

# UNDERWORLD LORE

No. 4, Vol. 1

AUGUST 2014



IO PAN

  
**EIGLOPHIAN LODGE**

*[gorgonmilk.blogspot.com](http://gorgonmilk.blogspot.com)*

I am borne  
To death on the horn  
Of the Unicorn.



ALEISTER CROWLEY  
“Hymn to Pan” (1913)



# THREE DEAD GODS

by GAVIN NORMAN

*Illustration by Erol Otus from the back cover of Deities & Demigods (TSR, 1980)*

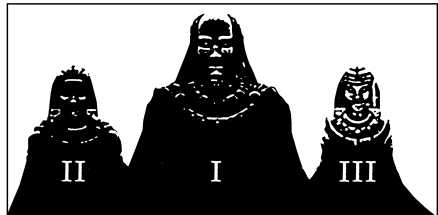
## INTRODUCTION

Gods are immortal and rarely die the true death that men do. Yet they can experience a sort of spiritual expiration. So long as their cults survive and remember them, they will retain some measure of power within the world of mortals and be an active force there. When a god is either slain or succumbs to Time and is forgotten—an inevitability, for all mortals are pitiless and fickle—he will find himself cast out, adrift in the astral dimension and barred from returning to his temples and shrines, if any remain. This astral afterlife of a “dead” and drifting god is without end. He will spend much of his time in torpor—dreaming and becoming lost and enlabyrinthed within his own mezzoglunes<sup>1</sup>. Some fools—greedy magic-users and their ilk—will attempt to seek out these drowsy, neglected deity-remnants in order to obtain the esoteric lore their minds may still contain. Of course, such dubious ventures are ill-advised and highly dangerous.—GG

I. AMMON THRAX

II. NUMATHOTH

III. PANATHOTH



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<sup>1</sup> See page 46.

## AMMON THRAX

**Symbol:** A grinning black moon crossing a yellow sun

**Alignment:** Chaotic

**Movement:** 120' (40')

**Armor Class:** -5

**Hit Points (Hit Dice):** 100 hp (15 HD)

**Attacks:** Infinite

**Damage:** None (energy drain)

**Save:** M15

**Morale:** 12

**Treasure:** None

**XP:** 2,400

Slaughtered ingloriously by the god of the rising sun, as punishment for his playful meddling with the tedious order of the cosmic cycle, Ammon Thrax now resides as a psychic waft in the astral plane. His consciousness is dormant and diffuse, but could potentially be reawoken by planar travellers who stumble upon the obscure astral backwater in which he drifts.

Those encountering the remnant of Ammon Thrax perceive the godlet's presence as a subtle black tint, covering a one mile diameter area, amidst the otherwise featureless expanse of the astral greyness. Those entering the darkened area must save versus spells or hear the voice of the dead god cackling merrily in their minds. The spells *commune* and *contact other plane*, when cast in the midst of Ammon Thrax's psychic echo, may be used to reawaken the godlet and to communicate with him. During life Ammon Thrax was at the best of times erratic, but in death his mind imprint is chaotic and prone to rage—a reaction roll should be made each round characters interact with him.

Once awoken the godlet is able (if he chooses—see reaction table) to attack all beings within his area. A normal attack roll is made, with success draining one level of life energy from the target. The substance of Ammon Thrax is now so diffuse that it can only be harmed by dimensional magic (physical spells such as *fireball* have no effect) or by weapons with a +3 or greater enchantment.

If the awoken form of Ammon Thrax were to be channelled into a more substantial plane of existence, it could be manipulated to cause astronomical mischief one last time, before dissipating for all eternity. The *gate* spell may, for example, be able to achieve this.



Dagger by Dave Trampier (1954-2014)



## AMMON THRAX Reaction Table

### 2d6 Result

2	<i>Friendly:</i> Babbles telepathically about cosmic cycles and the joy to be gained from derailing them. Obscure astronomical lore may be imparted in this way.
3–5	<i>Indifferent:</i> Merely cackles.
6–7	<i>Neutral:</i> Doubles in size—if left alone, the awoken remnant of Ammon Thrax will expand to encompass vast areas of the astral plane.
8–11	<i>Unfriendly:</i> Attacks all within range.
12	<i>Hostile:</i> Doubles in size and attacks all within range.



Panel from *Marada the She-Wolf* by Chris Claremont and John Bolton

## NUMATHOTH

**Symbol:** A finger beneath an eye, looking upwards

**Alignment:** Chaotic (originally Neutral)

**Movement:** 60' (20')

**Armor Class:** 9

**Hit Points (Hit Dice):** 100 hp (15 HD)

**Attacks:** 1 (bite)

**Damage:** 2d6

**Save:** M15

**Morale:** 10

**Treasure:** None

**XP:** 2,400

Numathoth's decapitated head floats aimlessly on the intractable currents of the astral plane. The whereabouts of his torso and limbs is a matter which he endlessly contemplates as he drifts powerless through the astral mists, as is the exact reason for his dismemberment and disposal in this manner. It is only due to the near-timelessness of the astral plane that Numathoth has partly survived this ordeal.

In life the petty god took on a panoply of wondrous forms. In quasi-death his transformative abilities are nullified, and his head appears as a stern man, dressed in the Egyptian nemes head-dress. The head of Numathoth is of giant proportions, measuring 50' in diameter. The gore of his decapitation still seeps from his cloven neck, leaving a trail of blood and neural fluid through the vasts of the astral plane. Astral travellers may come across these remains, and the perseverant may be able to follow them to their source.

Over the course of the millennia in which his head has drifted in solitude, Numathoth has been driven quite insane. Alongside his thoughts of recovering his body, he is obsessed with visions of cosmic apocalypse and bouts of raving glossolalia. Those who come within several astral miles of the head may gain a forewarning of the ex-god's presence due to his deranged bellowings.

In combat the petty god is virtually defenceless, as he has no means of propelling himself or directing his course of movement—he drifts powerless on the astral winds. Anyone who comes into melee range may be attacked by his gnashing teeth, but otherwise he presents a helpless target.

Numathoth has one but power at his disposal—the breath of gnostic revelation. In former times, his loyal disciples sought after this wondrous power and its enlightening potency. Now, however, its effects are somewhat more deleterious. The breath of Numathoth extends in a 60' radius cloud around his head, and

once every 2 combat rounds he can direct the breath against targets in a 30' area up to 200' distant. Characters engulfed in his breath must save versus breath weapon or suffer one of the following effects, selected at random.

### NUMATHOTH Breath Weapon Table

#### 1d6 Result

1	<i>Feeblemind.</i>
2	Horroric visions render the character permanently insane.
3	A revelation about the true nature of the cosmos causes the character to change alignment.
4	A prophetic vision has the effects of a <i>quest</i> spell.
5	<i>Phantasmal killer.</i>
6	Cosmic tranquility comes over the character, WIS permanently increased by 1 (max 19).

### NUMATHOTH Reaction Table

**Note:** Reaction not influenced by actions or attributes of encountered characters.

#### 1d12 Result

1-2	<i>Friendly:</i> Implores those encountered to help recover his body and restore him to his former status.
3-5	<i>Indifferent:</i> Suggests that characters approach and accept the gift of his gnostic breath.
6-7	<i>Neutral:</i> Speaking in tongues, gnashing teeth and rolling eyes.
8-11	<i>Unfriendly:</i> Lets out a blast of his breath to discourage approach.
12	<i>Hostile:</i> Blasts approaching characters with his breath and screams threats and prophecies of doom.



Managerie by Dave Trampier

## PANATHOTH

**Symbol:** A tongue of fire

**Alignment:** Lawful

**Movement:** 120' (40')

**Armor Class:** 3 (-4)

**Hit Points (Hit Dice):** 45 hp (8 HD)

**Attacks:** 2

**Damage:** 3d4

**Save:** M17

**Morale:** 11

**Treasure:** Chariot and golden books of truth—see below

**XP:** 1,060

There was a time when every word which was spoken by sentient beings throughout the multiverse was fastidiously recorded in an endless collection of tiny golden books which were kept in the imperial library of Had-Phanon, the five-dimensional hyper-pyramid of wisdom. The books could be looked up in the great marble index by topic (in one of several flat infinities of categorisation) or by the name, planetary origin or epoch of the speaker. The gods made the contents of the library accessible in full to any visitors to the sacred pyramid—a gesture of great generosity, but one which was in time realised to be of very little practicality, due to the general unavailability of advanced planar travel.

It was thus decided that, as a service to kings, sages, prophets and clergy on all known planes of existence, the books of the library would be made available on lesser worlds by a process of written order. A circulating library, carrying the requested books to their destination and retrieving them after the agreed timespan, was instituted, under the precise eye of the godlet Panathoth—who was crowned queen of the circulating library.

Given time enough to send an order to the sacred library, and to receive the desired transcripts, the veracity of any statement could be substantiated. These were times of justice and careful wording.

As is the way of things, the glorious days of knowledge and truth were crushed under wheels of war and entropy. Had-Phanon was annihilated, along with its library, and the godlet Panathoth was lost. Aeons have now passed, and the existence of the golden library has receded to obscure legend, known only to the most learned of sages.

However, by a twist of fate, not all of the golden books were destroyed. At the time of the destruction of Had-Phanon the circulating library was in transit after making a collection of books from the planet Trill, and became stranded in the

astral plane. To this day Panathoth drifts unconscious in the golden chariot of the circulating library, bearing with her the last extant golden books of truth, which number in several hundred thousands. If encountered, she may be awoken.

Panathoth herself takes the permanent guise of a young, stern woman dressed in Egyptian garb. Her eyes are a hypnotic pink.

With the sacred library destroyed, and her existence long forgotten, the powers of Panathoth are greatly reduced. However she still commands the golden books in her possession and can, in times of emergency, enlist their aid in battle. When in danger, Panathoth can cause the books to float and whirl around the chariot, or around her person, in a protective field of 10' radius. When the field is active she has an armour class of -4 against missile attacks and a +4 bonus to saving throws against external forces. Anyone attempting to pass through the shield must make a saving throw versus spells or suffer 4d6 damage and be propelled 100-600 yards in a random direction.

Aside from the protective aid of the whirling books, Panathoth has no divine powers, no weapons, and attacks with her bare hands.

The chariot of Panathoth can travel at miraculous speed, especially through the astral plane. Only those with magical means of transportation stand any chance of being able to pursue the godlet.

### PANATHOTH Reaction Table

**Note:** Result modified by Intelligence.

#### 2d6 Result

2	<i>Friendly:</i> Offers aid in the form of astral transportation or knowledge from her books.
3-5	<i>Indifferent:</i> Speaks in the formal tones of a librarian. May be persuaded to lend books.
6-7	<i>Neutral:</i> Circles characters in her chariot, inspecting them.
8-11	<i>Unfriendly:</i> Raises the protective shield of books and departs.
12	<i>Hostile:</i> Raises the protective shield of books and charges the chariot at those present.



**GAVIN NORMAN** is the author of *The Iron City* blog as well as the magical resources *Theorems & Thaumaturgy* and *The Complete Vrainancer*. Both titles are available for purchase at RPGNow. Of English descent, he currently resides in Berlin and is co-creating a weird wilderness setting called *Dolmenwood* with Greg Gorgonmilk. [[the-city-of-iron.blogspot.com](http://the-city-of-iron.blogspot.com)]



# MAIL ROOM

Dear Editor:

Do you ever get that not-so-fresh feeling after destroying an entire village of orcs right down to the last bawling orcling? How do you refresh yourself?

*Up yours,*

Lefty Cheever

**Taverntoss**

OH MAN, do I ever Lefty. I find that only a fresh glass of Quaggoth's Quim Cream Ale™ will really bring me back to the material plane after a long day of slaughter. Quaggoth's Quim™—Bottled at the source.

Dear Mr Gorgonmilk:

Please include more ogre jokes in future issues.

*Yours,*

Ogre Lover

**Gump-under-the-Hill**

Yeah... That's not going to happen, O.L. Ogre jokes are the only things that stink worse than ogres themselves. Only orcs seem to think that shit is funny.

Dear Sir:

In my wanderings across this great realm I have never chanced upon such an exquisite tome of knowledge as your humble publicaiton. Why, just last week your second issues' helpful listing of various dungeon ailments helped me correctly diagnose a case of the lucky shits in one of my

hirelings! Thank you, *Underworld Lore*, for being such a providential resource to adventurers of all stripes!

*Signed,*

Hodad Grunyon

**Thistlethorp**

Glad we could help, Mr Grunyon. Please remember to wash those coins thoroughly.

Dear Gorgonmilk:

There are not enough hot elf chicks in your magazine.

*Signed,*

Sir Handy

**Walthamthorp**

I couldn't agree more, Sir. Please consider the next couple pages UL's way of making up for this gorg error.

Dear Editor:

The entry on Tonya and her minions was absolutely disgusting. I felt violated just reading that filth. Who comes up with this stuff? Mr Schmeer is one sick puppy. Please cancel my subscription immediately.

*Harrumph,*

Ms Priss

**Upper Stickbum**

Terribly sorry to lose you as a reader, Ms Priss. Mr Schmeer is indeed an incurable sadist and necrophile—his resume was hand-etched on baby-leather! We just couldn't pass up a writer with those kinds of credentials.

## HOT ELF CHICK #1



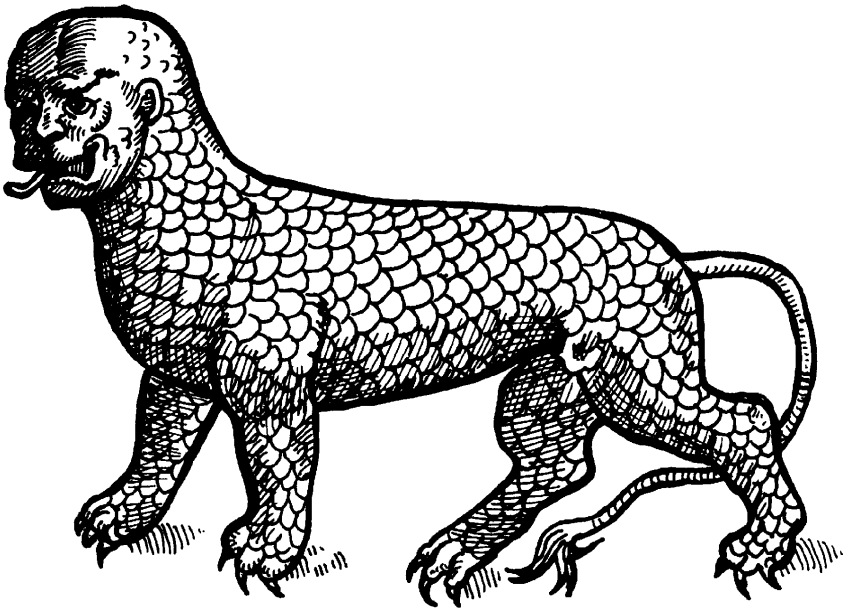
**Jeff Dee** (b. 1961) was the youngest artist in TSR history when he began his work at the age of eighteen. He went on to illustrate numerous materials for D&D including interior artwork for manuals and covers/illustrations for adventure modules. Some of his most recognized work can be found in the manual *Deities & Demigods*.

