flowing ooze at the northern end of the chamber and pipes of varying sizes clatter and run along the walls and ceiling. A door covered in clockwork gears, levers and valves blocks entry to area 3 of the map (see area three for more information). Large bronze braziers in the room give a dim illumination and emit a thick, sickly sweet smoke.

There are six contagion guards here (AC 5, HD 3, hp 21, 20, 18x2, 17x2; #AT 2, D special/1d8, SA cause disease, MV 90', Save Fighter 5, xp 122, 120, 116x2, 114x2). They will immediately rush to attack. They will seek to utilize their contagion spray attacks first and then use their stun rods as their follow up attack. The guards will seek to press the battle towards the oozing mounds. Every 4 rounds the mounds explosively belch forth the noxious ooze (save versus poison or be overcome with nausea for 1d12 rounds). If the battle seems to be going against them, one will retreat to area 7 to summon reinforcements. The contagion guards will not seek to kill, instead, they seek to disable opponents and render them unconscious in order to convert them into more contagion guards. The Contagion guards carry no treasure other than the Brass Sigil they wear, their stun rods, and their armor (see the items section for details).

Three inch long beetles colored a sickly yellow scurried along the oozing mounds. They are content to feed on the effluence, but if anyone is forced onto a mound, the beetles will immediately seek to add a new food source to their diet. Pustulent Beetles 30 (AC 4, hp 1x21, 2x9; #AT 1, D 1/special, SA cause disease, MV 120', Save Fighter 1, xp 6x21, 7x9).

## **Bloat**

*Arcane Pathognomancy*

**Level:** Magic User 2

**Range:** 40 ft

**Duration:** 6 rounds

**Area of Effect:** One Person

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 4 Segments

**Saving Throw:** None

This spell causes the victim to bloat, gaining an additional 20 lbs for every round (suffering the encumbrance effects). After the second round, characters wearing forged armors such as plate or banded must remove their armor or become immobile. By the third round, the character suffers a -1 penalty to dexterity (or -1 to hit rolls and saves). By the fourth round, any armor other than padded must be removed or the character will become immobile. By the fifth round, the character suffers -2 to dexterity (or -1 to hit rolls and saves). By the sixth round, the victim is unable to wear any item of clothing other than loose fitting garments.

## **Bone Spur**

*Arcane Pathognomancy*

**Level:** Magic User 1

**Range:** 30 ft + 10 ft/level

**Duration:** 5 rounds/level

**Area of Effect:** 30 ft radius

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 1 Segment

**Saving Throw:** None

By means of this spell, all creatures in the area of effect (within the hit dice limit) will be affected by painful bone spurs. This reduces the initiative and to hit rolls of all victims of less than nine hit dice by -1 for the duration of the spell. Creatures of over five hit dice can save versus magic to negate and creatures over nine hit dice are not affected by the spell.

## New Spells

Note: The New Spells section is hereby designated Open Game Content

### Arthritic Word

*Arcane Pathognomancy*

**Level:** Magic User 3

**Range:** 5 ft/level

**Duration:** 1 round/level

**Area of Effect:** One person

**Components:** V, S, M

**Casting Time:** 4 Segments

**Saving Throw:** Half

This spell causes the victim to be subject to crippling pain in all joints for one round per caster level (1d10 points of damage per round per caster level). If reduced to 0 hit points, the victim will be rendered unconscious but will not die. Instead, they will remain unconscious until the spell's duration has expired. In addition to the pain, the victim's hit rolls are reduced by 2 for the duration of the spell.

### Bestill thy Heart

*Arcane Pathognomancy*

**Level:** Magic User 7

**Range:** 10 ft/level

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Area of Effect:** One person

**Components:** V, S

**Casting Time:** 4 Segments

**Saving Throw:** None

This spell will immediately stop the heart of one selected victim within the spell's range (assuming the victim has a cardiovascular system). The spell will instantaneously kill one creature of up to 50 hit points. Unlike other instant death spells, the damage cannot be divided among many opponents.

**3. Laboratory.** The door to this chamber is a massive bronze series of clockwork gears and levers. Five levers control the locking mechanism. Arranging them in the proper manner opens the door. Misconfiguration has other, less than desirable effects. The proper arrangement is (from the viewer's left to right): up, up, down, up, down. Any other configuration will result in a flesh eating bacteria being released in the form of a brown cloud being emitted from vents above the door. The bacteria does 1d10 points of damage per round for 10 rounds. *Cure Disease* stops the bacteria however it does not recover the damage done.

Behind the clockwork door is a tunnel that leads to area three. This area is Calmos' laboratory and library. In the entry chamber, there are runes along the floor. Anyone not bearing the Dark Diadem, a contagion guard sigil, or pathogen signet must make a save versus poison or immediately suffer the effects of a wasting illness suffering 1d8 hit points of damage and one point for constitution drain per round for 12 rounds (cure disease stops further damage but does not cure damage already accrued).

The hall extends back 20' to Calmos' laboratory. Above the door to the entrance into Calmos' lab, three tarred heads are mounted on spikes. These are the last remains of Cambert Lethio, Oslian Deganis, and Felian Nejacs. If anyone (or thing) passes beneath the heads and does not possess the Dark Diadem, Pathogen Signet or a Contagion Guard Sigil, the heads will spew forth a foul smelling dark viscous goo (covers a 10' radius). Those covered by the substance must save versus death or immediately dissolve into a puddle of foul smelling ooze.

A large metal table is covered with texts, glass vials containing various liquids and powders, and writing implements. A large tome lays open on the table. It contains a list of measurements and equations. Hand written in the margin it is written:

"Truly there are terrors beyond hell where even the demoniac fear to dabble. The Umbra Palace. Rydekiar is the key."

