

THROUGH ULTAN'S DOOR

ISSUE NO. 1



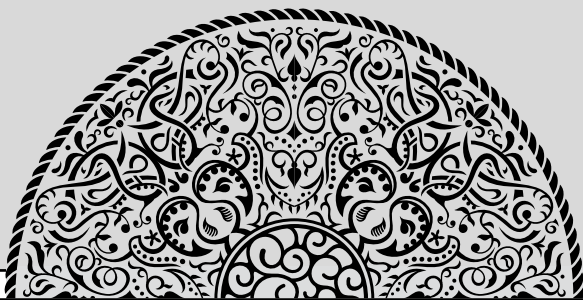


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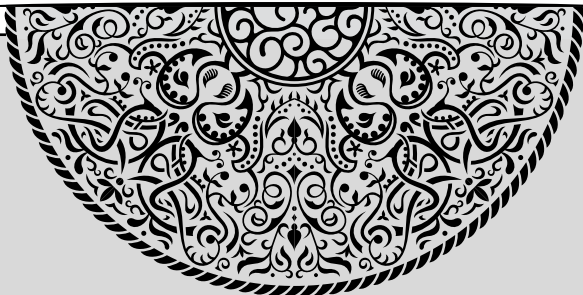
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INTRODUCTION



For the last three years my fancy has dwelt most about *Zyan*, cursed city of the dreamlands, the flying pearl of *Wishery*. This zine exists so that I might offer the phantasms of my delirious wanderings to you. I have shared *Zyan* with a host of travelers from the so-called waking world, raiders of nightmares, bold oneironauts all. You might think of the pages of this zine as a screen onto which are projected images from a magic lantern of our collective play. My hope is that under their flickering spell you might take *Zyan* up into your fancy and dwell there too.

Zyan Above is the great floating city of *Wishery*. From the surface of the dreamlands it is a mote lost in the endless azure sea of sky. The city is perched atop a cyclopean craggy rock, seven miles east to west and three miles north to south. The city streets follow the uneven surface of the rock with precipitous flights of rickety stairs, unexpected hollows, and arcades carved through living rock. The winds of *Zyan* are everywhere, whistling through cramped and ancient alleys, sunken arcades, and carven courtyards.

Each wind has its own name and is greeted by the residents like an old enemy. They hide from the winds behind gilded masks, which they remove only in the embrace of lovers, or in their steaming guild bathhouses. Beneath, the Zyanese are tall and lithe, with long pale faces, cruel cheekbones, and lustrous white hair. They were a noble race before the weight of their curse fell upon them. The many wonders they wrought now stand peeling and cracked: their ingenious hanging manses, their intricate astrolabes, and the vertical market, where once all the goods of Wishery could be haggled over under colorful pavilions.


Zyan Between lies beneath the city's streets, winding its cramped and twisted way through the center of the floating island. It is a dangerous and forlorn place. It consists of a network of apartments, catacombs, and hidden shrines of the great guild houses. Some are fiercely guarded, others abandoned and crumbling, repurposed by strange life that hides in the interstices of the island. These holdings are connected by the sewers that channel the waste waters and effluvia of Zyan Above into the Great Sewer River that streams ever downwards to Zyan Below. Many vile entities swell engorged on the rich castings of the Zyan Above. In places the halls of the undercity open too onto vast natural caverns where dwell the strange dream-creatures of other planets.

At the bottom of the undercity, the offal sinks and Great Sewer River spills into Zyan Below. Here a fecund and ever blooming white jungle grows like a pallid reflection of the gilded towers above, glimpsed in the fetid waters of a still pond. It springs from the base of the floating island downwards, a dense riot of immense fungal blooms, and thick snaking vines covered in flowers that look like the jeweled wings of insects. At midday it is dark with shadows, but at sunrise and sunset, the sparse lower levels are brilliantly lit by slanting ruddy glow of sunset. This inverted jungle is a surreal fever dream of life. Somewhere within its white bowers they say the lost Sunrise Palace hangs, dripping with the splendors of the Incandescent Kings.

But let us begin in the waking world. It starts with the opening of a door in the most unlikely of places...



ULTAN'S DOOR



To the casual observer, it looks to be a normal day in the city. As the long afternoon dwindles in the palace, manservants hurriedly polish the silver, while cooks sweat and curse, struggling to meet the Chatelaine's culinary whims. In the Temple, as the priests prepare for evening services, the censors draw up the newest list of proscribed activities intended to forestall the latest imagined heresies. Honest lumberjacks and fishermen return, exhausted from a long day of toil, passing as they always do through Bishop's Gate. But amongst the city's less savory elements who frequent the Mercury Whistle—criminals, poets, heretics, and thrill-seeking scum—a whispered rumor has begun to spread.

A printmaker named Ultan, while laying poison for rats in his shop just off the Square of Eidolons, is said to have come across a door under his stairs. This printmaker claims that this doorway was not there as recently as the previous day, and, even more implausibly, that it leads to the sewers of Zyan, the infamous floating city of Wishery. Word has spread quietly amongst the clientele of the Mercury Whistle that Ultan is charging 10 gold pieces a head for entrance, no questions asked.

From reckless uncles or cruel nursemaids, all children learn the stories of Zyan, the city of porcelain abattoirs. They learn with remorse and morbid curiosity about the fate of naughty children (like them) in the deadly puppet shows of that city, ample sustenance for habitual nightmares. More picaresque tales are shared over whiskey by old men about the lush bowers of the inverted white jungle that dangles from the underside of Zyan, home to ferocious beasts, its thick foliage said to hide lost hanging temples, the lairs of seductive lamia.

If Ultan's claims prove true, such an opportunity comes once in a lifetime. The last door appeared a century ago, surfacing incongruously on the oily waters of Lake Wooling. It remained open for only six months and a day, time enough for Garanax, then champion of the Chatelaine, to return from the dreamlands with a mated pair of the monstrous velvety crows that serve now as mounts for her dread Storm Riders. Although no pious observer of the sacraments, for his achievement he was sainted over the clucking of the Priests. To this day the bright carvers fashion the effigy of Garanax, Saint of the Crows.

Rumors About Ultan's Door (1d8):

1. Ultan's cerebellum is clouded by violent vapors of black bile. Why my friend once saw him proclaiming he had an earthenware head; another time he said his innards were all the meat of pumpkins.

2. Ultan lost his shop in a card game to the boss of the Withered Nightingales. One of their thugs is overseeing operations at the store. Whatever's going on with this door, you can bet they're the ones who will be collecting the fee.

3. My cobbler's son paid the fee. It's just a hole that leads into the sewers. If you want to smell like shit by all means pony up.

4. It is a trap set by the Censors to catch heretics longing for another world. They've been dangling false rumors around the city like shining lures on hooks. The padded cells of their white halls will soon be full of people like you.

5. My mother, rest her soul, was friends with Ultan's mother. It was a queer family. She says the fairies used to play about little Ultan's crib when he slept and sing him songs. You can bet it's a fairy door and Ultan is sending them that pay through to their bewitching glades.

6. A valet told me that it's an enchantment spun by Mirvolo, a wonder-worker who has taken up at the palace, who mazes the senses daily of the crowd at court with false miracles.

7. My brother saw three hardened mercenaries go into the shop, and come out again an hour later, larded with bags that clinked and jingled.

8. There's only been one taker so far, apprentices from the docks who were drinking here earlier tonight, some too young to grow a beard. None of them have come back, poor kids.

Reasons for Venturing Through Ultan's Door

My assumption is that recovering treasure is the primary condition for receiving experience (and so success) in your game. Beyond the thrill of exploration beyond the veil of sleep, characters travel through Ultan's door in order to loot the splendors of the dreamland. With this in mind, I have placed ostentatious treasure in spots of peril and interest, and detailed all saleable items. However, should you require a different premise for the players, or motivation for hirelings or rival adventuring parties, you may roll on the following chart id8:

1. You are circus performers, troubadours, and thespians, who wish to learn the rare arts of the dream world. Who has not shuddered at tales of the fiendish puppets of Zyan? Who has not heard of their wondrous masks? Who does not yearn to learn the achingly beautiful music that is played for the Visible King beneath the clouded dome of his Sunset Palace? He who brings the art of Wishery to the waking world will be first among the craftsmen.

2. You wish to be heroes like Garanax, Saint of Crows. The last time the door opened, he brought from the inverted jungle's lush white bowers two mated giant crows, a splendid gift for the waking world. You too wish to dally with lamias and slay great beasts in a jungle of dreams so that your name might ring out in song until the door opens again for distant generations.

3. You are devotees of the Slumbering God. You hold that the so-called waking world is merely one rung on a metaphysical ladder of dream worlds that flow every downwards, becoming more potent and condensed at each stage, until they pour into the great dream of *MA-NA-YOOD-SUSHAI*. In drinking deep of the pleasures and horrors of Wishery you approach one step closer to this holy of holies.


