

# RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

VOL. 1





**RANDOM ENCOUNTERS MONTHLY MAP COLLECTION**

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- Designer:** Justin David Russell
- Development:** Justin David Russell
- Editing:** Justin David Russell
- Cover Design:** Justin David Russell
- Cover Illustration:** 'The Bane of Osprey Cove,' by Justin David Russell
- Layout:** Justin David Russell
- Interior Art:** Justin David Russell
- Fonts Used:** Helvetica and Sherwood

### Content Creator's Thanks

Thank you for your Patreon support. This supplement of all maps released in September, now in high resolution, is offered in sincere appreciation of those pledging at the \$3 tier. Thanks, again, and may this bring your gaming experience to a whole new level! As always, have fun and, GAME ON!



I would also like to thank Mythoard RPG Crate ([www.mythoard.com](http://www.mythoard.com)) and Dice Fanatics ([www.dicefanatics.com](http://www.dicefanatics.com)) for their partnership and support! Any new and existing patrons will receive one (1) FREE random set of acrylic polyhedral dice, courtesy of Dice Fanatics. Are you looking for quality rpg loot delivered right to your door? Then visit Mythoard RPG. They now feature one of my amongst their loot! Visit one or tell them Random Encounters

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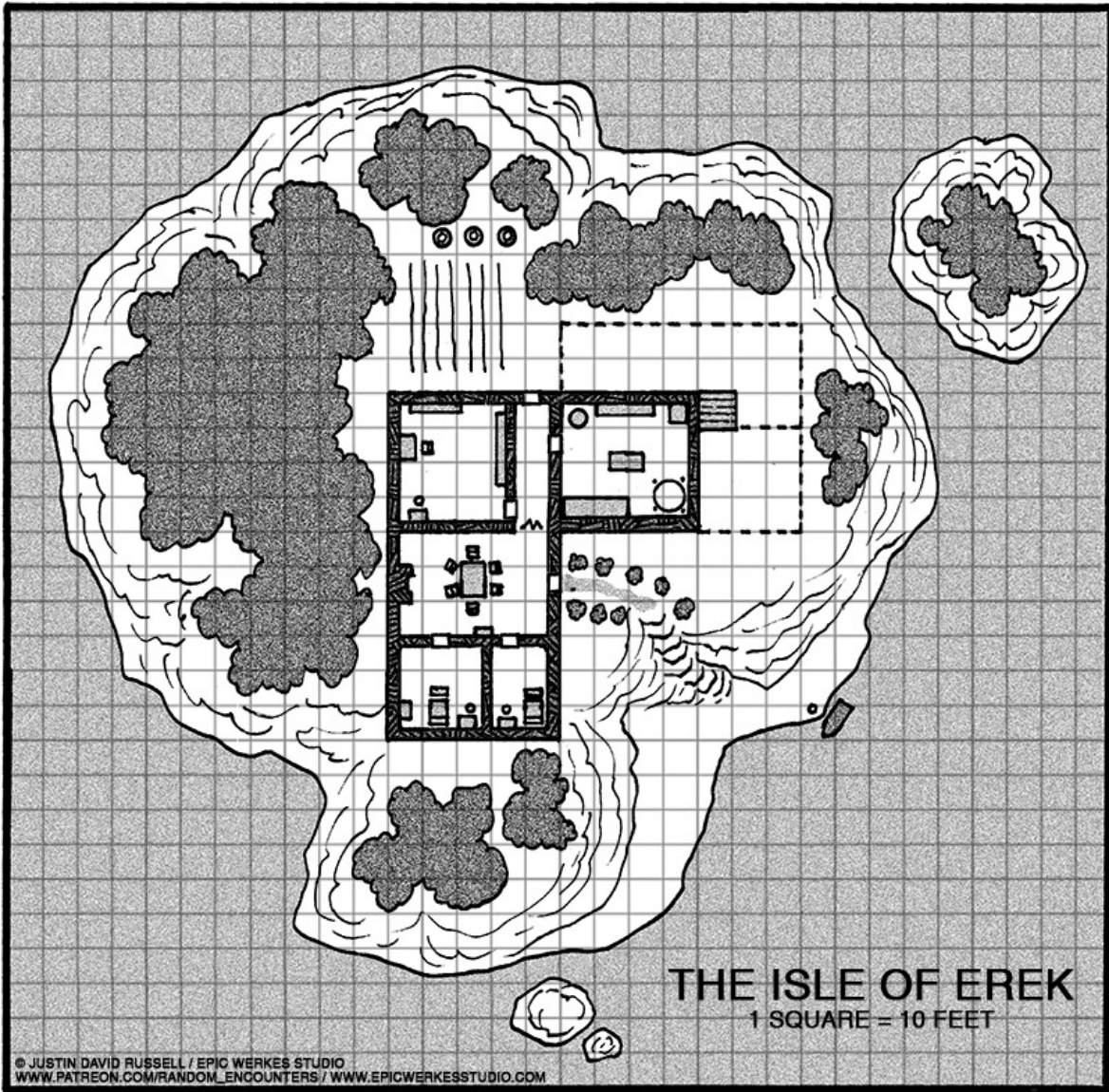
## **The Isle of EreK**

You approach the shore of the cool lake slowly, enjoying the scenery unfolding before you. Mountains loom on all sides, cupping the body of water as if some giant hand were preparing to scoop a great handful up to sate the thirst of the relentless, midsummer sky. It is then you notice a peculiar buzzing sound. Turning your head you notice a bumblebee staring you square in the face, mere inches from your nose! Instinctively raising a hand to swat the creature away, you are stopped abruptly by a high-pitched, yet stern voice.

'If you value your life, I would not continue!' Did that tiny creature just speak?

'State your business!' You stare, confused. 'I say, state your business!' The words seem to be a combination of a droning hum and barely decipherable human speech! It is then you notice the trail of smoke issuing from the canopy of trees cloaking the rocky island only a few hundred feet from you across the water. Portions of a stone house with a thatched roof peek out from behind the large, full trees.

Erek is a strange, old recluse living on the island to escape the pressures and distractions of more urban life. EreK is also a wizard of some power. He keeps chickens, a large pig, and several bee hives behind his home. He likes the trees shrouding his island, so he sends his apprentice to gather wood from the tree line at the edge of the lake.





## **Hill Shrine of the Crystal Forest**

All of you are tired. A long, weary day walking through the hills, avoiding patrols of monsters known to populate the area, has left you leg sore and chilled in the fading light of the late fall day. Your alertness long ago turned to paranoia. How long will it take to find this shrine, you wonder? And why is it in the middle of enemy territory, if the place was so sacred to the elves? But you know that is why you are here. The elven lord said the shrine's entrance was not too well hidden, and your guide says you are nearly on top of it.

As one of you stops to rest against a stone outcropping at the foot of a tall hill, the rest of you gasp as the man vanishes with a startled cry into the very rock! A reassuring shout from your companion eases your minds. Apparently, he found the shrine.

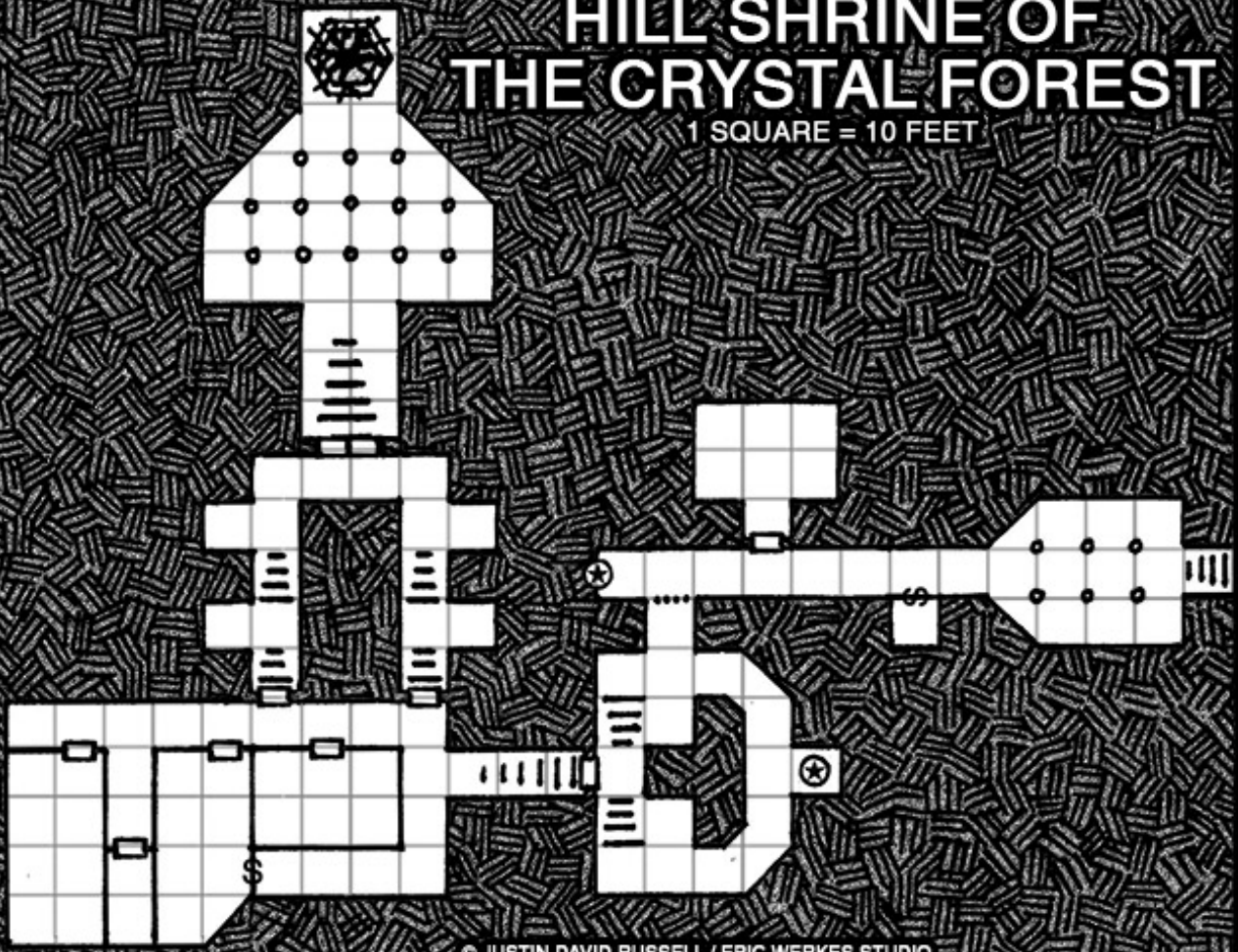
Not too well hidden? The elves and their illusions. Maybe elven eyes could have seen it well enough. Judging by the knowing smirk on the face of your elf guide, the rest of you guess that he had recognized it, after all. You all shake your heads and curse the elves and their love of tricks and pranks, ignoring the elf's tinkling laughter.

The Hill Shrine of the Crystal Forest was built by the elves many years ago. You were told the place was precious to them, regarded by them as a remarkable and magical place. Its namesake is a large, emerald tree made of countless precious stones, its leaves individually carved and fastened to delicate branches by magics long since lost to the world. The elf lord informed you that his people once gifted these leaves to those they considered friends. Such a gift was rumoured to bestow special magical effects upon the wearer, allowing him to see as elves do, among other things.

The chamber in which this crystal tree was located was said to contain a forest of crystal pillars. Each was carved to resemble a tree whose branches spread to the ceiling to sprout a vaulted canopy of glimmering gemstone leaves. The leaves, you were informed, sparkle and shine, effusing the chamber with soft radiance. But, you were also given a warning. Despite the beauty and magic of the place, there are traps and special measures taken to prevent unwanted guests from disturbing the sanctity of the place.

# HILL SHRINE OF THE CRYSTAL FOREST

1 SQUARE = 10 FEET



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## **Tomb of the Sword of the Sun**

There is a rumour that a great artefact lay deep in the sands of the Desert of Fire and Famine, couched in the ruins of a pyramid of modest height. You have followed the rumours south through many adventures over countless miles. Finally, a scrap of a map has led you here, to this far flung, forgotten corner of the world.

The Desert of Fire and Famine earned its name again and again as each nightly respite gave way to scorching heat and an unbearable beating sun during the day. You have been forced to remove your armour to travel here, trading it for the light, loose clothing favoured by the people that dwell in this sun-cursed land. You hope the tales you have heard about the sword you are looking for prove true.

Then you see it, a sand-worn pile of massive sandstone blocks. It is heaped like a cairn amid other ruins that have been reduced to practically nothing by time, disuse, and abrading winds.

The Tomb of the Sword of the sun is the last resting place of the Radiant Queen Shuroonafret. She was one of only a few known female warriors that lived during the ancient dynasty of Sun Pharaohs, guardians of Law and The Barrier that stands between life and death. Shuroonafret led her bravest warriors against the forces of the necromancer, Moot, the Eternal King, a servant of Chaos.

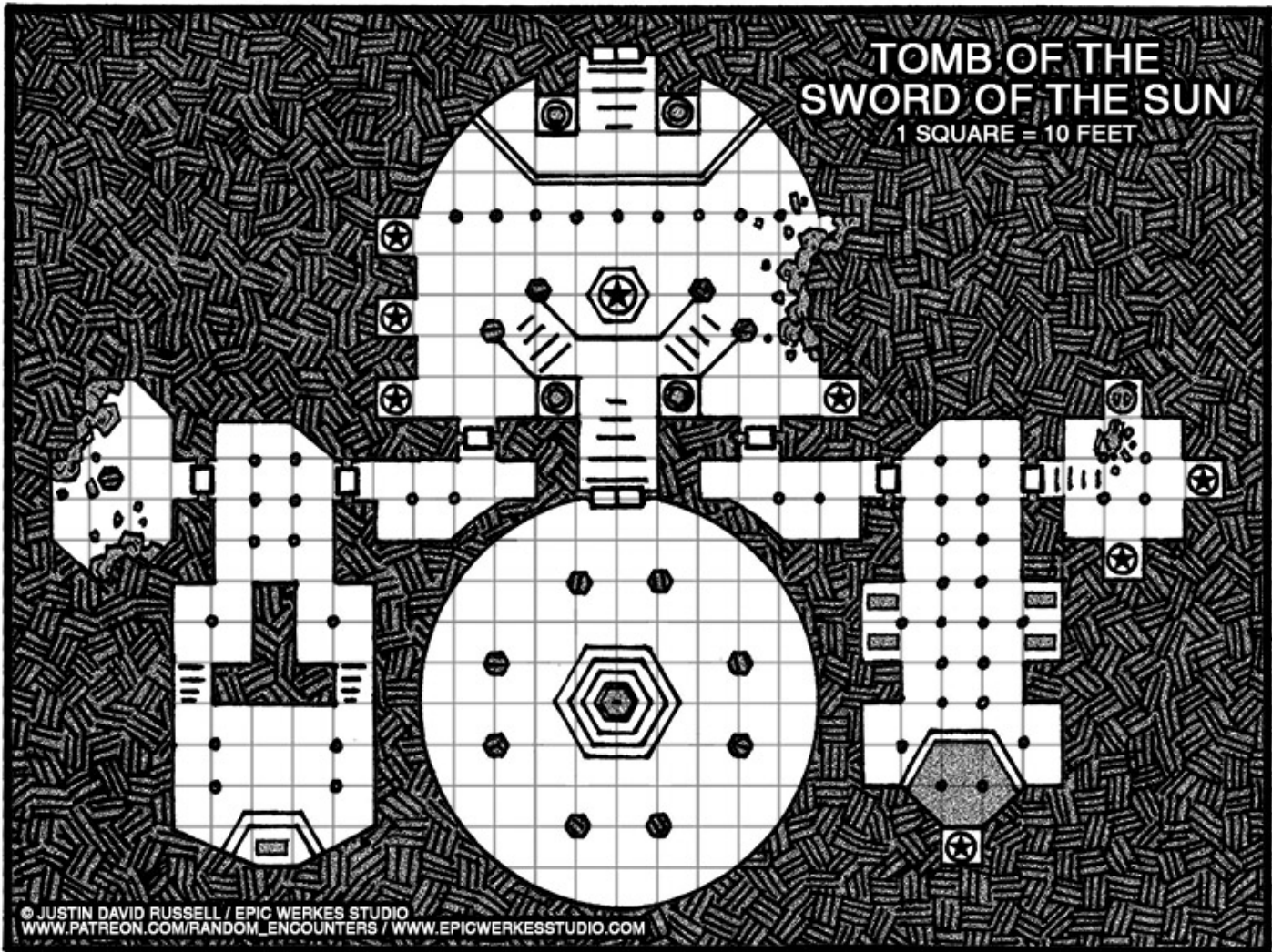
When she died, Shuroonafret's enchanted sword was placed in a pyramid in a sacred chamber, built under special instructions from the Sun Priests and the Queen herself. Shuroonafret's body was placed elsewhere in the complex, as were several of her family members so they might continue their vigil, even after death.

Some say the sword is the only thing keeping Moot imprisoned, that his soul will be freed if ever the blade is removed from its sacred location, gripped within a sanctified dolomite stone said to contain Moot's very soul. Will removing the sword to deal with one threat cause another, entirely? Are the adventurers unwitting pawns sent through clever, centuries old machinations to remove the sword that no evil can touch?