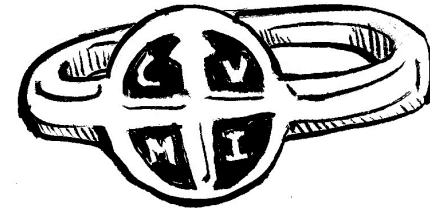
The tome is entitled the *Glyphic Mysterium of Pedantic Thought*. The text is composed of glyphs that are undecipherable without the proper key. The text is bound in a strange, smooth hide with silver fittings and inlay work. From the craftsmanship alone, it is worth 300 gold though the information it contains regarding planar travel makes it worth vastly more (up to 2500 gp to the right buyer). The book contains a key to the planar mechanism located in area 4 that opens a planar gate to various destinations. If this tome is consulted while operating the planar mechanism in the throne room, the characters should be able to match the patterns to produce the patterns from the table listed in area 4.

There are many books of esoteric knowledge on the shelves that pertain to various scientific and magical studies. On the whole, there are 97 tomes. The value of the collection is about 450 gold. There is one book in particular that is of value. Bound in dust dined dark grey leather, is Calmos' spell book. It contains magics dedicated to plague, famine and pestilence. The book contains the following spells (see entries in spell section for details): Arthritic Word, Bestill thy Heart, Bloat, Bone Spur, Consumption, Cancerous Touch, Evil Eye, Famine, Fever Dream and Jaundiced Eye. In addition, a portfolio of unbound parchment contains what appears to be Calmos' memoirs. It talks of his attempt to oust the unworthy Baron and don the baronial coronet under Kegos Thegan, the would be usurper of the crown. It outlines how Calmos, Cambert Lethio, Oslian Deganis, and Felian Nejac plotted the overthrow of the Baron and were themselves betrayed.

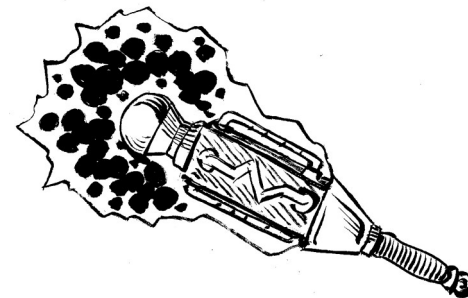
Shelves line the north wall of the library, carved into the living stone of the cavern wall. Indistinct organic shapes are suspended in murky fluids inside the dust covered glass specimen jars that line the shelves. There are twenty jars of various shapes and sizes. The jars are labeled as follows:

1. Gehenis Moth	6. Calcinated Hoary Brekmor	11. Hanler's Great Atropium.	16. Warbling Shuma
2. Spore Worm	7. Deviated Grand Palpinost	12. Bioluminescent Goaliant	17. Tethered Duja Beast
3. Reticulated Verdant Grub	8. Fleshy Untagliaunt	13. Vestinum Rydekiar	18. Burbling fetishistic Vetom
4. Truncated Bothar Vole	9. Diurnal Jaewisp	14. Corbelled Koakum.	19. Haunting Morris
5. Lesser Sanguinated nude Golows	10. Flavonated Gumpsom	15. Viscous Ootium	20. Chitinous Regimented Fermion

The jars are full of a viscous and cloudy substance. Most of the specimens are no longer living, however, the Spore Worm, Vestinum Rydekiar, Warbling Shuma, and Chitinous Regimented Fermion are all still very much alive.



**Pathogen Signet** This large signet ring is crafted of an unknown opaque material that is a mottled red in color and uncannily warm to the touch (as the brow of a victim of fever). This symbol of Calmos' station, the Pathogen Signet grants the wearer access to all areas within Calmos' cavern demesne. In addition, it allows the wearer to teleport without error up to three times per day to any location within Calmos' complex. Much like the Contagion Guard Sigils, it enables the wearer to become aware of the Contagion Guards whereabouts. This does not require activation of the bronze synchronization gong.



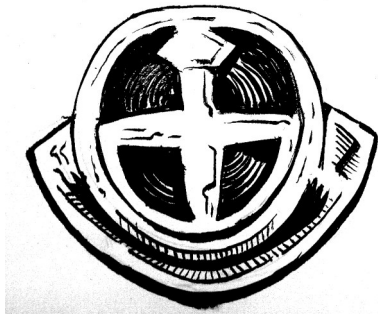
**Stun Rod** Symbol and weapon of the dreaded Contagion Guard, these devices are designed not to kill, but inflict pain and misery. Stun rods are three feet long and emit a crackling dark energy. The Stun rods inflict 1d8 points of damage per strike and have a 25% of stunning the victim for 1d4 rounds. When the victim reaches 0 hit points, they fall unconscious. Further hits from a stun rod will not kill the victim, but further incapacitate them for 1d8 rounds.

**Wand of Cancerous Consumption** This wand is a gnarled brown and black shaft of unknown material of two feet in length. When activated, it casts a cone of 10 feet in diameter for up to 50 feet that lasts for one round. All those in the target range suffer 2d10 points of damage and lose one point of constitution.

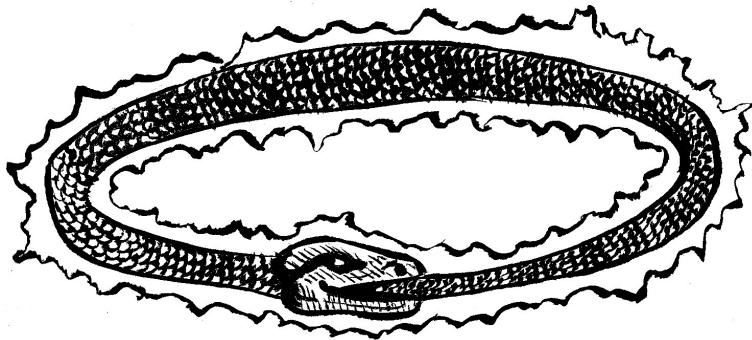


## New Items

Note: The New Items section is hereby designated Open Game Content



**Contagion Guard Sigil** Bronze disks inscribed with spidery markings; these sigils are worn by the Contagion Guards as part symbol of their affiliation and bond with Calmos, but also as a pass key to the areas within Calmos' demesne. Further, and most importantly, the sigils act as a synchronizer for all of the contagion guards once the central gong has been rung. This enables all contagion guards within the complex to become aware of every other bearer of a sigil for 2d6 rounds.



