

Ptolus™



DARK TIDINGS

By
MONTE COOK
For Characters of 6th or 7th Level



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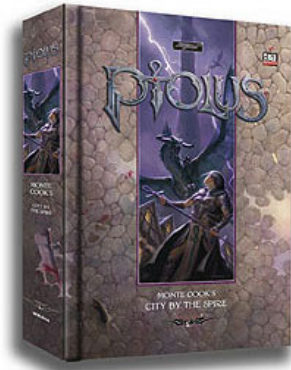


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This adventure is for use with Ptolus.

CREDITS

WRITING:

Monte Cook

EDITING AND PRODUCTION:

Sue Weinlein Cook

COVER ART:

Todd Lockwood and Jason Engle

CARTOGRAPHY:

Eric Blische (made with *Dundjinni*)

ILLUSTRATORS:

Toren "MacBin" Atkinson, Ed Bourelle, Kev Crossley, Jason Engle, The Forge, Michael Komarck, Eric Lofgren, Howard Lyon, Alan Pollack, Kristian Juul Rasmussen, James Ryman, Arne Swekel, Tyler Walpole, and Kieran Yanner

COVER AND INTERIOR DESIGN:

Lisa Chido

PLAYTESTERS:

Sue Cook, Matt Filla, Jacquelyn Karau, Mark Karau, and Kent Wayson

NOTE:

This book uses the rules from *The Collected Book of Experimental Might* (or the two *Book of Experimental Might* ebook volumes).



Introduction: DUNGEON HUNTERS

Exploring the labyrinthine complexes beneath the city can be filled with challenge, adventure, and reward. But it also can be filled with danger beyond imagining, as a young brother and sister discovered to their peril.



Experimental Might Rules

You can find *The Collected Book of Experimental Might* in game stores starting in February 2009, or order it from www.paizo.com. Those who prefer ebooks can buy the two individual volumes (*The Book of Experimental Might* and *The Book of Experimental Might II*) in PDF format from Malhavoc Press at www.montecook.com.

Ghul's Labyrinth: Ptolus, page 418

How Long Will It Take?

A typical group will likely complete this adventure in one extended game session, or two average-length sessions—perhaps six to eight hours of game time, total.

I remember it like it was yesterday. I was in the car with my friend Bruce Cordell, driving back from lunch. I was telling him about this idea for a campaign that would be heavily dungeon based. I explained that it would use the model of a gold-rush town, except instead of a city on the edge of a new gold strike, it would be a city on top of a dungeon filled with ancient treasures and dangers. Going down into this dungeon would be the occupation of many a thrill-seeker and fortune-hunter, but a good portion of them would fail. In fact, some adventurers could make a living doing nothing but going down into the dungeon to rescue others who had gone before and gotten into trouble.

Thus, the “rescue mission” is in many ways the archetypal Ptolus adventure. So it’s about time I wrote one. That’s what *Dark Tidings* is.

Dark Tidings, an adventure designed for four 6th- or 7th-level characters, was written as a supplement to *Ptolus: Monte Cook's City by the Spire*, a campaign sourcebook describing a robust fantasy city. However, it also supports the set of Experimental Might rules found in either *The Collected Book of Experimental Might* or the two ebook volumes (*Book of Experimental Might* and *Book of Experimental Might II*).

Of course, you can use *Dark Tidings* as a standard adventure, simply ignoring the notes regarding new rules, feats, and so forth. You can also set the adventure anywhere you like. At its heart, it’s a standard dungeon setting.

RUNNING DARK TIDINGS

This adventure takes characters deep into the Dungeon beneath Ptolus, into the area known as **Ghul's Labyrinth**. The DM should read Part IV: *Below the City in Ptolus* to prepare for this adventure, particularly Chapter 19: *What's Down There?* for background information about the Dungeon and its unique characteristics. The DM should be familiar with Ptolus' delving culture as well (see Chapter 27: *On Being a Delver*).

USING THIS BOOK

Throughout *Dark Tidings*, spells, items, or monsters introduced in this adventure, *The Collected Book of Experimental Might*, or *Ptolus: Monte Cook's City by the Spire* are noted in the outside panels. Otherwise, all references to spells, feats, and other rules are from the three v. 3.5 Core Rulebooks: the Player's Handbook, DMG, and MM.

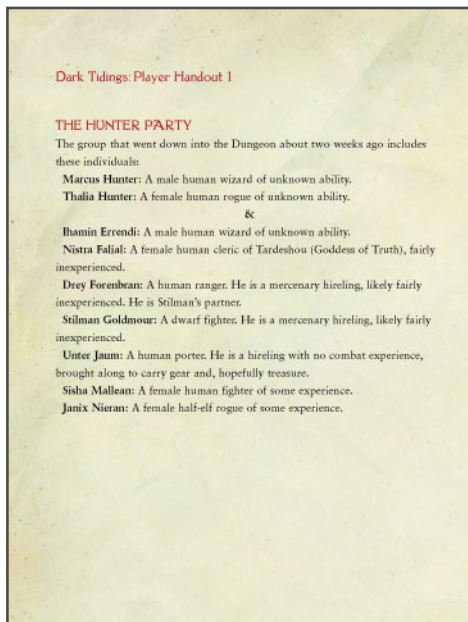
Dark Tidings assumes that the DM has access to the full *Ptolus* book (or its thematic PDF editions) and either *The Collected Book of Experimental Might* or the separate PDF volumes. The players do not need any background outside of what's provided in this book, although if this adventure is part of a Ptolus campaign, they might find the *Player's Guide to Ptolus* helpful. (It's a free download available at <www.ptolus.com>.)