## HOT ELF CHICK #2



Larry Elmore (b. 1948) joined the staff of TSR as its first professional illustrator in November 1981 and created artwork for modules, game books and novels, as well as paintings for posters and calendars. Elmore created *SnarfQuest*, a comic which appeared in *Dragon* from 1983 to 1989.





# GOETIAN MAGICK

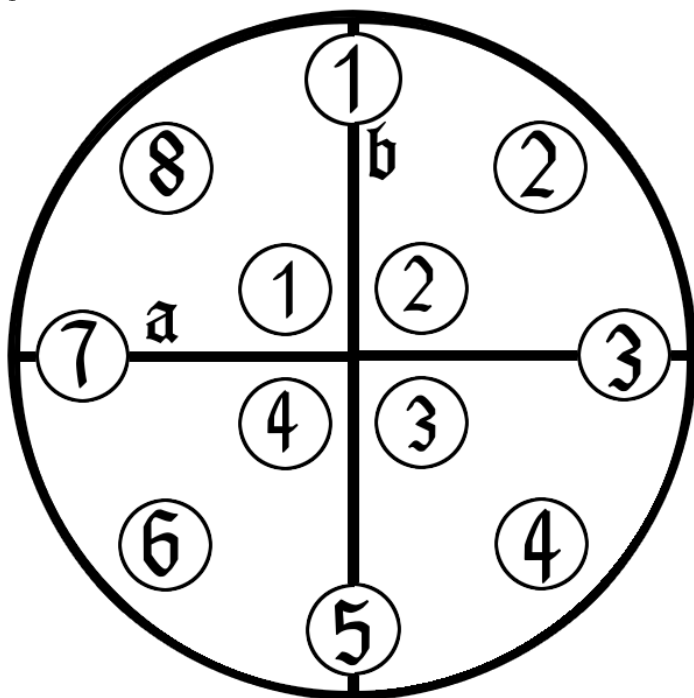
## RANDOM GENERATORS

by CHRISTIAN STURKE

(AKA rorschachhamster)

**Goetia** (Medieval Latin, anglicised *goety*, from Greek γοητεία *goitia* "sorcery") refers to a practice which includes the invocation of angels or of demons, and usage of the term in English largely derives from the 17th-century grimoire *The Lesser Key of Solomon*. It contains descriptions of the evocation of seventy-two demons, famously edited by Aleister Crowley in 1904 as *The Book of the Goetia of Solomon the King*.

If you ever needed more spirits like those that are described in the Goetia, here is a generator for a seal and the accompanying spirit.



Main position

1d8: 1 = N 2 = NE 3 = E 4 = SE 5 = S 6 = SW 7 = W 8 = NW

Minor position

1d4: 1 = NE-Center 2 = SE-Center 3 = SW-Center 7 = W 8 = NW-Center

Axis of reflection

1d6: 1 = E/W(a) 2 = N/S(b) 3 = Both 4-6 = None

Roll 1d<sub>5+1</sub> times for Name and 1d<sub>3</sub> times for main position parts of the seal, 1d<sub>3</sub> times for minor position parts of the seal, 1d<sub>4</sub> times for lines/forms that connect them. After that, roll for axis of reflection and mirror the whole seal on that line, on both, or not.

Roll 1d<sub>4+1</sub> times on powers/domain and once on the title table. Roll three times on the form table and you are ready.

1d30	Syllable	Part of Seal	Lines of Seal	Powers/Domains
1	A	Small Circle(s) 1d4	Triangle	Invisibility
2	Ag	Medium Circle(s) 1d3	Pentagram	Divine
3	Am	Big Circle	Square	Hidden secrets
4	Ar	Small cross 1d4	Polygon (1d6+4 Sides)	Hidden treasures
5	Ba	Medium cross 1d3	Wiggly line	Return of the lost
6	Bar	Big cross	Sinous line	Love
7	Bas	Small clubs 1d3	Long curve	Friendship
8	Be	Medium clubs 1d3	Zigzag	Honors
9	Bu	Big clubs	90° angle	Creates
10	El	Small I 1d4	45° angle	War
11	Er	Medium I 1d3	135° angle	Weapons etc.
12	Es	Big I	Septagram	Diseases
13	For	Small S 1d4	Hexagram	Languages
14	Ig	Medium S 1d3	Straight line	Oratory
15	Im	Big S	Straight line	Full of wit
16	In	Small U 1d4	Straight line	Crafts
17	Je	Medium U 1d3	Straight line	Astronomy
18	Le	Big U	Two parallel lines	Divination
19	Leth	Small X 1d4	Three parallel lines	General science
20	Mar	Medium X 1d3	Hook	All sciences
21	O	Big X	Loop	Some sciences
22	On	Small arrow 1d4	Loops	Philosophy
23	Pa	Medium arrow 1d3	Crescent moon	Herbs etc.
24	Ra	Big arrow	Meander	Transmuted metals
25	Sam	Small T 1d4	Winding line	Past/present/future
26	Si	Medium T 1d3	Angled line	Familiar
27	Tos	Big T	Four-leaf clover	Logic
28	Tri	Small spirals 1d4	Heart	Stones etc.
29	Va	Medium spirals 1d3	Spade	Mechanics
30	Vass	Big spiral	Diamond	Magic

<b>1d6</b>	<b>He is a</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Legions of Spirits</b>
1	Great	King	66
2	Mighty	Prince	31
3	Great and Mighty	Duke	30
4	Great and Powerful	Marquis	26
5	Great and Strong	Earl	2W10+8
6	Mighty, Great and Strong	President	1W10+9

<b>1d30</b>	<b>He showeth himself in the form of a</b>	<b>With/and</b>	<b>and</b>
1	n Angel	a Fiery Tail	and then into Human shape doth he change himself at the Request of the Master
2	n Archer	a Leopard's head	carrying a Bow and Quiver
3	n Armed Soldier	a Lion's face	carrying a bright and sharp Sword in his hand
4	n Ass	a Man's face	carrying a cruel Viper in his hand
5	Bird Phoenix	a Serpent's tail	carrying a Firebrand in his Hand, wherewith he setteth cities, castles, and great Places, on fire
6	Black Crane	an Ass's head	carrying a Goshawk upon his fist
7	Cat	bearing a Viper in his hand	carrying a Lance, an Ensign, and a Serpent.
8	Crow	bellowing	causing Trumpets, and all manner of Musical Instruments to be heard, but not soon or immediately
9	Dog	clad in Green	having the Voice of a Child
10	Dragon	Dog's teeth beset in a head like a Raven	he hath a Book in his right hand
11	Goodly Knight	Eyes Flaming and Fiery, and a most Terrible Countenance	He hath a great Voice, and roareth at his first coming

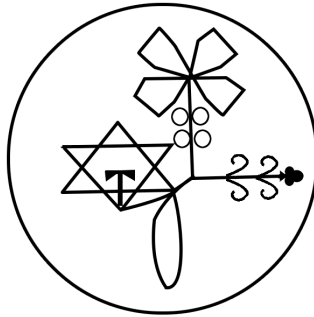
1d30	He showeth himself in the form of a	With/and	and
12	Great Bull	fluttering about the Circle	he holdeth in his Right Hand two Great Serpents hissing
13	Great Lion	Goose's Foot	He rideth on a pale horse with trumpets and other kinds of musical instruments playing before him
14	Gryphon	great Noises	He speaketh with a high and comely Voice.
15	n Hart	a Crown most glorious upon his head	after the command of the Master of the Exorcism he putteth on Human shape, and that very beautiful.
16	Horse	Great Teeth, and two Horns	He speaketh with a Comely Voice
17	Man	Hare's Tail	rideth on a Viper
18	Mermaid	He never speaketh the truth unless he be compelled	riding on a Black Horse
19	Mighty Dromedary	He singeth many sweet notes	riding on a Great Camel
20	Mighty Raven	His Feet are webbed like those of a Goose	riding on a Two-headed Dragon
21	Monster	Lion's Head	riding on an Infernal Beast like a Dragon
22	n Ox	Red Clothing	riding upon a Bear
23	Sea-Monster	sitting in a Chariot of Fire	Riding upon a crocodile
24	Soldier	There goeth before him also an Host of Spirits, like Men with Trumpets and well sounding Cymbals, and all other sorts of Musical Instruments	riding upon a Gryphon
25	Stork	Thou must in no wise let him approach too near unto thee, lest he do thee damage by his Noisome Breath.	Sitting upon a Dromedary
26	Strong Man	Three heads	sitting upon a pale-coloured Horse
27	Toad	Wings	Speaketh hoarsley

1d30	He showeth himself in the form of a	With/and	and
28	Ugly Viper	Wings of a Gryphon	speaking with a voice hoarse, but yet subtle
29	Wolf	a Ducal Crown on his head	vomiting out of his mouth flames of fire
30	Xenopilus	many Countenances, all Men's and Women's Faces	yet mild in appearance

Example: Samsimaropa

2 Major position parts: 4 small spirals in 3, 1 small clubs in 3  
 2 Minor position parts: Big T in 4, 4 small circles in 2  
 4 connecting lines: 90° angle, four-leaf clover, loop, hexagram  
 No mirror

5 powers/domains: War, Transmuted Metals, All Sciences, divine, past/present/future




*Samsimaropa is a Great and Strong Duke. He showeth himself in the form of an armed Soldier, with a Lion's face, and riding upon a gryphon. His office is War and to declare things Past and to Come, he teaches all Liberal Sciences, and giveth True Answers of Things Divine, if commanded. He can turn all metals into Gold. He governeth 35 Legions of Spirits, and his Character of obedience is this, which thou must wear when thou callest him forth unto appearance.*



**CHRISTIAN STURKE** is the author of the wealth of great RPG resources that is the *Rorschach Hamster* blog. He's a regular contributor to OSR publications, and we are super-stoked to have his Crowleyan demon-maker on exhibit in UL. [rorschachhamster.wordpress.com]

**ASE1**  
FOR BASIC AND  
ADVANCED GAMES

**Dungeon Module ASE1**  
**Anomalous Subsurface Environment**  
City of Benefix and Dungeon Level 1  
by Patrick Welmore  
AN ADVENTURE FOR CHARACTER LEVELS 1-2



Illustrated by Brian "Glad" Thomas and Andy "ATOM" Taylor

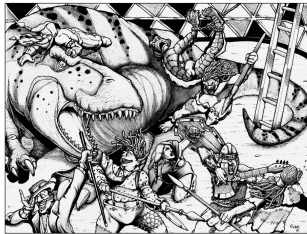
For those who shied back in their day and get your gonzo on! Bikes, gys, and space-robot! Avoid the land and the clear in the deep ground under the ground. This module describes the design and world around the City of Benefix, the City of Benefix, and the far level of the megadungeon that resides just below: the Anomalous Subsurface Environment.

Henchman Abuse

© 2011 Patrick Welmore

**ASE2-3**  
FOR BASIC AND  
ADVANCED GAMES

**Dungeon Module ASE2-3**  
**Anomalous Subsurface Environment**  
Dungeon Levels 2 & 3  
by Patrick Welmore  
AN ADVENTURE FOR CHARACTER LEVELS 2-4



Illustrated by Brian "Glad" Thomas and Guelle L.

The Anomalous Subsurface Environment is more than just robots and lasers - it's clowns and dinosaurs, too! Levels 2 and 3 of the critically ignored gonzo megadungeon are finally available - with more clones, more bikes, and more over-the-top weirdness to die along beneath the surface of the post-apocalyptic Earth!

Henchman Abuse

© 2012 Patrick Welmore

**What do morlocks, dinosaurs, robots, and clowns have in common?**

**ABSOLUTELY NOTHING!**

**IT'S TIME TO GET YOUR GONZO ON!**

*"This is one of the best products ever made. Go buy it now."*  
Bryce Lynch, of tenfootpole.org

*"One of the finest OSR-derived megadungeons"*  
James Maliszewski, of grognardia.blogspot.com

*"It is awesome"*  
Tavis Allison, muleabides.wordpress.com contributor and Autarch co-founder

*"One of those products people will remember fondly 20 years from now"*  
Gabor Lux

### **Anomalous Subsurface Environment**

<http://www.lulu.com/spotlight/PatW>  
<http://henchmanabuse.blogspot.com>



*Wild dogs surround a displacer beast carcass. Illo by Dave Trampier.*





# LAM

*by Michael Raston  
Illustration by Darcy Perry*

Lam is infinitely curious.

Lam does not comprehend physical life.

Lam views man as a child would view a jellyfish washed up on a riverbank, happy to prod its intriguing translucent flesh with needle reeds.

Lam is many. Lam's influence and effect on a world grows with time once Lam has been summoned. Lam will experiment on a world until nothing is left and Lam is once again staring at the infinite oblivion.

Lam exists in all beings' subconscious, Lam is not a figment of the imagination—Lam literally exists in the sub-physical realm of the subconscious.

Lam will never understand man.

Lam is so transcendent of man's physical reality that any physical being meeting Lam will be reduced to absolute terror.

Lam can never enter the physical world unless the very fabric of physical reality is rent asunder by powerful magics. Doing so will allow that which lurks deep in all men's minds to flow like an unstoppable ooze into the physical realm. Doing so means the eventual destruction of the world.

So why would any man wish to bring Lam to his world? Lam can change the rules of reality; Lam can provide his summoner with items of power outside the scope of imagination.

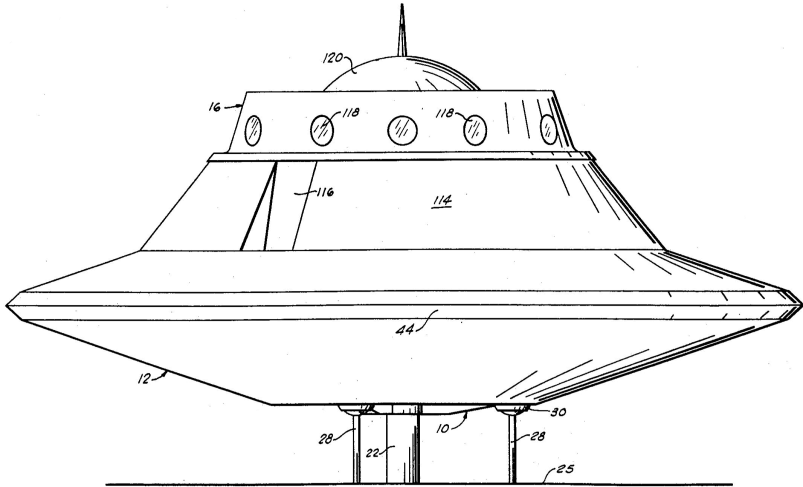
### **How to Summon Lam**

The details of Lam Summoning are vague, and may change from world to world. The result of the summoning will always be the same though. A cabal (d6+4) of magic-users of at least 6th level need to make a conscious decision to devote the next d10 years to unlocking the mysteries of Lam Summoning. The process involves the cabal becoming more and more detached from the physical realm as they delve deeper into their subconscious. Psychedelic drugs, sex rituals and meditations will all be employed for this goal. The two most important aspects of the Summoning are: steeling one's mind to deal with the shock of encountering Lam and allowing ones non-physical astral form to descend deep enough into the ocean of the subconscious to actually encounter Lam. In the final year of the research process there is 20% chance that each magic-user may fall into a never-ending coma and a 10% chance of encountering Lam early, turning that magic-user into a raving lunatic. The research will continue as long as at least two magic-users are unaffected by the perils of the final year.