**Dark Diadem** Originally crafted in the dark sanctum of the Sigilis Serpentine, a cult of worshipers of Sisisirrus, the serpentine god, this item of great power was stolen by Calmos' early into his investigations of the dark arts. The Dark Diadem adds two caster levels to the wearer (gains two spell casting levels for any magic using class). Any non-magic user must save versus death or be rendered insane. A successful save causes 3d10 points of damage. The wearer is immune to poisons of any type and is granted True Seeing at will. Finally, the wearer is granted the ability to speak with serpents.

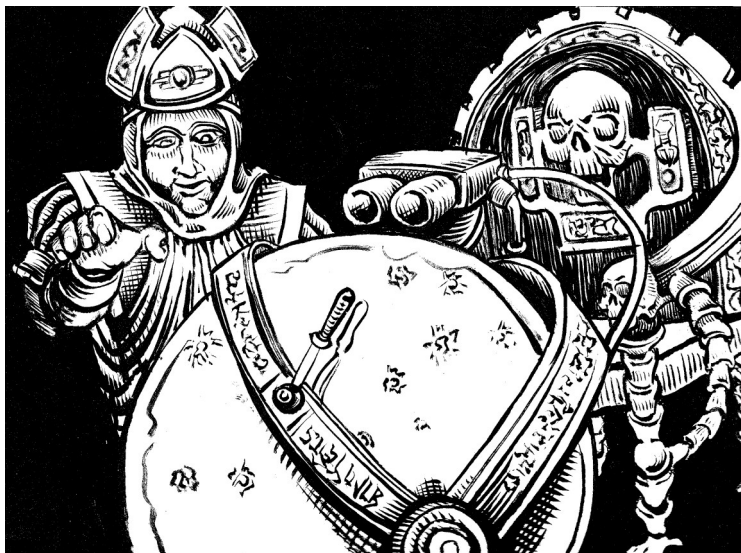
The **Regimented Fermion** is a twelve legged, chitinous creature resembling a beetle with a lobster tail. The Fermion is iridescent night blue in color. If the jar is opened, the fermion will scramble to the opening of the jar and take to the air. It will pulsate with a light from its abdomen creating a brilliant strobe effect (treat as a blindness spell).

The **Spore Worm** is a brownish-orange segmented worm 12 inches long with a large bulbous head (AC 9, hp 2, #AT 1, D special, MV 10', Save Fighter 0, xp 10). The head is featureless aside from several pinhole sized orifices. If removed from the oily substance in which it is suspended, the spore worm will emit a 5 foot diameter cloud of dark spores when it is in the vicinity of organic creature. A character within the vicinity of the spore cloud fails a save versus poison, they will fall unconscious and within 1d6 rounds, 1d20 new spore worms will begin to form within the respiratory tract of the afflicted victim. As the young spore worms begin to feed, the affected character will take 1 point of damage each round from each of the spore worms.

The **Vestinum Rydekiar** appears as a fibrous mass with many thin filaments dangling from the main mass. It is a translucent pearly blue in color and occasional flashes of light play amongst the lengths of the filaments and from within the fibrous mass. If the jar is opened, the Rydekiar will extend several filaments to attach to the flesh of the character opening the jar (succeeds on a 1-4 on a d6). Once attached, the character must make a save versus paralysis or take 2d6 points of damage and be stunned for 1d6 turns. The character's eyes will turn dark red. The Rydekiar allows those affected by the meld with the Rydekiar to perceive into higher dimensions. This perception acts as being under the effect of a True Seeing spell.

The **Warbling Shuma** appears as a delicate, frilled mass of rust red and blue. The Shuma undulates rhythmically while suspended in the fluid inside its jar. If the jar is opened, the Shuma will unfurl and begin to undulate more rapidly and produce a distinctive vibrational warbling sound. This sound is not unpleasant and will instill a sense of ease in all within 30'. Those within 10' must save versus magic or be affected as a sleep spell.

A nondescript clay jug sits on the metal table. It's unremarkable nature belies its potent magical properties. It is an Alchemy Jug used by Calmos in his various experiments. On top of a portfolio of human anatomy sits a large figurine of a fly carved in exacting detail of a fly. This is a figurine of wondrous power that Calmos would use as his steed when traversing the countryside. The Fly is activated by speaking the activation word "verminous" which is carved into the bottom of the fly. There are eight sludgy brown vials on a stand on the table. If opened, they have an earthy aroma, not entirely unpleasant. These are potions of cure disease. While they have a thick sludge-like consistency and earthy flavor, they have no adverse effect.



4. **Throne Room.** It is quite evident that exile did not harm Calmos's pride nor curb his ambitions. A set of steps carved into the rock leads down ten feet into a large chamber. There is a large throne of serpentine and ivory along the eastern wall. It is intricately carved with scenes of plague and pestilence. Anyone sitting upon the throne must save versus poison or become afflicted by a fast acting flesh eating virus. Those afflicted will suffer 1d8 points of damage each round for 12 rounds and lose 1d4 points of both charisma and constitution (cure disease will stop the virus but not heal the damage done).

A three foot diameter crystal sphere sits on an ornate black iron stand in the center of the hall. There is a brass viewfinder attached to the stand. The sphere occasionally flashes with multicolored brilliance and wispy points of light fade in and out as they swirl about the inside of the globe in seemingly random directions.