# TOMB OF THE SWORD OF THE SUN

1 SQUARE = 10 FEET

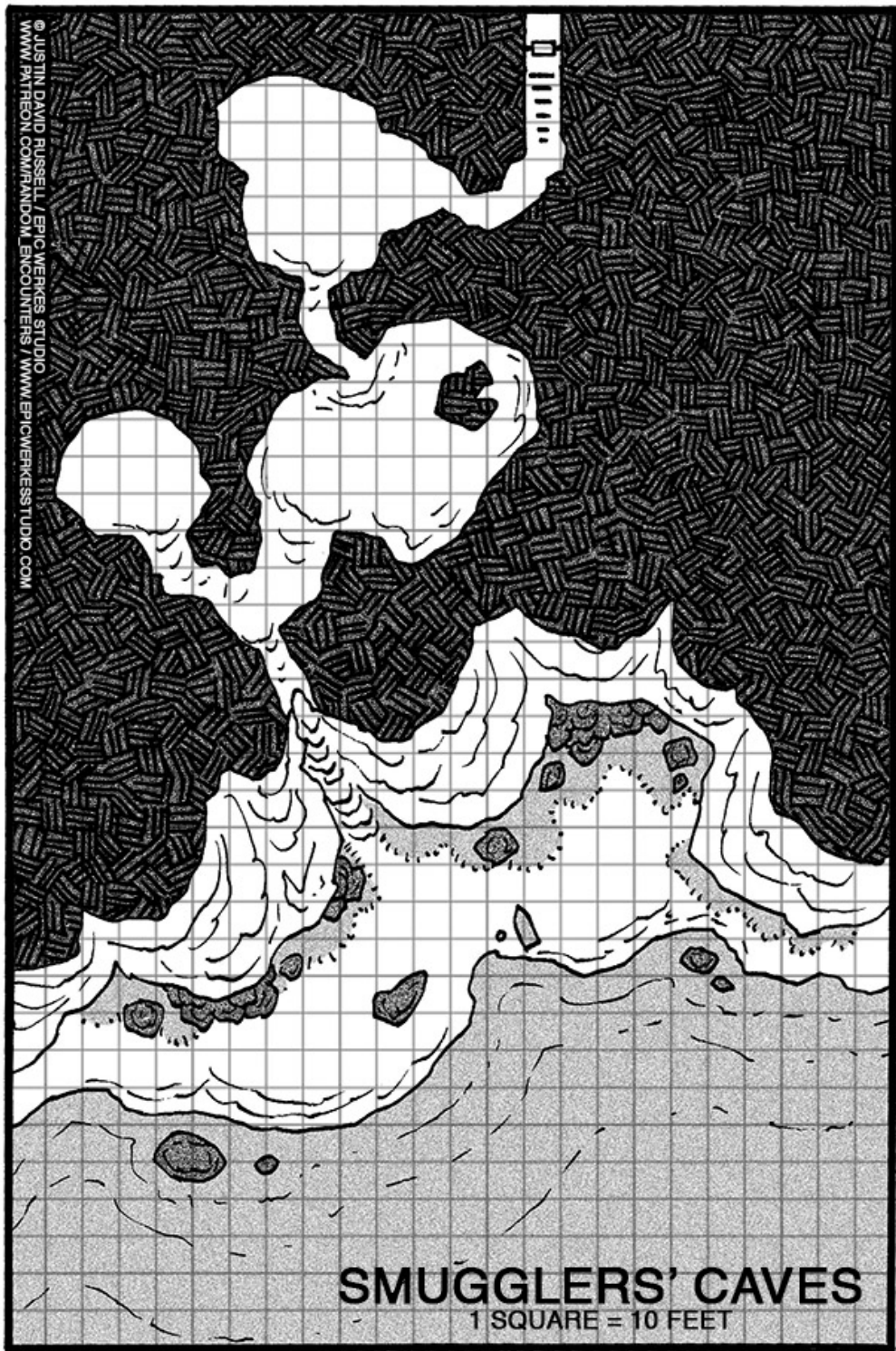


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## ***Smugglers' Caves***

Beneath the cliffside castle, tucked into a crevice in the limestone, is a sea-spray-lashed opening in the rock. A secret door in the undercroft lets one down a long passageway into the caves once used as storage by bandits. Later, it became the castle's postern gate. Even later, it was forgotten after the first cliffside castle was invaded from the caves.

Now, the place is a long-lost secret hidden from the modern rulers living in the keep above. The crude steps leading up to the cave entrance are currently obscured by grass and lichen; the cave is mostly hidden by the naked roots of a tree desperately trying to survive the merciless winds that rake the cliff face.





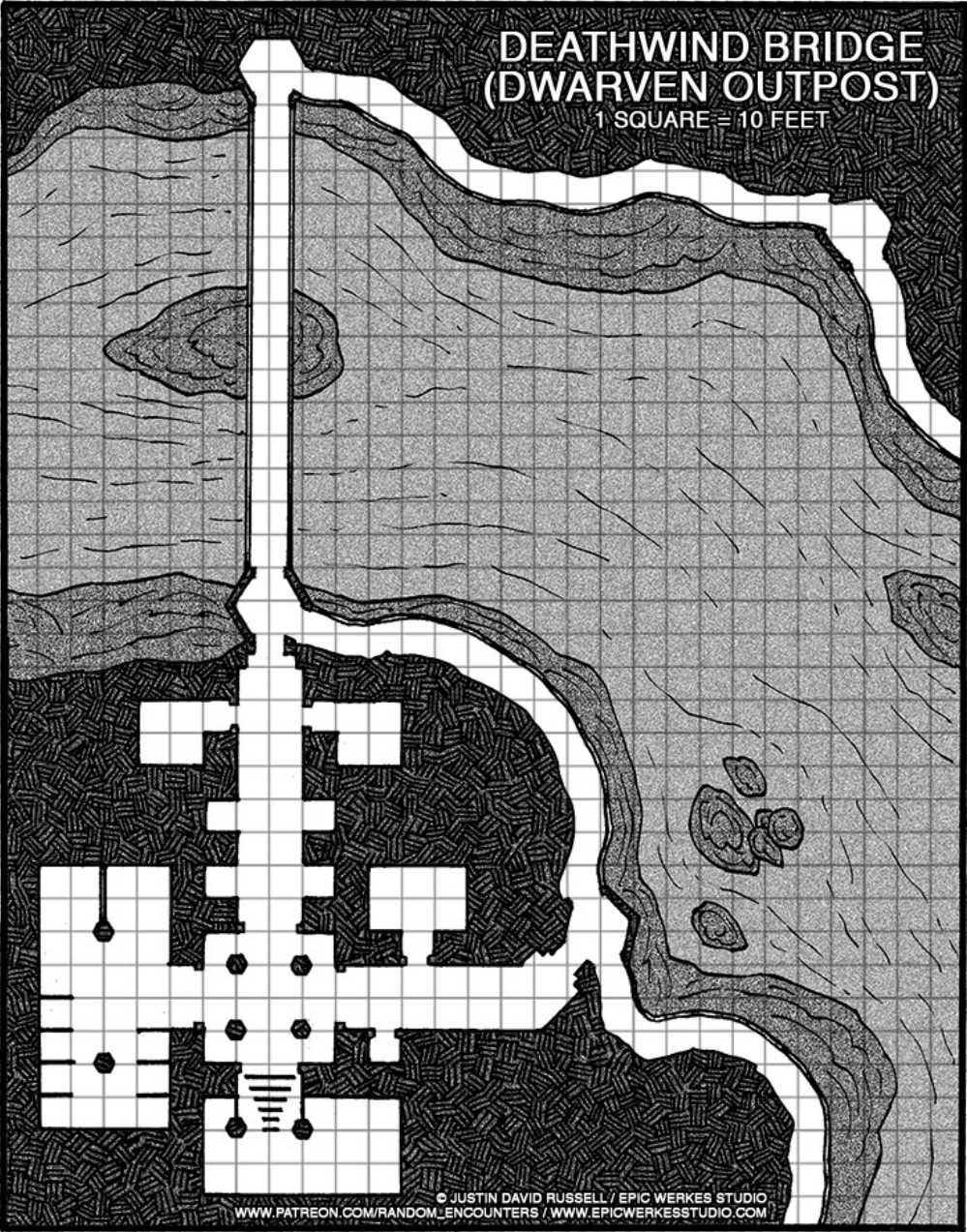
## **Deathwind Bridge (Dwarven Outpost)**

You are traveling along the solidly built dwarven mountain road that wends snake-like through the northern passes of the Towering Mountains. The weather is biting cold. Tearing wind nearly rips you from your feet as it races through the gorge. You marvel constantly at the state of the paths. The dwarves do nothing unless it meant to last.

Finally, you approach what you have been waiting to find. A squat, hexagonal tower made of large stones stands impassively before you. The road continues through it. Just beyond, a double-arched bridge spans the width of the gorge. It joins another squat tower on the other side where the road continues. The bridge marks the halfway point through the mountains between the Merchant City of Akar and the Fjordlands of the Sea Kings.

You don't have long to admire the bridge, however, before a sound you at first mistook for the screaming wind grows louder and louder, until you can no longer ignore it. Turning as one, you all barely have time to dive to the hard ground before grasping talons sweep the area where your heads had just been. A frustrated scream, as if a hawk or eagle had been given the volume of a great cat, pierces your senses. You scabble into the shelter of the tower, discovering another doorway leading deeper into the mountainside. What will you do now? That creature was as big as a horse, with massive wings and... did it have the hindquarters of a mountain cat? How can you cross the bridge now? Are there more of these angry creatures?

Long abandoned, the dwarven outpost once served as a resting place for weary merchants and their caravans. Stalls for cart animals and spaces for storing wagons and goods lie within. There is also an old armoury, a kitchen, guard quarters, and a dormitory. Though no one keeps it up anymore, the outpost still serves the same purpose it once did, as evidenced by the remains of countless fires and refuse. Dwarven masonry has ensured the place has stood the test of time. However, over the past few years, griffons have come to roost on the mountainside nearby. They know the bridge is an easy place to snatch a horse or two from unsuspecting travelers.



## ***Monastery of the Sacred Scroll***

Perched high on a craggy hill on the lonely Somer Isle, the Monastery of the Sacred Scroll is an isolated religious stronghold devoted to the tenets of Law, the Lawful Saint, Merek, and the study of the Dorandor Scroll.

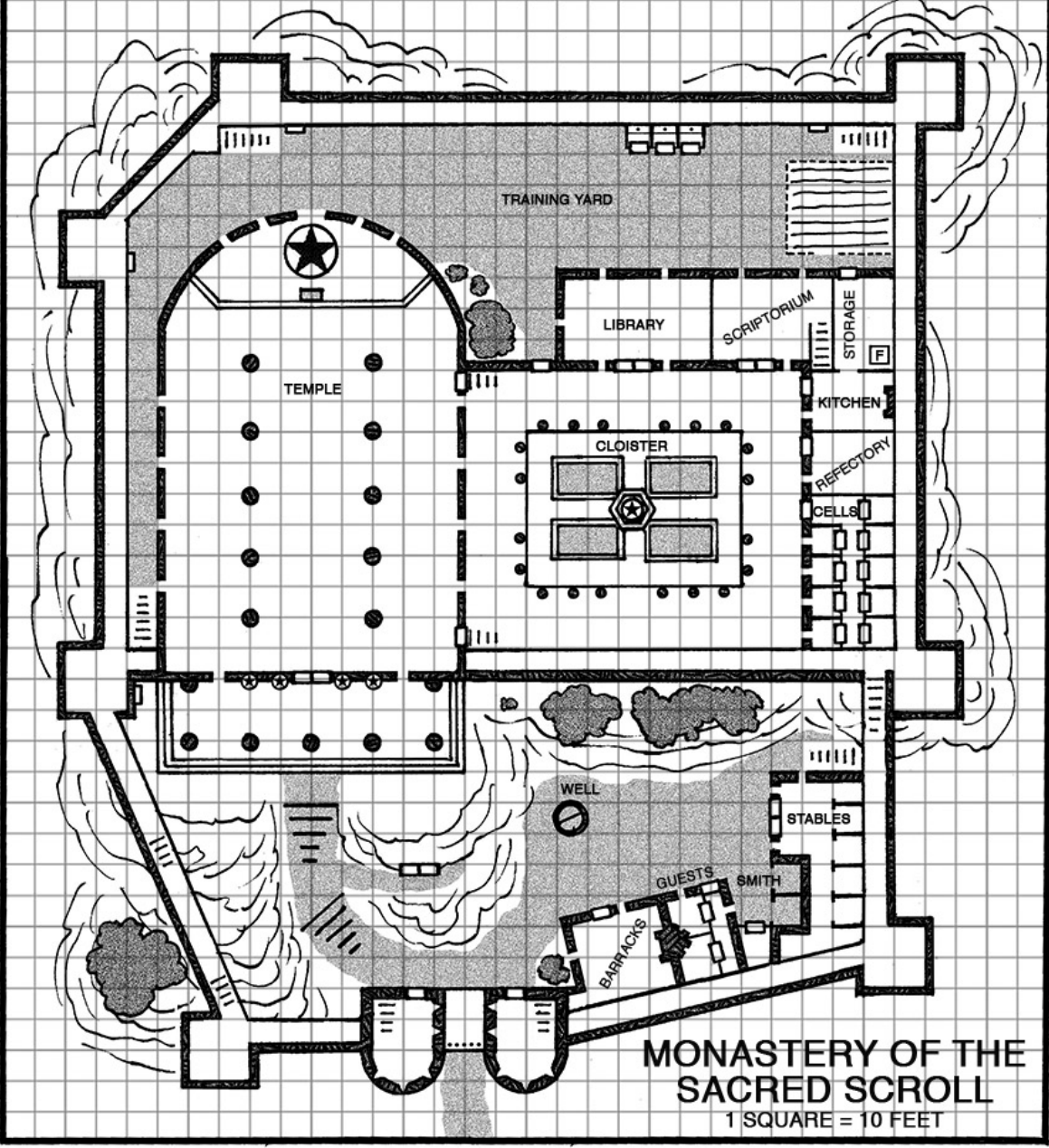
Merek, during his 'adventuring days, was a loyal religious crusader against Chaos. He liberated a scroll from a shrine devoted to the God of Violent Death, Gargon the Ravager. The scroll was ancient, and nearly forgotten by the priests of Law. A scrap of information led Merek to the Temple of Gargon, whose cultists had slain the original author of the scroll, Dorandor the Scribe, and placed his document among their treasury. The cleric of Law and his companions razed the Chaos Temple to the earth, routing and destroying its priests and idols.

Merek returned to the Eastern Borderlands. Using the financial support of his Temple and the spoils from the Cult of Gargon, and a labour force supplied by the Steward of Lantern Falls, he oversaw a building project that would ensure the Scroll of Dorandor remained safe, where it could be studied and transcribed for the benefit of all Lawful priests.

A massive set of bronze doors lead into the crag the monastery is built upon. They allow access to the crypts and the Chamber of the Scroll, where Dorandor's legacy is stored.

A small force of clerics and men-at-arms guard the walls. They all live in the barracks in the lower ward. The cloister in the Temple Ward provides seclusion for the monks that study the Scroll. Rarely, clerics are sent to Somer Isle's monastery for a specialized education and spiritual guidance that the Temple of Law in Lantern Falls cannot provide.

A collection of Lawful farmers and craftsmen gathered on Somer Isle's eastern edge, forming a tightly knit community that provides the monks with goods and news of the outside world.



## **Outlaw Ambush**

Your passage through the Hedges, a wild and dry region south of the Southern Kingdoms, has been fraught with danger. The area is renowned for its lawlessness and savagery. Beyond it lay the Maze. There are passes and narrow gorges that outlaws and Manticora are known to haunt, that sane men avoid at all costs, though it offers speed over the relative safety of the merchant routes through the Mountains of Mourning. You must now travel this way...

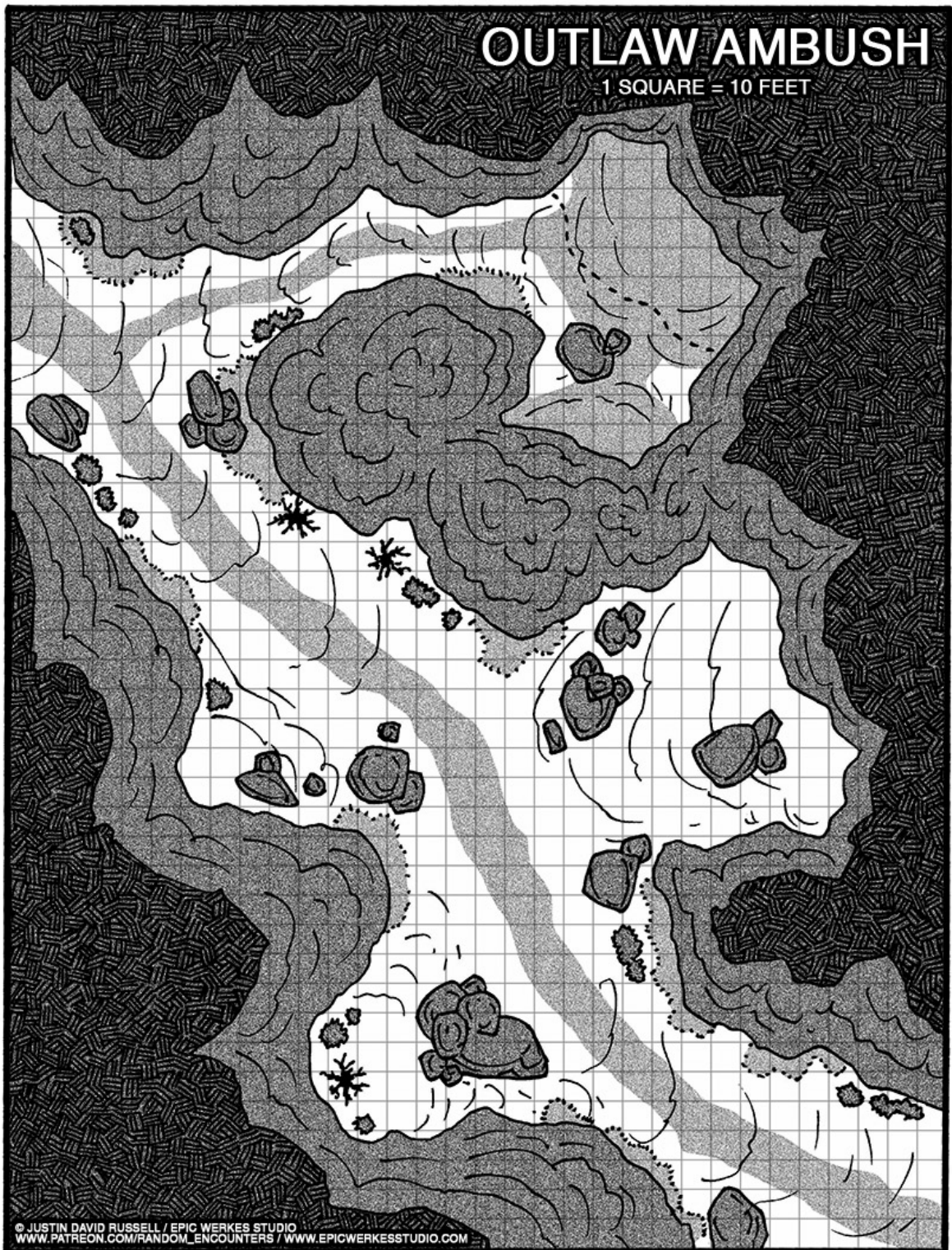
Outlaws, like ravenous monsters, gather where they may easily find prey. They hide in the rocks and the trees where they are hard to discover and may act freely far from the reach of Lawful rule.