This adventure book is protected content except for items specifically called out as Open Gaming Content on page 19 in the Appendix. Open content is not otherwise marked in the text of this book.

THE SET UP

The facts are these:

Thalia and Marcus Hunter are the children of deceased delver Adatol Hunter. Having attained adulthood, they were granted their father's belongings—mostly delving gear, some of it reputedly of impressive magical power, purchased with money gained from successful dungeon exploration or recovered during such adventures. Using the portion of their inheritance that was easily liquidated, the siblings hired some companions, henchmen, and guides and found a way down into Ghul's Labyrinth below the city. They had two goals. The first was to bring back an exotic beast for a collector named Korben Trollone, who would pay them well for a living specimen. The second, and far more important, was to prove themselves the worthy successors of their father's legacy.



This is Player Handout 1, found on page 17.

The Hunters and their companions have now been missing for two weeks.

While on one of his explorations, Adatol recovered a long-lost heirloom extremely important to House Kath (a painting of Lothian's mother created by Solorence Kath almost four hundred fifty years ago). Ever since then, the Kath's have felt indebted to him. So when Adatol's aged widow, Oudre, came asking for help, head of the house Lady Devina Kath herself pledges to do all she can. On the recommendation of a mutual acquaintance, Devina, along with her husband Matrenus and sister Sallina, invites the player characters to dinner at an exclusive restaurant in the Nobles' Quarter, The Aristocrat's Table.

There, they ask the PCs to find Thalia and Marcus Hunter and bring them back. Delicately, they explain that, even if it's just a matter of bringing back the siblings' bodies, so be it. A substantial reward awaits the group at the end of the mission.

The Kath's provide all the information they were able to obtain: the location where the siblings went into the Dungeon, a map (from the Delver's Guild) of the general area, and a run-down of the Hunters' companions and hirelings. Something magical prevents divinations from locating either Thalia or Marcus (or their bodies).

Time is of the essence, of course, but obviously this is a dangerous mission and shouldn't be undertaken lightly or by the ill prepared. The Kath's give the PCs each 1,000 gp to properly equip themselves for the mission.

Give the players Player Handout 1 (page 17), a roster of the Hunters' entire party as follows:

- **Marcus Hunter:** A male human wizard of unknown ability.
- **Thalia Hunter:** A female human rogue of unknown ability.
- **Ihamin Errendi:** A male human wizard of unknown ability.
- **Nistra Fialial:** A female human cleric of Tardeshou (Goddess of Truth), fairly inexperienced.
- **Drey Forenbran:** A human ranger. He is a mercenary hireling, likely fairly inexperienced. He is Stilman's partner.
- **Stilman Goldmour:** A dwarf fighter. He is a mercenary hireling, likely fairly inexperienced.
- **Unter Jaum:** A human porter. He is a hireling with no combat experience, brought along to carry gear and, hopefully, treasure.
- **Sisha Malleian:** A female human fighter of some experience.
- **Janix Nieran:** A female half-elf rogue of some experience.



House Kath: Ptolus, page 92



The Aristocrat's Table: Ptolus, page 284

Delver's Guild: Ptolus, page 108



Optional Adventure Hook

Alternatively, you could use the Delver's Guild as an impetus for the adventure. As explained on page 109 of Ptolus, delvers with retrieval insurance get teams of rescuers to come find them when needed. While the Hunter children were too new to be Master Delvers, perhaps out of respect for their father, the Guild has decided to pay a team (the PCs) to go find them anyway.

Korben Trollone: Ptolus, page 361

DM TIPS

When preparing for the adventure, make sure you go over the new Experimental Might feats and spells so that you can be prepared when combat starts. These new abilities help shape the tactics of the NPCs and monsters the characters will encounter.