Characters will find that the lights will respond to movements of anyone touching the sphere and will follow a characters touch across the surface of the orb. These symbols are a key that activates the portal outside area 8 (the secret door keyed on the map). There are nine floating lights inside the globe. Anyone that has come into physical contact with the Rydekiar will see the symbols as numbers (three sets from 1-3). If any character looks through the viewfinder, they will see a set of three calibrated slots in their field of vision. If the numbers are arranged in a particular pattern within the slots of the viewfinder, the area beyond the portal will become a gateway to a particular plane or place. The GM should roll a d6 (1-2=1, 3-4=2, 4-5=3) three times to generate the plane on the following chart.

### Pustulent Beetle

Frequency: Very Rare  
 No. Encountered: 2d10  
 Size: Small  
 Move: 120 ft.  
 Armor Class: 4  
 Hit Dice: 1-2hp  
 Attacks: 1  
 Damage: 1 hp + Disease  
 Special Attacks: Disease  
 Special Damage: nil  
 Magic Resistance: Standard  
 Lair Probability: 90%  
 Intelligence: Non  
 Alignment: Neutral  
 Level/XP:1/5 + 1/hp



Sickly pale yellow in color, these 3" long beetles are redolent with the scent of putrefaction. The initial bite only inflicts 1 point of damage, but the victim must make a successful save versus poison or be affected by a necrotic flesh eating disease. This disease causes the flesh around the bite to putrefy causing 1-2 points of damage each round for 4 rounds. During this time, the beetle feeds upon the pustulent flesh.

These vermin also lay their eggs in the necrotic flesh resulting from their putrefying bite. There is a 10% chance that anyone bitten will harbor 1d10 eggs. The eggs incubate over the course of 48 hours and will hatch, causing further 1d2 points of damage each round as the larvae feed. They will move to the surface of the skin in 2d4 rounds where they erupt from pus filled boils.

Cure disease kills the larvae and eggs on one victim. The lesions caused by the necrotic flesh will be itchy and painful and slowly heal over the course of 1d4 days.

## Plague Wraith

Frequency: Very Rare  
 No. Encountered: 1-3  
 Size: Medium  
 Move: 120 ft. or 240 ft. flying  
 Armor Class: 4  
 Hit Dice: 5+3  
 Attacks: 1  
 Damage: 1d6 + Disease  
 Special Attacks: Disease  
 Special Damage: Silver or magic weapons to hit  
 Magic Resistance: Standard  
 Lair Probability: 70%  
 Intelligence: Average  
 Alignment: Lawful Evil  
 Level/XP:6/550 + 6/hp



Damned for their loyalty to Calmos' mad pursuits and betrayed by his ambition; Cambert Lethio, Oslan Deganis, and Felian Nejacs are three aristocrats that hitched their dreams to a malign star and are now forever doomed to be in its orbit. Bound to their chamber, there is no release for them save through the return of their heads. The three writhe in impotent rage at Calmos' daily visits to their chamber, dreaming of a revenge that they cannot affect directly upon him.

Much like normal wraiths, the three are all but impotent in sunlight. However, they are fearsome indeed in the darkened chamber in which they are bound. Silvered weapons only inflict half damage and the grim trio is only truly affected by magic weapons. Unlike traditional wraiths, the plague wraiths do not cause level drain upon their victim. Instead, their touch is as a burning plague that causes 1d6 points of damage to those affected. Further, with each successful hit they cause a magical wasting illness that drains one point of constitution from the victim. Anyone slain by a plague wraith will rise as a zombie in thrall to the trio.

Die Roll	Die Roll	Die Roll	Portal location
1	1	1	Baronial Palace Cellars
1	1	2	The Cancerous pits of Elemonth
1	1	3	Verdant Gardens of Duke Nebehemith
1	2	1	Golden shores of the Kelmish Sea
1	2	2	Dark cells of the Ferund Gaol
1	2	3	Opiate dens of Khan Ferajawi
1	3	1	Festering halls of the palace of Gorgomoro
1	3	2	Palace Regal of Efreet Marshal Qajii
1	3	3	Tea room of the wanton Empress Rissa
2	1	1	Blood pits of the third ethereal coliseum
2	1	2	Shifting sands of Abba Wod Maesar
2	1	3	Bottom of the Abyssal Pustulent Sea
2	2	1	341st circle of the grand maze of Graz
2	2	2	Foredeck of the Astral Barge of Ji iji So
2	2	3	Foci tower on the plane of sound
2	3	1	Heart of a Red Giant Star
2	3	2	Black Dougal Alley in the City
2	3	3	Stone tower of infinite sorrow
3	1	1	Living halls of the ice worm
3	1	2	Mental abstraction of babbling newts
3	1	3	Flowering staircase of infinite distance
3	2	1	Stone plinth of the azure god
3	2	2	Corpulent tracts of writhing pestilence
3	2	3	Bestial castle of Gammon Rei
3	3	1	Court of duplicitous splendors
3	3	2	Fetid chambers of the carrion lords
3	3	3	Grand Library of Archmagus Abbeth hep Yeddek

5. **Gong Room.** Bronze braziers give off a diffuse glow. A large bronze gong is suspended in midair at the center of this chamber. The gong is a larger replica of the sigils that the Contagion Guard wear affixed to their chests. If the battle was going against the guards in area two, one of them will have retreated here to sound the gong. This alerts all other denizens of interlopers. All further encounters will be with readied opponents. The gong radiates magic and hovers steadily three feet above the ground. It cannot be moved from its spot by any means short of a wish spell. The gong acts as a synchronization device for the contagion guards in the complex. It requires the use of a Contagion Guard Stun Rod to activate. Otherwise, touching the gong will result in an electric shock that does 2d10 points of damage. Once it has been rung, all contagion guards will psychically synchronize and become aware of the whereabouts, activities and current status of every other contagion guard for the period of 2d6 rounds. This is a magical effect of the gong and the bronze sigils that the contagion guards wear. If any character is in possession of a contagion guard sigil and has successfully synchronized with it (see the description of the contagion guard sigil for details); they will become aware of the same information about the contagion guards. However, the guards will also become aware of that character's whereabouts and status as well. The contagion guards will attempt to find and eliminate the character (and companions) so synched. If the gong is struck again while the sigils are synchronized, the synchronization will be disrupted and not be able to be activated for another 6 turns.