4. You are merchants who wish to procure exotic wares that cannot be had in the waking world. You will bring the splendid fabrics, the piquant and exquisite wines, and the delicate masks of Zyan to the waking world. You will establish a trade route, opening markets others have literally only dreamed of.

5. You are jaded game hunters for whom the thrills of the hunt in the waking world have grown thin. You want to hunt Martian nightmares through the fever dream of life that your hunter's lore teaches is to found in the bowers of the White Jungle.


6. You are tomb robbers, cursed by an enchantment of an ancient mummy-wrapped amulet to age a year each week. The seers have just told you that the only way to lift the curse is to return the amulet to the neck of the statue of Vasanti within the Green Pyramid. The only catch: the Green Pyramid is in the Sanctorum of the Temporal Maenads, a prison for the enlightened sages of an alien faith found in the undercity of Immortal Zyan, the flying city of Wishery. The opening of this door is the miracle for which you have prayed.

7. You are magicians and scholars who seek precious texts lost to the waking world. If they can be found anywhere, you believe that they will be found in the library of the lost hanging Sunrise Palace of the Incandescent Kings, which is said to have the greatest library in Wishery. There you will unlock the Puzzle Scrolls, master the puissant Evocations of the Doomed City, and perform the dread summonings of The Book of Six Circles.

8. Three times the dream came to you of Immortal Zyan, with its seedy hollows, strange mirrors, and bitter winds. Each time you approached closer to the Sunset Palace. In your final dream you crossed the razor bridge over the howling chasm of blue, past the honor guard, reaching the colored panes of the palace's great stain glass window. Through the colored glass you glimpsed a monstrous orchid, its petals dangling over a majestic ivory throne dripping with jewels. In this throne sat a pale monarch weeping indigo tears. You would defy the will of the gods to see this place again and understand its sorrow.



ULTAN'S SHOP



Ultan's shop is just off Eidolon square on a quiet street. It has a small window on the ground floor displaying a woodblock print of the Chatelaine's aviary with its monstrous crows. At night the front door is locked with a heavy bar. During the day, a bell jingles when the door is open. Within there is a large counter with a display case holding open books with woodcut illustrations. There are numerous framed prints on the wall behind the counter (100gp).

Ultan is a thin older man with close set eyes, his hands stained by the ink of his trade. He will discretely conduct adventurers through a door behind his counter to his workshop. Here there are several work tables, stacked wood blocks of various sizes and shapes, numerous bottles of ink, and a bewildering variety of tools (150gp). Several prints sit drying. On the floor by the back door there is a rumpled bedroll, a big club with nails driven into the top, and a candleholder and matches.

His nephew Samir waits there, a bulky youth with a face like a slab of meat. He has taken leave of his work as a stevedore to act as his uncle's bodyguard in their new enterprise. He asks no questions and is generally loyal in a stupid way.

Ultan is currently charging 10gp per head for entry to the door. When the first group emerges holding any significant loot, he will raise the price to 25 gp, doubling the fee again as soon as this seems feasible. If asked questions about the door, Ultan will say that he was laying poison for rats when he stumbled upon the door yesterday. If asked how he knows that it leads to the sewers, he says that he poked around a bit in there, long enough to get the stench of the place. Should anyone question whether it leads to Zyan he will say that they will understand when they see the door.

After extracting fees in the workshop, Ultan will have his nephew Samir conduct them to a narrow hall. A short door leads to a cramped storage

space under the stairs. It has recently been secured with a crude lock. Against the back wall of the tiny cobwebbed and dusty space under the printmaker's stairs, where the ceiling is highest, stands an improbable door, three feet wide by six feet tall. It is painted cerulean blue, with gold leaf in swirling patterns that glisten in candlelight. The door opens inward by an elegant handle in the shape of an arching swan's neck. It opens into area 1 of the ruins of the Inquisitor's Theater.

Ultan HD1 (5) AC8 #A1: knife 1d4-1 MV12 MR6 S8 I12 W15 D14 C7 CH10

Samir HD1 (9) AC9 #A1: spiked club 1d6+2 MV12 MR10 S16 I6 W7 D10 C16 CH4





THROUGH ULTAN'S DOOR



Ruins of the Inquisitor's Theater

In Zyan the Inquisitor's Guild is the hand of justice. The inquisitors revel in elaborate punishments, reserving their dreaded puppets for the most heinous offenses. Justice, they say, must be seen as well as done, and the Inquisitors think of justice as a great and splendid show. These ruins were once a sacred theater of their punishments. When the shadow of its curse fell once again upon Zyan, hope became an antique custom. The great outposts in the undercity and the White Jungle below were abandoned. Their former tenants absent, other things now make their way through the darkness.

Factions

The Guildless

When citizens of Zyan commit shameful crimes, they are stripped of their masks and are given "the wash", a withering decoction that blackens the mouth and destroys the vocal chords. They are expelled from clan and guild and exiled into the sewers of Zyan Between. There they band together in forlorn communities, communicating through a haunting language played over pipes. They are filled with fear and hatred of their guilded brethren, who sometimes hunt them through the blackened tunnels of Zyan Between for sport.

The guildless have a village in the great wilderness of abandoned apartments to the south of the Ruins of the Inquisitor's Theater. They flee always from mirrors for they cannot bear the sight of what they have become. They have established a small outpost in the Inquisitor's Theater for access to the sewer river. Their leader is Shaltromo, a shaman of the Pickled Prince, an aspect of Golumex, the pariah Archon of failed purposes and ruined dreams. In addition to Shaltromo and his apprentices, the outpost consists of a dozen guildless, along with several equus hounds. These beasts are hairless, dun colored dogs with a head like a horse skull.

They feast on rotting flesh or offal in graves and catacombs and are domesticated by the guildless to serve as watch dogs.

The guildless will respond to unwanted incursions with force. If attempts are made to parlay, they will respond with fear and hatred to groups that have any masked members (including closed helms). If approached cautiously, communication will be possible for unmasked parties. The guildless are currently locked in struggle with the white swine whose Sow Queen nests in area 7. They will look positively on any group they know to have slain the swine. They can understand speech but can respond only with gestures and sign.

The White Swine

These, long, sinuous creatures have swine heads with knowing human eyes and the hands of children. The swine protect and care for their queen, a huge immobile mass of swine flesh constantly birthing and feeding. They feed her great masses of offal and tend to her needs, suckling at her numerous teats for their sustenance.

The white swine are violent, cunning, and mischievous. They are always on the lookout for fresh meat for their mother, and detritus to bolster their nest. They see in the dark, and move with silence on their soft children's hands, although their giggling often betrays them. No meaningful communication or exchange is possible with these murderous mischief makers. While generally striking with stealth and fleeing when overmatched, they will fight to the death to protect their mother.



The Weaver of Shadows

The Weaver of Shadows is a demon of the Archon Azmarane, spinner of the skeins of fate, whom the Inquisitors venerate under the aspect of Afatis, the many headed queen of puppets. The weaver has a bulbous thorax, beneath which sharp spider legs step delicately. From this rises an armless torso of sagging skin like tattered blue robes, then an eyeless face with a distended forehead like a Papal crown. When it strikes its torso snaps forward like a snake, hinged jaws opening to reveal an inky blackness within. The Weaver is no crude hunter, but an artist of violence. It plays its arcane webs like a harp to weave from the living atrament it exudes exquisite shadow puppets, delicate tools of slaughter. Although the Weaver is highly intelligent, and can communicate telepathically, it will not ordinarily do so with those it considers prey. With one exception.



Bereft of the bountiful sacrifices of butchered meat it once received, the Weaver of Shadows craves the veneration that is its due as the Beloved of Azmarane. If any slaughtered carcass is placed intentionally on one of its webs, roll 4d6 equal to or under the CHA of the one making the sacrifice. (Should the sacrifice be placed on the altar within its lair in 30 no roll is required.) On a success, the Weaver will offer to bestow the blessing of Azmarane on the individual offering the sacrifice. It will only make this offer once to any party. If accepted, it will pierce their chest with the claw of one of its legs, injecting shadowy ichor into their blood as they seizure. For the effects of the ensuing transformation see *Champions* (p. 35). Regardless of whether this offer is made or accepted, the Weaver will allow those who bestow a sacrifice on it to pass its webs, even opening a way for them.

Encounters

Roll 1d6 every 3 turns (or whenever loud noise is made) to check for encounter. On a 1 or 2 roll 1d8 and consult the following chart. 1 is an encounter with the indicated creature, 2 is an encounter with the creature's spoor, a trace or indication of the presence of the creature. On a spoor result, a 1 or 2 rolled on the next encounter check will be an encounter with the creature. More information on some of these strange beings can be found in the bestiary at the end of this adventure.