### **Results of Summoning Lam**

The most noticeable result to the general populace of the world where Lam has been summoned is the sudden appearance of technology just outside of the grasp of that world's previous scientific/magical prowess. Odd metallic vehicles will be seen rumbling through trees at a distance, or shooting across the sky in the middle of the night. Rumors will begin to surface of these bizarre metallic vehicles abducting men and women and large headed humanoid silhouettes conducting experiments. Particular power groups on the world's stage will suddenly have a staggering array of new, obscenely powerful weapons. The rumors of sightings will grow from the fringe until the entire world is in the grip of a Lam-induced hysteria. Anyone encountering Lam will not properly be able to describe the experience and will forever have a quantumly-shifted view of the universe around them. The original cabal responsible for the summoning will become obscenely powerful as they learn to change the very fabric of reality to suit their own needs. Ultimately Lam's experiments will grow in grandiosity until the entire population is held on

a metallic bench, their mind's probed endlessly as shallow audio-visual stimuli is beamed into their minds. This includes the original summoning cabal, who will witness the final scenes of their world imploding out of existence into the universe's black ocean of the subconscious.



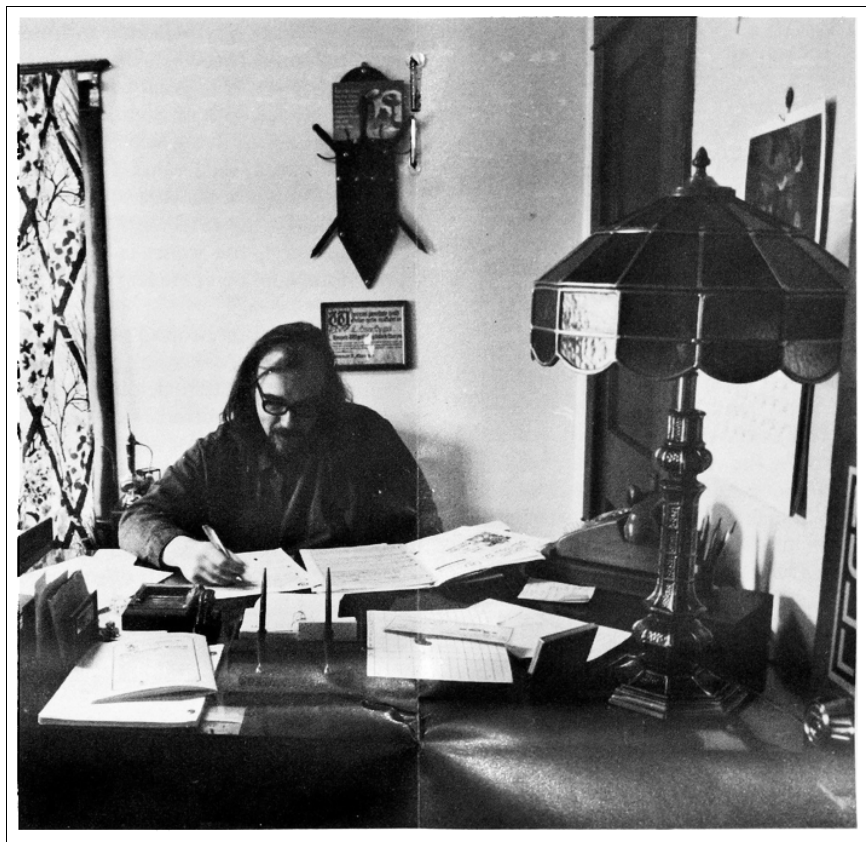
*A Lamian conveyance.*



**MICHAEL RASTON** is the author of *The Lizard Man Diaries*—a highly imaginative blog with a wealth of materials for B/X D&D. He just published a weird and wonderful little module called *The Towers of the Were-Toads* which also features his suitably old school style renderings. You can download it for free at his blog. [[lizardmandiaries.blogspot.com.au](http://lizardmandiaries.blogspot.com.au)]



**DARCY PERRY** is described by Grant Stone: "Besides being a dungeon master, Darcy is a master bluesman, although he doesn't strike me as being particularly blue. Perhaps it's the same as how horror writers are always happy and comedians are miserable." He's also a fantastic illustrator, with many pieces due to appear in *Petty Gods*. [[hitstokill.blogspot.com](http://hitstokill.blogspot.com)]



*Above: Securely ensconced at the head of the stairs, TSR's founder, Gary Gygax, is usually found poring over scrolls and manuscripts, when not actually producing new ones.*



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a *Brief Interlude* with  
**PAOLO GRECO**  
*Dreaded Author* of the  
**CHTHONIC CODEX**

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The *Cththonic Codex* (Lost Pages, 2014) is an exquisitely designed series of sourcebooks for running games in a truly weird, idiosyncratic landscape. Initially released as a trio of PDFs, the physical version of the *Codex*—a collector's boxed set replete with neat dice—has recently been published and

will be making its way out into the world this week. Being of a curious and inquisitive nature, UNDERWORLD LORE poses a few questions to the creator of the *Cththonic Codex*.

UNDERWORLD LORE: What authors and works helped inspire the weird setting of the *Cththonic Codex*?

PAOLO GRECO: The setting does not really have literary inspirations. The explanation is kind of long. And let me touch on a couple of aspects of presentation as they are quite relevant to better frame the *Codex*.

I had the fortune of growing up in Italy and my parents brought me around archaeological sites in Italy and Greece, so I saw a whole lot of old Etruscan, Roman and Greek stones. And I read mythology a lot, especially in primary school (not only Classic), plus studying the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in middle school. Also, Religion is kind of mandatory subject in Italy, and my mom

raised me a Catholic and sent me to Catechism (Saturday school?). We also visited an endless lot of cathedrals and churches. And, being a nerd, I tried to read all about them.

So, that's my appendix N. The only fantasy books I read as a kid were Ursula Le Guin's *A Wizard of Earthsea* and *The Tomb of Atuan* and Italo Calvino's *Cavaliere Inesistente*. I remember very little about the first, but even if consciously there's nothing at all of her writings in *Chthonic Codex*, the second book (*Academia Apocrypha*) is dedicated to Ursula, because she had a really big impact on me. And I just realized that there's a spell in *Academia Apocrypha* that animates an empty armour, so that's Calvino coming up. And I read a handful of Pratchett in the last decade, and another spell that animates a chest, so that's Pratchett: I'm a big fan of the *Night Watch* series, but the only other thing I stole from Pratchett is the habit of writing fantastic stuff to speak about contemporary life. So *Academia Apocrypha* is really influenced by my experience as a postgrad student at Glasgow University, but it's also about other things.

A major impact has been seeing the Nabatean ruins in *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*. The Nabateans hid a society in a desert, and worshipped strange idols (unrelated to the Devouring Idols), and that's a very powerful concept. So ten years later writing DarkMUD in the late nineties I put in a sort of prestige class (before 3E) called the Fire Dervishes that you could only join if you found a specific canyon in a part of a desert... sound familiar? And somehow that becomes a part first of my Inoosh-based *Arcana Unearthed* campaign, which then becomes the springboard of my faux-Italy Western League campaign. I never throw away ideas players like, but keep them around, so it's all been mucking my headspace for a long, long while.

And I spent the past two years reading about chthonic cults and Orphic myths and early Christian mysticism and Coptic underground churches on Wikipedia and other internet sites. And I spent a lot of time in the British Museum in London Alte Museum and the Pergamon Museum in Berlin. The classical collection in the first two are top notch, while in the last they basically built huge rooms where they rebuilt temples they cut and stole from

the Mediterranean, and seeing a big temple inside a bigger room is kind of a mindfuck: bad picture of the Pergamon Altar here:



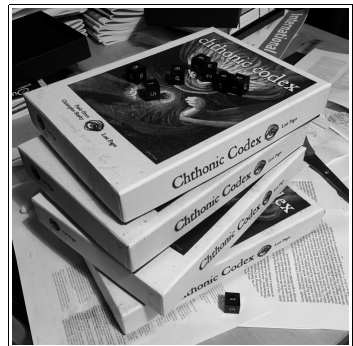
So I have this poster of all the statues of the Pergamon Altar on the wall above the screen, and it's a Titanomachia, and there's this bunch of gods you never heard about, like Eos, and Asteria, and Nyx. And the point is that there's a whole lot of Greek myths and gods that are just too plainly weird for modern tastes, like how Dyonisus was killed and his heart was eaten by a maiden and, poof, she's pregnant and a little Dyonisus is born. Or how the oracular powers of Apollo, which power the Oracle at Delphi, were actually taken from Python, a chthonic god/serpent, and that Apollo simply buried it under a baetylus (a meteorite), and whoever touches the stone gets the oracular powers, and that's the stone in the adyton of the temple in Delphi.

As for the presentation, the book originally was to be a forty-spread concertina book, each with a picture on the verso and some fluff and related crunch on the recto, so that if someone wanted they could fold out the book and have all of it visible at the same time. But I needed to see if it was feasible and so did *Pergamino Barocco* with Roger as a test for the technology. Then I learnt about Coptic binding, so the concertina aspect went away, but all the fluff was to be fragments written in character, and that part of the original

presentation idea was kept. The only part of fluff that is not written in character is written in authorial voice, and it's the part where I write all the possible levels of interpretation on how much the *Codex* is a lie, and whether it's a true description of the game world, a true book in the game world (which in turn might be satirical, fabricated or not) and whether it or its fragments exist materially in our world or not and whether they can be read as a deliberately false description of a campaign setting. In my Chthonic campaigns truth values can change a lot. So, there are a bunch of conflicting myths, and at least three for the origins of the oracle at Delphi, and IIRC they're chronologically not that far apart from each other. So, depending if you believe in religion or not, they're all lies, or only some of them are. And this is important.

**UNDERWORLD LORE:** How is a game set in the *Codex* milieu different from the typical OD&D campaign?

**PAOLO GRECO:** I ran *Codex* only as a "Harry Potter gone weird" setting, with the caveat that I never read or saw *Harry Potter* (except half a movie where there is a griffon chained and cool maps and time travel, but I was not paying much attention). So you have these PCs with a patron that tells them to do things but they are teenagers apt to drunkenness and risk and they get themselves into horrible problems all the time, and since they live in the mystical underworld the weird is everywhere. As a student you try not to get kicked out of school while escaping boredom and chasing interesting magic and whatnot trying not to die or have badwrongfun. And disasters happen, a lot, and change the campaign a lot. So a lot of assumptions about balance and what a game should be about fly out of the window, because the premise of the game is different. For example, rummaging in libraries might result in the PCs finding the equivalent of D&D treasure maps. Or they can just go and loot the school's pharmacy for potions. Or raid a lab. Or join a mysteric cult. Or raid the catacombs where wizards get buried. All the while going around with a goat and a dog on a





leash because sometimes you stumble into something that demands a sacrifice and you would rather not sacrifice a PC.

And there's a domain game too where PCs get to start their own school. But you can also run *Codex* as a megadungeon of sorts: nothing stops your party from going to the Fire Valley and looking at all the things. Except the residents, of course, which will do their best to.

UNDERWORLD LORE: Will there be a Volume IV?

PAOLO GRECO: You mean *Chthonic Codex: Further Fragments*! Sure, I can't resist a chance to alliterate. It will cover topics including:

- what are the spells of the Reformist Necromancers?
- why is it that all Gatekeepers start with an iron flask to trap spirits and demons but in the book there's no spells to bind them?
- all the good drugs, because the original draft for pharmacy was not going to fit in the book and would require much more development to actually publish.
- Stargazers will get to use their Azimuthal Observatories to directly tap starpowers.
- all the amphibians you will ever need
- maenads & goats



The *Chthonic Codex* can be purchased directly from its publisher, Lost Pages, in piecemeal as PDFs or in its entirety in a variety of electronic and physical formats.

[lostpages.storenvy.com/collections/440272-chthonic-codex](http://lostpages.storenvy.com/collections/440272-chthonic-codex)

Paolo's blog—and links to some of his other works, including *Adventure Fantasy Game*—can be found here:

[tsojcanth.wordpress.com](http://tsojcanth.wordpress.com)

# chthonic codex

σωμάτιον χθόνιος

# cryptic creatures

λάθε βιώσα

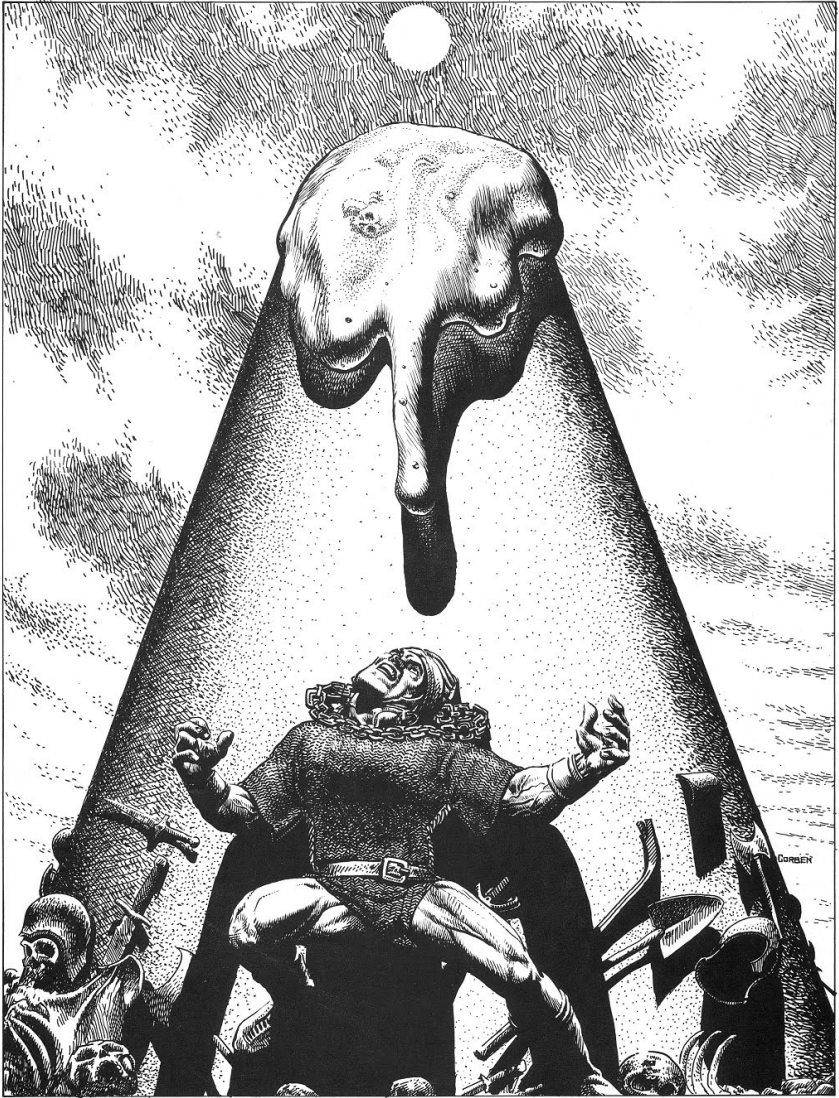
Graclean

Paolo Greco  
Christopher Stanley

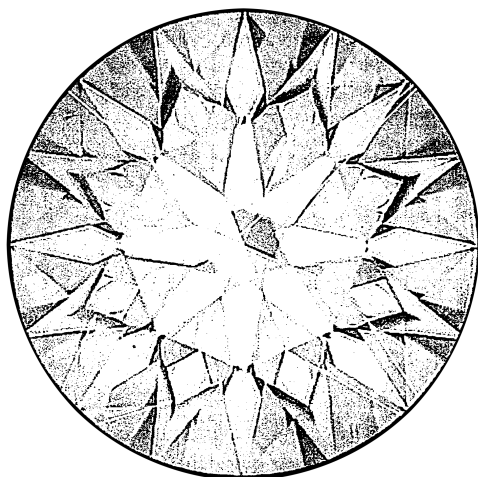


Lost Pages

## ON SALE NOW



*Illustration by Richard Corben*



## OBSCURE SOURCES OF OCCULT POWER

a d12 Table to Tempt and Torment the Hapless Magic-User

<b>1d12</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Author</b>
1	<i>The Ziggurat of Zeerthos</i>	G. S. Smith
2	<i>The Fallen Star</i>	faoladh
3	<i>The 37<sup>th</sup> Stone of Aea</i>	G. Gorgonmilk
4	<i>The Eduxshvara</i>	Logan Knight
5	<i>The Iron Heart</i>	Dani Black
6	<i>The Tail'ngs</i>	Porky
7	<i>The Seven Syrinxes of the Sylphs</i>	Phersv
8	<i>The Eye of Timmir</i>	R. Wheeling
9	<i>The Gibbering Sea</i>	Mark Chance
10	<i>The Grim Octahedron of Marluu</i>	Garrison James
11	<i>The Kourous Sarkophagus</i>	Mr. Todd
12	<i>The Living Chasm</i>	Dyson Logos