### Gogmuth the Corpulent

Frequency: Unique  
 No. Encountered: Unique  
 Size: Medium  
 Move: 90 ft  
 Armor Class: 1  
 Hit Dice: 8 (42 hp)  
 Attacks: 2  
 Damage: (1d12/special)  
 Special Attacks: See Below  
 Special Damage: See Below  
 Magic Resistance: Standard  
 Lair Probability: 70%  
 Intelligence: Average  
 Alignment: Chaotic Evil  
 Level/XP: 8/1100



Foul in the extreme, Gogmuth is in service to Gorgomoro the Pustulent. Standing 7' high (and almost as broad), Gogmuth is covered in weeping sores that continually exude pus. Those touching Gogmuth with exposed flesh must save versus poison or become violently nauseous for 1d12 rounds. Gogmuth possesses the standard powers of demon kind (infravision, darkness, gate, etc). Three times per day, Gogmuth can vomit forth a stream of bile in a 20' cone. Those struck by the bile are immediately violently nauseous (no save) and must make a save versus poison or contract a wasting illness.

Gogmuth's club is a +2 weapon that inflicts 1d12 points of crushing damage. It requires a minimum of 16 strength to wield. In addition, three times per day, it can cause magical internal hemorrhaging upon a successful strike that will inflict an additional 1d4 points of damage per round for 8 rounds.

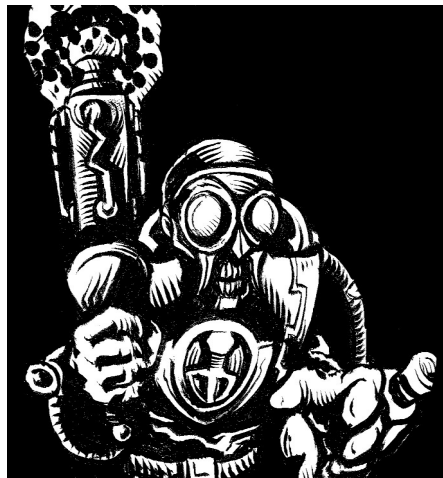
Calmos is not naive enough to think that Gogmuth is here to assist him in his plots. He knows all too well that Gorgomoro suspects duplicity on Calmos's part. However, Gogmuth does prove to be useful in keeping the slaves in line and ensuring that the infection machine is working. So for the time being, Calmos is willing to keep up his charade. Gogmuth enjoys the simple pleasures of torturing the slaves and feeding the corpses to the infection machine. He is not bright enough to fully understand the depths of Calmos's duplicitous nature. However, demons being demons, Gogmuth has no loyalty to any mortal and might very well betray Calmos if he thought that it would profit himself and not anger Gorgomoro to do so.

## New Monsters

Note: The New Monster section is hereby designated Open Game Content

### Contagion Guard

Frequency: Rare  
No. Encountered: 2d4  
Size: Medium  
Move: 90 ft  
Armor Class: 5  
Hit Dice: 3  
Attacks: 2 (SA/Stun Rod)  
Damage: (special/1d8)  
Special Attacks: See Below  
Special Damage: See Below  
Magic Resistance: Standard  
Lair Probability: 70%  
Intelligence: Average  
Alignment: Neutral  
Level/XP: 80+2/hp



Calmos has made it his mission to exact his vengeance upon the citizens of the land he considers his. He takes pride in twisting persons and places to his warped view of things. He is most pleased with his contagion guards. Calmos has utilized his study of the dark arks to devise a way to corrupt the human form into a mindless, disease carrying foot soldier.

Contagion Guards wear armored suits made of a light mesh material that gives them an armor class of 5 but is only slightly heavier than normal clothing (15 lbs and max move rate of 120'). They bear the dreaded stun rods and possess a deadly contagion attack. Brass tanks are attached to their backs and a system of hoses and nozzles run to the wrists. From these devices, the Contagion Guards are able to spray a pathogen in a 20' cloud. The fast acting pathogen will take effect within 1d6 rounds. Victims will suffer 1d4 points of damage per round and lose one point of strength per round until they have reached 10% of their hit points (or cure disease is cast on the victim).

The Contagion Guards goal is not to kill, but to incapacitate victims in order to create more slaves for Calmos or to convert to more Contagion Guards.

**6. Chamber of the Plague Wraiths.** This chamber is dark aside from a diffuse aquamarine glow emanating from a large pool of water along the southeastern portion of the wall. Three dark lumps lie on the ground in the center of the chamber. This is the final earthly prison of Cambert Lethio, Oslian Deganis, and Felian Nejacs (AC 4, HD 5+3, hp 46, 45, 44; #AT 1, D 1d6 + disease; SA disease, MV 120'/240' flying, Save Fighter 6, xp 826, 824, 818), three members of the aristocracy that joined Calmos in his treachery against the Baron. Calmos promised the three power and wealth and did deliver after his treacherous fashion. The three now are bound to this chamber in Calmos' demesne, prisoners forever shackled to this dismal chamber.

The three will immediately rise to attack anyone entering the chamber. Their desire for revenge upon Calmos will cause them to pause and consider any parley that would seem to offer a good chance to avenge themselves upon the duplicitous Calmos. Returning the three tarred heads is a powerful incentive as this destroys the binding that traps the three to this chamber. If this is accomplished, the wraiths will immediately leave the chamber, seeking out Calmos to exact their revenge. They will attack anything in their way. If the party does not entreat with the wraiths, the three will push the attack with a furor in an effort to create zombies in which they can control as a physical means to harry Calmos.