1. Guildless

Spoor: Distant piping.

They have alabaster skin, blackened mouths, and white hair. They are clad pell-mell in tattered and soiled finery. Their hounds are dun colored, snuffing beasts with heads like horse skulls.

1d6 **Guildless** HD1 AC8 #A1 Dam: Weapon 1d6 MV 12 MR7 Treasure: Worn knick-knacks worth a few coppers

1d4-2 **Equus Hounds** HD2 (9) AC7 #A1 Dam: Bite 1d8 + save vs. disease MV15 MR7

2. White Swine

Spoor: Fresh white feces.

Sinuous white swine, with children's hands, and mischievous human eyes.

2d4 **White Swine** HD1-1 AC7 #A1 Dam: Bite 1d6 MV12 MR6 Surprise on 1-3. Treasure: None

3. Shadow Puppets

Spoor: Shadows become unnaturally dark.

Pure black, ornate shadows, with feathered turbans, and elaborate armor and weapons. They move with a strange jerky grace like Indonesian shadow puppets. Although their weapons are deadly, they will melt away if they suffer damage. They will drag fresh corpses to area 29.

1d8 **Shadow Puppets** HD1 (1) AC9 #A1 Dam: By polearm 1d10 or scimitar 1d8 MV12 MR12. Special: Surprise on 1-4 in dim light, dispelled by *light* spell. Treasure: None

4. Oneiric Pudding

Spoor: A sparkling sheen of slime on the floor or walls.

A king feeds swans into a spaghetti press out of which comes strands of starlight, or a beautiful woman nurses a white lobster at her breast while

crooning a soothing lullaby. When one approaches, the phantasmagorical scene melts away and the pudding surges forward to attack.

1 **Oneiric Pudding** HD1d6 AC9 #A1 per HD Dam: Slap 1d6 MV9 MR12 Special: ½ damage from physical weapons.

5. Ravens of Perjury

Spoor: Black feathers.

Each is a tangle of raven's wings with no body or head, flitting erratically like a quick moving bat. In the center of the conjoined wings is a single staring eye that gives baleful glares like cutting knives or worse.

2-5 **Ravens of Perjury** HD1 AC6 #A1 Dam: Murderous Glare 1d4 (beam, range 30') MV18 MR5 Special: Once per day can fire a sleep beam up to 30', save vs. wand or single target suffers the effect of a *sleep* spell. Treasure: None.

6. Sewer Worms

Spoor: Clutch of gelid eggs in sewage nest.

Golden flange clotted with excrement, head like a starfish, 6' long.

1-2 **Sewer Worms** HD2 AC5 #A3 Dam: 2x Flange 1d4 save vs. poison o/5 1d4 rounds + Bite 2-8 MV9 MR7 Treasure: Golden flange (50 GP).

7. Shaltromo and Apprentices

Spoor: An ersatz shrine of ruin, e.g. dead flowers before a portrait with the eyes torn out.

An old man, pale, with white hair in a bun, and a black withered mouth wears a tattered vest hanging with fetishes. His holy symbol is a ruined child's doll, through which he works the witchcraft of the Pickled Prince. He is accompanied by two youths bearing wicker baskets of mushrooms and catacomb berries. Shaltromo will not act rashly, seeking help from reinforcements if overmatched.

Shaltromo Cleric 3 (14) AC8 #A1 Dam: by spell. MV12 MR6 Spells: *Reveal Soul* (as *detect evil*), *Shield of Memories* (those who attack relive the memories of their worst humiliation, effect as *Sanctuary*), *Induce Crushing Despair* (as *Hold Person*). Treasure: pearl encrusted fetish bandolier 150gp.

2 **Apprentices** Cleric 1 (4) AC9 #A1 Dam: cudgel 1d6 or spell. MV12 MR6 Spells: Apprentice 1: *Twilight* (as a melancholy light), Apprentice 2: *Visage of Senescence* (glimpse your future decrepitude as *fear*)



8. Explorers

Spoor: Crust of bread and paper wrappings.

Two figures ride a zebra striped caterpillar beast. The man in front wears a leonine mask with a great spear at his back, the woman behind a mask with a conical hat. Both wear rich damask robes. Two others in plainer robes and simpler masks follow on foot, bearing heavy packs. The group belong to

the Explorer's Guild. They have traveled from Zyan Above, hoping to find the tunnel (area 29) that an ancient map suggested once led into the White Jungle from the Inquisitor's Theater. Ulilamamo will assume anyone not wearing a mask is guildless scum and expect them to prostrate themselves before him and show proper fawning respect.

Ulilamamo Fighter 2 (11) AC4 Dam: Great Spear 1d8+1 MV9 MR10. Treasure: Mask and finery (125 gp), Lacquered Armor (splint) 150gp, Ring with lavender pearl 150gp.

Maneshaneru Magic-user 3 (6) AC9 Dam: Night Terror (dagger+1) 1d4+1 + save vs. spells or suffer waking nightmares 1 turn (4 charges remaining) MV12 MR10 Spells: *Unseen Servant*, *Magic Missile*, *Mirror Image*. Potion of slipperiness 10' splash. Treasure: Mask and finery (125 gp), Copper Necklace (75 GP), and a map which shows the location of the tunnel in the chasm (see area 28) to the south of the Ruins of the Inquisitor's Theater and gives direction for how to get from the other side of the tunnel to the Temple of the Lamia in hex F13 of the Depths.

Caterpillar Beast HD3 (15) AC7 #A2 Dam: Claws 2-7 MV15 MR10.

2 **Apprentice Explorers** F1 (5) AC7 Dam Spear 1d6 MV9 MR8.



THE KEY



1. Through Ultan's Door

The door beneath the stairs opens into a room that couldn't possibly be there given the layout of the shop. The floor of the room is faded tile, chipped and buckled. To the east is a heavy wooden door that opens outward. To the west there is an arched exit leading into a larger space. Looked at from the other side, Ultan's door appears as a plain, rusted metal door.

Examination reveals scratching claw marks five feet up on the wooden door to the east. The door is blocked by an armoire in area 10. Should the party push on it, one of the guildless in 10 will push back, while another runs to get help. The door may be opened by rolling 6d6 under Strength of the strongest character pushing, subtracting 2 from the roll for each additional pusher.

2. Domed Room

There is a stench of decay. The floor is covered in thick filthy straw. A dome rises to 40' high ceilings. In the center of the room there is an elaborate marble fountain. The western wall is taken up by massive wooden doors, one collapsed. Two sets of stairs lead up to a balcony with a balustrade 15' up. Dangling from the balustrade by ropes around their necks are three masked figures.

Hidden in the straw under each of the hanging corpses there are brutal bear traps set, 1d6 damage -6 MV until healed. The corpses wear fine but bloodied robes and have elegant beaked masks, like plague doctors at venetian carnival (50gp x 2). The central fountain is now dry. Water once flowed from the mouth of a nude with bound arms to a central basin. The stairs lead up to a second level balcony that has three doors on it leading to a, b, and c.

- a. A four-poster bed stands in this room with a gutted mattress, and a few tatters of shredded bed clothes. Attached to the wall, there is a tall mirror that has been smashed to pieces. Next to it stands a once fine armoire now scratched by claw marks and ruined. It has a hidden compartment in the base, holding a gorgeous carved wooden cask (50gp), within which there is an effigy of a golden web. If

- thrown it acts as a web spell (one use).
- b. The walls of this room are decorated in the tattered remains of shredded crimson arras. There is a bed with a gutted mattress, fouled with swine feces. On a night stand there is a small smashed mirror with a nice frame (20gp). At the foot of the bed there is an empty chest.
 - c. The same as a, but the armoire is missing.

3. Antechamber

Two red paths in the tiled floor, running through the northern and western entrances, meet in the middle of the room. Along the south side of the tiled path is a long table with metal legs and a marble top (80gp, heavy). Smashed ceramic bowls and detritus litter the table top and the floor beneath. Hanging from the ceiling on either side of the passageway to the north are two brass censurs (30gp x 2). There is a metal box in the northwest corner.

Among the detritus on the table top are broken ornamental fans, painted noisemakers, ribbons of bells, and tambourines. The passageway to the north smells of the sewer. The locked metal box (10gp) is decorated with a beaked mask. Within are bricks of incense that lost their scent long ago.

4. Canded Hall

A red tile path runs down the center of this long hallway. The smell of the sewer lingers in the air, getting stronger as one heads north. The hallway is decorated with facing alcoves at chest height in which stand unlit candles behind gayly colored glass screens. Most of the screens are broken, but a few are intact (40gp x 4). Lighting any of the candles behind an intact screen sends a warm and festive glow on the hallway.