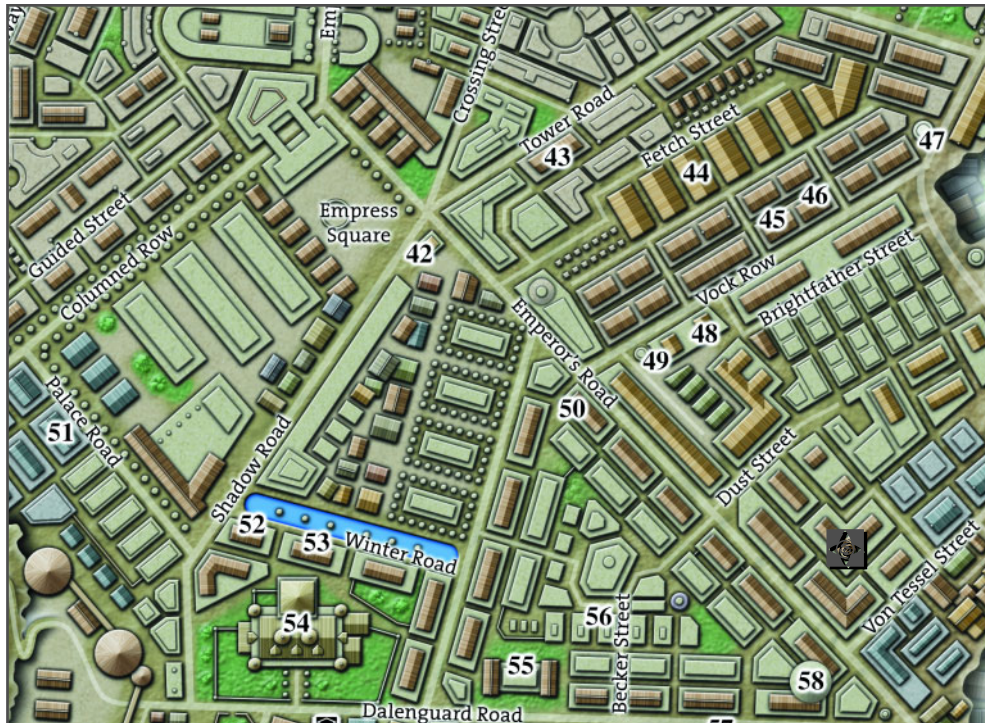


Characters can take advantage of the Undercity Market (Ptolus, page 423) and Delver's Square (Ptolus, page 198) to equip themselves for the adventure.

South Market district: Ptolus, page 350

Kevris Killraven: Ptolus, page 121

Korben Trollone's office: Ptolus, page 360



This map shows the entrance to the Dungeon—marked with this symbol —from a cellar between Dust and Von Tessel Streets on the east side of Oldtown. (Note that the numbers are not relevant to this adventure.)

PREPARING FOR THE ADVENTURE

Should the player characters accept the mission, they'll have very little time to prepare—Lady Kath would really like them to leave the day following their meeting, allowing time only to gather needed supplies.

Before they set off, however, some of the PCs may take the time to try to find out more about Adatol, his children, Ghul's Labyrinth, or Korben Trollone. Gather Information checks are in order, but keep in mind that each topic will take approximately half a day. (Bardic knowledge would be faster, obviously. Knowledge [History] can provide quick information about Adatol and Ghul's Labyrinth, and Knowledge [Local] might give some bits about Thalia and Marcus Hunter or Trollone.)

Adatol Hunter

- DC 14 Adatol was a well-known adventurer who died two years ago.
- DC 18 Adatol was Grand Master Delver in the Guild and had many contacts among the noble families and other wealthy and influential people of the city.
- DC 22 Adatol died from some disease gained while deep below the city.
- DC 28 Adatol's "disease" was actually magical poison designed by the dark elves.

Ghul's Labyrinth

- DC 10 Ghul was a powerful, extremely evil wizard who built Goth Gulgamel on the Spire.
- DC 15 Ghul's minions built many of the catacombs below the city.
- DC 20 Ghul's Labyrinth has many unique features, like special doors and strange laboratories.
- DC 25 Bluesteel doors (like in Area 2 of the next chapter) are a unique feature of Ghul's Labyrinth.

Korben Trollone

- DC 20 Korben Trollone is a crime boss in the South Market district.
- DC 22 He is known as "Korben the Keeper" because he keeps many animals and beasts.
- DC 23 Korben Trollone works for the crimelord Kevris Killraven.
- DC 25 Korben is said to be looking for a hydra egg.
- DC 30 Korben's office is located behind Edarth's Loans in the South Market district.

THE COURSE OF THE ADVENTURE

The characters use the map they are given to enter Ghul's Labyrinth from an old cellar beneath a building in **Oldtown**. They follow the trail of Thalia and Marcus Hunter and their adventuring party, which isn't all that difficult, as it's a large group and delvers often leave a trail of ransacked rooms and general destruction in their wake.

Then the PCs enter the Demesne of Dark Tidings (see below). There, thanks to the Hunters' actions, Dungeon inhabitants who previously had no access to each now other struggle for dominance. To reach a successful conclusion, the PCs need to learn the password to an otherwise virtually unopenable bluesteel door. But first, the group must cope with a lamia and her ogre partner, who seek to destroy a mummy and its ettin and orc servants. Eventually, the PCs might get to the chamber where a hydra guards the remains of Marcus and, even better, the room where Thalia hides, still alive. Of course, this assumes they can reach her, and then figure out how to get her out past some magical barriers.

STARTING IN MEDIA RES

The beginning of this adventure allows DMs to use a technique called *in media res*. This allows you to start a game session not with a lot of exposition and investigation, but with action. You can actually launch the session with the words, "roll for initiative."

To do this, allow the characters 1,000 gp each to equip themselves in advance for a dungeon adventure. Then start with them fighting the dragonnes in Area 1 (page 7), giving them the opportunity to retreat if necessary (the dragonnes won't follow them). *Then* provide them with the background of the adventure, how they got there, and even what happened in the "Prologue Encounters" (page 6). All the PCs may, if they wish, retroactively take actions to prepare, like making Knowledge checks to gain information.