As a sort of taunt to his former cohorts, Calmos has left a chest of gold coins (1000), various gems (800 gp worth); a token of the worldly wealth that was denied to the three conspirators in life and now forever denied to them in death. The chest is open and not trapped as a constant reminder to the wraiths of Calmos' mocking. Further, three weapons are amongst the scattered wealth: a Falchion, a Spear, and a heavy mace. These three weapons were wielded by the three conspirators during the treacherous overthrow of Baron Felin. The Falchion has an ornate hilt and cross guard fashioned in the likeness of an eagle. The words "*Lethio adis aquila voliantis*" are inscribed on the blade. If the phrase is spoke aloud by the wielder, treat as if affected by as by a haste spell (without the aging effect) for four rounds up to 3 times per day. The falchion is a +1 weapon (1d6+2 vs Small or Medium opponents 2d4 +1 vs Large). The spear is a +1 weapon and has a dragon coiled around the haft and the jaws open and the tongue forms the blade. "*Deganis Drago fuoco imolare*" is inscribed in gold inlay amongst the coils. If spoken aloud by the wielder, it causes the tip of the spear to ignite doing 1d4 points of additional flame damage to targets for up to six rounds, three times per day. The Mace head is fashioned into a stylized female head wearing a crown of spikes. The mace is a +1 weapon and has the words "*Nejacs peiova sanguinus corpae*" engraved into the haft. When this phrase is spoken aloud by the wielder, the eyes on the mace head will weep a blood like liquid and the mace will do an additional 1d8 points of damage for three rounds.



**Werron Grelish**

Level 4 Human Male Fighter

**Strength:** 16

**Dexterity:** 11

**Constitution:** 15

**Intelligence:** 10

**Wisdom:** 9

**Charisma:** 14

**Hit Points:** 36

**Armor Class:** 10

**Alignment:** Neutral Good

**Saves:**

**Wands:** 15 **Breath Weapon:** 16 **Death/Paralysis/Poison:** 13 **Petrefaction/Polymorph:** 14 **Spells:** 16

**Items:** Initially none

**Notes:** Werron is a competent leader and confident in his fighting ability. He does chastise himself for not being able to stop Calmos' minions from taking captives. His main goal is to seek the freedom of the captives more than re-vening himself on Calmos. Once this objective is met, he then seeks to destroy the infection machine before taking on Calmos. He is very aware of Calmos' reputation and rumored power and thus seeks to destabilize Calmos' plans first. If the party seeks to take on Calmos before freeing the captives, Werron will attempt to persuade them into waiting until the innocent captives are clear of the complex for fear that Calmos will attempt to kill the slaves in retribution.

**Ivar Gresslin and Terrik Mouroun**

Zero Level Human field hands

	Ivar	Terrik
<b>Strength:</b>	16	17
<b>Dexterity:</b>	11	12
<b>Constitution:</b>	15	13
<b>Intelligence:</b>	10	8
<b>Wisdom:</b>	9	9
<b>Charisma:</b>	10	10
<b>Hit Points:</b>	6	6

**Armor Class:** 10

**Alignment:** Neutral Good

**Saves:**

**Wands:** 18 **Breath Weapon:** 20 **Death/Paralysis/Poison:** 16 **Petrefaction/Polymorph:** 17 **Spells:** 19

## Characters

### Calmos Vectos Mori—The Pustulent Lord

Level 9 Human Male Magic User

**Strength:** 8

**Dexterity:** 12

**Constitution:** 9

**Intelligence:** 18

**Wisdom:** 8

**Charisma:** 16

**Hit Points:** 27

**Armor Class:** 3

**Alignment:** Chaotic Evil

**Saves:**

**Wands:** 9 **Breath Weapon:** 13 **Death/Paralysis/Poison:** 13 **Petrefaction/**

**Polymorph:** 11 **Spells:** 10

**Spells per day:** 4/4/4/3/3

#### Items:

Bracers of Armor +5

Dark Diadem

Ring of Armor +2

Robes of Resistance (+2 to all saves)

Wand of Cancerous Consumption

**Notes:** Cunning and manipulative, Calmos seeks to turn every situation to his advantage. He will not seek to engage directly in combat, however, will utilize his infectious personality ability to try and claim a new host body for himself. If in trouble, he will utilize his signet ring to transport himself to his Laboratory or if all looks lost, to his throne room to calibrate his planar portal and then seek to escape via the planar portal in area 12.

**Infectious Personality:** In his bid to free his soul from eternal damnation, Calmos learned a method of transferring his personality to another (unwilling) host via a viral agent from the entity in the pool. The viral agent requires the host to make three saves vs. poison. The first against the initial infection (success negates further checks). The second transposes the new personality over the old. A successful save at this point negates further saves but the victim will retain memories of the infecting personality. The third check is against the infecting personality totally consuming the host personality. A successful save negates but the host will partially retain the infecting personality. Unless a cure disease is applied, there is a 50% chance of the infecting personality assuming control in stressful situations.

Submerged in the pool at the southeastern corner of the chamber of the plague wraiths lies the source of the dim illumination for the chamber. The maze work of pipes that run along the walls and ceilings plunge into the pool. The pool is 20 feet deep and glows with an unnatural aquamarine light. Gently undulating in the depths of the pool is a mass of incandescent orbs and fibrous membranes. The entity periodically gives of waves that temporarily affect the fabric of reality (every 1d20 turns). All those within 10' of the pool will experience a reality warping pulse in which they temporarily "blink" out of the current reality and enter the dimension of the creature of a fraction of a second and then return. Characters so affected must save versus magic or roll on the table below:

Die Roll	Effect
1	Lose 1 point of constitution, hair turns white
2	Feeble minded for 2d12 turns
3	Unconscious for 3d6 turns. Gain one point of wisdom upon awakening.
4	Immediately attack nearest character. Will be in an uncontrolled frenzy for 3d6 rounds.
5	Will open wound on hand, inscribe sigils in blood on every surface for 2d4 rounds and then be violently ill for 1d12 rounds
6	Blind, deaf and dumb for 1d10 turns

The reality warping effects of the entity do not affect the plague wraiths. The entity in the pool is collocated with the pool in area 8 (though the pools appear separate they are actually the same pool manifesting in two locations). Calmos was able to successfully trap the entity partially in this reality (or so he believes) and use it to further his ends, gleaning insights into the nature of reality (see key for area 8 for more).