5. Bar

A red tile path runs from the eastern entrance to turn south through an ornately carved arch, passing beneath a few tatters of a black curtain still hanging in the arch. There is a marble bar on the north side of the room, with ruined cabinets behind it. Iron lanterns are set into the south wall.

The contents of the cabinets have been smashed and lie in a pile behind the bar. The pile is fouled by white swine feces, but two fine pewter drinking goblets can be fished from the debris, with leering faces and twinkling agate eyes (7gsp x 2). The arch is carved with decorations of masked performers, some stilted, others breathing flames, or juggling knives, while other unmasked figures flee before them or kneel in misery.

6. Alcoves

A red path runs down the tiled floor between 4 sets of richly carved alcoves. There is a 1 in 4 chance that the party will hear giggling from the darkness in the south end of the corridor (if so reduce the White Swine's surprise chance in area 7 to 1-2). The alcoves depict the following scenes.

First Alcoves: On the western alcove, an old man, naked and withered, pulls a skein of thread from his open mouth with one hand, untangling it with the other. In the eastern alcove these threads descend from above into a city scene at dawn, each attached to one of the figures depicted. Some wake leisurely in onion domed rooms and verdant gardens that rise above, while below others work in small courtyards, and narrow shops.

Second Alcoves: On the western alcove, a cluster of masked marionettes peak out like mischievous children from behind the robes of a tall female figure with six beaked, crow-like heads. The marionettes drag their strings behind them. On the eastern alcove, crowds of tall and lithe figures with flowers in their hair stream down a hilly street towards a set of massive doors decorated with an image of the same many-headed woman.

Third Alcoves: On the western alcove, two figures wearing priestly vestments dispute before an open book, while scribes transcribe the orations on vast rolls of parchment. On the eastern alcove, miserable figures are subject to punishments to make the most creative torturer green with envy. Some scramble away from heated coals, turning a great wheel to escape the licking flames, while others with open sores are beset by bees that have their hives in the wigs locked on to their heads.

Fourth Alcoves: On the western alcove, a figure in priestly vestments with a beaked mask directs a sacrifice of some slaughtered beast to be placed on a great altar in a darkened, subterranean cave. On the eastern alcove, a figure wearing a Papal crown and long robes rides a bulbous monstrosity with spider legs. He emerges from the shadows, moving forward to claim the sacrifice in the opposite alcove. His mouth is open in ecstatic expectation.

7. Theater of Punishments

The room smells like livestock. Three tiers of stone bleachers ring a decaying stage. At the far end of the room, a large black statue glittering with gems stands on a square pedestal.

The 3rd wooden stage in the center of the room has seen better days. It is collapsing at several points. At the opening between it and the ground, it has been stuffed on all sides with straw, rotting cloth, paper, and broken furniture. Small tunnel-like holes lead in at various points. The stage covers

the massive Queen Sow of the white swine. Her great, flaccid girth occupies most of the space under the stage. She is fed by her offspring from a set of holes in the northeast corner of the stage, and they nest and suckle at her teats in the collapsing southwest corner. The nest is damp with the fluids and afterbirth of the swine and catches fire only 1 in 6 with the application of an open flame, or 3 in 6 if doused with oil. The swine will attempt to extinguish any fire.

There are always 3d6+3 swine present here, half crawling in the nest, the rest lurking in the darkness. They will wait until the party is well into the room, and then use their surprise ability (1-3) to swarm those bearing torches or lanterns, dragging them under the stage and extinguishing the lights. Note that white swine do not check for morale in this room, since they will die to defend their mother.

The statue at the end of the room is made of basalt. It depicts a robed figure, with a long beaked mask. She pulls apart her robes, and dozens of smaller beaked masks peer forth from the darkness beneath, pressing out. Lapis Lazuli borders her robes, and the eyes of the masks sparkle with polished carnelians and peridots. There are 1600gp total worth of gems that can be removed by characters who scale the statue (3d6 under dex) at a rate of 100gp per player per round. The cubic plinth on which the statue stands is covered in swirling forms. Careful scrutiny of the pattern will reveal that there is a small piece missing, in the shape of a sun. Placing the amulet from 11 in this aperture triggers a secret door to open in the base. Stairs lead down to area 8.

3d6+3 **White Swine** HD1-1 AC7 #A1 Dam: Bite 1d6 MV12 MR6 Surprise on 1-3

Queen Sow HD12 (90) AC10 #A0 MV0 MRN/A

8. Temple of The Holy Puppets

The stairs descend sharply to a room with 12' ceilings. The floor is covered in a heavy dust that stirs with every step. There is a marble altar in the south wall. Beside the altar stand two unlit brass braziers (50gp x 2). Behind the altar rises an 8' tall costumed figure with a black bird mask and elaborate black robes, fastened by a glorious sash dripping with gold and jewels (750gp). Within apses to the west and east silent and unmoving figures stand, female and male respectively.

The figures in the apses are puppet automata that lie dormant until activated. The puppet automaton in the western apse is a 6' tall. It wears the mask of a young woman with rosy cheeks and sweating brow. She is dressed in a beautiful silk gown and holds a closed parasol in her hand. Close inspection reveals her to be a constructed figure, like a wondrously wrought manne-

quin (500gp intact, 100gp damaged). The parasol, should someone think to open it, has a heavy bladed exterior edge. When she attacks, her parasol is a spinning wheel of death.

The puppet automaton in the eastern apse stands 10' on narrow stilts. It wears the mask of a smirking gentleman, and is dressed in black formal wear. Examination reveals this to be a wondrously wrought mannequin (500gp intake, 100gp damaged). Its stilts have sharpened sides like long knives, and end in sharp spikes. He attacks with the fluid grace of a whirling dancer, slicing throats and shearing limbs with his scissor legs.

If anyone moves within 10 feet of the altar a magic mouth will be triggered on the figures in the apses. The female figure to the west will say, "Hail Afatis, Many Headed Queen of Puppets", the figure to the east will reply, "Whose Sacred Instruments Punish the Transgressors of The Law". Anyone who has eaten the melons of the tree that grows from the Hermeneutica of the Crooked Law in area 21 will know that this is the formula spoken at the start of a trial, and that the proper ritual reply is, "May Their Blood Feed Your Many Mouths!" If the proper reply is given within 1 round, then it will be safe to approach the altar and handle the puppet, otherwise the automata will attack. These automata will not otherwise respond and can be removed or destroyed provided they have not yet been triggered.

The figure behind the altar is of a woman wearing a mask like a crow. Its bosom swells beneath the robes, gathered up by the jeweled golden sash. Close inspection reveals that the figure is an ingeniously constructed marionette, attached by wires to a harness on stilts (1000gp intact, 200gp damaged). It is not a puppet automata like the figures in the apses, but rather a great instrument of punishment and terrible weapon. Only those with 17 dexterity or training as an acrobat can attempt to use it by rolling 5d6 under their dexterity; failure indicates that the puppet is damaged and can no longer be used. A success means that one may stand on the stilts above it, moving it to strike. In combat the robes of the marionette's bosom part to reveal 3 emerging needle-beaked heads that strike rapidly and with deadly force, like a nail gun.

The Sweating Maiden HD4 (20) AC4 #A1 Dam: Bladed Parasol 1d12 MV12 MR12 Special: has a 4 in 6 chance to block missile weapons with the parasol (roll for each attack).

The Groomsman HD3 (15) AC3 #A2 Dam: Scissor stilts 1d10 MV15 MR12. Special: Can attack with reach as a spear or polearm. Cannot be flanked.

Afatis Marionette HD6 (36) AC2 #A3 Dam: Needle beaked children 5-12. MV9 MR: as operator.

9. Dressing Room

Remnants of smashed furniture and other detritus are strewn about the floor. There is one intact mirror affixed to the wall (50gp). The door to the east is made of a rusted metal.

Amongst the detritus are ruined masks, wire and papier-Mache constructions, and shredded bolts of fabric. There is one small box of inscrutable tools (20gp) and a single container of greasy white face paint (30gp). The door to the east is locked and rigged on the other side with a sash of bells that will jingle if the door is opened with a 50% chance of bringing 2-5 guildless to investigate in 1d4 rounds.

10. Guildless Watchmen

An armoire has been pushed up against the western door. Two pale figures stand guard, with dirty white hair, blackened mouths, and shepherds flutes hanging about their necks. At their feet a dun colored beast with a head like a horse's skull snuffles about with a wet rasping pant.

These guildless guard against incursion from the white swine to the west. If the door in area 1 should start to budge, one of them will push back on the armoire, while the other runs off to get reinforcements. He will return in 3 rounds with 4-7 additional guildless.