One particular group of bandits is led by Krall, the Brawler. He is a wild and fierce warrior whose band are loyal to him out of respect more than fear. They know that Krall is an honourable man, as far as thieves go. His family lives in a village in the Southern Kingdoms near the Hedges. What he steals from those that find his narrow pass he splits with his own men, then sends most of his share back to his children and wife.



# OUTLAW AMBUSH

1 SQUARE = 10 FEET



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## **Dread Mines of Thork**

The Ruins of Thork were once a thriving dwarven stronghold dedicated to the mining of platinum. The caverns were, and remain, rich in the metal. Not long after the mines were opened, a thunderous tearing sound was heard, followed by a great shaking that threw nearly every dwarf from his feet. The dwarf lord in charge of the mine's operation soon discovered that the northern portion of the complex had collapsed into a heaving pool of strange, viscous ochre liquid. That was the last report Ofric the dwarf king received.

The next spring, the King sent a patrol of his guardsmen to investigate the lapse in communication. He had expected to hear from the mine and his cousin at least once during the winter months. The patrol never returned. Two more were sent, with the same results. Finally, Ofric had enough. He hired a small group of mercenaries from the Southern Kingdoms, a wizard among them, to investigate the unusual circumstances surrounding his mine.

The truth behind the mine is even more bizarre than anyone could have guessed. The material that sits in the chasm is an ooze that is known as Thork. Thork was once a being of great power that some would have even called a god. It desired to dominate, to spread itself over the entire world and consume it. But Thork was stopped by a powerful wizard, imprisoned before he could wreak much havoc on the world. The wizard contained the ooze in a pocket of platinum, a substance the creature could not digest, deep in the earth.

Unfortunately, the dwarves found and fractured the platinum pocket. Thork was freed and rent the earth in his exhilaration and anger. He took over the bodies and minds of the dwarves living in the mine. His viscous body became their blood, turning their skin a sickly yellow, and making them into loyal minions. Each dwarf in the patrols sent by the dwarf king was either killed, tossed into the pool of ooze as nourishment for Thork, or enslaved.

Thork's plan is to patiently build his army, gather resources, and then start his world-conquering plan in the far north with the dwarves. Will the mercenaries hired by Ofric be enough to stop Thork? Are the dwarves of the platinum mine doomed, or can they be saved?



## **Tomb of the Four Peers**

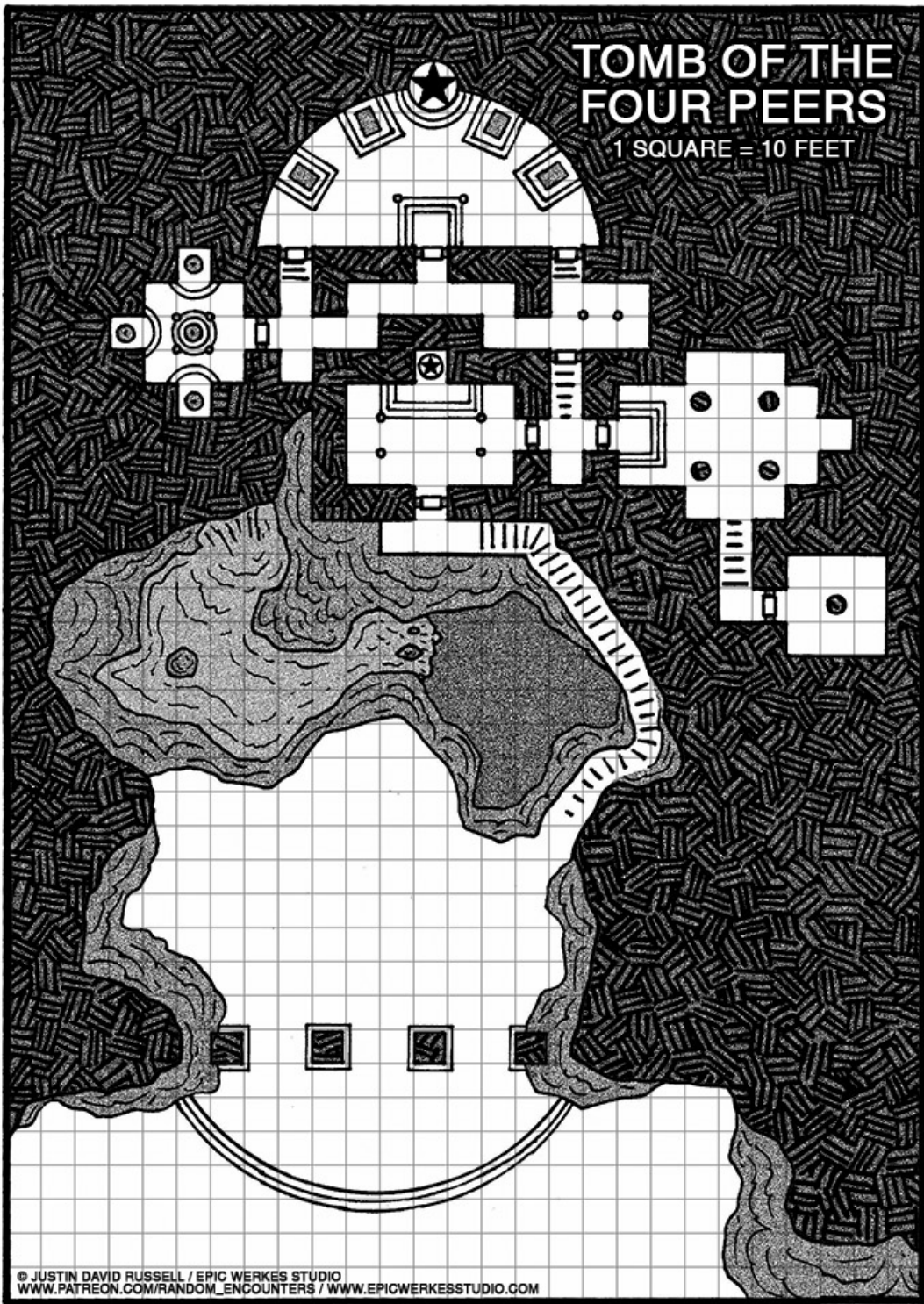
Your party has discovered a large opening in the face of a high cliff in the Pass of the Four Peers. Four granite pillars of large size and great height tower over you, each carved with the likeness of a warrior in chain armour bearing sword and tall shield. The pediment they support is covered with a massive battle consisting of free-standing sculptures, many of them missing parts of their bodies and weapons. You guess that the stone debris littering the ground at your feet is what remains of some of the missing pieces.

A cold wind issues from the darkness beyond the pillars. You are both eager and wary of entering. Your armour is heavy and hot, your clothes clinging and claustrophobic. Any uncertainty you may have felt is dispelled when your heat-addled senses perceive the thunder of water. Water, you think, that must be cool and refreshing...

Stepping into the shadows out of the sun instantly relieves some of your tension. It doesn't take your eyes long to adjust. A massive cavern opens before you. A wide waterfall straight ahead and to the left tumbles into an opening in the floor. A fresh breeze from the fall caresses your faces with fine mist. After realizing the water may be too far down to access, your eyes are drawn toward the shadowy recesses of the upper right hand portion of the space. Beyond the hole in the floor, accessible only by a winding stair that hugs the cavern wall, is a manmade structure covered with bas-relief. You recognize the style and some of the faces from the pillars and pediment outside. Around a stone doorway sealed with a large, carved slab of granite, four heroes raise their swords into a sun that beams numerous rays down upon them.

This is the Tomb of the Four Peers, heroes of the Southern Kingdoms during the time of the Chaos Crusades. They were some of the greatest warriors of their time, steadfastly dedicated to Law. The four stood alone with their retainers against a horde in one of the mountain passes in the Towering Mountains. They were abandoned after an agent of Chaos pretending to be a priest of Law delayed reinforcements in an attempt to buy time for his allies. The Four bravely defended their post, turning back the tide, but they were mortally wounded in the process. By the time the priest was discovered and extra forces deployed to the mountains, the battle had taken place and only one of the four remained, leaning heavily upon a wall of stone, surrounded by death. His spirit fled his body as soon as he reported the events of the battle. To honour these men, the pass was named after them and a tomb constructed in their honour nearby, overlooking the gap they defended with their lives.

Their bodies and their swords were laid inside. Some say the swords were placed in pedestals of enchanted stone, to remain until such time as they were needed again.





## ***When the Wizard's Away...***

If one were to describe Moranda, the former apprentice to the late wizard, Yorga the Uncontestable, subtle would never be among the words used. She was dramatic and ambitious, often entitled and narcissistic.

The young, pretty girl showed much promise when she first arrived at Yorga's doorstep. Flattered, and a little smitten, the wizard admitted her. He never had any children, and he saw now an opportunity he never thought he would desire, to pass on his knowledge. Yorga treated Moranda as his daughter, doting on her perhaps a bit too much, but eventually sharing the secrets he had worked his whole life to acquire.

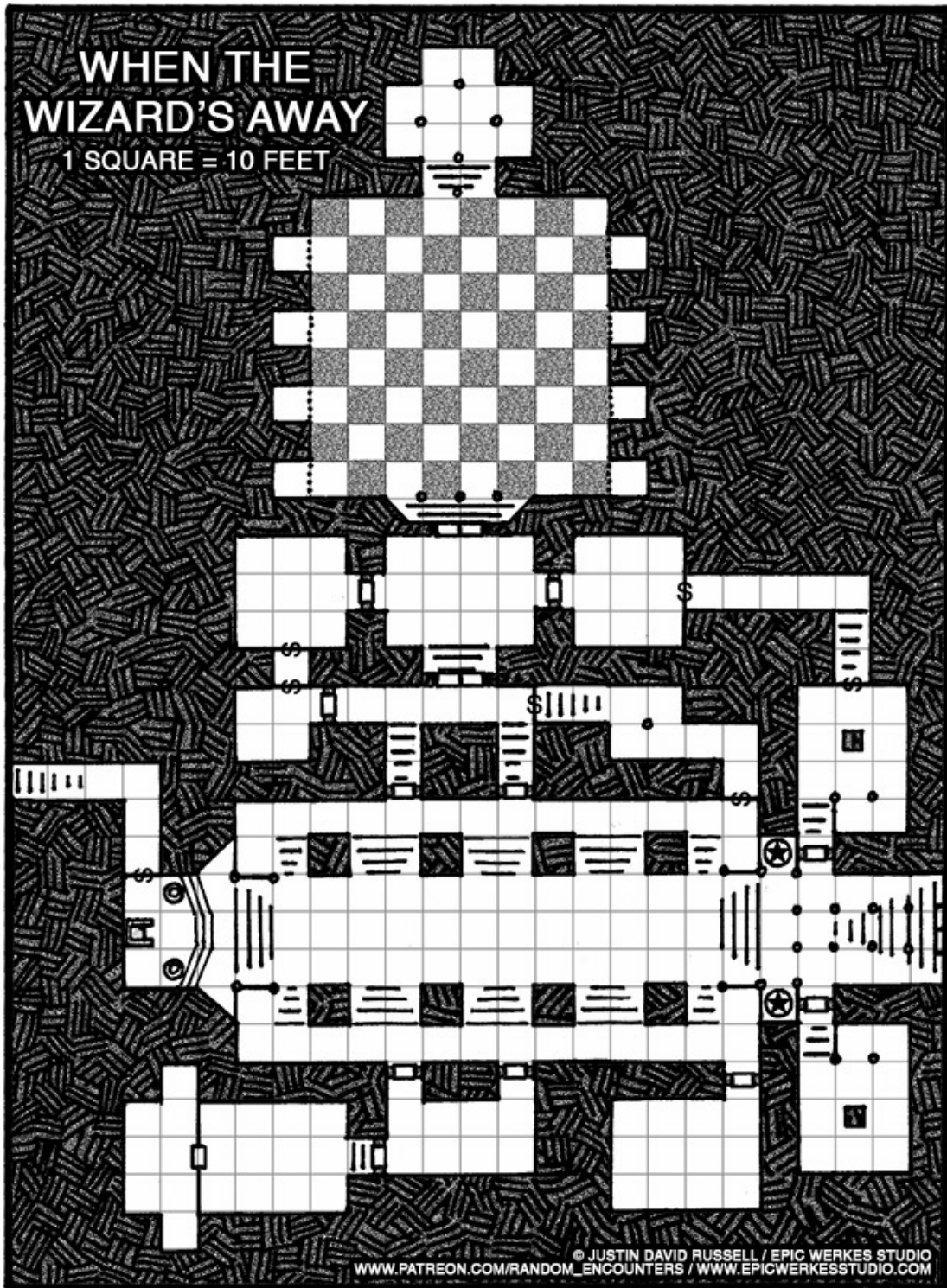
Yorga was a known recluse, but he was also famous for his love of games. Many of Yorga's peers traveled far and wide to challenge the aged wizard in games of all forms. But foremost of Yorga's possessions and accomplishments was his massive chess set with its marble chessmen. He kept the large bronze doors leading to the room magically locked, and forbade his apprentice from ever opening them, promising that, one day, her patience would be rewarded. This frustrated Moranda greatly, and finally drove her to poison her master. She was sure he was hoarding some great power from her.

With Yorga dead, Moranda could finally visit the forbidden room. She opened the bronze doors and discovered Yorga's secret, a chessboard made of alternating squares of white and red marble. Larger than man-sized chessmen were made of black and white marble.

Moranda shared the old man's love of games, and the two often played them long into the night. Yorga was proud that he had found a rival worthy of his skill. Moranda was overjoyed by her discovery, but her anger flared anew that her master had not shared this joy with her before. She knew he planned to, eventually, but like all of Yorga's plans and lessons, Moranda was not patient enough to wait for them.

She found the pieces were animated, and they spoke to her and were pleased to see her. They inquired after Yorga. Moranda lied and told them she knew nothing of the old man's fate, that he had left and never returned. Saddened, the pieces arranged themselves on the board and began to play against themselves, then offered Moranda control of one side. She loved this game, but she saw a different future for it, one fit for her ambitions.

Moranda began to send the pawns out to take locals and bring them back to her, forcing them to physically play chess with the red marble pieces. Unable to control themselves, the chessmen fought and slew those that could not best Moranda's keen intelligence and skill. Moranda's blood lust had been whetted. Eventually, she began to look for more and more skilled individuals to satisfy her desire for an equal. She now rules a large portion of a land she took from the hands of a local petty king. It is now custom for living games of chess to take place in the settlements in her land. The winners journey to her keep where they are taken below, imprisoned in alcoves sealed with portcullises, and challenged by the red marble chessmen controlled by Moranda herself. The white chessmen do her bidding, serving as her agents and guardians. She trusts no one living in her home, except on the day of the Great Game. As of yet, none have bested her.



A black pall hangs over the lands she controls. Challengers play in the tourneys to protect their families from Moranda's wrath.

## **The Godring Mine**

Long has it been speculated how the dwarves came by their precious pearly metal. Many covet the strange mineral that offers the strength of steel at a fraction of its weight.

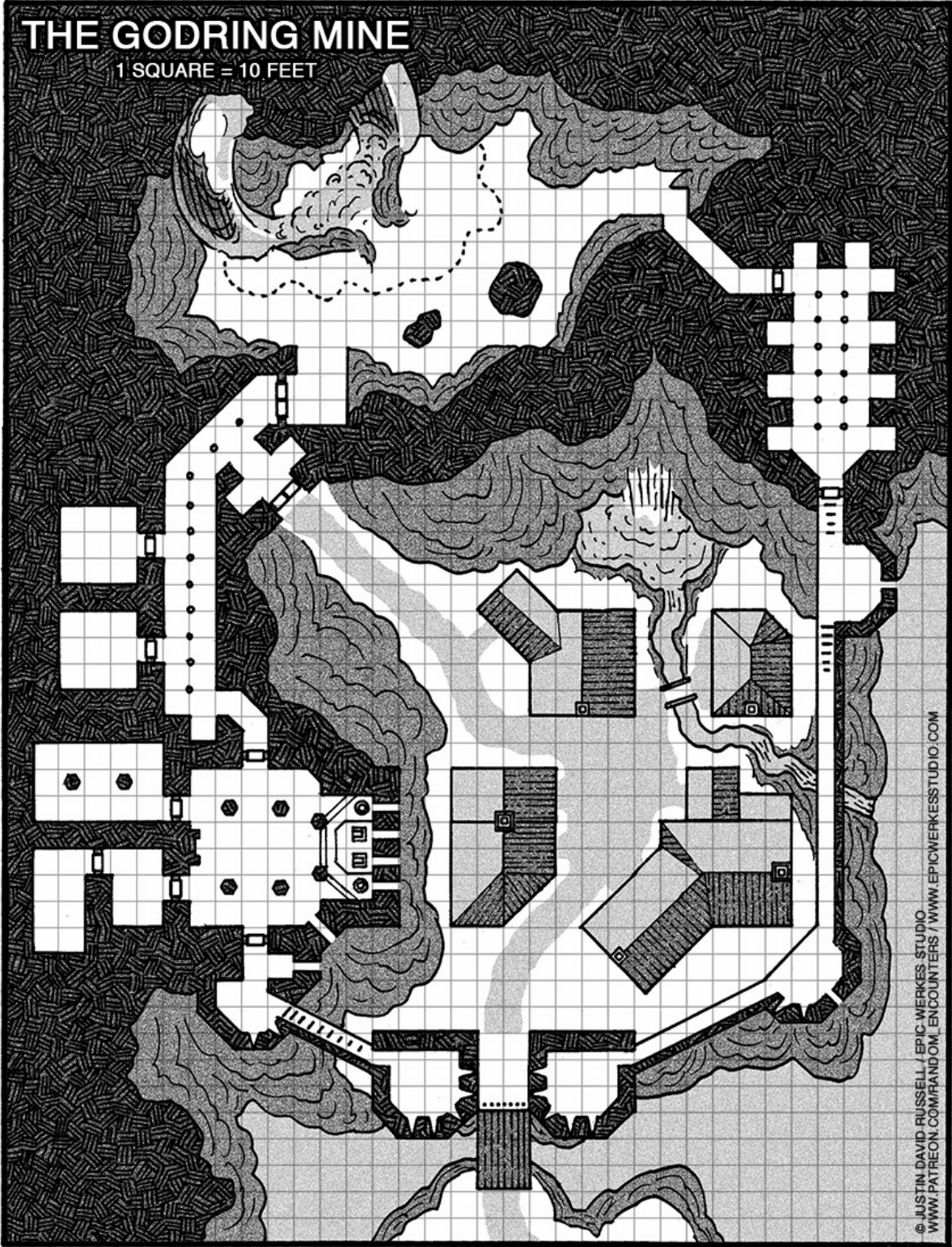
Deep in the mountains is a high place. A place where once a silver star fell from the heavens and was buried by time and stone. The dwarves eventually stumbled it, finding the silver ring in a cavern. They marveled at its unmarred surface, its lustre, density, and the star-like, iridescent glow. They built a fortress around it, sturdy and high unreachable by those that might wish to abscond with their treasure. They believed their god had himself left them this holy ring. That he had bestowed upon them a great boon as a sign of trust, and kinship. For among the dwarves, as was later passed by them to the northmen, the custom of ring-giving was practiced.