It's a fun and exciting way to get the ball rolling without having to wait to for the action to start.

THE DEMESNE OF DARK TIDINGS

When Ghul forced his minions to carve the labyrinths around the Spire, he used different sections for different purposes. In this particular area, called the Demesne of Dark Tidings, he set a powerful magical item that he had stolen in the land of Kem far to the south. This item, the *Sartalin Sphere*, was unfortunately damaged in his attempt to secure it from its previous owner. While he intended to get around to repairing it, he never had the chance.

THE SARTALIN SPHERE

Sartalin was a powerful enchanter who created a magic item that would allow him to know all the thoughts and secrets of his enemies (and, one supposes, his friends). Now the sphere, when activated, reveals the thoughts of everyone within its area of effect (which is everything on the map on page 8). However, it only gives dark intent. In other words, all those within the area know the dark thoughts, desires, and intentions of anyone they can see within the area. Line of sight is vital for this power to function. It does not reveal anything that isn't sinister, selfish, evil, or wrong. Tapping into this function of the sphere is not an action; it occurs automatically.

The *Sartalin Sphere* has two other secondary abilities granted by Ghul when he placed it in the Demesne. The first is that it transmits the key word for the bluesteel door in Area 2 to everyone in its area upon its initial activation. The second is, while the sphere is active, Lianahsa the mummy must remain within her temple-tomb (Area 7).

Thalia and Marcus' group activated the sphere. This means that, when the characters arrive, many of the Demesne's inhabitants now know the key word and can reach areas they could not access before. They can reach each other as well, which leads to a brewing conflict. It also means that the PCs will know not only each others' dark thoughts, but the evil desires of every Dungeon inhabitant they meet.

Throughout the area descriptions starting on page 7, you will see sidebars called "Dark Tidings," which describe the dark thoughts currently being broadcast.

While the *Sartalin Sphere* remains active, use of the Bluff skill (including with feint maneuvers) is impossible. Lies and trickery are very difficult, if not impossible. Sneaking up on someone is not hampered, however, as a creature must be aware of another creature to gain his dire thoughts.

A character who has used the red panel of one of the pedestals (see below) to make himself immune to the sphere's power for a time may use Bluff and lies.

THE PEDESTALS

Throughout this section of the Dungeon, Ghul and his servants placed strange stone pedestals that draw on the magical energy of the *Sartalin Sphere*. Each of the pedestals has three rectangular glass panels on the top: one colored red, one blue, and one yellow.

A creature that touches the red panel gains immunity to the *Sartalin Sphere's* effects and a +5 bonus to saves versus all mind-influencing effects for ten minutes. Creatures who touch the blue panel are healed for 3d6 points of damage. A



Oldtown: Ptolus, page 312

DM TIPS

If the player characters are only 6th level, use the standard average hit points found in the MM for the foes in this adventure, rather than the Experimental Might-influenced hit point totals provided here.



Ghul: Ptolus, page 81

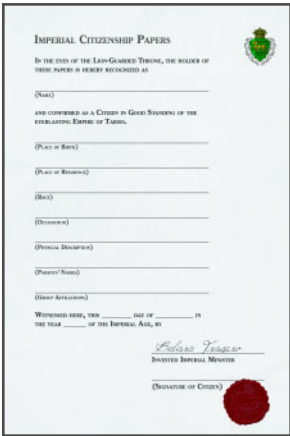
The Spire: Ptolus, page 159



Kem: Ptolus, page 41



City Watch: Ptolus, page 150



Imperial identification papers:
Ptolus, page 552

creature that touches the yellow panel on every pedestal on the map (there are eight of them), deactivates the *Sartalin Sphere*. Each panel can be used only once each day.

PROLOGUE ENCOUNTERS

These encounters are not labeled on the map. They are not combat encounters. You can play through them, or the DM can simply give the players this information and start in Area 1 (page 7).

Either way, it takes four to five hours for the PCs to make their way from the entrance of the Dungeon marked on their map to Area 1, cautiously exploring mainly empty rooms and winding passages. Occasionally they have to double back when they encounter dead ends, or when the trail goes cold and they realize they’re no longer on the right track.

PROLOGUE ENCOUNTER 1

In a long, wide hallway decorated with ancient frescoes lies the site of a recent battle. The Hunters and their troupe encountered a pair of ankhegs that laired near here. The battle was quick and the adventurers suffered only a few minor wounds. The two ankhegs, now quite decomposed and partially eaten by scavengers, have been dead for two weeks. Other than the bodies, PCs can find the remains of some bits of bandages and salve (indicating that Nistra likely mended a few wounds) and a few apple cores and cashew shells (indicating that they all rested here after the fight).