2 Guildless Watchmen HD1 AC8 #A1 Dam: Corroded Scimitar or Spear 1d6 MV 12 MR7. One of the guildless carries a silver locket with matching miniature portraits of his former self, in noble attire, and one of his love, a white-haired beauty (35gp).

Equus Hound HD2 (9) AC7 #A1 Dam: Bite 1d8 + save vs. disease MV15 MR7

11. Shrine to the Pickled Prince

There is a sweet, cloying smell in the air, like cloves. Against the eastern wall a strange figure stands, still and scarecrow like. Neatly before it on the floor are what look like offerings of food.

The clothes of the figure are sewn from a patchwork of different fabrics, some royal finery, others drab like sackcloth. His head is the clay face of a man set into what had previously been a lantern. From his neck hang various fetishes—a bronze amulet shaped like the sun, a small white child's hand on a string, black feathers. The bronze amulet opens the secret door in area 7.

The offering consists of a haunch of cooked meat, a silver melon-like fruit, a loaf of bread, and two incense sticks in a candle holder that have burned down. (For the effects of eating the melon, see area 21.)



12. Latrines

The room smells of excrement. Larvae buzz around the privy holes.

13. Baths

The doors to this room are unlocked. It has a pungent aroma, like pickling spices and blood. There are two sunken stone bathes, tiled with mosaics. Three barrels stand on the eastern side of the room. There is a 1 in 4 chance that Shaltromo and his apprentices will be here (see area 14).

Steps lead down into the sunken bathes, which are now dry. They are decorated with aquamarine mosaics showing fish swimming amongst the tops of what appear to be submerged trees. There are spigots (no longer functional) with handles on all four sides. There are bloody stains on the bottom. Buckets, hatchets and saws sit in the bottom of the pools.

In the barrels along the eastern wall, things stand fermenting. The first is pickling the little child hands of the white swine, and thick caps of meaty green mushrooms. The second is fermenting a harsh alcohol that burns the sinuses. The third contains a purple shamanic brew stinking of nutmeg. Those who consume it must save vs. poison or suffer cramps (-2 to all rolls for 1 hour). Those who succeed will have wild dreams when they next sleep.

14. Shaltromo and His Apprentices

The passages to the west and east are through crudely stitched curtains of hanging white skins. The entrance to the south is through curtains made of a red patterned fabric, once splendid, now tattered and dingy. There is 3 in 6 chance that Shaltromo and his apprentices will be present. If they are then candle light will flickering from behind the curtains.

- a. Apprentice 1: A dirty bedroll, some crumpled clothes, and a crude candle.
- b. Apprentice 2: A dirty bedroll, crumpled clothes, and a battered lantern lie on the ground. Tucked under the bedrolls is a copper bracelet set with a carnelian (25gp).
- c. Shaltromo: A heavy black curtain covers the way to the south. Herbs and fetishes hang from the walls. A huge candle of greasy brown wax sits in the corner. There is a sleeping matt on the floor and a rotting pillow. On a narrow shelf rests a pouch that contains 6 doses of potent hallucinogenic dust that smells of nutmeg (120gp). Hidden in the pillow is a bracelet of silver teeth (70gp).
- d. A 10" portion of the floor here glows with a brilliant light. This

continual light serves as a ward against the shadow puppets of the Weaver in area 28.

Shaltromo Cleric 3 (14) AC8 #A1 Dam: by spell. MV12 MR6 Spells: Reveal Soul (as detect evil), Shield of Memories (those who attack relive the memories of their worst humiliation, effect as Sanctuary), Induce Crushing Despair (as Hold Person). Treasure: pearl encrusted fetish bandolier 150gp.

2 **Apprentices** Cleric 1 (4) AC9 #A1 Dam: cudgel 1d6 or spell. MV12 MR6 Spells: Apprentice 1: Twilight (as a melancholy light), Apprentice 2: Visage of Senescence (glimpse your future decrepitude as fear)

15. Pantry

Smoked haunches of white swine hang from hooks, with other more dismal comestibles in wicker baskets, such as dried fungus and bitter catacomb berries.

16. Storeroom

On a shelf are stacked torches made from table legs, wrapped with once fine fabrics, now soaked in swine lard. Jury rigged spears with sharpened cutlery for points sit against the wall. Rotting carpets are rolled up in corners, and bolts of soiled fabric. Battered cooking pots are stacked neatly in one corner.

17. Barracks

This room has twelve bed rolls, replete with rotting furs, and soiled pillows. Next to them are set candles, folded clothes, and knick-knacks. There is a large wooden chest against the north wall. At any time, there will be 3-6 guildless sleeping in this room, and a 1 in 2 chance that an equus hound snoozes in the corner.

Searching the bedrolls and personal effects will turn up the following “treasure”: a porcelain cat with a frightening face and long claws (2gp), a silver ring missing its gemstone (5gp), an engraved copper bell (1gp), and a hopelessly rusted dagger with a fine hilt (4gp), and the keys to unlock the doors at 18.

3-6 **Guildless** HD1 AC8 #A1 Dam: Weapon 1d6 MV12 MR7

Equus Hound HD2 (9) AC7 #A1 Dam: Bite 1d8 + save vs. disease MV15 MR7

18. Locked Doors

These rusted metal doors are all locked. (The keys are in 17.) They have also been strung with bells. Anyone who does not take precautions opening them has a 4 in 6 chance of alerting the guildless who will come to investigate in 3 rounds.

3-6 **Guildless** HD1 AC8 #A1 Dam: Weapon 1d6 MV12 MR7.

Equus Hound HD2 (9) AC7 #A1 Dam: Bite 1d8 + save vs. disease MV15 MR7

19. The Well

- a. Clay vessels, jugs, buckets, are stored here, including a fine urn depicting flaming locusts (6ogp).
- b. The well is still in use. There is a bucket on a rope. The water tastes of Sulphur but is potable.

20. Lounge

Tables in each corner have been smashed, and the stuffing of chairs stripped by tiny claws. Charming wallpaper is dirty and has been shredded in places. The spoor of the white swine, and the rinds of one or two silver skinned melons litter the floor.

21. Scriptorium

There is a fruity smell in the air. A huge tree has burst from the northwest wall. Its twisted limbs are heavy with silver-skinned melons. The tree's gnarled roots have buckled the tiles of the floor, and now bar the way through a door leading to the northwest. The matching door to the northeast is not similarly blocked. The room has several large pieces of furniture, including three slanted (writing) tables at standing height, and one long central (reading) table, with heavy wooden chairs. The floor of room is littered with silver melon rinds.

Both the doors to a and b are painted with peeling green paint and thin silver lines like a stylized spider's web or circuit board. The roots of the tree have literally grown to encase the wooden door to (a).

The sturdy wooden furniture is scratched and moldy. Some dried bottles of ink and blotters remain in the drawers of the upright tables. Closer inspection of the floor will uncover white stool, and the occasional scrap of torn paper, now illegible.

The melons have a white flesh, aromatic and sweet, with black markings that look suspiciously like writing. Eating the fruit instills one with knowledge of the byzantine criminal law of Zyan, transmitted from the source of the tree in area (a). Eaters of the fruit will catch themselves often classifying actions under the headings of this strange criminal code, asking questions like, "Was what he just did miscreant abhorrent, or merely repugnant after-the-fact?" No matter their sophistication or level of education, the debates

of the disputing jurists will ring from time to time in their mind, and they will find themselves taking positions on arcane questions of jurisprudence. (Should they ever be subject to a legal proceeding in Zyan Above, they may add 4 to their charisma.)

- a. The door can only be opening by cutting a hole in it or chopping up the roots of the tree. Within the room is musty and damp, owing to several drips from the ceiling. Wooden papyrus rollers hang by hooks on the wall. There is one bookshelf on the wall filled with rolled, moldy papyri in little nooks. Another bookcase has collapsed, spilling the papyri on the floor into the middle of the room. The great gnarled roots of the tree spring from this damp mass of papyrus. Within this strange loamy soil, little bits of bright illuminations, and the flowing script of disputing jurists can still be seen.

Anyone who has eaten the fruits of this tree will know that the papyri mulch from which the tree springs constituted a single holy work, *Hermeneutica of The Crooked Law*, a collection of disputing commentaries on the criminal code of Zyan. The guildless will not eat the fruit of this tree under any circumstances, for it carries the bitter taste of their past transgressions. Having glutted themselves, the white swine, on the other hand, are subtle jurists all.

The intact papyri in the standing bookcase are illegible from moisture in the room. A single sealed scroll case contains a cleric scroll with three spells: *Fear*, *Testify*, and *Chain of Evidence* (see **Spells** for spell descriptions).

- b. Empty bookshelves line the walls of this room. The covers of books lie everywhere on the ground. Closer inspection reveals that that the pages have been crudely torn out. A few handsome covers remain (20gp x 3).