The dwarves guard all their methods of Making with great jealousy. The location of the Godring Mine is a well-kept secret, known only to the mountain-dwelling dwarves of the clan of the same name. They extract the metal and turn it into beautiful artifacts to be shared with others of their kin.

The material is difficult to separate from the Godring, and even more difficult to work. For this reason, it is only ever harvested when the dwarves are in great need, or when they wish to express fellowship and reverence. It is nearly always mixed with steel, bronze, and other minerals to harden and enchant them. There is only one known item made purely from the metal, and that is the pearly crown that rests upon the heads of the line of the Godring Clan Lords.

# THE GODRING MINE

1 SQUARE = 10 FEET



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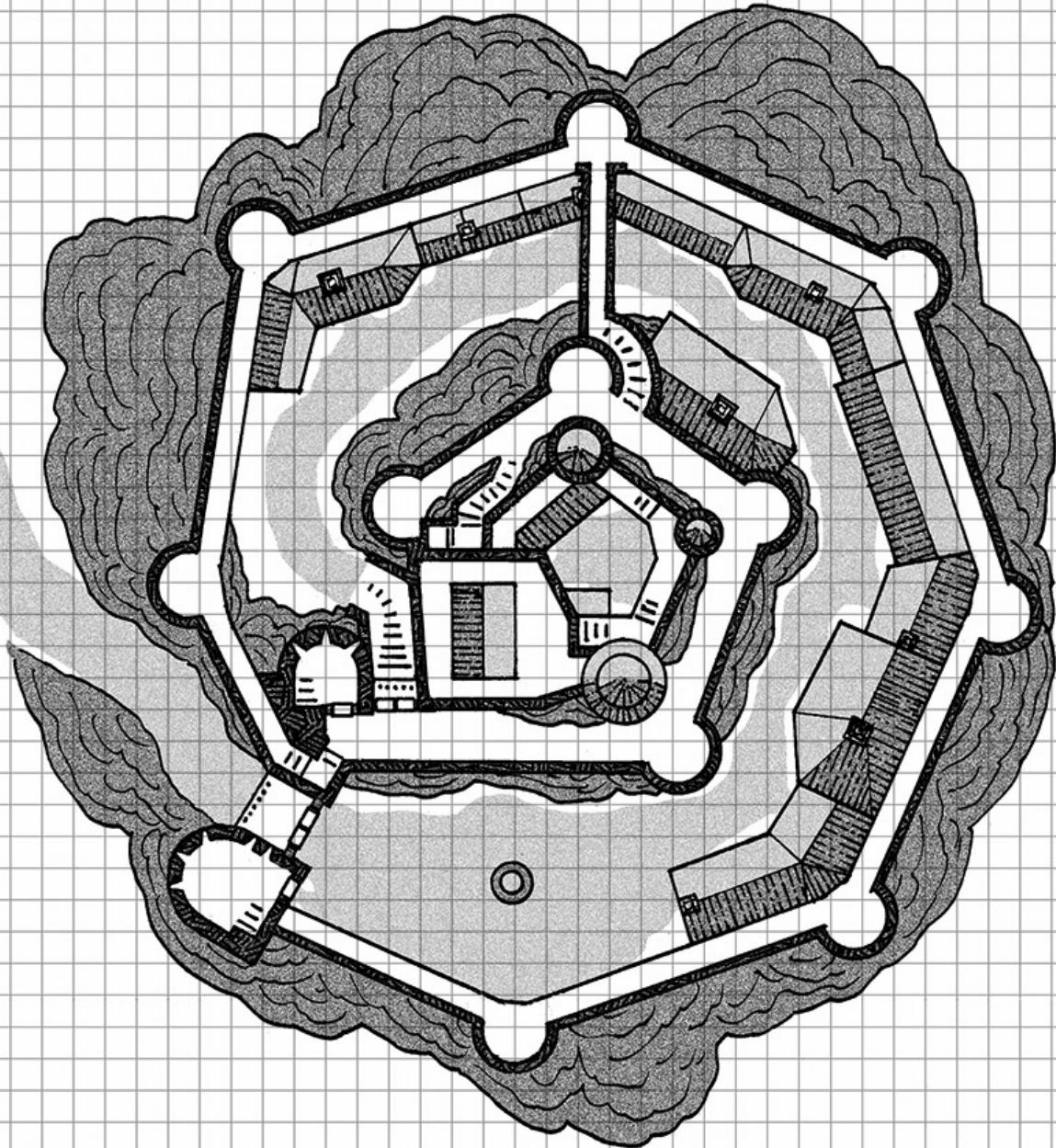
## **Stonespear Castle**

Stonespear Castle looms high above, a steadily rising spiral of natural and worked stone. Inside the walls is a small military outpost with barracks, an inn, stables, trader, blacksmith, and a few other craftsmen. Crenellated battlements give defenders on the walls and towers protection against invaders. The lower gatehouse is tall. It has three levels (the lowest is shown). Only the courtyard of of the Keep is flat. Even the lower courtyard with the well inclines slightly. By the time one makes it to the square Keep, one is nearly two hundred feet above the road leading up to the lower gatehouse. Stonespear's high tower and namesake juts from the castle's tallest point another 40 feet. The castle is a marvel to behold. It is an easy landmark for those traveling the lands where it is located.



# STONESPEAR CASTLE

1 SQUARE = 10 FEET



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## **Deep Hall of the Gnome Lords**

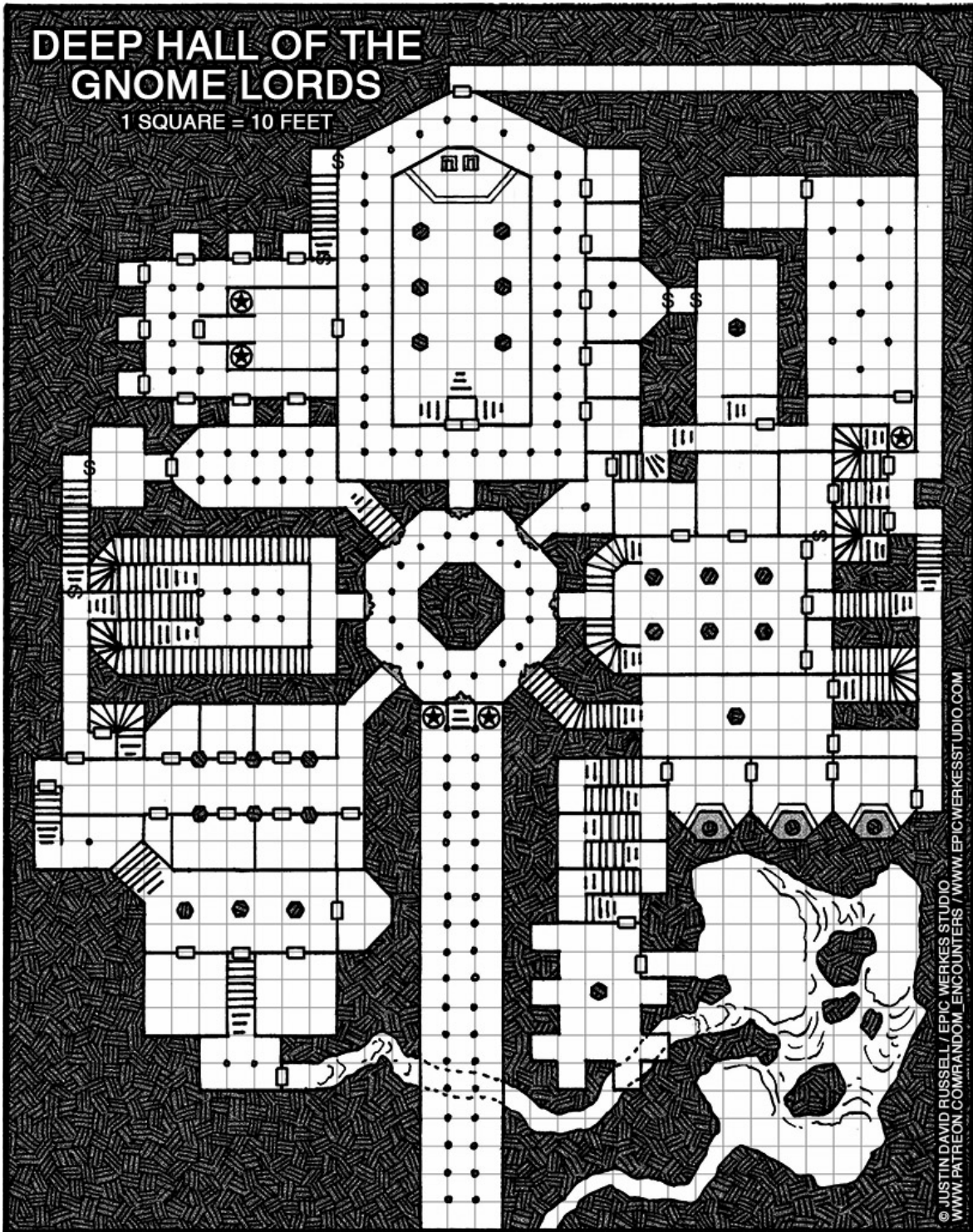
A long, pillared hall leads down into the earth from a lightly fortified entry protected by illusions and runic spells. Statues of ancient gnomish kings flank the main entry. Unless accompanied by gnomes, any comers will be attacked by the statues. Entering the Deep Halls through the red marble, gaping maw of the God of Making, one is presented with an eight-sided, mani-pillared chamber. Each wall features an identical red marble visage, mouth agape, surrounding an open portal leading to different sections of the Halls.

The gnomes built this sprawling complex beneath the Ancient Hills millennia ago. It is a sacred place for the gnomish people more akin in style to structures built by their dwarven ancestors than anything they build today. It is the seat of the Gnomish Lords, including the current Gnome Ruler, Rungold, and his Queen, Gwenwylla.

The gemstone mines lead deeper into the earth where the gnomes have further mining operations. There is also an area they sealed off that leads to deeper places where no mortal has any need to go. In fact, the evil down those unhallowed earthly paths has more than once attempted to take the Deep Halls, but the gnomes have each time been able to repel them, once with the aid of the elves of the Silverleaf Forest.

# DEEP HALL OF THE GNOME LORDS

1 SQUARE = 10 FEET



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## **Secret of the Shrine**

Deep below the earth, many millennia ago, there dwelt a tribe of fish men that worshipped a dark and ravenous god of Chaos. The fish men were relentless in their search for food for their deity. The deity, Arizog, lived in a lake far from the prying eyes of men and other Lawful creatures. He regularly accepted offerings of all kinds, preferably Lawful beings that lived under the sun. He relished the taste of their fear and loathing for him.

Arizog's minions were eventually defeated in a violent effort to end the threat of the horrible fish men, to stop them stealing the sick, weak, elderly, women, and children to satisfy their insatiable deity. After this event, Arizog's influence and power waned greatly.

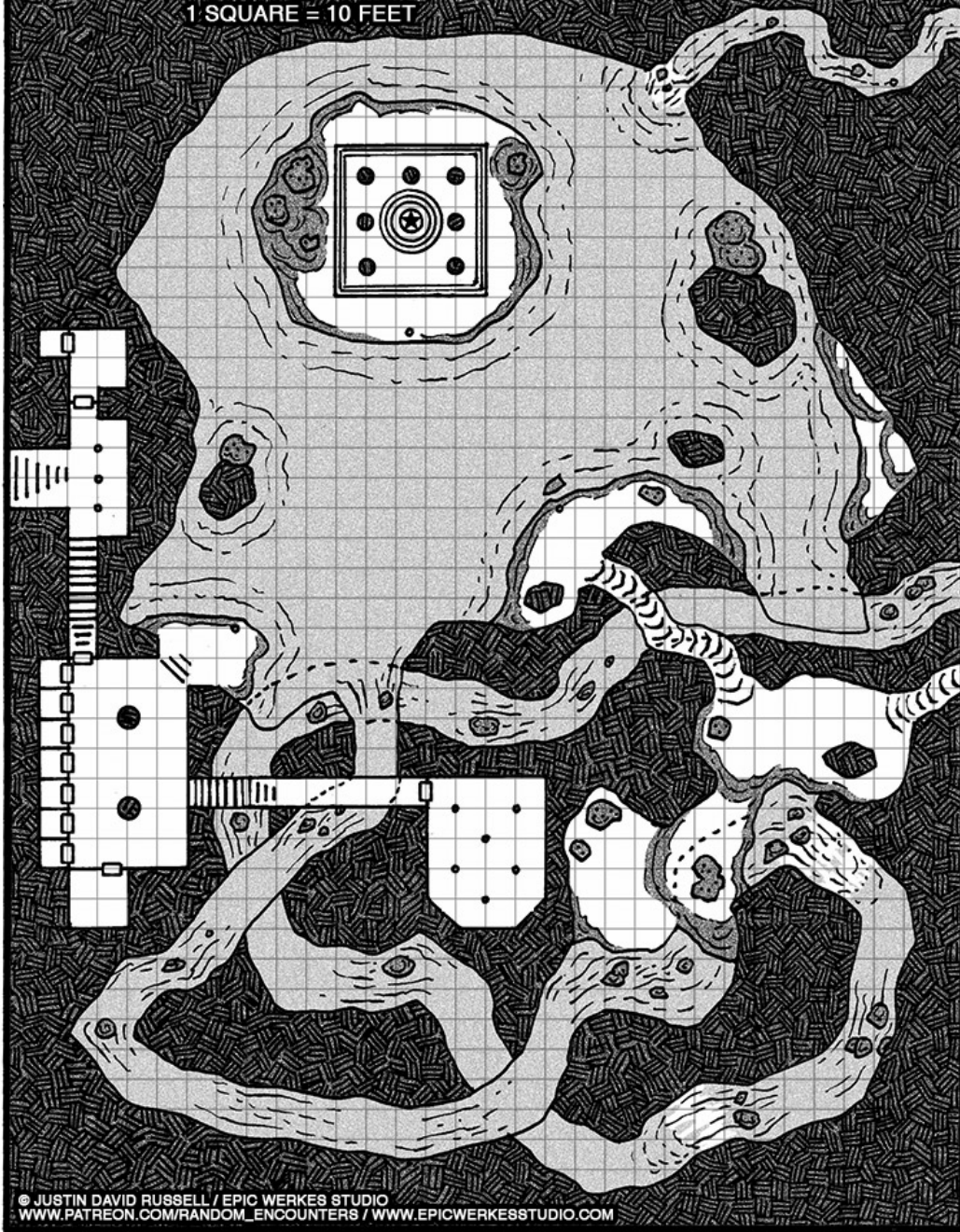
Nearly 200 years later, a group of chaotic, evil humans uncovered the forgotten shrine, and the weak god himself. Arizog promised them power and influence unimaginable if they served him. All of the newly indoctrinated cultists were turned into half-fish half-man hybrids. They went out into the world and began to resurrect their god in the world, waking the slumbering, insatiable power that dwelt in the dark, deep place beneath one of the Southern Kingdoms.

The new cult built extra rooms and fixed the crumbling shrine. Their more human-like appearance has made it possible for them to infiltrate the lands above with relative ease. Arizog's eyes and ears have spread far and wide in this way.

The fish-god is now growing in power, with designs bent on punishing the world above. He sends his horrific minions into the world to collect sacrifices, and awaits their return in the black, cold waters of his home.

# SECRET OF THE SHRINE

1 SQUARE = 10 FEET



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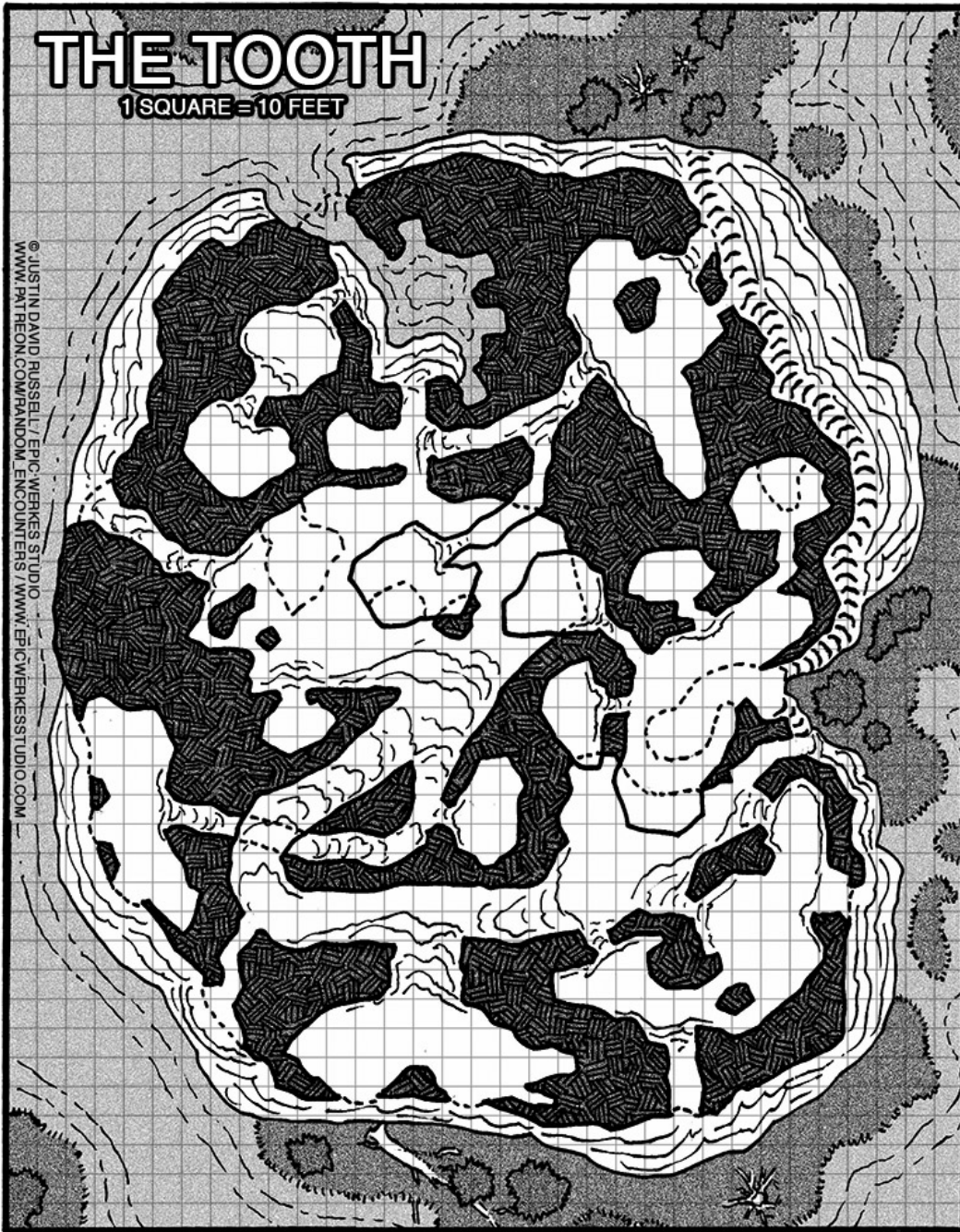
## **The Tooth**

Deep in the sloughs of the Lizard's Tongue is The Tooth, a high outcropping of sand and gritstone inhabited by a lizard man chieftain and his tribe. The Tooth acts as a hatchery and an outpost. There are armouries, barracks, lookout points, and stations for storage and cooking. A pool at the bottom is a nursery. A shaman/oracle is located in a high chamber open to the sky. The room is covered with drawings, skins, fetishes, and other sacred materials important to the beliefs of the tribe. The chieftain is in the southernmost chamber. His throne is made of bone and stone. It is hung with trophies taken from his enemies. Two openings provide the leader with a view south so he can survey that part of his realm from his throne room. All openings in The Tooth are closely guarded by sentries with spears, bone swords, and an array of other weapons salvaged from raids into civilized lands.