**7. Guard Chambers.** large glass tubes rising vertically from floor to ceiling line the walls of this chamber. There are eight tubes arranged in two rows of four in the center of the chamber. The tubes are filled with a dark fluid. Upon investigation, humanoid forms with tubes attached can be identified suspended within five of the tubes, the remaining tubes are empty. A maze of pipe works run along the ceiling and disappear into the dark recesses above. Metal ladders and scaffolding run into the dark recesses of machinery ominously crouched overhead. These are the shaping vats for the Contagion Guards. Calmos utilizes the strongest of his human captives to convert into Contagion Guards. The process completely destroys the persona of the victim, leaving behind only a husk that is subject to Calmos' will. Lurking above in small chambers off the scaffolding above the tubes are ten contagion guards (AC 5, HD 3, hp 21, 20, 19x 2, 18x3, 17x3; #AT 2, D special/1d8, SA cause disease, MV 90', Save Fighter 5, xp 122, 120, 118x2, 116x3, 114x3). The Contagion guards carry no treasure other than the Brass Sigil they wear, their stun rods, and their armor (see the items section for details).

Further investigation will reveal that there are meters attached to a console on each tube. The meters are numbered from one to ten with a needle that moves along the numbered area. Three of the meters are at two, while the remaining tubes are metered at eight. On the console there is also a heavy bronze lever and a valve. If the valve is turned, it drains the fluid in the tube. The lever causes a series of gears and pulleys to retract the glass tube into a ceiling recess. Once the fluid is drained from the tubes and the tubes raised, the five human males will be revealed. The two that were metered at eight will be almost completely mindless vegetables. The three that were metered at two are sickly and disoriented but will be grateful for their release. Ivar Gresslin and Terrik Mouroun are young field hands that were abducted in a raid by contagion guards. Werron Grelish is a seasoned mercenary that was abducted in a caravan raid. Ivar and Terrik are not skilled at arms and do not relish the thought of going up against Calmos' minions. Ivar and Terrik will seek to be reunited with the other abductees in area 11. Werron is a fourth level fighter with the following statistics: Human 16 Str 11 Dex 15 Con 10 Int 9 Wis 14 Cha; 36 Hp; AI NG. He will gladly accompany the party to assist in freeing the prisoners. He does not possess any equipment and will need to be provided with arms and armor.

**11. Slave Quarters.** Two Contagion Guards stand outside this door (AC 5, HD 3, hp 21, 20; #AT 2, D special/1d8, SA cause disease, MV 90', Save Fighter 5, xp 122, 120). This chamber is barred from the outside. Floor to ceiling mass bunks fill this chamber. The fetid smell is beyond description. Women and children huddle together in large bunks. Filthy and scared, they are initially frightened of anyone entering the chamber. If they can be convinced that they are to be freed and reunited with the men, they will follow the instructions of their liberators. There are twelve women and sixteen children of varying ages present. The contagion guards have stripped the slaves of anything of value and they have only the rags on their body. However, if the bunks are searched, they will turn up a folded parchment. It is a map of the Squamous Sanctum of the Sigilis Serpentine.

**12. Planar Portal.** This chamber is only accessible if the planar portal has been activated via the mechanism in the throne room (area 4). Two large bronze columns topped by pearlescent globes are located on the east and west sides of the room. The cavern walls appear to be made of polished onyx. A dimensional gate to extra planar realms will appear between the two columns when the portal is active. The portal remains active for six hours once a destination has been selected. The portal is two way so that anyone entering to the realm beyond, will see the portal from the other side and be able to return. However, once the six hours is up, the portal will close and anyone that ventured through will be trapped and must find an alternate method of return (unless of course someone reactivates the portal to the same plane).

#### NOTES

This adventure is meant to be open ended. As such, there are not any defined victory conditions. Or rather, the victory conditions should be defined by the Game Master and players. An obvious goal would be to free the prisoners. Or to release the plague wraiths, or perhaps take out Calmos more directly. Calmos is a tough and canny opponent, quite willing to use his magics to flee and perhaps turn up later to plague (pun intended) the party. In any case, it isn't necessarily about completely clearing the complex, but more about encountering the strange. In addition, there are several hooks here for Game Masters to further develop. The bottom line is that it should be about fun. Feel free to change, add, delete, or mine this for ideas. After all, that is perhaps the most fun part of this hobby. Happy gaming!



**9. Infernal Infection Machine.** This chamber is filled with monstrous pistons, pipes, gears and furnaces. Steam and smoke occlude vision so that visibility is limited to a 10' radius. Lit by hellish flames from the furnaces, shadows dart amongst the plunging pistons and churning gears. Machinery fills the entirety of this chamber with a narrow 5' alley that runs from north to south. There are small tunnels that penetrate into the interior of the mechanism. Two contagion guards are posted at both the northern and southern entrances to the chamber (AC 5, HD 3, hp 21, 20, 18x2; #AT 2, D special/1d8, SA cause disease, MV 90', Save Fighter 5, xp 122, 120, 116x2). Hunched and huddled human forms scurry with the rats amid the machinery and smoke. These slaves (20 zero level human males) constantly work the machinery and tend to its mechanisms. They will pay no heed to anyone other than the Contagion Guards, from whom they will cower. Anyone attempting to stop one of the slaves from working will notice that the people are gaunt, jaundiced, and filthy. They will initially be unresponsive to any interaction from anyone. If stopped, they will see to continue about their duties. If either Ivar Gresslin, Terrik Mouroun, or Werron Grelish is present, the people will be wary but will answer inquiries. They will indicate that they must continue to maintain and feed Calmos' hellish machine lest they become fuel for the Upper Works. They will not join any open revolt unless the women and children in area 11 have been freed.