22. Gallery

There is a strong smell of the sewer here, and the sound of flowing water. The northern wall is set with small apertures—arrow slits—looking out over the Great Sewer River 15' below. There are empty torch sconces on the east and west walls. Torchlight reveals glistening waters, flowing sluggishly to the left. Twisting a torch sconce on the eastern wall opens the secret door to area 23.

23. Armory

There is a door operated by a level visible in both the east and west walls. A lantern sits on a table next to flint and tinder. In the hall to the south,

arms and armor hang ready for use. There are six suits of gorgeous black lacquered armor with plague doctor masks built in, as scale mail (100gp x 6). There are also eight shortbows of a fine make (40gp x 8), four spears (10gp x 4), and six scimitars (25gp x 6).

24. Gallery

There is a strong smell of the sewer here, and the sound of flowing water. The northern wall is set with small apertures—arrow slits—looking out over the Great Sewer River 15' below. There are empty torch sconces on the west wall. To the east there is a portcullis, and crank. It is rusted shut at 3". A red tile path begins at the portcullis and turns south in the middle of the gallery to move down the hallway

Shining torchlight through the apertures reveals glistening waters, flowing sluggishly to the west. Beyond the portcullis, a rotting carpet leads to broad steps that go down to a walkway by the river's edge. Twisting a torch sconce on the western wall opens the secret door to area 23.

25. Docks

A rotting carpet runs from a half-raised portcullis to grand marble steps that lead down to a brick terrace by the river. The smell is potent. The river flows by slowly to the west. Masses can be seen bobbing here and there in the brown, oily water. Two wooden piers extend into the river 20". A green wooden boat is tied to the end of one of the piers.

The piers are rotten; there is a 2 in 6 chance anyone walking on them will fall through into the river below. The boat at the end of the pier is a splendid green canoe, seating six comfortably, with an upcurving bow and stern. The bow has been carved to look like the head of a dragon, and the stern as its tail. There is an upright pole with a hook at the front, from which hangs a green shuttered lantern. The seats are covered in red velvet cushions, with storage beneath holding lamp oil, flint and tinder, and extra rope. Six stout oars are fastened neatly in oar locks.

26. Cavern

This is a natural cavern, made of a stone. Three columns of rock run from floor to ceiling. A ring of dolorous faces has been carved into them at a height of 9", and rivulets of tears seem to flow down from them, running around a metal door set into the north base of each. Steps lead up 10" onto a natural shelf of rock.

These doors are all locked and their hinges rusted shut. Opening them by force will create a great racket. The tiny cells within the columns each con-

tain a buckets and a wooden bowl. Any encounters rolled in this area will be with shadow puppets dispatched by the Weavers of Shadows in area 28 to investigate intruders:

3-10 **Shadow Puppets** HD1 (1) AC9 #A1 Dam: By scimitar 1d8 or polearm 1d10 MV12 MR12. Special: Surprise on 1-4 in dim light.

27. The Chasm

This is a very large, natural cavern. A chasm runs through the center of the cavern with a rope bridge strung across its center. At the southern end of the cavern, there is a huge stone arch.

Any encounters rolled in this area will be with shadow puppets. The rope bridge is set into wooden poles that have been sunk into the cavern floor. Rotten wooden planks serve as steps. The chasm over which the bridge runs begins at the west as a narrow, rocky spill, and ends 40' deep at the eastern side, where a pocket runs under the cavern wall a ways. Most of the eastern end of the chasm is taken up with a roughly circular vertical tunnel (area 28). The archway to the south leads out of the Ruins of The Inquisitor's Theater to The Apartments of The Guildless, a wilderness of abandoned chambers, courtyards, and arcades.

3-10 **Shadow Puppets** HD1 (1) AC9 #A1 Dam: By scimitar 1d8 or polearm 1d10 MV12 MR12. Special: Surprise on 1-4 in dim light.

28. Down the Hole

The vertical tunnel is 120' wide. A current of fragrant warm air flows up it. A web of thick black cables has been spun across the tunnel 10" down from the floor of the chasm. The weave is dense enough that a normal adult can't fit through. On the very eastern side, cables can be seen running down the wall of the vertical tunnel into the darkness.

The web is not sticky or adhesive and is capable of supporting great weight. The cables can be sawed through in 5 rounds to make a hole large enough to pass through. They will also melt enough to allow passage—emitting noxious fumes—if exposed to an open flame in 2 rounds. However, as soon as anything touches the web, pulses of purple light run outwards from the point touched along the weave towards the periphery of the web. These pulses ultimately travel down the cables on the eastern end of the tunnel into the darkness.

These purple pulses summon the Weaver of Shadows from its lair in area 29 in 3 rounds. The Weaver travels directly up the side of the tunnel and is able to pass through the web at will. If possible, it will perch on the surface of the

web outside the illumination cast by party light sources. Its many legs will then deftly flow across the web, like the many arms of a virtuoso stringed orchestra. The black and silent symphony of the Weaver of Shadows imparts life and shape to the darkness it exudes. This living atrament takes the form of shadow puppets: elegant warriors with ornate armor and feathers in their turbans bearing curved swords and polearms, or archers who pull back bows of pure darkness firing sallies of deadly black arrows, or a wizard who calls forth enchantments from the black smoke emerging from a lamp at his feet.

What shadow puppets the Weaver shapes each round can be determined by rolling on the chart below. Once a sufficient number have been produced, it will send a wave of the puppets streaming out of the darkness to attack. The Weaver does not hazard its own death when hunting. It will use its fast move to stay out of melee if possible. If injured or clearly overpowered, it will retreat to its lair in 29, and begin generating shadow puppets to serve as guardians against any impending assaults there. These shadow puppets last only 3 turns, so there is a limit to how many may be produced. Note that the shadow puppets cannot climb the tunnel, unless the party has left a rope dangling.

What Shadow Puppets Does The Weaver Weave? (1d8):

- 1-2 1d8 Shadow Puppet Footmen** HD1 (1) AC9 #A1 Dam: By scimitar 1d8 MV12 MR12. Special: Surprise on 1-4 in dim light, dispelled by a *light* spell.
- 3-4 1d8 Shadow Puppet Pike men** HD1 (1) AC9 #A1 Dam: By Polearm 1d10 MV12 MR12. Special: Surprise on 1-4 in dim light, dispelled by a *light* spell.
- 5-6 1d8 Shadow Puppet Archers** HD1 (1) AC9 #A1 Dam: By shortbow 1d6 MV12 MR12. Special: Surprise on 1-4 in dim light, dispelled by a *light* spell.
- 7 d4 Shadow Puppet Camel Riders** HD1 (1) AC9 #A2 Dam: Spear 1d6 and Hoof 1d6, MV18, MR12. Special: Surprise on 1-4 in dim light, dispelled by a *light* spell.
- 8 1 Shadow Puppet Sorcerer** HD1 (1) AC9 #A1 Dam: by spell. Spells: Roll 1d4 each round to see what spell it casts:
 - 1. *Darkness*
 - 2. *Magic Missile* (bolts of black lightning) 1d6+1,
 - 3. *Phantasmal force* (summon shadow beasts),
 - 4. *Stinking Cloud* (a shadow fog that chokes). Special: Surprise on 1-4 in dim light, dispelled by a *light* spell.

Weaver of Shadows, Beloved of Azmarane HD6+6 (36) AC4 #A3
Dam: 2x Stab with legs 2-8, 1 x Bite 1-10 + save vs. poison (death/o)
MV15 MR6 Special: Summon Shadow Puppets, Magic Resistance 30%.

29. Lair of The Weaver of Shadows

There is a 3 in 4 chance that the Weaver of Shadows is in its lair. If it is not present there is a cumulative 1 in 10 chance that it will return each turn. 300' down the tunnel (28), a cave branches off to the southeast. It has ridges of rock formations, and crystalline frostwork columns that look like ice formations but are in fact hard and brittle mineral deposits. Passing along this columned tunnel, one emerges into a small oval cavern with a smell of decay. An altar has been carved from the white living rock of the cavern. Beyond it, at the back a black web is slung between two massive columns of rock. Before the web is a pit of carcasses and bones.

The sides of the altar are covered in cave pearls, rounded calcium deposits with a lustrous sheen. The surface of the altar is salty and sucks the moisture from one's skin. The top has been carved with an elegant spiderweb design; the grooves of the web are stained a dark brown.

The web is 60' from the altar and has a 50' diameter, slung between two massive columns of rock. It is composed of the thick black fibers that characterize the web in 28.

Beneath it is a morbid corpse pile, the remains of the Weavers' rich feasting. The corpses include the bodies of many white swine, a few guildless and equus hounds, and some other humanoid forms. There is a great deal of treasure buried in the corpse pile. For each man turn spent in ghastly excavation roll once on the following chart, moving down the table to the next entry if an entry recurs, starting again at the beginning if you reach the end.