# THE TOOTH

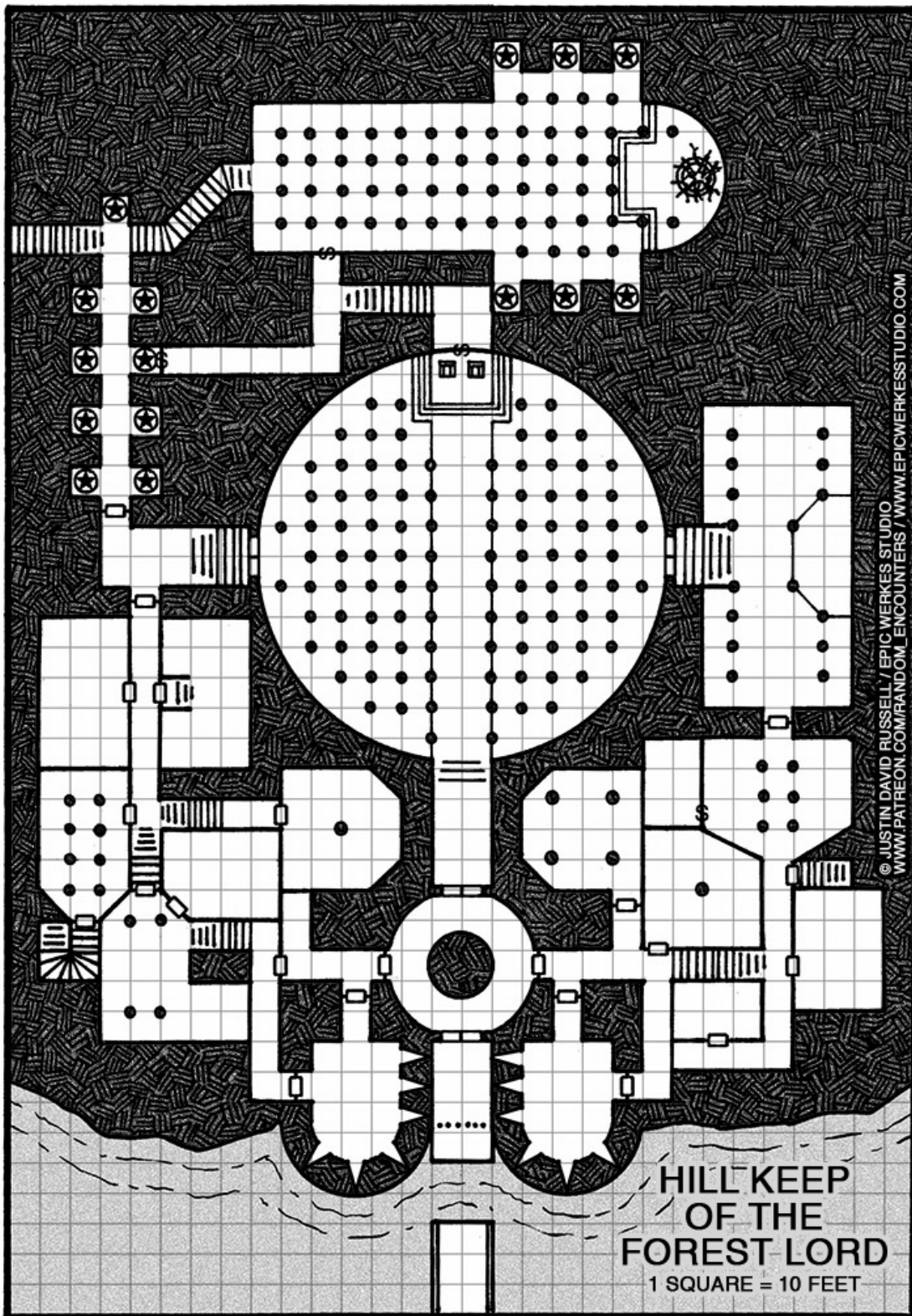
1 SQUARE = 10 FEET

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## **Hill Keep of the Forest Lord**

The elves enjoy building under the hills in sprawling complexes that are covered in carvings of great beauty. They venture out at night to revel under the stars. Above is a typical layout for an elven keep. It is rife with fine, stylized carvings. To walk the halls of an elven Hill Keep is to be transported into a realm of stone forests painted in bright colours to simulate the thriving sylvan world outside. All of the seasons are represented in exquisite detail. Animals in bas relief chase themselves and the elven denizens. Of particular majesty and beauty are the throne room and the Temple of the Seasons. In the throne room, a handful of elven guards stand next to their leader, while others remain ready behind a forest of stylized stone, always present but unseen, protecting their king in the company of strangers and visiting dignitaries. The Temple of the Seasons is a sacred space where a hall of stone trees painted much like the throne room greets the visitor. At the far end is a large tree with a multitude of branches, each from a different leaf-bearing tree. Every day, they change as they do throughout the year to signal the turning of the day to night, to day again. Falling leaves vanish before landing on the carved floor.



## Troll Hall

Your party has traveled into the barbarian lands of the North. Your experiences have been many here. The one thing you have come to dread - more so than the overall aggression that has been visited upon you by the Northmen - is the abundance of trolls and giants in this land. The Northmen fear them and keep fire and weapons always handy to scare them away, like one does with wolves.

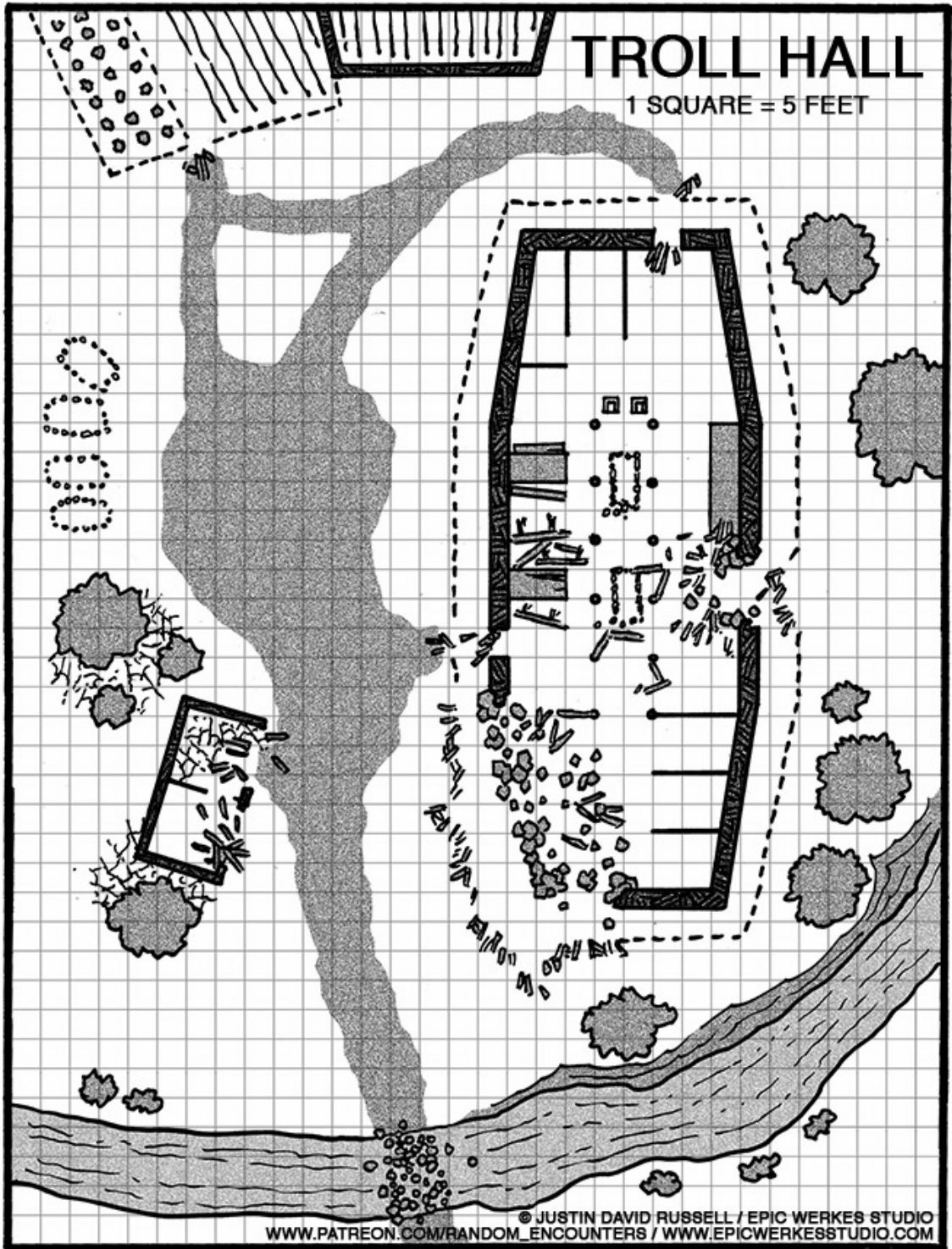
You are reminded of this today as, through the usual damp haze that hangs over this land, you catch the unmistakable scent of death, charred flesh, and soot. An uncomfortable quietude settles around you. Your hands stray absently to your hilts and quivers as your paranoia and straining eyes devise shadow shapes to haunt you in the fog. The lively chuckling of a nearby stream seems almost out of place.

The well-traveled path you have been following leads to a ford. The splashing of your horses causes your teeth and muscles to clench, your breath to catch in your throats. The angular shapes of buildings loom to the left and right. You recognize them as a shed and one half of a barbarian longhouse. Looking closer, you see that the fence and entire corner of the house has collapsed. Dread seeps into your hearts. You see the bodies of livestock littering the ground ahead as you bring your horses to a stop. You have stumbled upon this scene more often than you care to admit. Trolls and giants. Why are there so many trolls and giants in this cursed land?

A sudden shifting of stone locks your attention on the collapsed corner of the longhouse. Looming there in the rubble, its long, sinewy arm grasping one crumbling wall, its hideous visage pointing in your direction, snuffling loudly, is a troll. The stench of rotting meat almost overwhelms you. Roaring loudly, the creature leaps from its perch on the ruins and launches at you, drool dangling wildly from its toothy maw. You reach for your weapons, but not before your already tense mounts panic and scatter, carrying you with them in all directions.

This steading was the subject of a troll attack. Only one, but it caught the people inside unaware. The interior is a bloody mess. Only a few dead men lie outside, but the livestock lie scattered haphazardly where they were slain. The troll broke down a portion of the back wall, burying a few sleeping warriors in stone and thatch, including the best among them. The rest fell quickly in the darkness. The troll has since taken up residence, feasting on the slain. It has been about a month. Many of the bodies are badly decomposed, others gnawed to mere bones, and others have been consumed entirely.

The shed was where some of the animals were kept and sheared. Part of it is collapsed after the troll went searching for more meat. Since, a few giant spiders have moved in to the shed and the nearby trees. The troll is not happy about it and has worked to remove them, but has simply been too lazy and content with his meals to deal with that particular problem.





## **Tomb of the Sun Maiden**

Your party has been wandering the mountains for days. You are fairly sure you are in the correct location. The sun is riding high in the sky. Its rays warming you in the clear, crisp mountain air. You stop to take stock of your surroundings. One of you pulls out the aged parchment map the Matriarch gave you before leaving the monastery. You found each of the landmarks, thus far. Turning, you espy the last, the Sun King's Finger, a crumbling tower the priestesses once used to watch this area. It teeters upon a crag across the alpine valley. According to the parchment before you, delicately inked by the Sisters of the Sacred Sun, the cave should be here, overlooking this area...

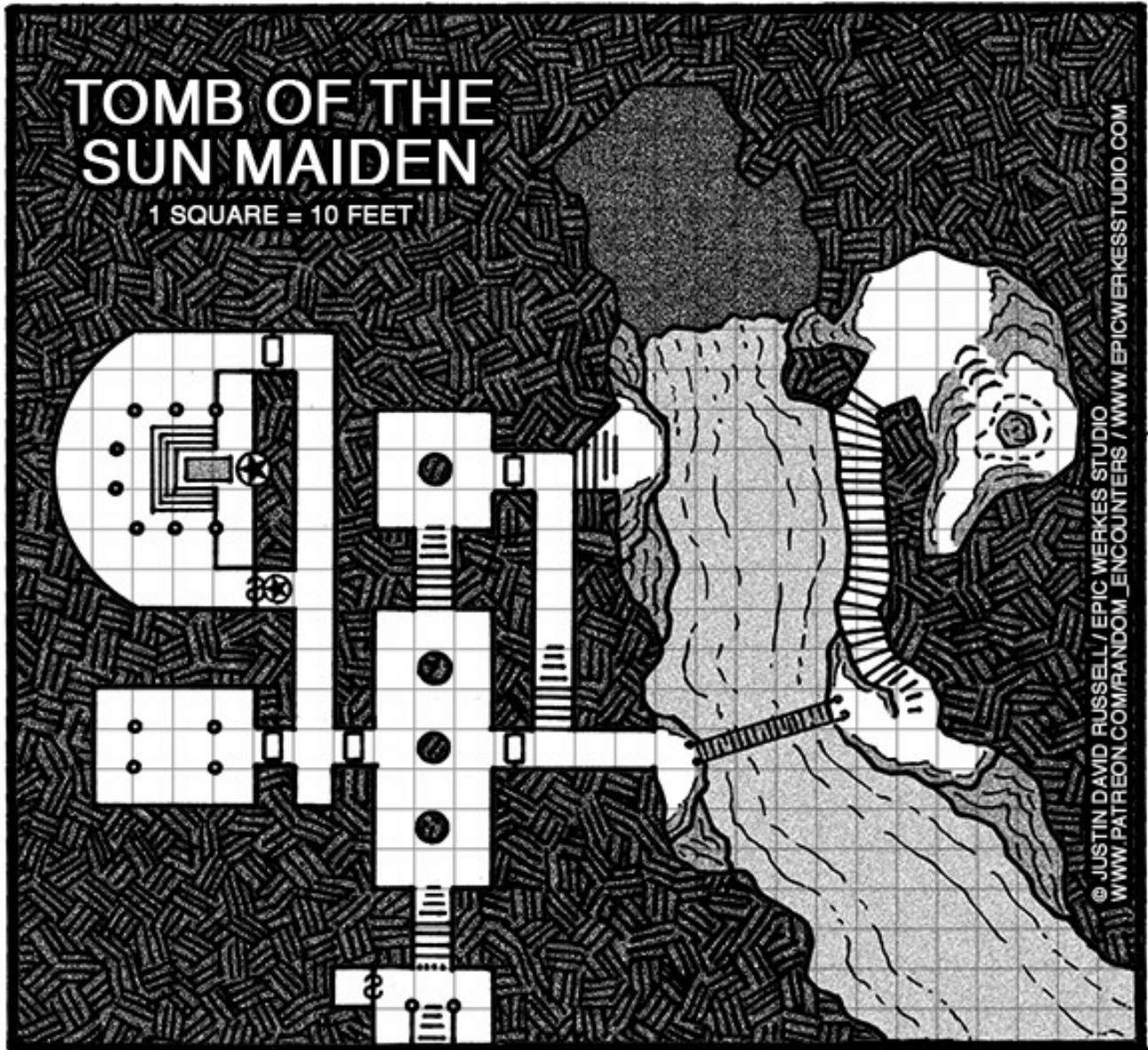
A hawk screams as it soars overhead, distracting you. It glides for a brief moment, suspended by the mountain currents, then plummets to the valley floor to catch a midday meal. You turn from the spectacle and continue your trek. Rounding a boulder, you finally rest in the shadow of a narrow cleft. You pull out the food the Sisters provided you with and silently consider the day.

One of you places a tired hand on a waist-high stone. After running your finger along a strangely inorganic groove, you call your companions and investigate. Though badly worn by the elements, you find the four foot stone is etched with a carving of a woman in armour, a sword clutched tightly over her chest in mail-mittened hands, her shield covering her lower half. A sun halo surrounds her head. Elation and relief pass over all of you. But it is short-lived. Looking around, you notice that the cleft you have stepped into is barely wide enough for the thinnest of you. If you remove your gear, you surmise, you should be able to fit through one at a time...