## 1 THE ZIGGURAT OF ZEERTHOS

In the desert of Phastia legends speak of an undead scholar of a previous age, entombed in a black monument that stands in a silent and scorched valley. Would-be acolytes who survive the journey to this place and make their way inside the Ziggurat must find a certain room that is said to hold the corpse of Zeerthos, a forgotten pharaoh's court wizard. The building is said to be filled with traps and illusions. Supplicants will find that they cannot cast spells inside the Ziggurat and so must be wise and daring enough to survive.

It is rumoured that those who locate the hidden room that contains Zeerthos' sarcophagus will find it filled with not just treasures from many ages, but the dead bodies of failed female supplicants, kept for his bizarre pleasures.

Nobody knows what the acolyte must promise to this dark figure, but they must whisper their oath and in return they are granted detailed visions of Zeerthos' esoteric rituals. If stories hold true, the acolyte will stay in the Ziggurat for at least ten days in order to receive the undead wizard's wisdom.

The followers of Zeerthos may visit the Ziggurat multiple times as there are insights to be gained by repeat visits. But the path the supplicant follows in the Ziggurat is different each time, and each journey into the ziggurat must be at least ten years from time before. Spell insights 1, 2, or 3 can be gained the first three times, but *Undeath Mastery* is always the last to be learned and only if the previous three have been mastered.

### *Possible Spell Insights*

1. Water Spells (Max. 8 spell levels for rituals to summon/control elementals)
2. Illusion Spells (Max. 12 spell levels for rituals involving illusions)
3. Fire Spells (Max. 6 spell levels for rituals involving fire, flames or elementals)
4. Undeath Mastery Spells (3 spells involving the undead of 5th level or higher)

## 2 THE FALLEN STAR

The Star is a diamond the size of a child's fist, faceted in such a way as to make looking into it a dizzying, self-annihilating experience. Anyone who gazes into it must save (vs. spells or will, whichever is applicable to your system) or suffer the effects of a *confusion* spell until the Fallen Star is removed from his sight. However, whether confused or not, the gazer may also ask questions exactly as if he had cast a *contact other plane* spell. Chaotic creatures or characters who gaze into the Fallen Star must additionally save vs. death (or will) or suffer the effects of a *bestow curse* spell. The chaotic creature or character may choose instead to change alignment to lawful (as if undergoing Atonement) in order to avoid the Curse. Currently, the Fallen Star is hidden deep underneath the Temple of the Celestial Rainbow, guarded by the secretive priests and monks of that lawful order.

The Fallen Star acts as a bridge between the furthest reaches of the Cosmos and the material world. If a *gate* spell (or any other spell which connects the material world with other planes) is cast through the Fallen Star, it will automatically be successful, no matter which entity is the target, and no matter what blocks that entity has set against appearing in the material world. There may be other effects from this primal connection that the Fallen Star has with the outer void, but these could only be found through intensive research, which is forbidden by the Order of the Celestial Rainbow.

When it first arrived in the world, the Star fell from the sky, its impact creating an enormous explosion that destroyed a province of the Old Empire (leading to the fall of that august state) and formed the Skyfall Lake, at the center of which is Skyfall Island. The Fallen Star was found at the highest point of Skyfall Island.

3 THE 37<sup>th</sup> STONE OF AEA

The Stone is a massive, sentient pylon floating in a region of the astral dimension called the Black Spiral Refuge. Magic-users who sleep upon its damp, mossy surface can telepathically enter the mind of the stone and access its (possibly limitless) memories. These memories include a vast archive of eldritch and potentially perilous magics.

Magic-users must be wary of the phantoms that haunt the stone's mind. Delving too deep and running afoul of one of these figments could render the magic-user a mindless husk. Phantoms trade such husks and use them as "clothing" to enter the Material Plane.

*Contemplation of the Boundaries of Physical Forms (W6)*

By means of this spell the magic-user can absorb other creatures into his or her body, often leading to grotesque results. Absorption includes the memories and knowledge of the target. A successful save indicates that the target is constitutionally incompatible with the magic-user—in which case both parties take 1d6 points of damage.

4 THE EDUXSHVARA (THE CRONE'S SOUP STONE)

*The mausoleum stood empty but for a few broken chests and the enthroned corpse, its face withered into a mocking leer. Possessed of a mind for desecration Jacobus turned towards the throne. And stopped.*

*Settled amidst the decayed ruin of the dead king's belly sat a stone. Carved mouths covered its multifaceted black surface, and in the flickering light of Jacobus' torch they seemed to gulp at the air like suffocating fish.*

*"Consume us", they whispered. "Consume us, and in turn your enemies shall be consumed by the void."*

*Kneeling before the throne, Jacobus pushed his hands into the crumbling mess of preserved entrails, raising the stone before his face. The guttering torch by his side danced over the mouths as he opened his own.*

*“Consume us...”*

Roughly two inches in diameter, the stone will be found in the belly of a desiccated corpse or skeletal remains. They may be surrounded in glory, squalor, self-imposed imprisonment, the Eduxshvara's potential can take many paths. But when found the result is always the same.

Upon discovering the stone a magic-user will hear its whispered promise of power, and if unwilling, must save vs. magic to resist. Once swallowed the stone will settle in the magic-user's stomach, who from then on will need to eat at least 3 meals per day to appease it. For every two meals the magic-user misses, the stone will devour 1hp worth of his flesh from within, with the cacophonous whispers only he can hear providing fair warning. (*“feedusfeeduswe'rehungrysohungry...”*)

Every time the magic-user casts a spell, there is a 10% chance of the stone acting as a conduit, causing an enhanced effect agreed upon by both the referee and player. In general this could be something as simple as double duration/area/damage, but if a 1 is rolled something pretty spectacular should happen. This chance is increased by 5% if they eat immediately before casting, 10% if it is the flesh of someone of the same race, and another 10% if it is the flesh of something inherently magical. (So a human magic-user eating the flesh of another human magic-user before casting has a 35% chance of the stone acting as a conduit)

Each time it acts as a conduit, the stone will consume the magic-user's essence over the following week, effectively aging them by one



year. This is not painful, and unless they are actively checking themselves the player should not even be given a hint of what is happening until they have aged by at least five years. The stone will not willingly leave its host, and a player trying to remove it will soon discover it has increased in mass since they first swallowed it.

*(“Are we not kind? Live on with us..”)*

Once the magic-user has aged by ten years, regardless of level, the stone will confide the secret of the Drowning Kiss.

The Magic-User can steal the vitality of any other intelligent being, regaining 1d4 years of life per HD of the being, turning them into a putrescent mess in the process. However, this requires them to be alive and helpless for 2 rounds per HD, so it is not often a wise thing to try in combat. But if they were sleeping...

## 5 THE IRON HEART

All initiates into the Order of the Iron Heart spend their first years studying the alchemy of metallurgy, in addition to whatever clerical or menial tasks appointed by their magister. The first true work of magic by an initiate is the creation of their Iron Heart, the Star Regulus, out of iron and other, stranger materials. It is with this talisman that they begin the second stage of their training.

The initiate begins to train with their talisman in preparation for the final rite that completes their training. The first exercises include sensing the location of their talisman without sight. Once this has been mastered, the initiate will then practice sitting across a room from their talisman while visualizing their Star Regulus moving across the floor towards them. This has been mastered when the talisman begins obeying these cognitive commands.

The final test is a 24-hour ordeal that requires the initiate to keep their talisman in perfect, mid-air suspension under the supervision

of the magister. Once the initiate can manipulate all the gravitational force around their Star Regulus they are ready for the final step the process—Tuning.

The process of Tuning begins with the physical restraint of the initiate-to-be-adept supine in the ritual chamber. At this point certain orders allow for numbing drugs or ointments to be applied to the initiate, but tradition dictates that this procedure be performed WITHOUT drugs of any kind so that the initiate's mind is absolutely clear.

The skin of the breast-bone is sliced open to the sternum, spread and held open with hooks. With the sternum exposed a chisel is applied to bone, shaping a depression deep enough to hold the initiate's Star Regulus. The talisman is then hammered into the depression. Once the installation is complete, the initiate's muscle and skin are carefully sown back together.

Following the Tuning the initiate is now know as an adept, a Gyromancer.

The Order of the Iron Heart has several compounds spread across the land. Entry into its mysteries is always begun at an early age, during adolescence, after some degree of observation by members of the Order that the adolescent is a "child of promise"—possessing some latent magical ability. Adult initiates are rare, but not unheard of—typically the result of a large sum of silver paid directly to a greedy magister.

#### *Abtibat's Scintillating Spear*

The partial incantation of *Abtibat's scintillating spear* brings forth a crackling shaft of pure energy into the magic-user's hand. This "spear" can then be thrust as a melee weapon into any opponent within range. If the spear hits, the Magician can choose to discharge the energy to send the opponent hurtling back.

The full incantation brings forth what will appear to be a bundle of crackling spears of energy into the magic-user's hand. The magic-user can then hurl these at any number of opponent's at range similar to a volley of javelins from a squad of soldiers. These jets of energy also create pulses of gravity on their landing, sending the magic-user's opponent's flying back.

## 6 THE TAIL'NGS

The Tail'ngs are a garish field of compacted sediment and incandescent glass lying up in the Lower Podia, easily found for the unnatural aurorae and frequent energetic strikes it draws down, and for the eerie glow across the region after dusk. Channels are vitrified in the sediment along the paths of the strikes, creating freestanding glass coils over time as the surrounding material weathers to corrosive dust, these coils themselves collapsing in turn. By some property of the sediment the eldritch energy of each strike remains trapped within and a single fine shard is a powerful wellspring. Even to enter the field is to invite fundamental reconfiguration.

### *AFFLUX: Caustic Flare*

The shard emits in a single flash a glowing sheet—more freely shaped by an experienced welder—of one square foot per ounce of shard, which heavily degrades matter and does 1d6 damage per square foot of contact.

## 7 THE SEVEN SYRINXES OF THE SYLPHS

When the satyr Aegipous slew the Red Unicorn, he hollowed her horn and made seven pipes, so large that they could be taken for organ pipes or for ivory columns.

When the Sylphs and other aerial spirits play with the Seven Syrinxes, they modulate the emotions of the Red Unicorn. Each song is a spell but some songs can drive mortals crazy.

You can still find the Seven Syrinxes on the forgotten Cliff of the Seven Echoes. Some unicorns still want to retrieve the Syrinxes and bury the horn. There are banshees who believe that the Seven Syrinxes could increase their powers.

The Initiates of the Seven Syrinxes can be magic-users, aeromancers or bards.

*The Dirge of Sighs and Longing* (W1)

This is usually the first spell which comes from this source of magic, and it often backfires on the caster. The target becomes melancholic and full of grief toward the death of the Red Unicorn. Deaf people and albino felines always make their save.

8 THE EYE OF TIMMIR

A strange relic once in the possession of a holy man called Pardeux, the Eye is a cunningly cut blue sapphire roughly the size of a monkey's fist suspended from a silver chain that may be worn around the neck. The sapphire is inhabited by a willful and fickle spirit who is disinclined to share his magic. Only once each day may he that bears the Eye of Timmir call upon the power of the entrapped spirit. All subsequent requests will be totally ignored until the following sunrise. Even so, there is only a  $[(1d6)d6]d6\%$  chance that the spirit will grant its master's request.

In game terms, the Eye allows the character's player to peek behind the referee's screen and look through his notes and maps for one minute only. A sand-timer is very appropriate here, though any time-keeping device will suffice. The player is then free to share any knowledge acquired this way in-game to the other PCs, or he may simply keep it to himself.

This meta-knowledge of the campaign world has a deleterious effect on the character. Each time the possessor of the Eye utilizes its power, he accumulates a 5% chance of acquiring some form of

madness (referee's discretion here—look for more on madness in UL #5).

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\*[(1d6)d6]d6%

*Instructions:*

1. Roll 1d6 to determine x.
2. Roll xd6 to determine y.
3. Roll yd6.

Minimum result = 1% [1d6%]

Maximum result = 216% [36d6%]

## 9 THE GIBBERING SEA

At the end of the last age, the armies of Law and the hordes of Chaos battled in the valley pass between Ancient Kardmon and the Blasted Heaths. Thousands died, and beleaguered chaos wizards unleashed the Sleepless Dust from Beyond the Pale. Reality collapses under the eldritch weight, and the valley vanished, leaving behind a crater hundreds of miles in diameter and scores of yards in depth. In the centuries since, rain, run off from snowcapped peaks, et cetera, have filled the crater with icy water stained black by the impure earth of the crater. When the ebon waters bubble and lap on the shore, the sounds of countless voices gibbering in sorrow can be heard.

Chaotic spellcasters spending a fortnight in the wilderness around the crater's edge who survive on nothing but the Gibbering Sea's foul waters can tap into its unholy power. (Those that don't survive are seldom seen again, but a few wander back to civilization irrevocably insane.)