In the corpse pile you find (1d10):

1. A featureless black fencer's mask, with encrustations of carbuncles around the eyes, like the dripping crust of some jeweled infection (250gp)
2. A leather pouch containing mottled jasper playing chips (150gp)
3. A copper bracelet of a coiling serpent with a single eye of ebony in the center of its head (50gp)
4. A morning star, the ball a yawning sun face, the spikes its golden rays (175gp)
5. A rotted braided belt with an amber belt buckle containing a silvery locust that glows like an ember (casts illumination as a candle)

6. A peaked helm with a chainmail veil, dented but finely made (75gp)
7. A rusted blade springs from the mouth of a handle of horn carved as a singing maiden (80gp)
8. A metal amulet in the shape of fantastical blue mechanical nautilus. The wearer may walk on clouds as though they were solid (5 charges remaining, 1 hour per charge)
9. A metal mask like a roaring lion with a smaller white face peering from within the open mouth (125gp)
10. A necklace of bismuth stones strung on a chain of platinum, each stone a miniature rainbow labyrinth (700gp)

Weaver of Shadows, Beloved of Azmarane HD6+6 (36) AC4 #A3
 Dam: 2x Stab with legs 2-8, 1 x Bite 1-6 + save vs. poison (death/o) MV15
 MR6 Special: Summon Shadow Puppets, Magic Resistance 30%.

30. Into The Depths

The tunnel continues down another 700' from the Weavers Lair before it levels off. At the bottom of the vertical portion of the tunnel another black web has been spun, identical to the one in area 28. Disturbance of this web summons the Weaver in 5 rounds. Beyond the web, the tunnel becomes horizontal, emerging from the peak of Mount Drethi into hex E13 of The Depths, Level 2 of the White Jungle.

BESTIARY

Ravens of Perjury

No. App: 2-5

HD: 1

AC: 6

#A: 1

Dam: Murderous Glare 1d4 (beam, range 30")

MV: 18 (fly)

MR: 5

Special: Once per day can fire a sleep beam up to 30", save vs. wand or single target suffers the effect of a sleep spell.

A tangle of black conjoined birds' wings, surrounding a single unblinking eye. These strange creatures are produced through the spell Testify, although they sometimes multiply by fluttering about mirrors.

They often roost in ruined and forgotten places associated with the Inquisitor's Guild or the Archon Azmarane. They are not hostile per se but turn their violent gaze upon things from an animal curiosity.

They employ their sleep gaze only when threatened.



Oneiric Pudding

No. App: 1

HD: 1d6

AC: 9

#A: 1 per HD

Dam: Slap 1d6

MV: 9

MR: 12

Special: ½ damage from physical weapons. If it hits by 4 more than needed, save vs. paralysis or the ooze flows into orifices and drowns the character in 3 rounds.

The residue of the dreams that sustain Zyan gather in small rivulets, running down the sides of buildings, and dribbling through the gutters into the sewers beneath the city, where it sometimes collects into a sludge. This oozing substance acquires a strange disjointed consciousness, full of sudden transitions and symbolic thinking. It instinctively hungers for further dream sustenance, and owing to its manner of feeding, is quite dangerous. When it senses the presence of a conscious being, it draws on its stores of symbols, and images, to produce a vignette to attract its prey. This will usually be some dreamlike scene. For example, a king feeds swans into a spaghetti press out of which comes strands of starlight, or a beautiful woman nurses a white lobster at her breast while crooning a soothing lullaby. When within striking range, the scene melts away and the ooze attacks. If the ooze is slain it will slowly liquefy, running rapidly through forms as it dissipates: a swarm of butterflies, the head of a giant baby, a piece of the moon, etc. It will leave behind 1 pint per HD of oneiric residue that can be collected in flasks. It is of use of alchemical purposes including the creation of potions of Penumbra Migration that allow one to travel between the waking world and Wishery.



SPELLS



Testify

Level: 3 Cleric

Duration: 1 turn

Range: Self

When asked a question, if the caster of this spell tries to reply with what he knows to be a falsehood, he will choke on his own words, vomiting the lie up as a Raven of Perjury. Note that he may answer questions in a misleading way or speak lies spontaneously when no questions have been asked. But he may utter no outright falsehoods in response to questions without vomiting up a tangle of wings. Since each Raven of Perjury takes 3 rounds to emerge, this spell may produce at most 3 of these strange creatures, which are in no way under the control of the caster. This spell is granted only to clerics of the Archon Azmarane.

Chain of Evidence

Level: 4 Cleric

Duration: Instantaneous

Range: Touch

To cast this spell, the cleric must be touching an object. The spell reveals the identity of the sequence of individuals who have touched this object in the last 1 day per caster level in the order they have handled the object. The spell provides both an image and a name for each individual. This spell is granted only to clerics of the Archon Azmarane.



CHAMPIONS



Should someone accept the gift of the Weaver of Shadows, it will pierce the chest of the recipient with one of its needle legs and inject the black ichor from which it spins its shadow puppets. The one so blessed will immediately begin to seizure. Those who witness the bestowing of the gift will notice the shadow of the recipient darken and then begin to move out of synch in a shaking, ecstatic dance during the seizures. Once the seizures pass, the party will find the recipient subtly changed. His demeanor will be different, and he will sometimes act from unknown motives. From time to time, the party members will catch the champion's shadow whispering into his ear and will hear a hushed voice. The champion will not speak of these conversations.

The champion knows through the whispers of his shadow that he is now a pawn of Azmarane in the Numinous Game, the inscrutable contest between the Unrelenting Archons, sole deities of the alien religion of Zyan Above. The champion will now receive whispered instructions from his shadow in private moments. Should he question these hidden purposes, the shadow will always reply, "It belongs not to the pawn to question the intention of the hand that moves it." Should he fail to take good faith steps towards achieving these purposes his shadow will begin to torment him. It will first disturb his sleep with loud whispers and sudden jostles. Next it will take to shoving him at inopportune times, or even wounding him. Should the character abandon the Numinous Game altogether, the shadow will slay him.

As a pawn, the champion is blessed with the following miracle of Azmarane, usable once per day. He may detach his own shadow to perform any action the character could perform for 1 turn. The shadow will generally follow the character's commands, although it will pursue Azmarane's purposes if these diverge from the orders of the character. The shadow has AC9 and 1 hp but is otherwise physically the same as the champion. If the champion uses spells, it will have memorized the spells the champion currently has memorized, but as though the shadow were 2 levels lower. The player may choose which from among the spells the character has memorized the shadow will



retain, keeping in mind the shadow's diminished number of spell slots. The shadow may wield shadowy versions of the character's equipment, but none of the shadow items will be enchanted. The shadow may interact with things as though it were a physical object. It is dispelled by a light spell. If it is destroyed or dispelled, the character will be without a shadow until he sleeps again.

Although the alliances and oppositions in the Numinous Game are ever shifting, Azmarane is currently allied to Nulfex the archon of negation and absence, and opposed to Vulgatis, the archon of unseemly and fecund growth. The shadow will initially whisper to the champion about the canoe docked at 25, suggesting that he take the canoe downstream to defile The Catacombs of the Fleischguild. It will whisper to him of the fabulous ruby called "The Heart of Haldicar" hidden there, and the rich treasures clasped by mummified hands in the sarcophagi of the Master Carvers. If the champion becomes more powerful, it will urge him to travel further downstream to the Temple of the Archons, where he may open a portal to defile the sacred spaces of Vulgatis by planting a seed in the belly of the statue of that archon. (These locations will appear in later issues of this zine.)