This is the tomb of Saint Avengela, a former priest and cleric of the Sisters of the Sacred Sun. She is entombed within, as is her sacred Sun Sword. Avengela was highly regarded in her day as a devotee of Law. Her escapades included traveling to a mystical island full of the spirits of elves, wandering the sun-scorched lands of the hawkmen, and entering the Kingdom of Chaos to stop the evil wizard Kaznar from performing a rite that would have spelled destruction for many. She died fighting the dragon Uruzug in the Marshes of Madness. Her body was taken to this cave, placed in an intricately carved sepulcher, and her sword placed in a natural chamber exposed to the sky. In this way, the sword can always be seen by the sun, the Eye of the Sun King.

# TOMB OF THE SUN MAIDEN

1 SQUARE = 10 FEET



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## **Tombs of the Chaos Kings**

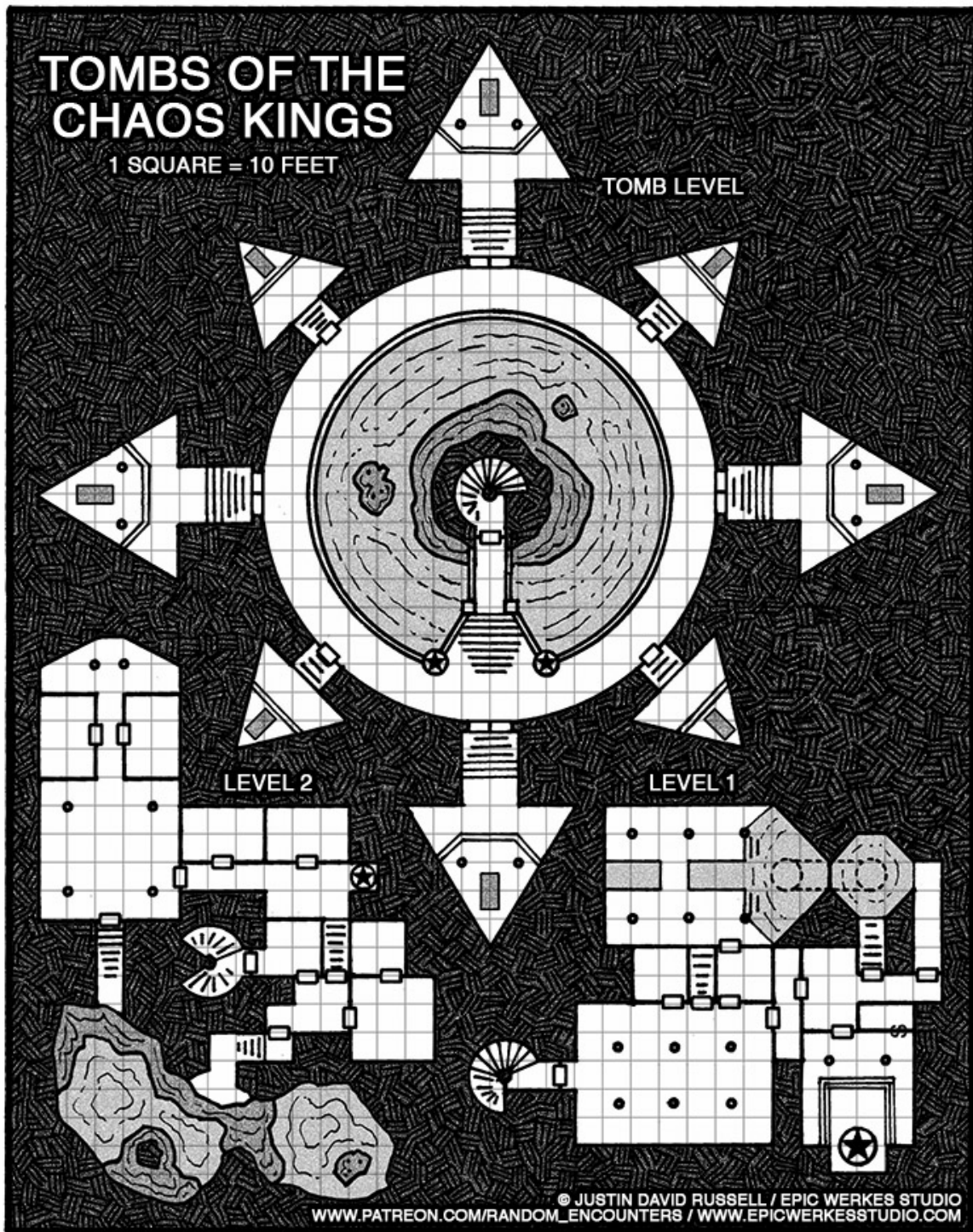
In centuries past, the Kingdom of Chaos was great in might and size. Its minions swarmed over the Southern Kingdoms in countless numbers; there was much suffering. The Kings moved their capital to the Horse Lands of Doone, and built a massive tomb beneath the earth on the backs of the native Doonians. In later ages, the weight of the Chaos Kingdom became unwieldy, began to collapse in on itself, and the Southern Kingdoms rose up and pushed the forces of Chaos back to their northern, craggy realms. The ruins of Doone were abandoned, for the land had become inhospitable. Though the greater evil forces had been routed, there remained an air of gloom and monsters and evil men roamed freely. Only later, after living for a time in other lands in small traveling groups, did the nomadic Doonians reclaim their birthright. Their land is now much smaller, large portions of it having been swallowed by other more powerful realms that share its borders.

Sleeping beneath the ruins of the once beautiful, now nearly forgotten, former capital of the Chaos Kingdom, are the tombs of its greatest kings. Its three levels are reachable on by descending a spiral stair, through a massive column of stone that supports the natural ceiling of the great tomb chamber. Stalactites hang like innumerable teeth in the darkness above, waiting to devour any visitors.

What horrors lie in the Chaos Tombs? Rumour has it the kings are restless and wander the forsaken complex, feasting on hapless treasure hunters and explorers.

# TOMBS OF THE CHAOS KINGS

1 SQUARE = 10 FEET



## **Bonemist Geyser**

Your current quest has taken you to the Silverleaf Forest. The elf king has given you leave to travel through his realm. The first day you could feel the watchful eyes of the elven rangers upon you, though you could not see them. Eventually, the feeling subsided. You guess that they wanted to ensure you followed your elven guide and went where you were directed, a region near the northern edge of the forest where a strange occurrence has been observed. You are to investigate it.

Your elven guide has taken you along game trails and paths only the elves know. Their woods are renowned for being trackless. While any invader is busy looking for signs of easy passage, the elves may move freely and harry them with arrows and their magic, and remain totally unseen.

Your guide abruptly raises a delicate hand, motioning for you to stop. He points to his nose and sniffs. His features wrinkle slightly to show his distaste for something. You test the air with your own senses. A sickly smell lingers on the breeze. It is faint, but unmistakable. Death. But it's mingled with something else. Sulphur? After a moment, you hear a great rushing sound that takes you completely by surprise. You hear frenzied squeaking, then loud clattering and thudding that ends shortly after it starts.

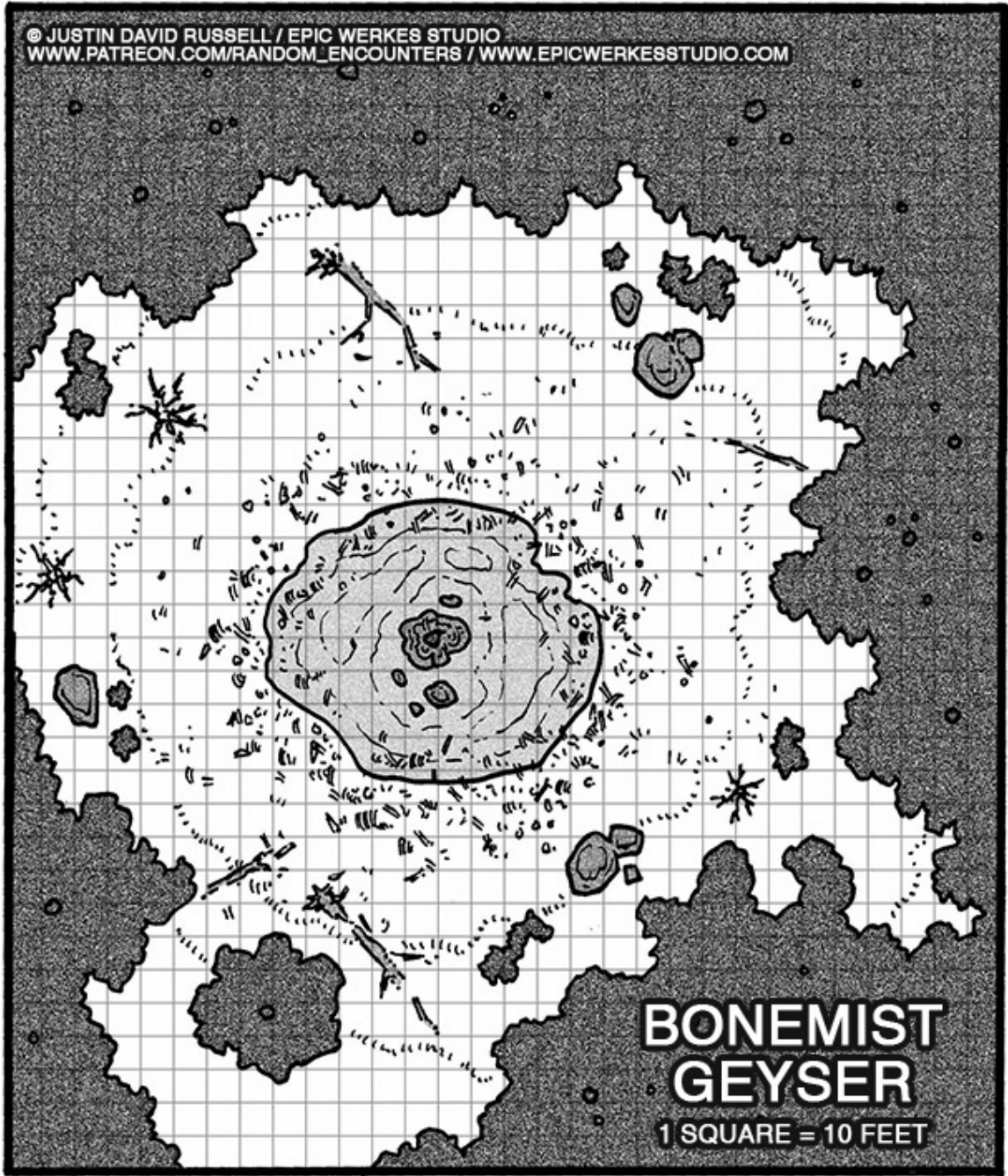
Motioning you forward, the elf urges you to proceed slowly and quietly. He takes the lead. You are amazed at how silent he is. No stick breaks, nor loose stones shift, under his booted feet. Neither is there any tearing or whispering of cloth against snagging branches as he moves. You are painfully aware of your own clumsiness as, at least to you, you blunder through the underbrush. The smell of death grows stronger as you proceed, turning your stomachs.

Approaching a break in the trees, you are startled by what you see. A low rise with sparse grass cover is littered with bones! Some of the bones contain meat. Everything is steaming. Bits of cloth and other refuse litter the hill, as well. Rats many times larger than any you have seen, as well as other scavengers, have descended upon the clearing in great numbers. The smell is overwhelming, as is the sound of furious chewing and ripping. You see a rocky outcropping sticking out of a blue, bone-filled, steaming pool at the heart of the clearing. What could have caused the gruesome scene before you? The elf king said there was a mysterious occurrence in the north of the forest. He was right...

The bones that litter the clearing are ejected from the geyser at the heart of the pool. They rain down on the area, then they are devoured by giant rats, weasels, boars, squawking crows and ravens, and numerous other forest scavengers. Bears frequent the clearing, as well. There is a pecking order. The animals feed in order of size. When the bears and boars are finished, the rats, weasels, and other smaller creatures wander in. It is extremely dangerous to enter into or come near this clearing when the geyser first goes off, which is approximately every 12 hours.

Deep below the surface is a monster lair. They raid above-ground settlements, gathering slaves, food, and materials. A steam vent in one chamber leads to the tube through which this geyser erupts. When it does, it carries with it all the refuse the tribe of monsters dispose of.

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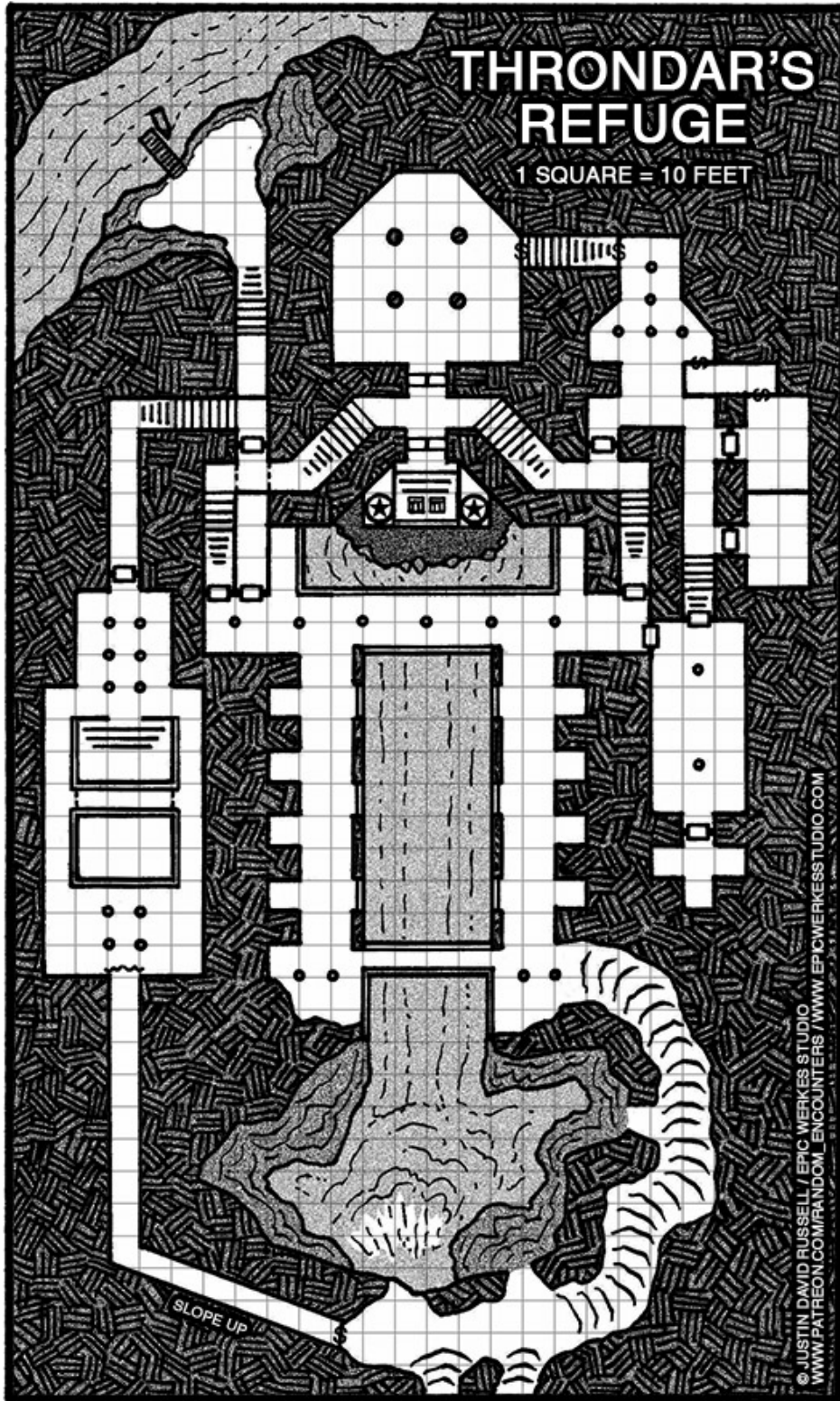
## **Throndar's Refuge**

During the Chaos Crusades, when the Southern Kings banded together to conquer the northern realms, Throndar, the then King of the Chaos Lords, left his throne to a doppelganger to be his public face in case the southern forces were able to conquer his lands. He had his engineers design for him a safe place wherein he might plan his counterstrike against his enemies.

From this refuge, Throndar was able to fool the Lawful invaders into thinking that he was dead. When the Southern Kings retreated, leaving one of their bravest warriors, Bolbec the Lion, on the throne to make the Chaos Lands a vassal state, Throndar lay low, continuing to plan from his secret stronghold. No one knew that he lived except his best champions and his closest advisors. In the years that followed, those most loyal to the King of Chaos were allowed into his confidence.

Over time, Bolbec grew to suspect that a secret movement was growing to challenge his authority. He started to smell the rats that had begun to sneak around his court. Before he could send word to his king, Bolbec himself was slain and replaced by his doppelganger assassin. Slowly, the creatures began to insinuate themselves into the Lion's House until Throndar was ready to make his move. Leaving his refuge, the King of Chaos was easily able to retake his throne. The Southern Kings were not aware this had happened until Bolbec's head, along with the heads of many in his court, were returned to them on a pike. Utterly disheartened, the Southern Kings would wait nearly thirty years before attempting another Crusade. And during that devastating war, the Lantern Priests of Law were swift and injurious to the people of the northern realm. Remembering Bolbec's death, they swept into the north like a storm. But that is a tale for another time...

Today, the refuge remains abandoned in a portion of the Towering Mountains where neither the Chaos Lords nor the Southern Kings hold sway. Bandits and goblinoids have occupied it, on and off since the last Chaos Crusades ended. Larger, wilder monsters have made it a lair once or twice. The opening is an inconspicuous cave that leads two ways, both circuitous and confusing, easily confusing any not well-versed in the twists and turns the paths take. An underground river allows access from a dangerous canyon full of harpies, and eventually leads out to a broad river beyond the mountains.



## **The Lizard's Tongue Swamp**

Past the wild Hedges, past the meandering stone canyons of The Maze, and beyond the treacherous passes of the Mountains of Morning lie the vast wetlands of the Lizard's Tongue Swamp. It is comprised mostly of sandy soil and brackish water. The cypress swamps of the upper regions teem with giant leeches and tribal lizard people.

The Laughing Plains is a damp region of grassland south of the Old Dwarf Road. It is notable for its giant flying, bloodsucking insects. The Soaring Sands belong to the Steppe Lords. It is a high desert of dry and arid climate. The Sleeping Jungles contain tribes of warring men subsisting on the world around them. Their penchant for head hunting has made the tribesmen infamous. The Crystal Teeth are jagged islands of daggerlike stone intermixed with a clear quartz-like substance that is as sharp as glass.