A chaotic spellcaster who has tapped into the Gibbering Sea's power

selects his spells as normal for his class. He can, however, select one spell of a level no higher than one less his maximum allowed spell level from another class's spell lists by praying to the sea's essence. For example, a cleric who can cast 1st- and 2nd-level spells could select a 1st-level magic-user spell, and a magic-user able to cast up to 3rd-level spells could select a 1st- or 2nd-level cleric spell.

## 10 THE GRIM OCTAHEDRON OF MARLUU

The milky jade swirls and fluctuates like rapidly changing weather trapped within the eight facets of this peculiar object of sorcerous power. It is not of this world. Indeed, it is not of any world. It is unnatural. It is unreal.

The Grim Octahedron hovers above the ground, independent of gravity, morality or eschatology. It is timeless and outside the currents of events of limited, material existence. But it observes. It watches. It interferes, at times. In it's own way.

Each facet of the Octahedron corresponds to eight 'Elements' that have nothing to do with the so-called classical scheme of Fire-Air-Water-Earth or the less common Steam-Ooze-etc. paradigms promulgated by decrepit sages in fetid basements. In truth no one has managed to catalog all of the 'Contra-Elements' made accessible by the Grim Octahedron...and it is suspected that it grants access to far more than just eight specific energetic forms.

The Grim Octahedron is most often encountered in dreams, in the midst of fevers, or hallucinations. It intrudes on such things as though attracted to them like a moth to a candle-flame.

Encountering the Grim Octahedron grants the option to surrender one or more points from a designated attribute (WIS or INT) for access to some obscure, 'contra-mental' energy-source signified by a glyph that is encoded into the initiates' flesh and soul.

The Glyph so received allows the spell-caster to access a unique power source that grants a +1 damage bonus to all their spells that is rooted in their affinity to some specific fragment of the particular unrealities caught-up within the Grim Octahedron. New spells of peculiar and obscure natures have a tendency to seep into the dreams of these individuals and they often find themselves slowly losing their sanity or fading out of conventional reality over time.

More details may be found within the pages of the Hollow Bronze Grimoire of Marluu.

## 11 THE KOUROUS SARKOPHAGUS

Legends tell of an ancient artifact named the the Korurous Sarkophagus. The device was crafted by a powerful sorceress-queen who used it to maintain her rule over the oasis city. Tales are unreliable but all agree that the device granted her the ability to craft mighty spells and be in two places at once. No one can say why her city fell, or what happened to this queen and her wondrous device. Some say the water dried up and she died in the midst of a starving city, others say she was betrayed by her generals. Whatever the truth may be, it lies somewhere in the cold sandy wastes that lie north of the great mountains.

The Kourous Sarkophagus is an elaborate stone standing coffin that is carved out of the rock of the Queen's large desert palace. It stands as her throne and her tomb. It is from this device that she ruled her city, sending out a duplicate golem of herself while her actual body resided here helpless and attended by servants. It cannot be moved without destroying the delicate mechanisms and enchantments that power it. The brave magic user that enters the device will immediately be transfixed with hundreds of slender spikes all over their body and will not be able to leave the coffin unless they are dead. They will require food and drink three times or more the normal amount and have a particular craving for blood in

particular. The device will take care of their other bodily needs. The coffin has two long stone arms that can be controlled by the occupant with great precision and strength. The arms are used for manipulating objects in the room, feeding and defense. The arms can also have tiny needles in them capable of draining blood (roll as if they are stirges).

Once they have merged with the Sarkpohagus, a magic user will immediately gain the ability to cast spells as if they were one level above their current maximum and will gain the corresponding additional number of hit/spell points or spell slots appropriate to the game system. They will also gain the ability to send out a flesh golem duplicate of themselves that can act as their agent in the world. The golem duplicate has the dexterity and appearance of the magic-user but also the strength and abilities of a flesh golem. The caster will be aware of themselves in the throne room as well as in the golem body. They can speak with the golem voice although it is labored and awkward, the golem form also cannot be poisoned, feel pain smell or be put to sleep (although the caster can). The caster is able to cast spells as if they were either in the sarcophagus or as the golem.

Should the golem body be destroyed, the caster will immediately and permanently lose 1d6 strength/constitution. Another golem will be crafted/grown in 1d6 weeks time, and if there are available fleshy raw materials placed in the appropriate container.

## 12 THE LIVING CHASM

During the great war against the elves, many potent magics were unleashed, including a massive *stone to flesh* spell that transformed an entire chasm in the badlands into a living mass of flesh, teeth, eyes and mouths. No one knows if the chasm was sentient from that point onwards, but today it is a vicious and unpleasant sage and source of strange knowledge for those who are willing to deal with it and trust it to keep it's side of the bargain (and not eat the



petitioner in the process).

Further, there are those that have learned to tap the mighty life force and ancient knowledge of the chasm (most with, but some without it's willing permission).

*Unravel Flesh* (W5)

The touched target's flesh unravels from his body, tearing skin away, then baring the target's skeletal structure in one horrible unwinding motion. The target dies instantly unless he makes a successful save vs. death. (Range: touch)

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# MEZZOGLUNES

SOJOURNS IN THE DREAMS OF GODS

BY GARRISON JAMES & GREG GORGONMILK

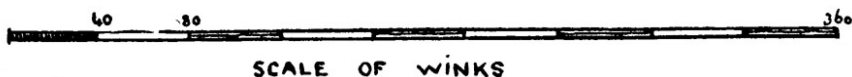


**T**HE DREAMS OF UNDERWORLD GODS—be they indigenous to that environment or exiles cast down from the Land Above—secretly congest the tunnels, passageways, quadrangles, chambers, and caverns of the subterranean realms, rising invisibly through the Underworld's levels—a psychic smog that will sluggishly condense and congeal into the liminal, half-real territories called mezzoglunes.

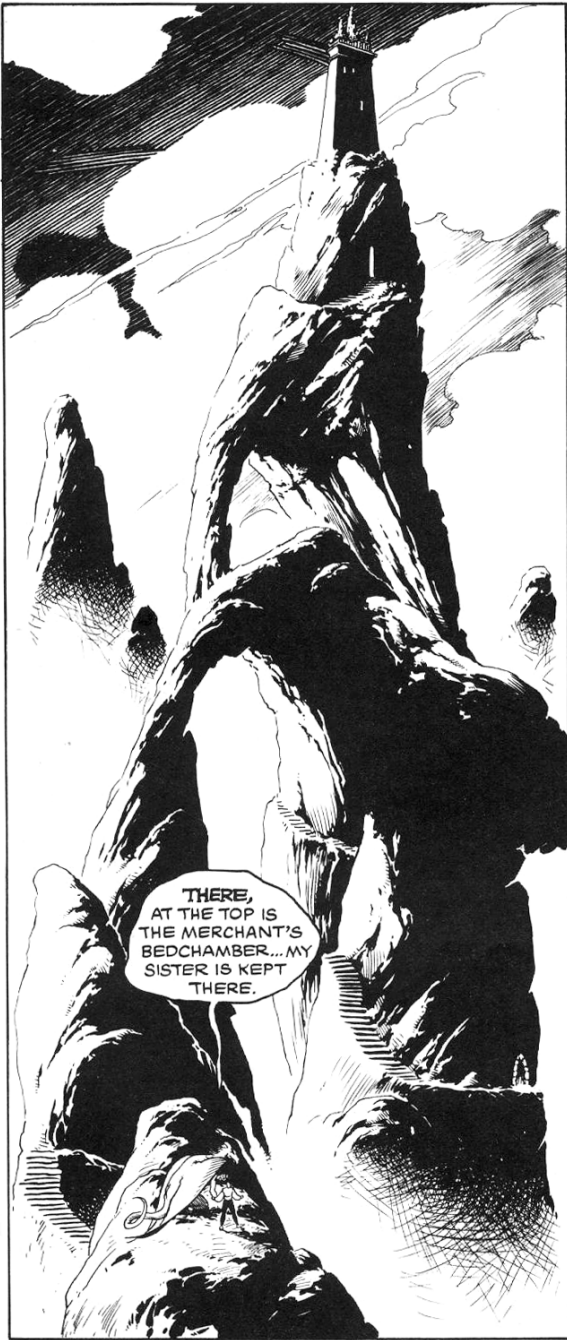
Mezzoglunes are psychic real estate accessible to mortals only through the act of dreaming. For every level below the surface world, there is a 5% chance that the dream-self of a sleeping N/PC will accidentally "wander" into a nearby 'glune.

It is very rare that such non-places are found uninhabited. Ghosts of dead adventurers, for instance, may take up residence in a mezzoglune and are just as likely to welcome a stray dreamer as they are to rebuke him for showing up uninvited. Demons, shadows and other disembodied phantoms are equally attracted to the ambiance of particular 'glunes, sometimes altering the misty dream-environments to suit their unearthly tastes in decor.

There are particular hazards associated with dreaming in mezzoglunes. For instance, an N/PC always runs the risk of encountering a being capable of constraining him with its magic—thus entrapped, his dream-self will be incapable of returning to his physical body. Separated, the N/PC's empty shell could be hijacked by any wandering incorporeal.



*Illustration on p. 46 by Sidney Sime (1867-1951)*



## TWELVE MEZZOGLUNES

### 1d12 Description

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- 1 *Saligar's Library.* Visitors to this Mezzoglune lose 1d100 days per hour spent here. Some feel it is a small price to pay as they gain access to a range of scrolls, incised tablets, codices and rare manuscripts that can be read in no other place. Indeed, there are many documents here that simply do not exist anywhere else. A save is required to retain each spell memorized and/or learned in this place as you return to the world you know. Each visit requires a new save for all spells taken from this place, including any from a previous visit. This unfortunate effect is why some spell-casters hire multiple agents or take-on apprentices, as it just isn't cost-effective to keep going back themselves.
  
- 2 The silent, brooding beings who hover within the lurid green mists of this nameless mezzoglune watch over the warped blackened forests of hooks and barbs where howling things prowl in wretched obscurity. They watch and they wait, implacable in their vigilance. You may ask any one of them three questions. You will receive one answer. It is up to you to determine its ultimate value.
  
- 3 Those who trespass upon this particular mezzoglune find their hair taking on a life of its own, writhing and coiling and wriggling about them like an aura of thread-fine worms. The effect is unsettling and persists for 1d4 weeks, during which time you can converse with various worm-like beings in their dreams. Most of them will seek to avoid you, as you are so hideous and alien to their mind-set and grotesquely distorted

in terms of their physiology, however a few brave or demented souls among them might be able to discourse with you somewhat. Most of them demand things from you, things for which you have no words, no common basis of comparison...

- 4 *Cryptic Yuin.* Those returning from this mezzoglune must save or find their own shadow has been replaced with that of some other being. The new shadow will move of its own accord and volition, from time to time, but usually it remains discrete. It seems to be looking for something, or someone...
  
- 5 *Xo.* A dismal place, where shattered ruins encrust even the walls and ceilings like so many smashed wasp nests. Fear drips from the fractured stones, forming terrifying puddles and pools across the uneven, rubble-mounded and bounded grounds. There are secrets lost beneath the rubble and debris of this place, but the longer one remains, the more intensely the fear begins to affect them. Every 15 minutes another save must be rolled, each time a cumulative penalty of -1 is accrued, failure subjects the victim to the effects of a *fear* spell, success allows them to remain in this place for another 15 minutes. So far no one has found anything worthwhile. But then no one knows where to look, or what they're looking for really...
  
- 6 *Black Hlod.* Wet and fetid, this garishly lit mezzoglune reeks of the herb mace. Everything has a dull, orange tinge to it. Even those who visit this place take on a slight orange-tint for the next 1d4 hours. The twelve-limbed spider-things living here will teach you how to bite, if you ask them. They will give

you the means to truly bite your enemies, if you make it worth their while...

- <sup>7</sup> *Udash'Lam*. A steaming green jungle packed into an irregular box canyon probably less than a mile on each side, there are five Trapezoidal Ziggurats buried beneath the densely-intertwined canopy. All the plants in this place are hot-sapped and radiate a faint green glow. Only one of the ziggurats has a path that has been cleared out by past visitors, possibly pilgrims or would-be looters. No one is sure who made the path. No one really cares. At the top of the ziggurat is a massive stone fist. Anyone who speaks anything other than ancient Divish-Lur will be crushed to death by the gargantuan stone fist.

It is considered worth learning the once-dead language as each level of the ziggurat is covered not only with gurgling plants, but with hundreds of trapezoidal tablets carved from some smooth, green stone, each one inscribed with some spell, recipe or formula, all in Divish-Lur.

The jungle surrounding the ziggurats is home to troops of heavy-set two-headed baboons who spend their time tearing and stamping-down the jungle plants to form matted tunnels and nesting spaces. The baboons are not native to this place but were trapped here when their master, a mighty half-serpentfolk lich was crushed to death by the gargantuan stone fist.

GARGANTUAN STONE FIST

No. Enc.: 1

Alignment: Neutral

Movement: 150' (Perpetual Levitation)

Armor Class: 4

**Hit Dice:** 6  
**Attacks/Damage:** 1/4d6  
**Save:** F8  
**Morale:** 12

It is currently unknown if there are other Gargantuan Stone Fists (or something else) atop the other ziggurats.

**TWO-HEADED BABOONS  
OF ARCHMISTRESS BOZIK**

**No. Enc.:** 1d4 (1d4x10)  
**Alignment:** Neutral  
**Movement:** 90' (30')  
**Armor Class:** 7  
**Hit Dice:** 2+2  
**Attacks/Damage:** 2/1d4/1d4 (Bite/Bite) or by weapon  
**Save:** F3  
**Morale:** 6

Once they were far more intelligent, due to the spells and serums of their former master, but their long exile within this isolated mezzoglune has caused them to slide into a form of ever-accelerating degeneracy. They still understand a few basic words in Divish-Lur and anyone speaking that language to them gains a +2 bonus to their Reaction Roll. They will serve someone whom they believe can help them to escape from this place. However, they have very limited patience and if they are not liberated within 3d6 Turns, they will attack their would-be master.

- 8 *Curdled Nishar:* This is a strangely curdled space occupied by a collection of eyes culled from hundreds of different beasts and beings, each one unique and all of them kept alive and in working-order by some background effect emanating from the disturbingly sloping and warped walls of this peculiar little pocket realm. All the eyes are not only incredibly well preserved, they remain connected to their owners across time and space. No one knows why anyone would participate in such a thing, but that is more a failing of those investigating such things than anything.



- 9 *Blue Singe.* Once this mezzoglune was exposed to incredible, intense heat. Now it is a frozen wasteland less than five miles in any direction, locked in roiling blue fog and light-dampening ice. Spending more than ten minutes in this place runs the risk of the trespasser suffering 2d4 damage due to the cold. Anyone suffering in excess of 4 points of damage have their shadows converted into luminous blue glows that can be seen up to 360' away. The effect persists for 3d6 days. A successful save reduces the time by one day.
- 10 *Orzeel's Festering Fen.* A squalid, noxious place crawling with dislocated shadows and vile growths, not all of which are fungus or slime-molds. Water has condensed across the curiously curved and twisting passages of this place, leaving unsightly streaks through the filth and grime that has accreted across the walls and ceiling over the centuries. Anyone spending time in this place suffers a -3 penalty to all saves versus infection or disease for 1d100 days after wards.