**10. Upper Works.** A set of steps ascends ten feet to the chamber of the upper works of Calmos' mechanism. The hellish machine is constantly fed from above here, filling the skies above the once prosperous province with pestilence. Several stooped men (11 zero level human males) feed large bundles from a large stack into a blazing furnace. There are six Contagion Guards here overseeing operations (AC 5, HD 3, hp 21x2, 20x2, 18x2; #AT 2, D special/1d8, SA cause disease, MV 90', Save Fighter 5, xp 122x2, 120x2, 116x2). In addition, a large, bloated humanoid figure bellows, belches and cajoles the slaves. The figure is 7' and has oozing sores on its body. It wields a large wooden club that is banded and studded with Iron. This is Gogmuth the Corpulent, a minor unique demon in service to Gorgomoro the Pustulent, summoned forth by Calmos to oversee operations. Gogmuth's stats are: AC 1, HD 8, hp 42, #AT 2, D 1d12/special, SA Spew Bile, SD +1 or better weapons to hit, MV 60', Magic Resistance 30%, Save Fighter 9, xp 1100). Gogmuth's club is a +2 weapon that inflicts 1d12 points of crushing damage. It requires a minimum of 16 strength to wield. In addition, three times per day, it can cause magical internal hemorrhaging upon a successful strike that will inflict an additional 1d4 points of damage per round for 8 rounds.

**8. Calmos's Chambers.** A heavy wooden door banded in iron denies entry into this chamber. The door opens outwards into the corridor. Behind the door is another iron door. This chamber is dimly lit by a diffuse glow originating from a pool of water at the southwest corner of the room. A large baroque canopy bed, wardrobe, chest, desk, and high back chair are in the southeastern corner of the room. There is a strong odor of sickness and decay in the room. The chair is facing away from the entrance. Upon further investigation, a gruesome sight will greet the viewer: the corpse of a man dressed in tattered finery sits in the chair. Pallid beetles scabble over wasted flesh, the face is fixed in a rictus grin and the eyes are gone with runnels of puss oozing from the empty sockets. Weeping open sores are evident on the jaundiced skin. There is a slender diadem of onyx fashioned into the shape of a serpent swallowing its tail resting on the corpse's brow. The corpse will not respond to being touched or spoken to. However, if the characters attempt to remove the Dark Diadem, the "corpse" will reveal itself to be very much alive and will emit a dark cloud 15' in diameter from its mouth. All within the radius must save versus poison or be affected as if by a confusion spell cast by a 9th level magic user. Strange memories, thoughts and feelings will flood their consciousness as Calmos' personality infects them. At the end of the confusion, the affected characters must make another save against poison or change their alignment to Chaotic Evil. After 1d10 rounds, anyone who failed the second save, must make a third and final save or immediately become an NPC and fully take on the personality of Calmos (a self serving, twisted sociopath who is only out for his own gain). The infected characters retain their physical attributes (Strength, Dexterity, Constitution scores and hp) but their remaining attributes change as follows: Intelligence 18, Wisdom 8, Charisma 16. Calmos is a ninth level mage (although the Dark Diadem has given him power in excess of this, in effect making him an 11th level magic user). Those infected with Calmos' personality attempt to kill off the other member's of the party. If successful, they then attempt to kill each other (there can be only one and one is more than enough). The remaining Contagion Guards in the complex will immediately respond to an attack on Calmos and move to his location to aid him.

Aside from the Dark Diadem, Calmos is wearing robes of resistance that give him a +2 on all saves and has the Pathogen Signet (see new item descriptions) on his right ring finger, a ring of armor on his left index finger (+2 AC), Bracers of Armor (+5 to AC) and a Wand of Cancerous Consumption with eight charges (see new item description). He has the following spells memorized: 1st Level (Cancerous Touch x 2, Shield, Bone Spur); Level 2 (Bloat, Jaundiced Eye, Mirror Image, Stinking Cloud); Level 3 (Arthritic Word, Evil Eye, Fireball, Hold Person); Level 4 (Fear, Minor Globe of Invulnerability, Polymorph Self); Level 5 (Consumption x 2, Famine).



The pool in the southwest corner is the same as the one in the chamber of the plague wraiths. However, the dimensional warp effects here are stronger (perhaps amplified by Calmos's use of the Dark Diadem). Calmos's efforts to cheat his demonic "allies" opened a dimensional rift to a reality beyond the known planes of existence and brought forth the entity in the pool. Calmos main goal was to find secrets of immortality, and these he found after a fashion (see his character description for more information). Calmos has gleaned much about the nature of the planes beyond from the entity but never succeeded in grasping the nature of the entity itself. For it's part, the entity interacts little with the wider world. Though Calmos believed he had trapped it on this plane of existence by utilizing magically irradiated crystals suspended in the water; the truth is that the entity has gained a foothold in this reality and is learning what it can through its interactions with Calmos and his minions.

The reality warping effects are stronger here and more frequent (every 1d10 turns). The effects are listed on the table below:

Die Roll	Effect
1	Lose 2 points of constitution and charisma, hair turns white and teeth fall out. Develop dry, scaly skin.
2	Feeble minded for 24 hours. Permanently lose one point of intelligence and wisdom.
3	Unconscious for 3d6 turns. Gain one point of wisdom upon awakening and lose two points of constitution. Develop oozing sores over entire body.
4	Immediately attack nearest character. Will be in an uncontrolled frenzy for 3d6 rounds.
5	Seek to join with entity in pool. The radiation from the pool causes 1d12 points of damage per round.
6	Permanently blind and deaf

Any attempt to attack the creature in the pool results in the attacker(s) disappear along with the entity. For all intents and purposes, the attacker(s) are dead, having been transported to extraspatial dimensions beyond the realms of men.