PROLOGUE ENCOUNTER 2

The scene of another fairly recent battle offers further clues that the player characters are on the right track. In recent months, a group of particularly loathsome thieves and cutthroats found this

subterranean chamber and made it their base of operations. They lived much of their lives in the dark or near-dark environs of Ghul’s Labyrinth, daring to sneak above ground to waylay citizens at night and hiding from the tender mercies of the City Watch during the day. Thalia, Marcus, and company encountered these thugs and murderers in their lair and slew many of them when the brigands reacted with immediate violence upon discovery. The rest of the thugs fled deeper into the Dungeon, likely coming to even fouler ends at the claws of things far more terrible than thieves living in the dark.

Sadly, Janix the rogue did not survive the encounter. The adventurers left their friend lying in state on a wooden bench (sans valuables). By some quirk of fate, the body has not been disturbed in the two weeks it’s been here. She has no equipment, but she does have her Imperial identification papers. The chamber has another bench, a long table, and a variety of food, weapons, and gear. Thalia and Marcus took anything worth anything (which wasn’t much). Nearby, a room served as a sleeping chamber for the eight thugs. It likewise has been thoroughly ransacked.

PROLOGUE ENCOUNTER 3

A weary and wounded porter hides behind a pile of broken statuary and other rubble in a dark and damp chamber. Hopelessly lost, the man is delirious and weak from dehydration. His name is Unter Jaum (male human commoner1). He tells the PCs that the Hunters’ party encountered some terrible monsters “both lion and dragon” somewhere deeper in the Dungeon and he fled in terror. Unter, in shock as he is, will be of no use to the party members. Their best bet is to leave him some food and water and get him on the way back to the surface.



The Demesne: MAP ENCOUNTERS

Once the characters enter the map on the next page, they are within the Demesne of Dark Tidings and, therefore, under the effects of the Sartalin Sphere.



I have presented the encounters here *in situ*. The creatures aren't all in their lairs waiting for PCs to come and bash them. Some don't have lairs, as they've arrived from elsewhere in **Ghul's Labyrinth**. They're actually involved in adventures of their own, so to speak.

While hopefully this is interesting, it does mean that when the player characters do the unexpected—and they always do—the DM will have to improvise some of the encounters. For example, if the PCs attack the ettin and orcs in Area 6 but flee before slaying them, the DM will have to figure out how those creatures as well as their ratmen slaves and mummy master react.

See the map on page 8 for the layout of all the Demesne areas described here. The main antagonists are as follows:

- **Derrogma**: A unique ogre mage (see Area 3).
- **Kaevos**: A lamia (see Area 4) who commands a handful of troll bodyguards.
- **Lianahsa**: A mummy (see Area 7) with a group of ettin and orc servants.

AREA 1: DEMESNE ENTRANCE

(EL 10)

This large, two-tiered chamber clearly has some kind of chamber beneath it—a large

iron grate in the floor allows one to see down into an open area below. The eastern half of the room features a raised platform of stone, held aloft on pillars that look like giants balancing it on their shoulders. Atop the platform is a pedestal that holds a massive glass sphere. Strewn about here are bits of torn clothes and broken gear, some covered in dried blood.

The ceiling here is 30 feet high. The height difference between the eastern and western portions of the chamber is 15 feet. The raised platform in the eastern portion is 20 feet high, so it is still 5 feet higher than the western half of the room. This means that the characters cannot use the ladder connecting the two halves of the room to reach the platform.

A chamber immediately below this one is not shown on the map but conforms to the exact same size and shape of the western half of this area.