The ruins of Azarand and Zazgar were once great dwarven strongholds, but they fell to invasion and the passage of time. Those willing to brave the manticoreshaunted Maze to get to the Old Dwarf Road may cut out a whole week of travel through the mountains, if they survive the trip through the Zazgar Mountain Road. Most use the well-traveled caravan routes to the north.



## **The Midnight Alleys**

Your time in the wilderness hasn't prepared you for the sights and sounds of the city. Your earliest adventures took place in the furthest corner of the kingdom, in and around a sleepy village where little of note took place. Now, people, animals, wagons, and carts thronging in the streets overwhelm your senses. The stench of human waste of all types nearly turned you away at the gates! But, your search for intelligence has taken you here, to the city, where you have learned the greatest storehouses of human knowledge are stored. Sages of great repute dwell somewhere within.

But, after an exhaustive search throughout the city, you learn that it is not from these scholarly men you must find what you seek. You swallow the swelling panic that threatens to conquer your resolve. Before you, looming in the darkness, is a narrow pathway that leads into the Midnight Alleys. Crumbling old buildings forgotten by the city elite crowd together like a mouth full of rotting, broken teeth. Shuffling, shadowy shapes flit from doorway to doorway. You are sure a rusty dagger in the back awaits you here, if you are not careful.

Sighing and placing your hands on your weapons, you forge ahead. Your thief companion walks confidently, yet warily, before you, eyeing the darkness as if he knows what lurks there and how to avoid it. He is the only one among you that hails from the city. When your efforts to find the information you sought proved fruitless, he raised a bony finger and smiled knowingly, 'I think I have an idea where we might find the knowledge we seek!' You all looked at him quizzically. He smiled and explained that most urban environments have secret places where one might find anything, if the price is right. At first, you were eager to explore the thief's claims. Finally, you would have what you have so ardently sought for months! The idea of potentially running afoul of the law concerns you, but your companion assures you the information you need will not draw much attention.

But now that you stand in the dark, late in the night, past the city curfew, weapons half drawn, about to enter a place you have recently learned through rumours is renowned for murder, theft, and activity attributed to a guild of outlaws, you are beginning to seriously second-guess the logic of your decision to come here...





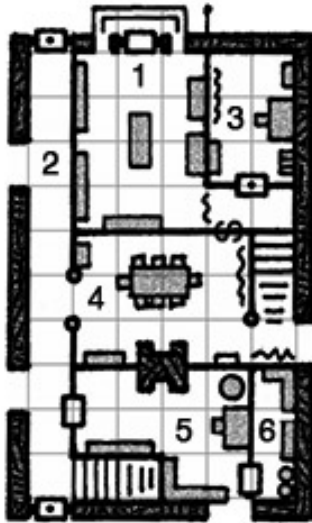
## **Cultist in Trading**

Cultists operating in the city got you down? Then you need to find out where they're operating and bring them to justice!

After questioning the assassin that made an attempt on your lives last night, you discovered that the local trader hired him. The trader is a servant of Chaos. He has been using his business to cover his illegal activities. A secret shrine in the undercroft of his small establishment serves as a sacrificial chamber and access to the sewer network under the city.

You turned the assassin in to the authorities, but quickly learned that the trader is an upstanding citizen and has never been in trouble. Many speak well of him. So questioning guardsmen don't scare the cultists back into hiding, you are given permission to investigate the trader and bring anything you learn back to the Constable to be relayed to the King.

What you discover upon reaching the trader's establishment is a structure much like others in the city. A well-maintained stone foundation at ground level supports a wood and plaster upper story that hangs out over the street. The red clay tile roof protects the building from the elements. The lower windows contain horn panes, while the upper level windows contain glass, signifying the man must be well-off, indeed. A small barrel hangs on its side from a wrought iron rod above and to the left of the main door.



GROUND FLOOR



UPPER FLOOR



UNDERCROFT

# CULTIST IN TRADING

1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

## KEY:

- 1. SHOP
- 2. HALLWAY
- 3. OFFICE
- 4. HALL
- 5. KITCHEN
- 6. BUTTERY
- 7. GALLERY

- 8. PARLOUR
- 9. MASTER BEDROOM
- 10. WINE STORAGE
- 11. DRY STORAGE
- 12. SERVANT'S QUARTERS
- 13. MAIN STORAGE
- 14. CULT SHRINE

## ***Osprey Cove***

You wander down the craggy coast road on your way to the beleaguered fishing village of Osprey Cove. The air is cool and wild in the narrow crevices leading down to the settlement. You learned the local lord and his peasants have taken refuge in the next town after a group of harpies took up residence in the caves above the village.

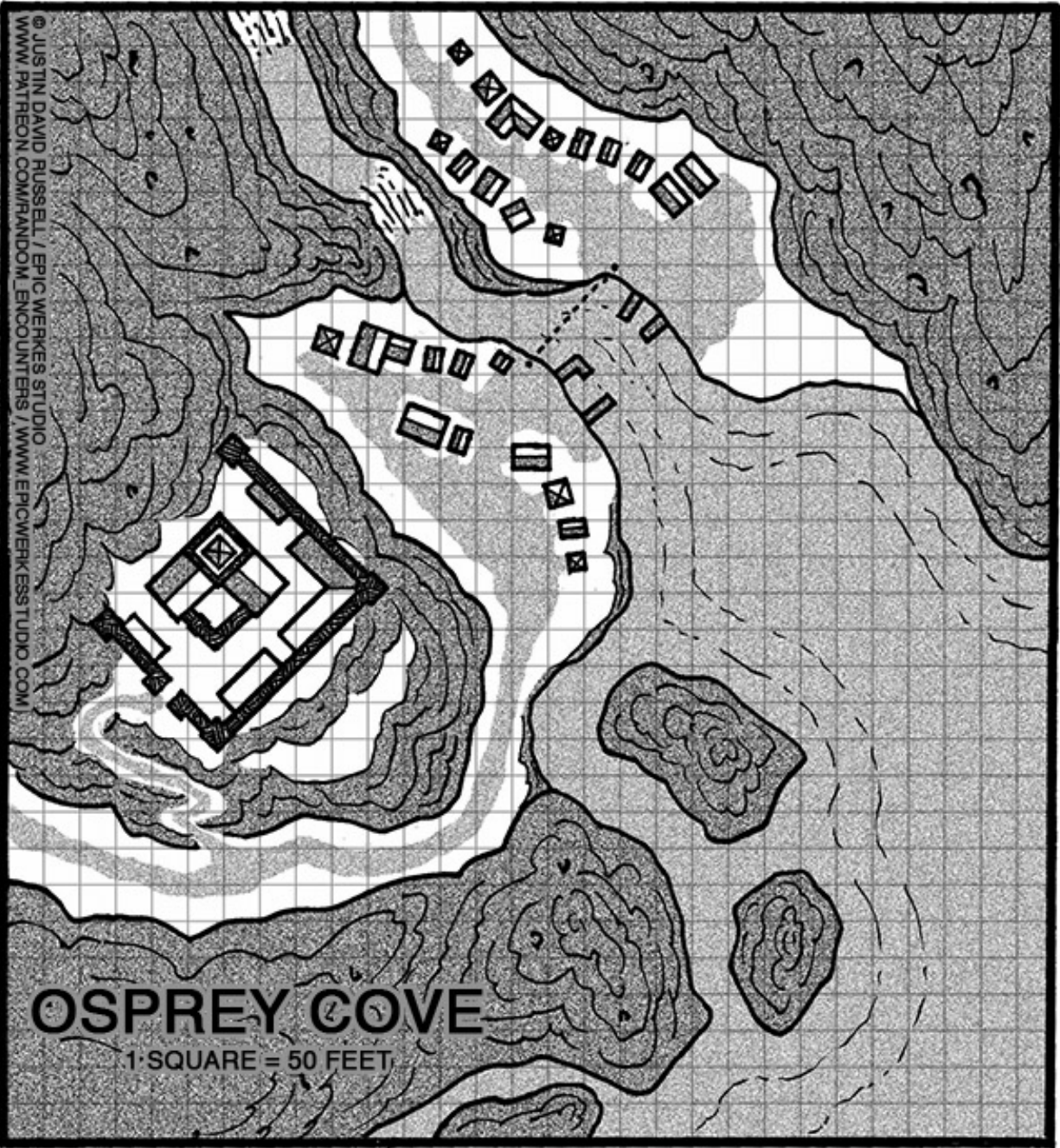
You have eyed the high stone enclosing you warily for over an hour. Your destination's namesake filled the skies with their screams up until a short time ago. Then it stopped, suddenly, as does the forest in the presence of a predator. You haven't seen harpies before. Your expectations and imagination create vivid scenarios of bloody death in which you and your companions fight weird variations of birds-men in varying degrees of success.

You are startled by a wild keening that sounds almost human, as if a woman were loudly lamenting the death of her beloved. But the plaintive cry of the bird of prey laces the sound, giving it a strange and unnatural quality. Looking ahead and skyward you hunker down behind the stone cliff before the pathway turns to reveal the village. You notice several large dark shapes in the sky, circling lazily. Some emit that wailing, agonizing half-human scream before landing, while others take off, leaping gracefully from rock perches.

They are women... at least in part. They have brown feathered wings for arms, like birds! Long, bony fingers with sharp talons extend from the wings, ready to deliver painful death to anyone they are directed toward. Long, dirty tresses frame beautiful, wild female faces. Their torsos are those of nude women. But it is their legs, powerful human legs, feathered like the wings, with taloned feet like an eagle, and the hawk-like tail that draw your attention most. Looking down, you see the besieged village nestled into the cove. You see what you can only imagine are dead bodies lying prone in the open areas and draped doll-like across rocks. The cloying scent of death confirms your fears.

You see caves up high in the rocks around the settlement. Normally the homes of fishing birds, they are now the roosts of the monsters you screeching and circling before you. Some of the bird-women even perch within the lord's manor, settling on the walls like gargoyles...

What will you do?



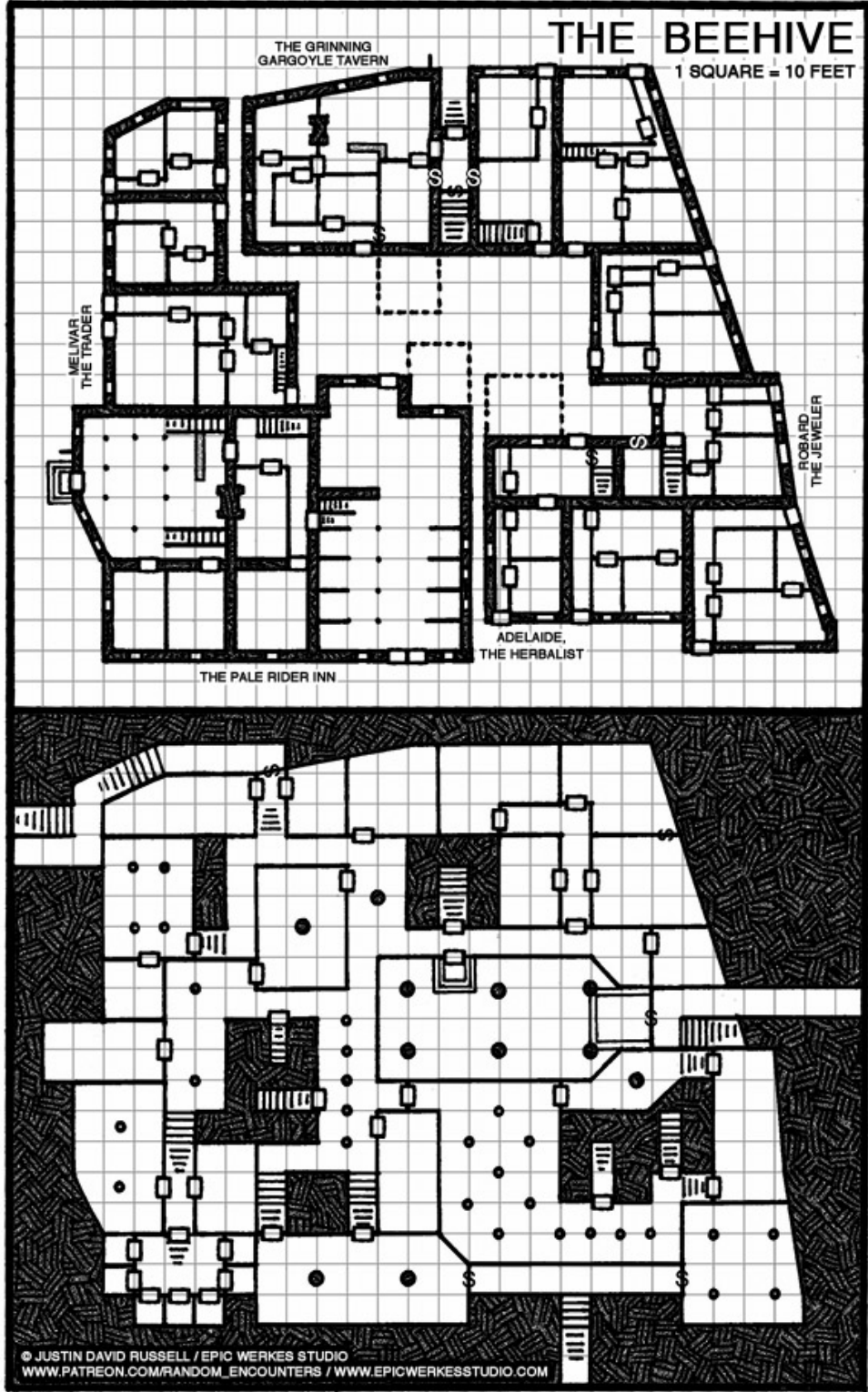
## **The Beehive**

In the Pearl City several rival thieves guilds operate in constant conflict with one another. One such guild, the Golden Daggers, is known for its fierceness and unrelenting vengeful behaviour when one of their own is slighted. Their lair, known colloquially as the 'Beehive,' is a honeycomb of chambers beneath a small block. The undercrofts of the various establishments were extended to link the buildings together. Everyone on that block is either a member of the Golden Daggers, or one of their 'pollen bearers,' those paying for the protection and favour of the guild.

The guild master is Cedric Silvertongue, a manipulative, patient, but vengeful man. He trusts no one because he himself is not trustworthy (but such is the way of thieves). Cedric and each of the guild masters before him run the Golden Daggers as a well-oiled machine. Each member has a purpose. They venture out, like honey-bees, to collect what they can to bring it back to the guild, where they can fence it to the jeweler or trader, then bring the gold back to the guild treasury.

The Golden Daggers are also infamous for what they call 'pollenating the city,' a process by which they offer the same 'protection' other guilds promise at a fraction of the cost (despite other guilds' claims on a particular area), for the express purpose of gaining their allegiance should the guild master call for it (and the promise of the guild to seek vengeance should it be asked for). It is this network of allies that make the Golden Daggers so formidable. Even other guilds fear the reach of the small group of thieves, for their own territory may be riddled with Golden Dagger allies. Each such ally is given a gold coin of the type common in the city, but the reverse is struck with a stylized bumblee, its stinger longer than it should naturally be. Each business or individual paying for the guild's protection may trade this coin in for one special favour over the course of their lives. This favour must be carried out, but once it is, the person, his family, and business is forever indebted to the Golden Daggers.

Each of the guild's thieves are given honey laced with a deadly poison. This honey is placed on a dagger, crossbow bolt, arrowhead, etc., to deliver a fatal sting. The herbalist, Adelaide, makes the poison.





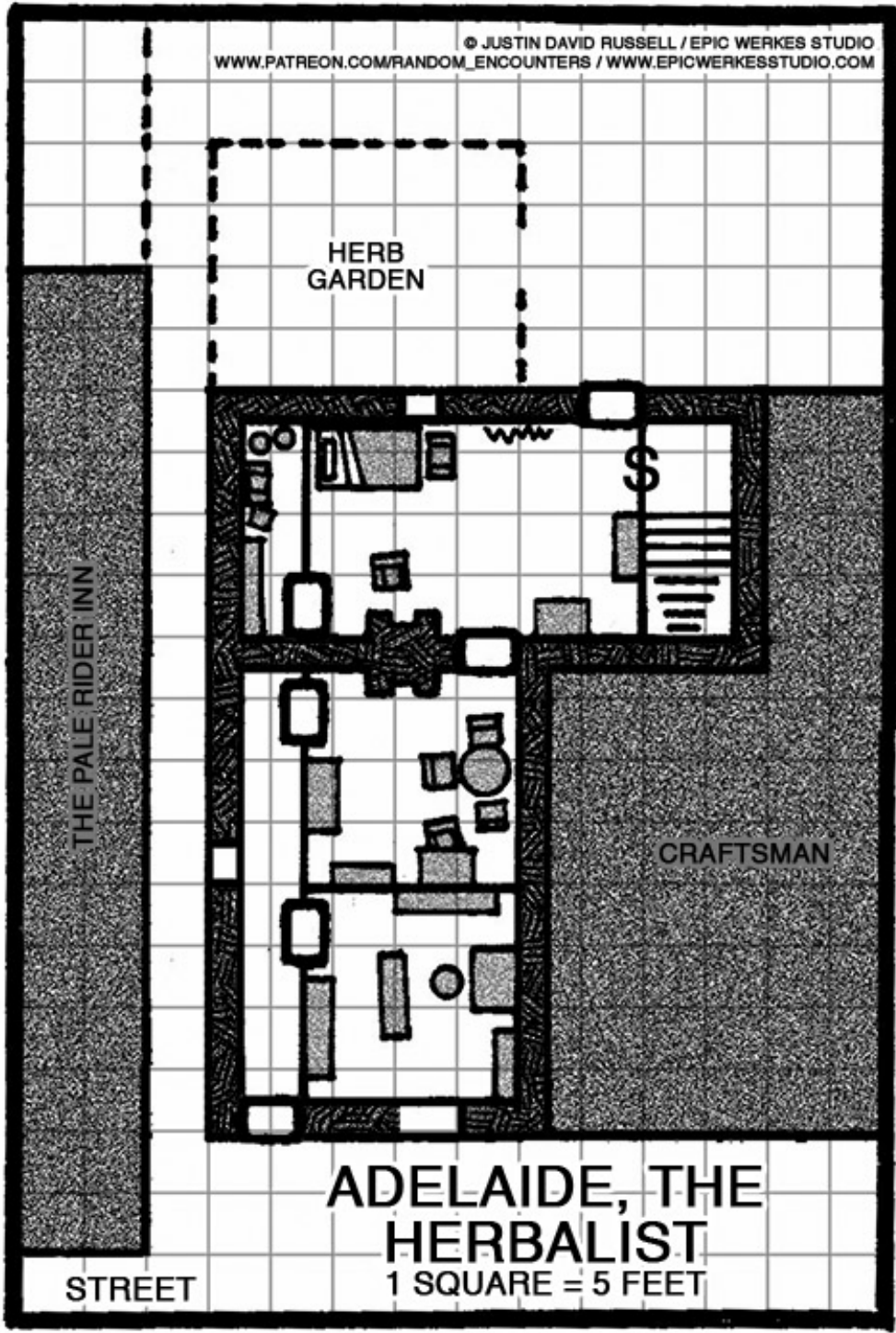
## **Adelaide, the Herbalist**

Things are pretty busy here on the old home front. We're moving, but I am endeavouring to get my daily maps done and continue with my other Patreon duties, while still trying to find time to paint. I decided to spend the last few days fleshing out the Beehive, since folks enjoyed that so much. Each location I will provide from here until Sunday will be a closer look at the various named locations from September 26th's map for folks that want to use them in their games. These maps will finish out my settlements and cities series of maps. I hope you enjoy this map. I apologize for the lateness of this image. Have fun and, as always, GAME ON!