Deep within the bowel-like labyrinthine conduits of this mezzoglune, there is a low-lying, water-logged hillock, atop which stand three solemn faces of mottled gray-green basalt. These colossal faces are rumored to be oracular in some manner. They are the last vestiges of the dead god Orzeel. This place is her tomb.

- 11 *The Narrow Chasm.* There is only just enough room for one person to barely fit into this gap between two vast, black surfaces set in eternal opposition to one another. It is best not to look too deeply into the reflective, obsidian-like surfaces of the opposing walls. One might be driven insane, possessed by

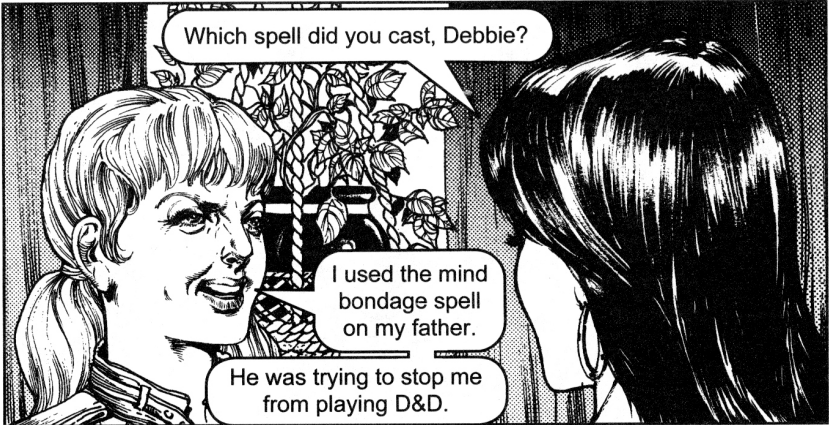
demons, or replaced by some sort of doppelganger, depending upon which text you believe or trust.

For those who find the blue key that opens the way to this place, if they dare to trod upon the dry, brittle bones of thousands of forgotten adventurers who died in the midst of terror and mindless panic, this place serves as a sort of rite of passage. It is said that anyone successfully making their way through the Narrow Chasm gains a permanent immunity to all magical fear effects. Those who fail wind up trapped forever. Some feel it's a risk worth taking.

- 12 *Talv.* Chalk-white dunes of extra-fine dust extend for as far as the eye can follow in every direction, including up and down. Space is disjointed and somewhat unhinged in this place. Those who find their way into this place can't help but to stir-up clouds of the chalk-dust, which lends itself to the spontaneous evocation of various disembodied spirits, ghosts and other such remnants of lives lost to the dangers of the underworld. For a small sacrifice of some milk, wine or mead one or more of the spirits might be induced to answer a single question. A hard-bitten and scurrilous lot, these ghosts will plead, wheedle and beg for more and more sacrifices that they might persist even a slight bit longer before oblivion claims them. But as one interacts with any one of these things, more are attracted to the goings on, and they grow increasingly demanding and agitated. Whatever you do, never under any circumstance give these things blood...



**GARRISON JAMES'** vivid imagination is barely contained by his D&D blog *Hereticwerks*. His first module, *Taqlar's Tomb*, is now available via RPGNow. James' contributions to the OSR ideabanks favorably recall the exotic territories, flora and fauna described by Clark Ashton Smith. [[hereticwerks.blogspot.com](http://hereticwerks.blogspot.com)]



**RONA JAFFE'S**  
**MAZES AND MONSTERS**

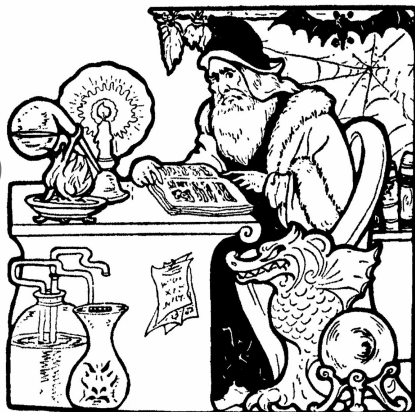
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## THIRTY+ MAGICAL DWELLINGS

<b>1d30 Dwelling</b>	<b>Author</b>
1 <i>Gelatinous Cubicle</i>	G. Gorgonmilk
2 <i>The Hollow Giant</i>	Dane Black
3 <i>The Watchmaker's Alcove</i>	Needles
4 <i>Earnest Jan's Well-worn Wizardly Workplaces</i>	Porky
5 <i>The "Hallenbruck-Brewery-Front"</i>	JD
6 <i>Down the Rabbit Hole</i>	Ryan Miller
7 <i>Boshkar's Basement</i>	Garrison James
8 <i>Empty Tomb</i>	Matthew Schmeer
9 <i>Isolated Yurt</i>	Matthew Schmeer
10 <i>The Slaughtered Miner</i>	Needles
11 <i>Pavilion of Innumerable Veils</i>	Rebus
12 <i>Legendary Snail Shell</i>	The Frostbeard
13 <i>Dancing Hut</i>	R.Wheeling

14	<i>The Mirror of Miglin</i>	G. Gorgonmilk
15	<i>Offalmongers' Folly</i>	Porky
16	<i>Lune Dimune</i>	Porky
17	<i>The Osteolix</i>	Porky
18	<i>Scribble</i>	Porky
19	<i>Infernice</i>	Porky
20	<i>Waterborne</i>	Porky
21	<i>The Salt Cellar</i>	Porky
22	<i>The Heap Unseen</i>	Porky
23	<i>Threshold of Eternity</i>	Red Orc
24	<i>The Wandering Chamber</i>	Porky
25	<i>Ingrew Brew</i>	Porky
26	<i>CMY</i>	Porky
27	<i>The Skyscraper</i>	Porky
28	<i>The Entrails of the Progue Rams</i>	Porky
29	<i>The Co-Riddor and the Junk Room</i>	Porky
30	<i>The Inner Clumps</i>	Porky



- 1 *Gelatinous Cubicle.* More of an office space than a dwelling proper, the Cubicle is actually a living gelatinous cube with a roughly 10' x 10' x 10' hollow inside it that contains a lead-lined chamber. Various metal tubes extend from this chamber through the creature's translucent green body, providing the interior with ample air to breathe. A circular port-hole can be found on one of the cube's sides that is large enough for a man to pass through and step inside the chamber. The door to this port-hole resembles that of a safe and usually features a trap-loaded combination lock.
  
- 2 *The Hollow Giant.* The result of an *animate dead* spell cast on the stitched-together flesh of titanic humanoids wrapped around an iron housing. Along with the Hollow Giant proper comes the command ring that allow the magic-user to direct the actions of the Hollow Giant, as well as stay in communication with it when away from the dwelling. The entrance to the Hollow Giant's chamber is through the mouth, which will unhinge to accomodate the the magic-user's access—with a directive through the command ring, of course. Once inside, the resident-wizard will find that within the Giant's enormous ironclad belly is a finely furnished and provisioned single-person dwelling—fit for study, respite or simply isolating oneself from the mundane world. The resident-wizard within the Hollow Giant should take care and bring plenty of scented oils and salts into the iron housing. The animation spell, while complete, does nothing for the horrible death-stench that the Giant continues to exude. *Caveat Emptor!*
  
- 3 *The Watchmaker's Alcove:* This pleasant little pocket dimension, once the abode of a Lord of Order, is now up for sale along with over 20,000 tools of the trade belonging to such a lord. Long abandoned, this lovely plane takes the

form of a deserted shop or office space belonging to a professional merchant. Seated between the material plane and the astral, this space has enough room for the busy on-the-go wizard as well as his tools, familiars and family. The wizard should be familiar with both the school of Order and the issues that its magic can cause. Any broken or mismanaged machine brought inside the Alcove will fix itself within 1d20 hours as the magic of the place heals all broken mechanical imperfections. The place has a 60% resistance rating to the magics of chaos. These safeguards may be improved with time, patience, and performance of the proper rites. Those wishing to purchase this wonderful dimensional property should contact the real state offices of Vance, Lovecraft and Moorcock through the usual astral channels.

- 4 *Earnest Jan's Well-worn Wizardly Workplaces.*  
**SEE SUB-TABLE A ON PAGE 75.**

- 5 *The "Hallenbruck-Brewery-Front".* This well-established brewery in (next big city in your campaign) not only produces one of the finest ales in the known kingdoms, it also comes with an inebriation-fueled mirror-dimensional arcane facility (you may remember the positive review in *Potion Weekly* a couple of years ago), complete with an occult library (value not known), a fully equipped laboratory (with minor fire damages due to recent unfortunate events) and the recipe for the "secret ingredient" that makes this place so special. This clandestine extra-dimensional space is a perfect copy of the brewery (and in the same place, sort of), with all the necessary changes to realize big projects and all the comforts needed for after-hours relaxation. And no smell. There is no smell. In the interest of full disclosure: Apparitions of drunkards are a bare possibility. They are

harmless and their songs are decent. Rumors that our dearly departed uncle and his highly sophisticated recipes (which are all part of the deal!) are responsible for a local zombie outbreak, cases of mind control, demonic possession or mutations are overly exaggerated. Interested parties are welcome to send their references.

- 6 *Down the Rabbit Hole.* Rathik the Wise comes to town every now and then for groceries or to sell off his custom-made +1 daggers. The greedy have attempted to track him back to his home in the woods, but he has evaded even the most powerful of adventurers. When followed several miles into the forest, Rathik steps behind a tree and completely disappears. Anyone bothering to look at the base of the tree will see a well-used animal burrow but nothing more.

Rathik's lair consists of a clever twisting of space inside and under the tree. To enter one must be shrunk to tiny size and enter the animal burrow. From there one will enter a foyer where they will find themselves in giant room. This room and the rest of structure is of normal size, but thanks to the twisted space, these normal size rooms all fit inside the tree. The walls and floor are all made of the wood of the tree. Windows consist of scrying portals rather than actual openings in the wood. The upper rooms, inside the tree trunk are made up by Rathik's bedroom, a library and study, a drawing room and a dining room. In the upper notch of the main branches, many feet above the ground is an outdoor patio and garden. This is the only part of the home visible from the outside. Anybody climbing the tree will easily be able to see it but it is protected from physical intrusion by powerful spells of warding. The lower floors are under the tree, among the earth and roots, and consist of storage vaults, cages, and a room with a furnace and forge.



<sup>7</sup> *Boshkar's Basement.* It's a dusty, filthy sty of a place; half the floor is flooded with some dark muck, and several sets of rickety old shelves totter just on the brink of collapse. The smell is horrible and lends credence to the rumor that the landlord used to use this place as a second cess-pit not long ago. Past the shelves and mounds of trash, in one of the corners near a window that doesn't correspond to the alley on the otherside, there's a green-patinaed brass ring set into the wall. Pushing or pulling the ring releases a cloud of toxic green gas. Rotating the thing clockwise opens the way to an old wizard's hidden laboratory. No one's seen the previous tenant in decades. If you can convince the extremely bored golem keeping watch on the other side of the corner-ring that you aren't really trespassing, maybe it'll give you a quick tour. It is bored, after all. And it has been a dreadfully long time since its master left for an excursion to some minor plane or other. With a little conniving and some deft use of Charisma and fast talking, it could be possible to bamboozle the nigh-senile golem into recognizing a long lost heir or something..

<sup>8</sup> *Empty Tomb.* This is a rough-hewn tomb with a 1/2-ton round boulder for a door. The door is guarded by two angelic beings wielding swords of flame who will roll away the boulder if you ask nicely or if your name just happens to be Mary. The tomb itself appears empty, with only a leftover body wrapping laying on the ground. Picking up the shroud and giving it a good shake will reveal the true nature of the tomb: it is a large palatial estate, square in shape, with three doors at every side. The estate is laid out like a square, as long as it was wide; roughly 140 miles on each side, with walls 200 feet thick. The walls are decorated with every kind of precious stone: jasper, sapphire, agate, emerald, onyx, ruby, chrysolite, beryl, topaz, turquoise, jacinth, and amethyst. There is no sun nor moon but an

ever-radiant, unceasing light.

Unfortunately, only the truly lawful good may enter the estate and PCs must have a personal invitation; there is an old man with a large reservation book who guards the way, and two more angelic being wielding swords of flame to eject any non-lawful good PCs. Those whose names are found in the book (1-in-12 chance if lawful good) will be invited in for a personal audience with the all-powerful lord of the estate. All others will be forcibly ejected whence they came.

The wizard sits upon a throne of pure gold in the center of the estate, and has hundreds if not thousands of conjured minions singing his name in an unceasing chorus (they are kept to the west side of the estate, so you can barely hear them near the throne). The wizard appears uninterested in surroundings, and can be seen reading an ancient tome (roll on some weird book table) or fiddling with some sort of obscure and unknown device (roll on some sort of “what is this weird tech” table) on a lap desk made of blackest ebony. If approached, the wizard will be friendly, but disinterested, as if he has had this conversation before and already knows the outcome. He has ink stains on his fingers and the longest, most gorgeous beard anyone in the party has ever seen.

- 9 *Isolated Yurt.* A tavern may have an ugly hat hanging on the wall that no one is fool enough to claim (roll for specific kind of hat<sup>1</sup>). Unbenownest to all, this hat is a portal to a wizard's lair in located on the High Steppes of the Wandering Waste. Donning the hat is enough to transport the wearer to the doorway of the yurt<sup>2</sup>, sans hat (the hat will

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1 [mediafire.com/download/3skgjzaxc09pc6s/BX+Headgear.pdf](https://mediafire.com/download/3skgjzaxc09pc6s/BX+Headgear.pdf)

2 **yurt:** a circular tent of felt or skins on a collapsible framework, used by nomads in Mongolia, Siberia, and Turkey.

magically replace itself on the wall). The door to the yurt is warded with many spells so only the true owner of the yurt may enter.

The yurt itself is made of a hornbeam circular frame covered in heavy felt, which itself is then covered with canvas and suncovers decorated with magical sigils to ward against scrying. The frame is held together by physical rather than magical means, as the weight of the covers keeps the frame under pressure.

Inside, the yurt is extremely tidy; every object is kept in neatly arranged chests and boxes.<sup>1</sup>

Leaving the yurt requires a *teleportation* spell.

- <sup>10</sup> *The Slaughtered Miner.* This literal hole in the wall located in a walk in subbasement of an isolated alley. This establishment caters to the wives, sons, and daughters of fallen miners. They host the families of such victims giving food, advice, and a bit of gold coin. This place seems to work behind the scenes with the mining guild. They conduct addition investigations into matters such as cave ins, monster sightings, and much more.

The place is run by human agents working for 'powers from below'. There have been rumors of families who have gone into the wood paneled and quaint planked establishment never to return. The place also has a small stall store for adventurers and those venture into the Earth. A small trade area for relics and curiosities. And an on staff scribe of Earth lore. They do have a selection of rooms for rent or hire but these are spartan affairs at best. The place is often remarked by Dwarves and the like as smelling like home.