THE IRON GRATE

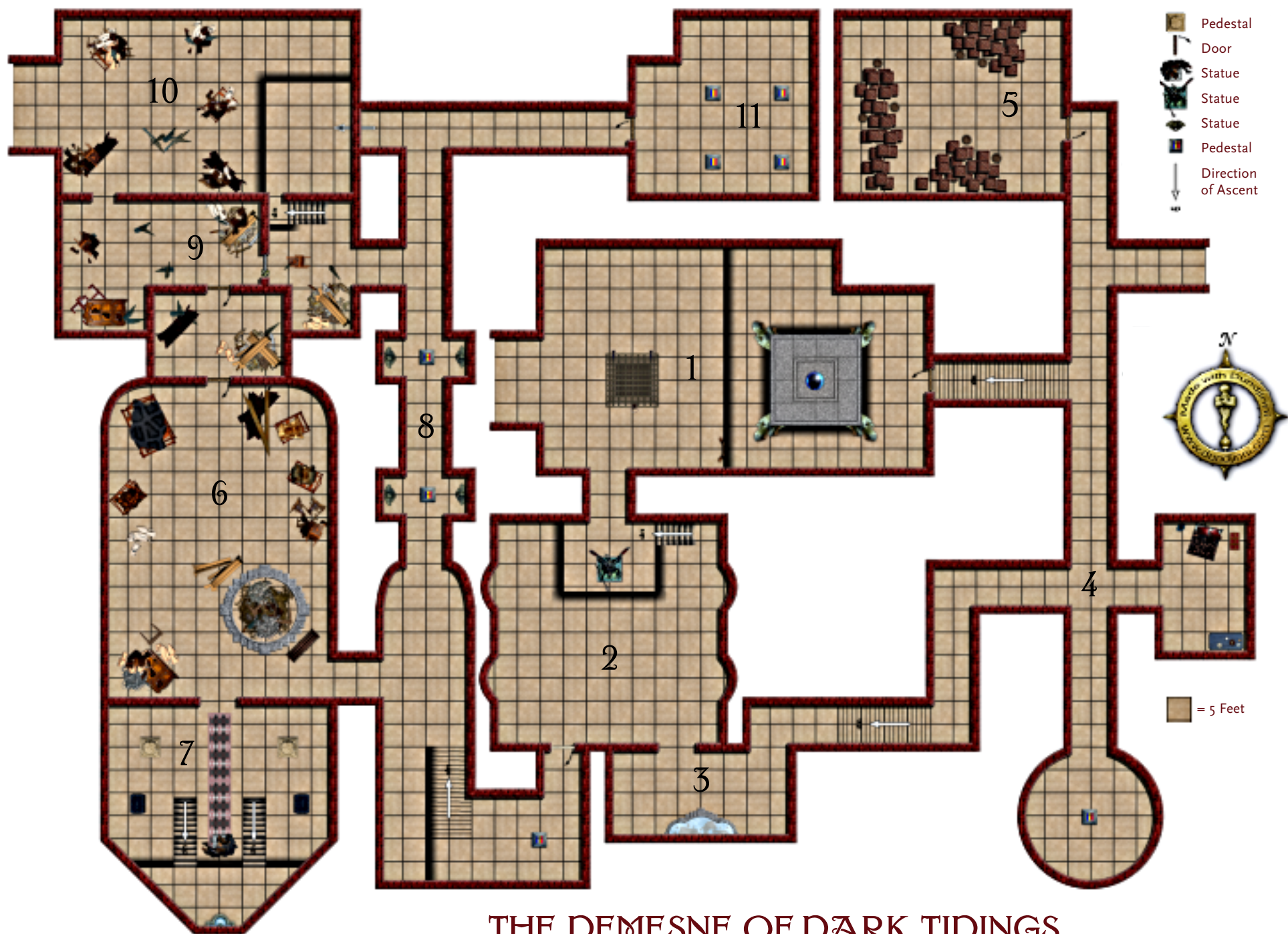
This hinged grate can be latched and locked, but currently it is not. If a PC latches and locks it, any dragonnes in the chamber below will be trapped.

Ghul's Labyrinth: Ptolus, page 418

Prevailing Conditions

Unless described otherwise, the rooms are dark, the doors are unlocked, lightweight, and wooden (hardness 5, 10 hp, break DC 15), and the ceilings are 15 feet high.

Each inhabitant of this dungeon is presented with the new Experimental Might rules. Many have a few more hit points than normal (adding in their Constitution score) and most have additional feats from the new rules. However, not every monster has been given a feat for each Hit Die or level. It's just not necessary. Instead, they have enough to make them interesting challenges, because that's the point.



THE DEMESNE OF DARK TIDINGS

CREATURES

This area holds three dragonnes. These beasts were pets of one of Ghul's lieutenants, held in stasis until inadvertently freed by Thalia and Marcus when they activated the *Sartalin Sphere*. Now the creatures keep many of the Demesne's inhabitants cut off from going up from here.

The dragonnes do not really care for each other and are not particularly hungry, but they are belligerent. This means that when the PCs enter this area, one dragonne will be on the platform in the eastern portion of the room. It attacks immediately. The other two are in the chamber beneath. Upon hearing the fight, one of the other monsters comes up and joins the fray, easily pushing the grate open. This happens one or two rounds after the battle begins.

The third dragonne won't come up until the battle ends, although it will attack immediately. A really smart player character will run over and the lock the grate immediately after the first dragonne attacks, which takes a standard action. A smart character will take the time out of the middle of the fight with the second dragonne to close and lock the grate, which takes two standard actions (one to close, one to lock).

Dragonnes: hp 95, 91, and 86. Give each one the Power Attack and Stunning Blow (DC 18) Experimental Might feats.

TREASURE

The remains of the wizard Ihamin, the ranger Drey, and the fighter Stilman lay here, torn apart and partially eaten by the dragonnes. Of these remains, only Stilman can be positively identified without magic, although a Heal check (DC 15) is still needed (to determine that the remains are those of a dwarf, and Stilman was the only dwarf in the Hunters' party). Their gear and valuables, however, lie about the area. Many miscellaneous items have been destroyed but the intact equipment includes a suit of *+1 slick chainmail armor*, four *+1 sonic crossbow bolts*, a scroll of *burning hands* and *rogue's stab*, a gold ring with an emerald (750 gp), a silver belt buckle with onyx (125 gp), a masterwork longsword, 50 feet of silk rope, three tinder-twigs, a lantern, a dagger, and some miscella-



neous tools and worthless items, including Drey's identification papers.

In the chamber below, where the dragonnes laired, lies a severed finger bone that still wears a *+1 ring of protection* amid other grisly remains. This finger belongs to Nistra the cleric—it's the only thing left of her.