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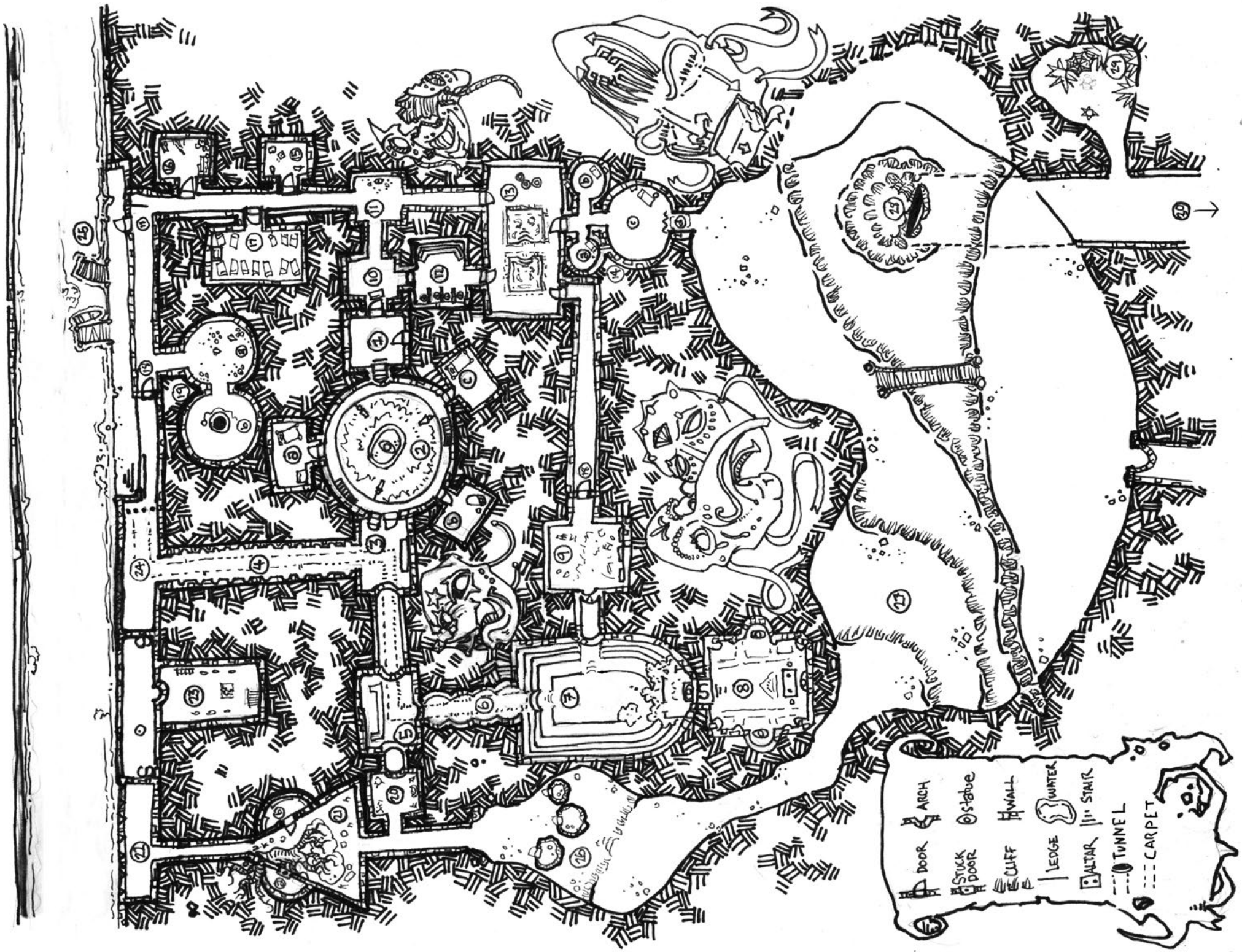
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THROUGH ULTAN'S DOOR

INSIDE THE NEXT ISSUE



*Travel Down the Great Sewer River
to the Catacombs of the Fleishguild!*



ARCH
 DOOR
 STUCK DOOR
 CLIFF
 LEDGE
 ALTAR
 TUNNEL
 CARPET

O-stave
 H-WALL
 WATER
 STAIRS

ENCOUNTER TABLE

1. Guildless

Spoor: Distant piping.

They have alabaster skin, blackened mouths, and white hair. They are clad pell-mell in tattered and soiled finery. Their hounds are dun colored, snuffling beasts with heads like horse skulls.

1d6 **Guildless** HD1 AC8 #A1 Dam: Weapon 1d6 MV 12 MR7 Treasure: Worn knick-knacks worth a few coppers

1d4-2 **Equus Hounds** HD2 (9) AC7 #A1 Dam: Bite 1d8 + save vs. disease MV15 MR7

2. White Swine

Spoor: Fresh white feces.

Sinuous white swine, with children's hands, and mischievous human eyes.

2d4 **White Swine** HD1-1 AC7 #A1 Dam: Bite 1d6 MV12 MR6 Surprise on 1-3. Treasure: None

3. Shadow Puppets

Spoor: Shadows become unnaturally dark.

Pure black, ornate shadows, with feathered turbans, and elaborate armor and weapons. They move with a strange jerky grace like Indonesian shadow puppets. Although their weapons are deadly, they will melt away if they suffer damage. They will drag fresh corpses to area 29.

1d8 **Shadow Puppets** HD1 (1) AC9 #A1 Dam: By polearm 1d10 or scimitar 1d8 MV12 MR12. Special: Surprise on 1-4 in dim light, dispelled by *light* spell. Treasure: None

4. Oneiric Pudding

Spoor: A sparkling sheen of slime on the floor or walls.

A king feeds swans into a spaghetti press out of which comes strands of starlight, or a beautiful woman nurses a white lobster at her breast while crooning a soothing lullaby. When one approaches, the phantasmagorical scene melts away and the pudding surges forward to attack.

1 **Oneiric Pudding** HD1d6 AC9 #A1 per HD Dam: Slap 1d6 MV9 MR12 Special: ½ damage from physical weapons.

ENCOUNTER TABLE

5. Ravens of Perjury

Spoor: Black feathers.

Each is a tangle of raven's wings with no body or head, flitting erratically like a quick moving bat. In the center of the conjoined wings is a single staring eye that gives baleful glares like cutting knives or worse.

2-5 **Ravens of Perjury** HD1 AC6 #A1 Dam: Murderous Glare 1d4 (beam, range 30') MV18 MR5 Special: Once per day can fire a sleep beam up to 30', save vs. wand or single target suffers the effect of a *sleep* spell. Treasure: None.

6. Sewer Worms

Spoor: Clutch of gelid eggs in sewage nest.

Golden flange clotted with excrement, head like a starfish, 6' long.

1-2 **Sewer Worms** HD2 AC5 #A3 Dam: 2x Flange 1d4 save vs. poison 0/5 1d4 rounds + Bite 2-8 MV9 MR7 Treasure: Golden flange (50 GP).

7. Shaltromo and Apprentices

Spoor: An ersatz shrine of ruin, e.g. dead flowers before a portrait with the eyes torn out.

An old man, pale, with white hair in a bun, and a black withered mouth wears a tattered vest hanging with fetishes. His holy symbol is a ruined child's doll, through which he works the witchcraft of the Pickled Prince. He is accompanied by two youths bearing wicker baskets of mushrooms and catacomb berries. Shaltromo will not act rashly, seeking help from reinforcements if overmatched.

Shaltromo Cleric 3 (14) AC8 #A1 Dam: by spell. MV12 MR6 Spells: *Reveal Soul* (as *detect evil*), *Shield of Memories* (those who attack relive the memories of their worst humiliation, effect as *Sanctuary*), *Induce Crushing Despair* (as *Hold Person*). Treasure: pearl encrusted fetish bandolier 150gp.

2 **Apprentices** Cleric 1 (4) AC9 #A1 Dam: cudgel 1d6 or spell. MV12 MR6 Spells: Apprentice 1: *Twilight* (as a melancholy light), Apprentice 2: *Visage of Senescence* (glimpse your future decrepitude as *fear*)

8. Explorers

Spoor: Crust of bread and paper wrappings.

Two figures ride a zebra striped caterpillar beast. The man in front wears a leonine mask with a great spear at his back, the woman behind a mask with a conical hat. Both wear rich damask robes. Two others in plainer robes and simpler masks follow on foot, bearing heavy packs. The group belong to the Explorer's Guild. They have traveled from Zyan Above, hoping to find the tunnel (area 29) that an ancient map suggested once led into the White Jungle from the Inquisitor's Theater. Ulilamamo will assume anyone not wearing a mask is guildless scum and expect them to prostrate themselves before him and show proper fawning respect.

Ulilamamo Fighter 2 (11) AC4 Dam: Great Spear 1d8+1 MV9 MR10. Treasure: Mask and finery (125 gp), Lacquered Armor (splint) 150gp, Ring with lavender pearl 150gp.

Maneshaneru Magic-user 3 (6) AC9 Dam: Night Terror (dagger+1) 1d4+1 + save vs. spells or suffer waking nightmares 1 turn (4 charges remaining) MV12 MR10 Spells: *Unseen Servant*, *Magic Missile*, *Mirror Image*. Potion of slipperiness 10' splash. Treasure: Mask and finery (125 gp), Copper Necklace (75 GP), and a map which shows the location of the tunnel in the chasm (see area 28) to the south of the Ruins of the Inquisitor's Theater and gives direction for how to get from the other side of the tunnel to the Temple of the Lamia in hex F13 of the Depths.

Caterpillar Beast HD3 (15) AC7 #A2 Dam: Claws 2-7 MV15 MR10.

2 **Apprentice Explorers** F1 (5) AC7 Dam Spear 1d6 MV9 MR8.