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<sup>1</sup> See various possible floorplans here: [yurts.com/products/downloads.aspx](http://yurts.com/products/downloads.aspx)

There are rumors among the Dwarves that the place is run by an exiled Dwarven king but there are not any who have survived in the area. The staff changes from time to time but then there is the mystery of the door.

The Slaughtered Miner is protected and locked by a complicated three foot thick metal door with the most incredibly complex lock mechanisms. No one has been yet able to identify the manufacture or make. A teleport or dimensional gate will allow an exit from the place but not an entrance once the establishment is closed. The lock down mode allows no one short of a god entrance. The place has been in the city for hundreds of years and has no signs of leaving. Yet its many mysteries remain in tact.

- <sup>11</sup> *Pavilion of Innumerable Veils.* A large pavilion or carnival-style tent, appearing big enough from the outside to hold a few hundred people shoulder-to-shoulder. Within the tent are layers upon layers of drapery: velvet curtains, calico sheets, moth-eaten tapestry, etc., all arranged in apparent randomness in concentric circles around the tent pole. Partitions in the curtains occur at varying intervals, creating a circular labyrinth of fabric.

An unenlightened interloper could easily pass through the pavilion with little difficulty, either groping their way through the folds of the structure or lifting each curtain to pass under. However, the pavilion's proprietor will know that when two incongruous draperies are held together, a key word spoken, and then quickly drawn apart, they open portals to pocket dimensions within the tent's structure, which may be outfitted to a magic-user's needs and wants.

There is, of course, no actual tent pole at the center of the mass; rather the layers of fabric become so dense as to prevent further progress. It is probable that a drapery-generating automaton or demon exists at the hart of the tent, creating a micro-cosmos in felt.

- <sup>12</sup> *Legendary Snail Shell.* This revisioning of undersea wizard lairs was originally built by a multi-stalked mucous-gliding creature of momentous proportions that enjoyed 8,967 years of reigning over the dwellers of the Ellin oceanic basin. The original owner was forcibly evicted by Octavian the Multitudinous, who ingeniously teleported a steam elemental lord to the inside of the shell (but don't worry, not a lick of structural damage to the place... Rather sanitized the place, I'd say). After contracting the triton city of Klarsyyth to provide workers to excavate for over a month, Octavian was able to move in.

This fashionable piece of property now boasts a jellyfish defense system surrounding a tiered 100-room layout served by nineteen air elemental retainers who tirelessly scrub the air. Highlights include a game room including a Tik-Tik-Arthee array for hosting triton lords, a lounge centered around a reverse shell (for listening to the land), a mother-of-pearl throne room, and a giant pearl said to be useful for scrying anywhere below the ocean.

To tour the property please place an inquiry with Yamul the Gnome in Klarsyyth.

- <sup>13</sup> *Dancing Hut.* Once fashionable among hags, witches and minor goddesses of cranky temperament, dancing huts have gone the way of pointy hats and star-embroidered wizard-robos. Production has been non-existent for some time, with

only several dozen of the belegged shacks remaining. While all of them share a basic design—cosy cottage set atop a number of fleshy, fully functioning limbs—the specifics differ. **SEE SUB-TABLE B ON PAGE 77.**

<sup>14</sup> *The Mirror of Miglin.* A little-known invention of Miglin the Mauve, an ancient wizard sometimes known as Miglin Thune, descendent of the crafty Tuzun. In its default configuration, the Mirror appears to be nothing more than a mundane—if well-crafted—example of its kind. Its frame is carved of gleaming rosewood and fashioned in a striking wilderness motif. Its glass and tain are flawless. When the proper command word is spoken, the magic-user may pass through the Mirror's surface and into an extradimensional simulacrum of the environment reflected. Anyone standing in the material plane will be able to see the magic-user on the other side of the Mirror as well as any items he has brought with him. Those using Miglin's hideaway should keep in mind that if the Mirror is cracked or shattered, its magical bindings will be permanently annihilated, stranding the magic-user in a dislocated pocket-reality. The artificial objects that occupy the pocket will then slowly decompose and dissolve into a colorless, weightless sludge, and the magic-user will ultimately be left with only those items he brought over from the material world.

<sup>15</sup> *Offalmonger's Folly.* Those are no faultlines shaking our homes, nor true hills running with slides of mud, but the buried folds of the hide of a sleeping beast that lies across the worlds, a beast enclosed by skin on this side of the void, and maybe on the other; its viscera somewhere in between. We know because we climbed in—down the rabbit hole and out through one of the pores; we found the offalmongers' mark and copies in triplicate of the commission: to feed this

world by teasing living tissue in from the beings of an outer realm. But the organs spilled, and flooded the land, and the 'mongers commissioned next a retaining membrane, fine and tight; and gave form to a new form of life. And what a growth spurt it's putting on! It's down there now, squirming and fit to burst. Brooding supervolcanoes? Interplanetary megaweapons? Nothing, friend, compared to the bang when this goes up! In the meantime there's fine dining, and warmth all year round, not to mention that versatile pseudodermis, its delicate capillaries pumping otherworldly ichors. For research or revelry? You choose! Mining facility, manufactory and palace in one—what an abode! Might we interest you in a chamber..?

<sup>16</sup> *Lune Dimune.* High in the upper foothills of a liminal range of crags, so lofty below the low-hanging moon, juts a gust-raked promontory over a void. There the honed eye might discern a line of perspective unhooked from the vanishing point and anchored to a distant summit, and the bold may step out into the field of vision to grow grotesquely disproportioned and vast. The line of peaks is now but a stair and the moon a balcony upon which to scrabble. A pioneer has dug out the further side, cut deep caverns and drilled peering holes down on the corners of the earth. Horrors called down from the rearward dark may lurk yet in the core chambers, and devices roam openly on the craterscape, but much fine cheese remains unmined.

<sup>17</sup> *The Osteolix.* Have we got an astounding self-timeshare opportunity for you! Our insane arcane architects will bend time and space and reason itself to construct for you a fine retreat—within your very own body! That's right: a spacious home in any single bone, internal deposit or exoskeletal plate of your choosing! Be in even when you're

out! Shelter from the chill within your very own marrow! Look inside yourself and see your essential nature in a whole new mood lighting! Expensive? It can hardly cost an arm or a leg when you keep the limb and the limb keeps you! Arrange a looping today!

<sup>18</sup> *Scribble.* Begun as a modest chalk circle on an oddly vulnerable site and expanded by innumerable frantic arcanists down the ages, this complex system of trans-Euclidian lines in a range of materials has become a labyrinthine fortress capable of resisting any imaginable onslaught at least somewhere within its extent, up to and including the onslaught of reason, as many of its most rational architects have found if the signs are to be believed. For messages smuggled out via dimension and plane, by ingenious means, suggest the sanctuary has become a nigh on unnavigable nightmare, a hungry honeycomb sucking in those seeking only a safe place to hole up, occupied by maddened figures in flight and hybrid populations of the traumatised, hunted through crazy spaces by unlikely beings summoned into existence in final acts of desperation, or trapped in their turn while sheltering from still greater threats. Hide by all means, but careful where...

<sup>19</sup> *Infernice.* Streaming a constant reek of steam, this slender chimney of stained stone rises thousands of feet through the twisted floors of a former urban spire, roost now to flocks of migrating beasts from far spaces, as alien as what lurks below. Perhaps. For beneath the sparse and barely recovered land around, down below the blasted strata of age-encrusted waste and past unutterable undegraded filth and lost wonders, lie the habdomes and meander the labyrinthine ways of a once mighty city, its name famed across the cosmos. And forgotten. The collapsed,



compressed and drowned spaces are haunted by the wracks of what once lived and could not crawl out, and by what grew or crawled in over the millennia, from deep sumps and decayed matters, through ancient gates to other natures. Unbearably deep in this vast eldritch waste, toxic and beyond toxic, through slick and crushing rubbles on the twenty-seven hundredth level below, there nestles against the warmth of the chimney wall a complex of well-appointed living quarters and unparalleled investigative chambers carved in hardened liminal efluvia, all now long locked by outer rites and runes. The strange is on the very doorstep and has its foot in the door.

<sup>20</sup> *Waterborne.* Fed by essential waters bubbling up from deep springs, this creek will dissolve a persistent swimmer over a period of 1d3 turns per HD, once a turnly save is first failed; gathering oneself together once dissolved and pulling free takes twice as long. While protected amid its reed banks, a guest can rest easily on the silty bed, rising and falling with the tide and quite literally mingling with fellow waders and wallowers. However, the life of a solution is no solution for life: the evaporated salts of the surrounding flood plains speak drily of the existential risk of lingering out of season...

<sup>21</sup> *The Salt Cellar.* Hidden among the whispering dunes alongside Waterborne is a shallow pit half-filled with the local salts, gathered, sieved and compacted by the once-pitying former hands of a husk now sprawled nearby. This glittering mass constitutes an underworld in which the essences of 1d100x10 evaporated and leeching beings merge and live on, knowing each other almost innately but rarely able to form true compounds. It yearns in many hundreds of voices, and burns even several yards away, leeching the

essence of the inquisitive into itself at a rate of one level per turn, once a turnly save is first failed. Restoration requires rehydration, with each of the evaporated or leechd beings then popping back into existence, albeit heavily intermixed, with each initial being now scattered among 1d100 new.

22 *The Heap Unseen.* A fallen star that never shone, this invisible mound cloaked by unearthly technologies bars imperceptibly the path across a lonely field, long unploughed and gone far to seed. The rare passersby nurse their bumps, bounces and falls and learn to circle wide, and do so wide-eyed and wonderstruck. Regular visitors learn to count their paces in from the dawnward hedgerow. (For you, bizarre bipedal loper—what a freak you are!—the count is perhaps fifty; no, fifty-one.) Beyond the mound's angled airtight threshold, and the elegant pillars so artfully installed, the interiors with their sloping floors of crumpled metal and plastic matter thrum with a stellar power. The crystals of the walls speak of distant worlds and this hopefully careful owner studies with intent their gigatomes of sleekly folded data. And I gasp, I admit, at what our world too may yet become...

23 *Threshold of Eternity.* This is the room of a magic-user who has studied the elements and their relationship to everything in the universe. The double doors are finely made of an unknown dark wood and have inlaid upon them a diamond-shaped pattern in a silvery metal suggesting the elements. Beside them—conveniently at waist-height for an approaching humanoid, no matter what their height—is a shelf on which sometimes stand a candle and cup of water. Beside the door is a mat on which, perhaps, a pair of ornate shoes is sitting. The doors will open at a push; but stepping through them could prove hazardous.

Thanks to its elaborate geometry, this room contains everything in the universe. Inside is, quite literally, the outside. Glancing into the room will reveal views of distant lands—steaming jungles, freezing wastes, teeming streets of alien cities, blazing deserts; stepping through the doorway will transport the unprepared to any other place on [your campaign world] or perhaps another world altogether. Only those who know the secret to deactivating the room's defence mechanism (enter barefoot, holding one's breath, with a burning torch or candle in one hand and a container of water in the other) will be able to avoid the room linking itself to a far-away location.

Those who successfully determine the combination will find a comfortable suite of rooms; a reception room with couches, bookshelves, and aethereal music provided by elementals of the air, opening onto two bedrooms each with its own en suite bathroom, a dining balcony with views over the streets of the city below, and a small but well-fitted kitchen with all ancient conveniences (hot- and cold-running water elementals, a tame fire elemental-powered cooker, a small rock golem for crushing garlic).

Unfortunately, due to the nature of the room, it is extremely difficult to tell if the wizard has actually left it.

<sup>24</sup> *The Wandering Chamber.* This well-travelled set of polished stalk panels is usually chanced upon in transit or temporary storage, often close by a thoroughfare, in a coach house, distribution centre or buffer, more rarely buried or otherwise concealed to prevent discovery, as at times of war. When assembled to its tattered plans, more or less accurate copies of which exist in many lands, it frames a room out of time in which all past, present and future occupants again coexist, breaking off their ageless discussions only to write

out the export licences, packing notes and directions for the next leg.

- <sup>25</sup> *Ingrew Brew.* A prime example of liquid architecture, this architectonic recipe of only moderately fantastical ingredients needs but a fair-size tureen or cauldron and is very forgiving in terms of ritual and heavenly conjunction. Mix it all up on a good heat and in you step. Dry as a bone—that's the skull component—and more secret and spacious than a private sea—that'll be the conch. But keep the outside simmering or there's no getting back...
- <sup>26</sup> *CMC.* Abandoned now for long years and heavily rotted despite its lamination, this stiffened wood pulp villa consisting of three geographically remote single-room cabins is in fact one structure refracted into three constituent colours and scattered to the vertices of the world. Each cabin has but one hue, either (1) cyan, (2) magenta or (3) yellow, with an occupant able to leap from one to the other by use of a suitable chromatic magic. Unfortunately, each set of walls, door, floor and roof form a physical barrier to the given constituent colour only, and only to the extent that the colour is present, allowing entities reflecting less in this hue to force access more easily, perhaps explaining the abandonment. Rumour persists of three further cabins, combinations of the hues, while wilder speculation claims that a previous owner resides even now within a unified seventh, entirely black.
- <sup>27</sup> *The Skyscraper.* This well-appointed crow's nest located several miles above the countryside is entirely invisible, as is the mast upon which it rises. If the base can be found and the long ladder climbed, or access gained by another

means, ownership can be taken back from the creatures of the upper skies. A little lacking in privacy perhaps, and breezy too, with sphincter-clenching swings through arcs of several hundred yards at a time—but what a view!

28 *The Entrails of the Progue Rams.* This is the bell-pull, the knocker, the rat-a-tat-tatter. This simple icon, this chirruping caller: 'Hallowed Egg One' I cry and there I am. The endless fluid heaven of the great and fecund goddess Kompuda where every dream becomes real and the ways of a milliard worlds may be known or made.

29 *The Co-Riddor and the Junk Room.* Hoarding instinct out of control? Contemptible home furnishing decisions? Simple inability to get on with your fellow residents? Live with your failings no longer! Just plug your dwelling into the Co-Riddor and we'll carry them off through our intracosmic back passage! And that's not all. You want a new life? We'll bring you one! It's not the rats in the walls—it's us! The Co-Riddor! And now, introducing the Junk Room! Feel like trash? Just want to live in a world of your own? We've got the pocket universe for you!

30 *The Inner Clumps.* As the dusts of upholsteries, insulations and tissues is ground down fine by the action of deep dwelling itself, they may pass out through the fabric of the cosmos and whirl in the crawlspaces beyond, where none but the subtler spirits make their homes. There the true nature of living beings and their furnishings grows apparent in impossible structures born of dreams of shelter, warmth and bliss, but wracked by decay, tension and catastrophic failure. While these outer clumps may be reached through a heart of hearts, and even occupied by those so inclined,

they have their counterparts in the dusts trickling back in opposite directions, particles flowing in from other worlds—perhaps drawn for certain ends—to coalesce in warped reflections of those peri-homes and stand in all their beauty and horror in plain sight here, among and within the most intimate of spaces...