THE SARTALIN SPHERE

The sphere sits on the pedestal atop the platform. To deactivate it, one must cast a *dispel magic* spell upon it (no caster level check is needed, however). If deactivated, it can be reactivated with just a touch. When the PCs arrive, Marcus Hunter has already activated it. That means the members of the Hunter party, Lianahsa the mummy and its slaves, and Kaevos the lamia all learned the key word of the bluesteel door in Area 2. Kaevos' trolls and Derrogma the ogre were not present at the time, but Kaevos told Derrogma the key word.

Activating the sphere has other effects as well (see page 5). The *Sartalin Sphere* cannot be destroyed or removed by any process short of a *wish*.

During the battle with the dragonnes, the player characters will experience the "dark tidings" effect for the first time. How this is handled depends largely on the group of characters and the style of the players. Good-aligned characters will have few dark thoughts, and they will likely be minor and probably rather petty. Still, for a group that enjoys a lot of role-playing, this is an opportunity for characters to suddenly make even their minor grievances with the other characters, various NPCs in the campaign, or any other issue, known to all. (Once the PCs are out of combat and realize what's going on here, it will be hard for them not to think their various dark thoughts, which immediately broadcasts them to the others.)

Neutral or even evil characters, however, may broadcast some truly dark thoughts, perhaps revealing vital secrets and plans. Impending betrayals can be spoiled, and evil plots are suddenly laid bare.

AREA 2: ALCOVE ROOM

(EL 0 / 6 / 9)

Directly south of the dragonnes' domain, the characters find a large chamber opening up before them.

The builders of this dark labyrinth painted the soaring cathedral ceiling of this area in abstract red and black swirls. Although time has faded the paint, the effect is still disorienting. The statue of a hideously ugly man—perhaps a half-orc or a demon-blooded fiend—stands upon a raised platform fifteen

Area 1 is a difficult encounter, but keep in mind that all three dragonnes do not attack the PCs at once.

Rogue's stab: The Collected Book of Experimental Might, page 132, or The Book of Experimental Might ebook volume, page 73

DARK TIDINGS

The Sartalin Sphere reveals the dark thoughts of the dragonnes, but only when they actually come into view. These thoughts are quite limited: "kill and eat these creatures," basically. Their general dislike for each other is also revealed.



Characters with the Tracking feat may try to follow the Hunters' path. However, the Difficulty Class is very difficult: 28.

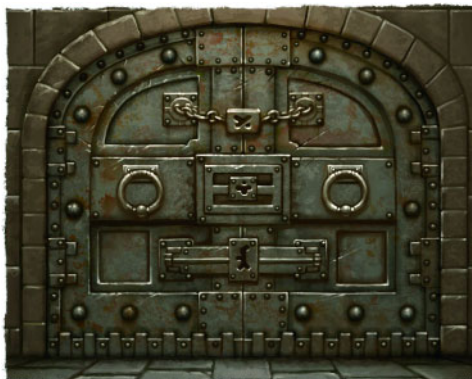
DARK TIDINGS

Derrogma's dark thoughts almost immediately disclose his intentions against Lianahsa and her slaves once he reveals his presence. But he knows that and won't be surprised by it or try to hide his thoughts or intentions. The simulacra ogres don't really have much in the way of independent thoughts other than "kill."

Bluesteel doors: Ptolus, page 420

If the PCs negotiate with him, Derrogma can provide them with the key word to get them past the bluesteel door in Area 2. They might even easily trick him into revealing it as a part of a dark thought.

In the playtest, the player characters rested for an extended period in Area 3 after dealing with the lamia and trolls beyond. As they did, they heard the orcs from Area 6 leave to investigate the new territory (Area 2 and up into Area 1). However, the dragonnes trapped below Area 1 frightened them into retreat. If the PCs had not learned the bluesteel door password yet, they would have heard the orcs use it.



feet above the floor. The interiors of four tiny alcoves continue the red and black swirling motif of the ceiling. An iron door with an obvious lock in its center leads to the south.

The ceiling here is 25 feet high. The alcoves are empty and contain nothing special.

TREASURE

The fighter Sisha, seriously wounded, stumbled into this chamber with Thalia and Marcus after the horrific battle in Area 1, but she died here. Although the siblings took most of her valuables, they left her masterwork full plate armor and masterwork heavy steel shield along with her corpse. From here, the siblings went on alone.

THE BLUESTEEL DOOR

The bluesteel door in the chamber's south wall is one of many in Ghul's Labyrinth. The door has a hardness of 12, 120 hit points, and a break DC of 31. It is magical and will open only if someone says "Nilatras." Derrogma, Kaevos, Lianahsa, and Lianahsa's servants all know this key word.

DEVELOPMENT

See Area 3.

AREA 3: WHEN AN OGRE MAGE IS NOT AN OGRE-MAGE (EL 8)

South of the great chamber housing the bluesteel door, a narrow room lies beyond an archway.

A crumbling but functional fountain babbles and bubbles along the south wall. The basin is filled with crumbled plaster and bits of masonry. The water is milky white with residue.

The water in the fountain tastes terrible, but it's not actually dangerous if one drinks from it in small doses (or filters it through a cloth first).