Adelaide is the herbalist for the Golden Daggers Thieves' Guild. She is a middle-aged woman with dark hair and a sweet smile. A smile one would not immediately associate with someone that deals with deadly poisons on daily basis. Despite her maternal, disarming beauty, she is as vengeful and ruthless as Cedric, the guild's master thief. She and Cedric are sometime lovers; they even have a teenage child together, Hadrian, who lives with the thieves in the Beehive below.

She receives honey from the guild and laces it with a special concoction of deadly herbs. The honey is the perfect poison delivery system. It is a common sweetener for many households; it can also be placed on a dagger or other weapon, where it sticks and crystalizes, until ready for use in an assault against any unfortunate target.

Adelaide is proud of her duties. She spent much of her youth apprenticing with the previous poisoner, learning and growing her skill. She even managed to make the honey poison more potent.



ADELAIDE, THE  
HERBALIST  
1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

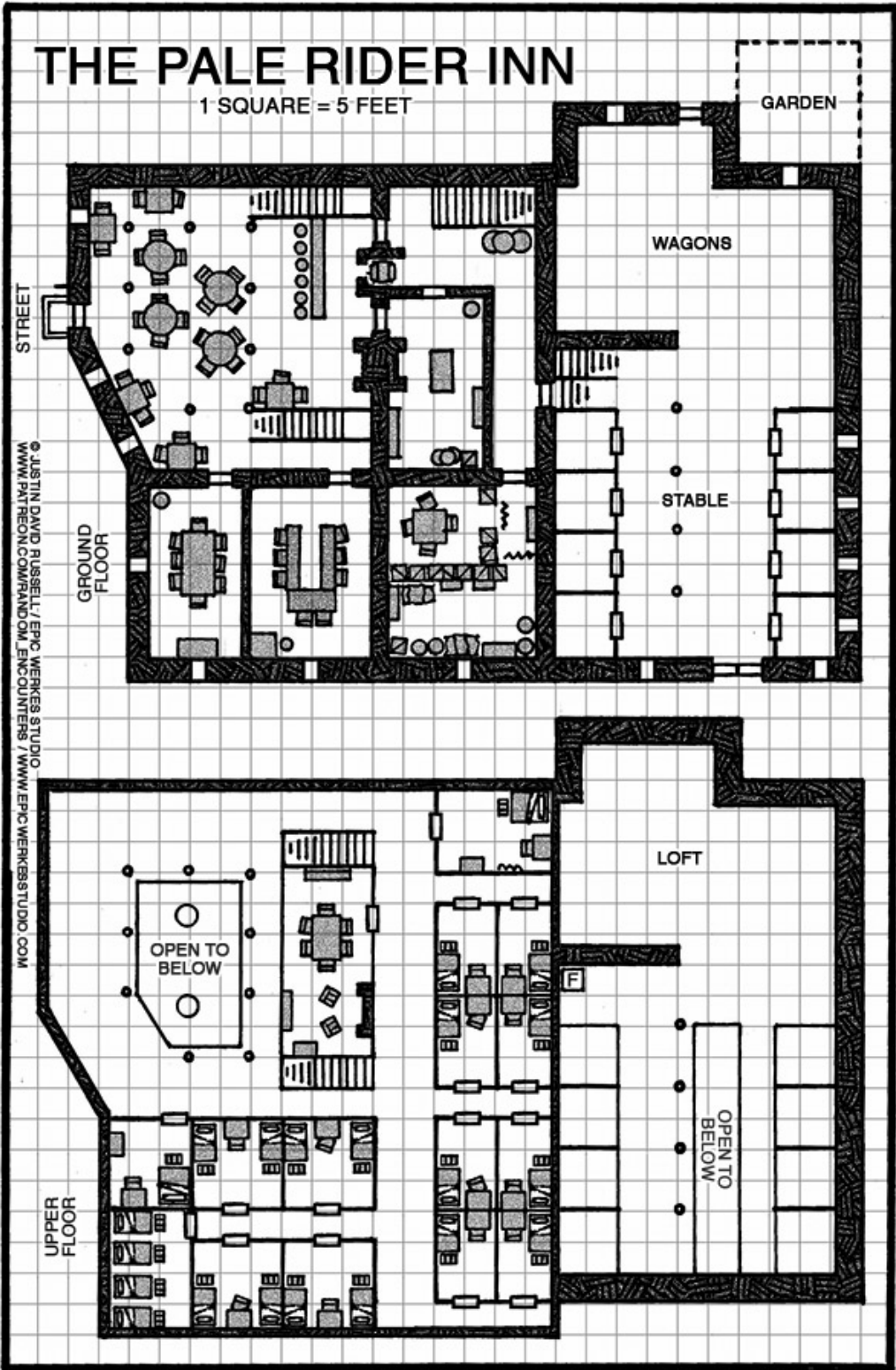
## **The Pale Rider Inn**

A wooden sign on a sizable building creaks as it swings restlessly on its chain in the city's winter wind. Painted on the sign, a rider dressed in grey clothing astride a grey horse gallops away toward some unknown destination. The two-story building has a solid stone foundation. Its upper floor, hanging out over the street, is made of wood and plaster. It needs mending in a few places. Raucous laughter can be heard emanating from within. Horn-paned windows glow warmly, but do not allow a view inside. A stable, both stories made of worked stone, is attached to the back of the inn. Wood smoke and the tantalizing scent of cooking meat whip around you as you stagger toward the inn's thick, weathered wood door.

You know the inn's reputation. It is a front for the Golden Daggers. Its bandy-legged proprietor, Rulf, is said to be a contact for anyone looking to reach out to the infamous guild of thieves. You have heard that its rooms are well-maintained, if simple, with comfortable straw mattresses. The food is mediocre, the ale fine, and the clientele suspect. Wealthy individuals and unattended woman would be wise to avoid the establishment at any time, especially at night.

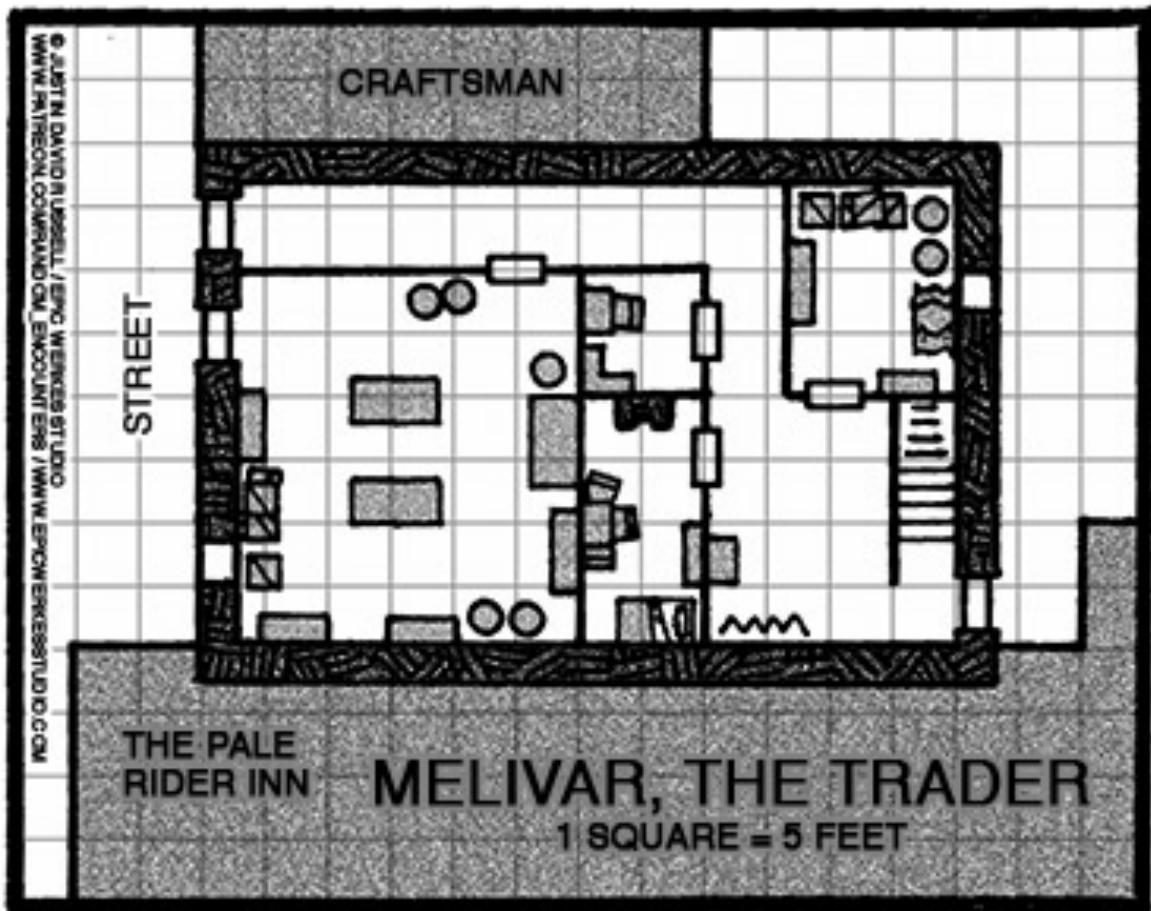
The Pale Rider is a well-known gambling den. A tucked away back room serves Rulf as a meeting place where high-stakes games are played. One might also ask Rulf for money, if they are willing to get it back to him in an unreasonable amount of time. A standard feature of the inn are the large brawlers that haunt the common room and keep eyes on patrons. Rulf knows everything that happens under his roof. Those that are so inclined may speak to the innkeeper about contacting the Golden Daggers, but one must know the correct passwords and have good cause. Most will not speak of the guild openly, for fear of their life.

A variety of comers visit the inn, from rogues fleeing the law, to individuals looking for work from the guild, to the low and lonely that drag themselves into the place to drown their sorrows and gamble away their lives. It is a dangerous place where one can expect to have his throat cut in a dark alley, if he is not careful. It is definitely better to be feared here. It is the pecking order of the coward that rules the day. If one shows up with companions, or their reputation for violence and skill with weapons precedes them, their likelihood of survival is much increased. However, the desperate are at times deadlier than the most skilled assassin, so it behooves everyone to watch their backs while at the Pale Rider.



## **Melivar, The Trader**

The trader's shop is supported by the Pale Rider and a craftsman's shop. The front is shabby and in need of some repair. A barrel hangs over his shop window. The trader, Melivar, is a slight, unassuming man. He is a member of the Golden Daggers and acts as a fence for any of the guild members looking to get rid of their pilfered goods. Melivar is also a shrewd business man. He is always looking for a good deal and a sucker. He has many things (many useless odds and ends and most basic equipment items the rpg you are playing lists) in his shop, though he keeps a special selection in Robard's secret storage room for black market dealings. The trader's tactic is to isolate weaker buyers and convince them to pay high prices for useless and broken things. He repairs items enough to get them out of his store, but offers no refunds for dissatisfied customers. Wise buyers would not try to get their money back from the trader, anyway. A few armed guild members do Melivar's bidding and watch the shop for trouble.



## **The Grinning Gargoyle Tavern**

The Grinning Gargoyle is a ramshackle stone building of only one story. It teeters on its crumbling foundations slightly. A wooden sign hanging from a wrought-iron bar in front of a narrow hall leading to the entry depicts a grinning grotesque. The proprietor is a large, unkempt, scab of a woman, named Beatrix, Bee, or Queen Bee (as she is known to the Golden Daggers; she only allows them to call her that). Her dresses are patched and stained from years of careless use and mending. She is a gossip monger. Her five sons are members of the guild. The youngest, and largest, Borric the Wall, is the tavern's muscle. He is a mountain of a man, both portly and muscular. He is also 'touched' as Beatrix says. He has a mild form of retardation, likely from the Queen Bee's rough lifestyle while pregnant with him. Borric is kind and ignorant, and will do anything Beatrix says, which is usually roughing folks up. Borric sleeps on the floor of the Queen Bee's large chamber.

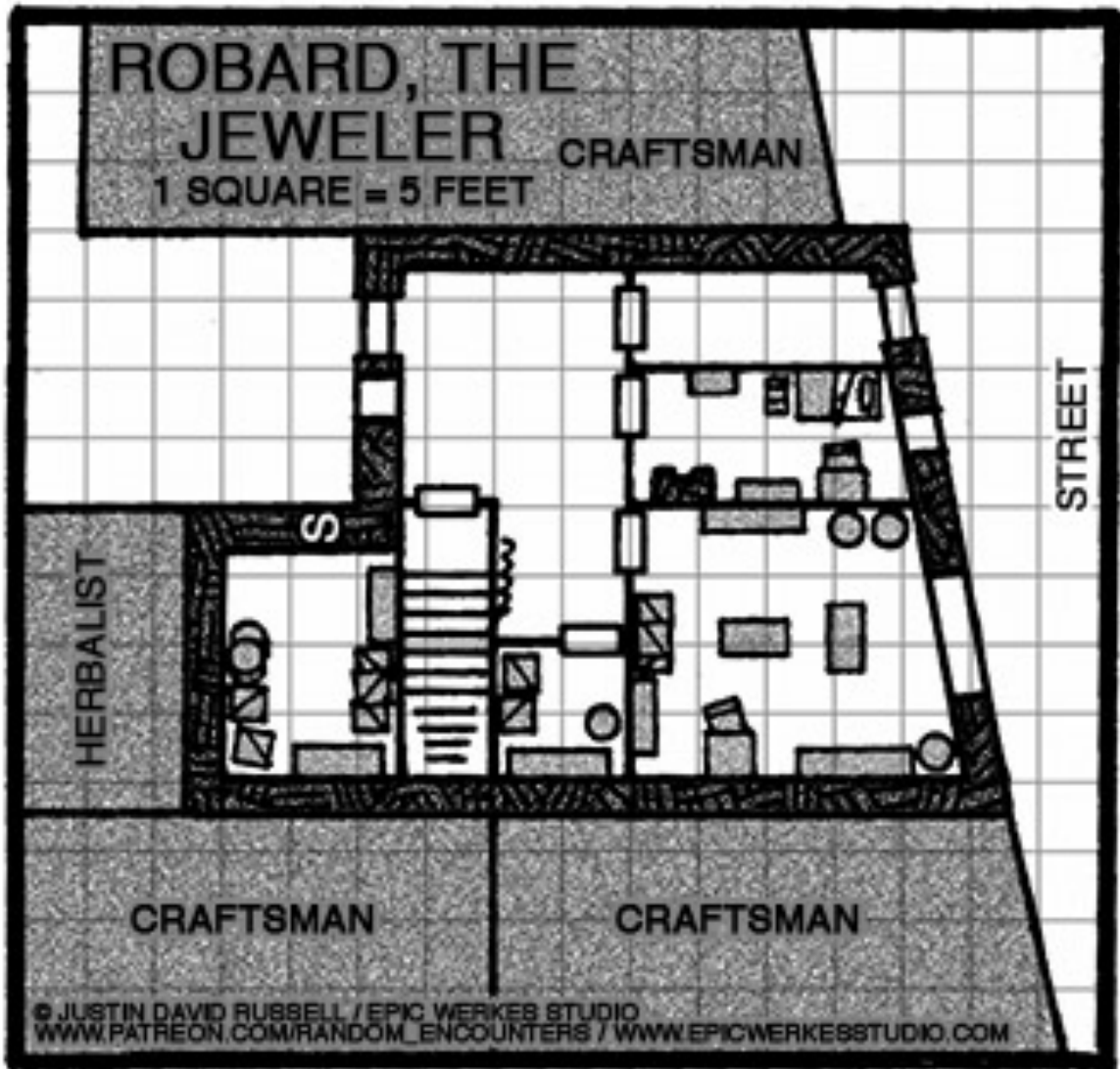




## **Robard, the Jeweler**

Robard's establishment is a bit more well-kept than other buildings in the area. Robard, himself, is a small, mean, stick of a man. He is married to his work, which is making all types of jewelry. He acts as a fence for the guild. He also makes specialized items of value, such as poison needle rings (known as 'The Bee's Sting'), the coins the Golden Daggers hand out to their Pollen Bearers. There is a secret room behind the shop that the other fences use to store items they will sell or take down to the guild's treasury.

**The Bee's Sting:** A special note about the ring known as 'The Bee's Sting.' It is given out to certain guild members, assassins. The top is fashioned into a crude bumblebee on a plain ring. The bee's body is a chamber that holds a tiny needle coated with the honey poison the Golden Daggers are known for. The ring is only used when on suicide missions. The assassin must get close to his target, at which time he 'stings' his victim, then stings himself. This is usually done when the guild is enacting some form of revenge against someone else. The dead body of the assassin, along with his ring, is a particularly unnerving calling card.







***Thank you for your support!***

Want help finding inspiration for your next adventure? Are you a busy GM looking for a quick map? Do you want unique locations to spice up your random encounter tables? Then you've come to the right place! Random Encounters provides creative solutions for gamers. It specifically caters to the Old School Renaissance, but the maps and descriptions found in this book can be used for any fantasy role playing system.

Please enjoy this offering. Have fun and, as always, GAME ON!