**SUBTABLE A:**  
**Earnest Jan's Well-worn**  
**Wizardly Workplaces**

*Step right up my good being and get yourself a bewitching bargain - the bargain of the very age! I saw you coming a mile off—right here through my crystal ball. Now, gaze deep. I've got just the place for you. Do you see it? A fine arcane abode priced for the pocket of the discerning prestidigitator but fit for a minor deity. Did I say minor? Middling even! It's...*

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## **1d10 Workplace**

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- 1 anchored along sunbeams in a shaft of unusually vivid light and accessible only by means of a reconfigured spell for illumination adjusted to the given wavelength. A stellar opportunity!
  
- 2 zipped up in a dimensional hollow; the hollow itself and/or the careful—ahem—current owner may be a braner<sup>1</sup>.
  
- 3 strung taut up into the heavens, space elevator-like; import/export offworld or keep a personal space fleet—or lure someone else's from afar! The choice is yours!

---

<sup>1</sup> [theporkster.blogspot.com/search/label/braners](http://theporkster.blogspot.com/search/label/braners)

- 4 inside an exceptionally dense body orbiting within the atmosphere of its host world. Spectacular views! Accessible using convection currents, perhaps in the eternally elegant style of that impeccable sorceress Ms Mary Poppins.
- 5 tightly woven from thick silver cord and suspended somewhere on an astral plane. Classy.
- 6 built upside down into the ground, the foundations showing flush with the surface. Now that's workmanship, and by nameless ancient artisans to boot!
- 7 compressed into a pointed hat. How's that for imagination—worthy even of the indefatigable arch demiurge jasons<sup>1</sup>.
- 8 one fractal scale further down, easily mistaken for an intricately carved staff, just as you—its new proud owner—could easily be mistaken for a woodworm while within. Confound your foes—at no extra charge!
- 9 the original inspiration for the old British police box, a classic design recognised across the dimensions. Often imitated, never bettered.
- 10 sewn from the outer skins of gas giants and bobbing like a cork on a lost sea of stars. Hideous hellhole and holiday home in one!

---

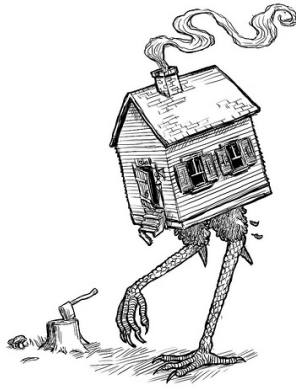
<sup>1</sup> roll1d12.blogspot.com

**SUBTABLE B:  
Dancing Hut Generator**

<b>1d8</b>	<b>Legs Type</b>	<b>#Legs</b>	<b>#Rooms</b>	<b>Tower?</b>
1	Chicken-like	1	1	N
2	Crab-ish	2	1	N
3	Draconic	2	2	N
4	Goaty	3	2	N
5	Humanoid (femmy)	4	3	N
6	Humanoid (manly)	4	3	N
7	Humanoid (skeletal)	6	4	Y
8	Spidery	8	5	Y

**HIT DICE** are equivalent to the Hut's total # of legs multiplied by its total # of rooms, eg. a Hut with four legs and two rooms has 8HD.

**MOVEMENT RATE** for all Huts has a base rate of 10 x #Legs. If there is an odd number of legs, divide the result by two. If the Hut possesses a tower, subtract five.





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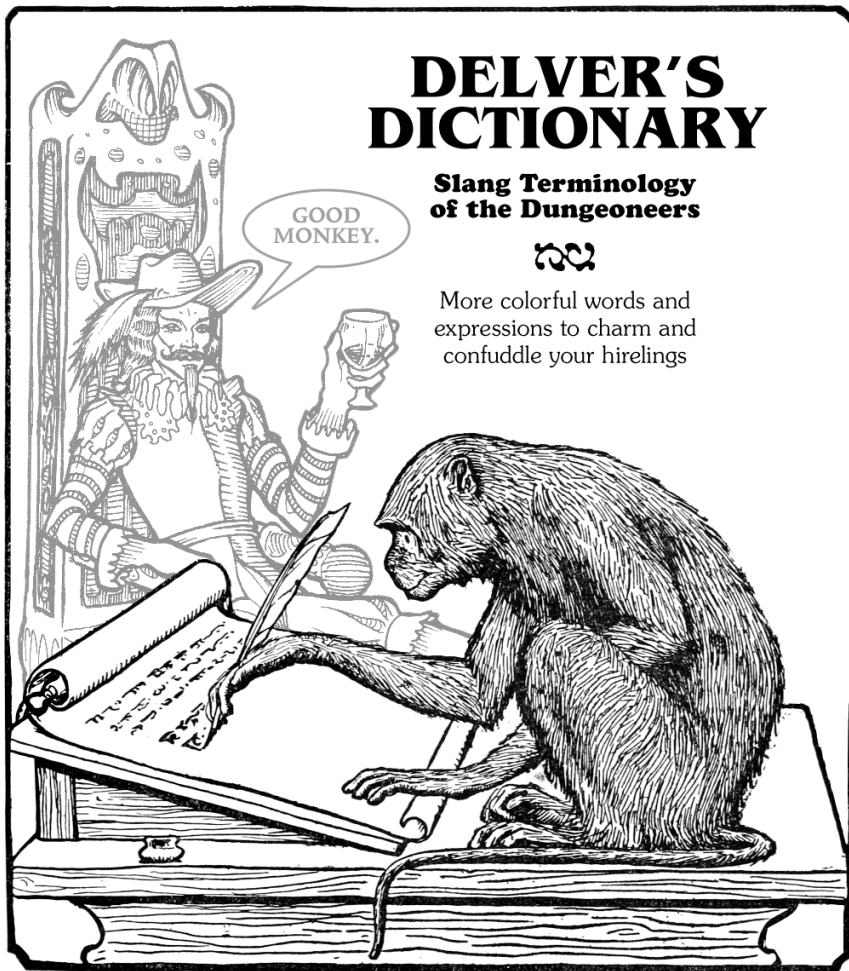
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# DELVER'S DICTIONARY

**Slang Terminology  
of the Dungeoneers**



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expressions to charm and  
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MUCH GRATITUDE TO  
Matthew Schmeer, Ryan S.,  
Madi H., Nikki D., Noah M.,  
Michael B., Evan L., and  
Stephanie W. for their  
invaluable researches into the  
much-neglected field of  
subterranean philology.

**Arseclench.** *n.* A small, fist-sized passageway connecting two caverns.

*"Well, I can see the room through this here arseclench, but we can't get in there from here unless you got a shrinking potion or something."*

**Beandipper.** *n.* One who eats beans to the exclusion of all other types of foods while dungeoneering and thus makes the rest of the party suffer the stench of their unending flatulence.

*"Next time, Wankle can be the doorman. That beandipper is driving me nuts."*

**Crassling.** *n.* Any party member who can't stop cracking jokes at another party member's expense.

*"Tara's getting sick of that crassling's comments about the size of her treasure sack."*

**Dumblesnort.** *n.* Deep, obnoxious laugh, usu. coming from a large, hairy man.

**Dumbsel.** *n.* A stupid, inbred royal princess, esp. one whose rescue is the subject of a quest.

**Dwarven Glory Hole.** *n.* Any crack or crevice in a natural cavern that contains easy access to a flaky vein of insignificantly minor amounts of mithril, silver, or gold. Usu.

considered derogatory.

*"We spent three days down there and we don't even have enough coin to fill a frumping' dwarven glory hole!"*

**Erf.** *n.* Hollow-sounding natural cave walls that aren't actually hollow.

*"I've checked this whole wall for a secret passage but it's nothing but erf."*

**Frumping like Frankin.** *v.* Running into an unexplored cave, assessing its occupants, and then immediately turning around and running out to hide behind the adventuring party. So named after Frankin Framlish, a legendary 0-level human hireling who lived to be 76.

*"I knew that mummy had to be shambling somewhere around the main tomb, so I frumped like Frankin through those halls."*

**Gnockersquee.** *n.* The sound a goblin makes when it's cut in half by surprise.

*"That one sure let out a loud gnockersquee before he died, didn't he?"*

**Frogsicle.** *n.* Frozen frog on a stick; favorite summertime treat of many ogres in thrall to ice wizards.

**Gratch.** *n.* A homely girl from the grasslands, esp. one whose rescue is the subject of a quest.

**Gleer (-ed, -ing).** *v.* To smile in an intimidating or horrifying fashion; most notably seen on goblins and trolls before devouring a victim.

*"Did you see that!?! The bloody bastard gleered before he bit Hav's ankle! Hand me my bow!"*

**Gricker.** *n.* An ogre that sculpts with or crafts weapons from bones; a bone-smith.

*"Talk to Glark. He's a great gricker! He made me this shield and these bookends from nothing more than an owlbear ribcage!"*

**Handsome Jack.** *n.* Stalagmite, esp. one resembling a phallus (see also PERVY ELF).

**Harving.** *v.* To collect items by slaying monsters.

**Hrrbrr.** *n.* The low, pulsing sound of a giant purple worm tunneling nearby.

**Irby (-ies).** *n.* Naturally occurring cairn-like piles of round, potato-sized stone.

*"Right inside the face, you'll see about three or four irbies; make sure to take a stone or two for luck before heading down into the cave!"*

**Jaxon.** *n.* Rabbit bones used to flavor stews.

*"Put a few of those jaxons you saved in the pot; the marrow'll flavor up the beans right nice."*

**Juicy.** *n.* A wife or husband married while under the affects of a love potion.

**Juicer.** *n.* Administer of a love potion with pretense of marriage.

**Jackster.** *n.* Person devoted to looking for magic beets.

**Jayber.** *n.* Person placed under a curse to start every sentence with the same letter.

**Kloon.** *n.* The inexplicable appearance of an above-ground feature in a dungeon.

*"Don't think about why the tree is here. It's a friggin's kloon! Just think about how nice it is to finally find some firefood."*

**Kobold Squats.** *n.* Stomach jitters caused by a near miss, usu. accompanied by the desire but inability to void one's bowels.

*"I've had a bad case of the kobold squats since that rock slide."*

**Krelby.** *n.* A meat and grain stew made with makeshift ingredients and served when it's "good enough."

*"We hunkered down with a bowl of krelby made of blind cave fish, shoe leather, and bonemeal. It wasn't much, but it put something in our bellies."*

**Lichlick.** *n.* Any naturally occurring salt deposit.

*"Scrape some salt off that lichlick—these beans need a little flavoring."*

**Marlosh.** *n.* The mushy, not-quite- mud, not- quite- watery

quicksand-like substance that makes up the binding agent in an owlbear's freshly regurgitated waste pellet. Named after Harkin Marlosh, who surprised an owlbear in mid-vomit in Quaston's Caverns back in 823.

**Merril.** *n.* A shady male psychic.

*"Avoid the merril at the gypsy tent; he can't shuffle a tarot deck to save his life."*

**Morgret.** *n.* Any land or area hidden with magic used for secret trysts.

*"Nice work, Wally! It looks like your spell revealed Von Vorgut's mistress's mogret! Can you believe that contraption over there?"*

**Nice Easy.** *n.* Any level, flat floor clear of debris and obstacles.

**Onwooree.** *n.* Sound of someone falling down a slope, cave, mine shaft or cliff directly towards your location. Hearing this sound usu. means you should move or become someone's soft landing.

**Oompah.** *n.* Pipeweed that can be scavenged from corpse and still be smoked.

*"That halfling's corpse had a nice wad of Bertleshire oompah tucked in a vest pocket—it'd be a shame to let it rot down here."*

**Pervy Elf.** *n.* Stalactite, esp. those resembling a phallus (see also HANDSOME JACK).

*"That part of the cave is nothing but handsome jacks and pervy elves for about fifty feet before it clears out to a nice easy."*

**Quersh.** *v.* To loudly attempt to hush the party.

*"Frankin tried to quersh us, but instead he only attracted the attention of the head priest—talk about ruining the element of surprise!"*

**Reeltoo.** *n.* Any improvised device used to wind rope or cord.

**Swedow.** *n.* An acronym for Stuff WE DON't Want. Any goods deemed of little value or not worth the effort of hauling to the surface, even in massive quantities.

*"Sure, there were six whole pantries full of tinned iron rations near their expiry dates. But you and I both know that's all just swedow.."*

**Terk.** *v.* To slam one's head into a low ceiling by standing up too quickly.

*"I terked myself good in that exit tunnel from Trotman's Crypt."*

**Ulander.** *n.* Any native underground denizen.

*"We ran into a motley pack of ulanders on our way out—a couple of bugbears, a goblin or two, and, believe it or not, a stair stalker. His name was Frank. Nice fellow, actually."*

**Vlark's End.** *n.* Any crippling injury suffered by a dwarf while exploring an underground passage. Named after a drunken dwarf who wandered away from his party, fell down a crevasse, and bled out after breaking his ankle.

*"Stiggurd here almost met Vlark's end in that rockslide back there!"*

**Wank Cheese.** *n.* Any non-poisonous, non-edible, non-animated lichen, ochre, jelly, or fungus growing in a dungeon.

*"Don't worry about that spongy shelf—it's just a bit of wank cheese."*

**Xvart's Kneecaps.** *n.* Small blue gemstones of little value mainly used for ornamental decoration.

*"Don't bother with those xvart's kneecaps—go for that ruby eye there!"*

**Yngwie.** *v.* Loud music lacking a visible source which appears to emanate from rock formations, usually in proximity to large patches of erf. Music is usually of rhythmic drumming accompanied by screeching, cultish chants. Often occurs in areas where there is no known cult activity. Explained by gnomes as a natural geological phenomena involving certain stone density and proximity to underground rivers.

*"After you get through the earwasher, you should hit a room were the yngwie is loud as hell. Don't worry, though—that means you're getting close!"*

**Zelda's Purse.** *n.* Derogatory term for a goblinoid prostitute, esp. one who services human clients.



*Illustration by Dave Trampier*

## The Thief's Plan for Salvation

by Christian Sturke

Ezrem Masolial is an elfish thief/magic-user with a strange plan to achieve some form of afterlife, a fate that is mostly barred from people of his race in popular belief—he steals from temples and resolds the stolen artifacts and relicts against absolution and as well as the goodwill of the temple for returning as a “poor sinner with a change of heart.”

He does this frequently in different temples and different places. Sometimes, though, he steals from a temple and for some reason or another can't return the artifact.

Anxious that the theft of these pieces could spell his doom and eternal damnation, he finally settled down and built an oecumenical shrine for his relicts and artifacts to be housed in, so that the Gods he stole from could be placated.

What none of the priests realize—those that use this shrine to give praise to their respective gods and to gossip with colleagues of friendly or at least neutral persuasions—is that Ezrem built a secret dungeon level under the shrine, filled with spyholes in the walls and floors to eavesdrop on them and their conversations—and learn of possible new targets for his heists.

A keen observer of the shrine could see smoke coming out of the chimney, even though nobody heats a shrine in the middle of summer. The dungeon level is a lavishly decorated affair with a few spare bedrooms and a central chamber dominated by a large fireplace, a lot of literature on different religions on some big book shelves, and an enormous armchair amidst a lot of copper tubes ending above it, that can be used to hear what in any of the niches and confessional boxes in the shrine above is said.

Ezrem has a few low level thieves as followers, mostly elves and halfelves, and a hunchbacked, ugly human apprentice named Gin, obviously a nickname.