CREATURE

A very special ogre named Derrogma watches invisibly from this room into Area 2. If anyone enters Area 2, he begins creating ogre simulacra (see below) and sending them in to attack. If anyone somehow sees him, or if it seems as though he might be able to finish off foes weakened by the ogres he sends in, he will join in the attack himself, shooting eldritch bolts from this room, and gaining cover from the archway between the two chambers.

If the player characters come from the east rather than the north, he just tries to stay hidden until they're gone; he plans to attack them later.

One of Derrogma's unique abilities allows him to create lesser ogres from his own flesh. Using a full-round action up to three times each day, he can pull off a handful of his own flesh and toss it onto the ground up to 20 feet away, where it instantly grows into a Medium ogre that obeys Derrogma's mental commands.

Derrogma is an ogre mage, but not an ogre-mage. Which is to say, he's an ogre wizard. But in truth, except in size, he's as unrecognizable as an ogre as one can get. Effeminate, intelligent, cautious, and refined, he's no typical ogre. However, Derrogma is subtle, not outlandish or flamboyant. His caution gives way to timidity, but not to absurd cowardice or ineptitude. (In other words, while he's no typical ogre, DMs shouldn't play him for laughs.)

Derrogma has allied himself with Kaevos the lamia, more out of fear than out of need. Derrogma comes from a line of specially-bred Ghul-spawned ogres more intelligent, long-lived, and sorcerously inclined than normal ogres. He originates from a far-off area of the Dungeon, but his wandering brought him here, where he found the lamia. Kaevos has convinced Derrogma that anyone he encounters here is a dangerous foe and must be eliminated. "It's 'kill or be killed' here," she told him, and he believes it. Now, he helps her fight against Lianahsa the mummy and its servants; currently he seeks to spy on them, and perhaps even snipe off a few on his own.

Kaevos gave him a page torn from a very old book about Ghul's Labyrinth and its inhabitants that provides secrets useful to those who would oppose the mummy. See Player Handout 2 on page 18 for a facsimile of this page. It says the following:

Lianahsa, the Exalt: Lianahsa should have risen to be the greatest of the Sadist Priests of Jol, but she was struck down by her rival, Kisselin of the Black Blood. Placed within the Labyrinth and given the kiss of unlife, she now serves as an eternal guardian of one of the Master's Great Keys.

Deactivate the Sartalin Sphere to allow Lianahsa to leave her temple-tomb. Within each of the temple coffers lie the two halves of her heart. Keep them safe, for without them, her prayers go unheard. However, should you need them, the vials in those coffers cure the rotting disease she can confer and immediately remove any damage from the debilitation caused by her touch.

And scrawled at the bottom of the torn page is this handwritten message: *Use this information to destroy that bitch if you can.*

If seriously threatened, Derrogma will flee, using either *invisibility* from his scroll or *expeditious retreat* to help him escape. He runs to Area 4, hoping to gain aid from Kaevos.

Derrogma

Male unique ogre (Chaotic Neutral)
Large Giant

Wizard5 **CR 8**
HD 4d8+20 + 3d6+15 **hp** 73
Init +2 **Speed** 30 feet

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 17 (AC 20 vs. melee, 23 vs. ranged if move 10 feet)

BAB/Grapple +5/+16

Attack/Full Attack +12 slam attack (1d6+10)

Space/Reach 10 feet/10 feet

SA Create ogre simulacra, Eldritch Bolt discipline (+7 touch, 2d6 damage, 45 foot range), Bolt of Bedevilment discipline (DC 15, 45-foot range).

SQ Arcanist discipline, Telekinesis discipline (25 lbs., 45-foot range), low-light vision and darkvision 60 feet.

Fort +11 **Ref** +5 **Will** +8

Str 24, **Dex** 15, **Con** 21, **Int** 16, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 9

Crucial Skills: Climb +12, Listen +11, Spot +11.

Other Skills: Decipher Script +11, Knowledge (Arcana) +14, Spellcraft +10.

Crucial Feats: Combat Casting, Defensive Move, Defensive Stance, Empower Spell, Power Attack.

Other Feats: Alertness, Scribe Scroll.

Spells: 2/2/2/1/1; save DC 13 + half spell level (CL 5, +12 melee touch, +7 ranged touch).

5th—*dispel magic*

4th—*invisibility*

3rd—*knock*, *shrapnel globe*

2nd—*expeditious retreat*, *shocking grasp*

1st—*jump*, *obscuring mist*

Possessions: +3 bracers of armor, cloak of resistance +1, hand of the mage, potion of lesser restoration, potion of hide from undead, scroll of invisibility, blur, and lightning bolt, scroll of glitterdust, resist energy, and levitate, 15 pp, 160 gp, 9 sp, gold necklace (100 gp), gold ring (50 gp).

Simulacra ogres (3): hp 45, 39, 36. Use standard ogre stats, but give each a +8 slam attack that inflicts 1d6+7 points of damage. Give



each the Debilitating Strike and Fleet of Foot Experimental Might feats. The simulacra ogres are unarmored and thus have only AC 13.

AREA 4: KAEVOS (EL 8)

East of where the party met the ogre lies a crossroads of sorts.

This is an innocuous intersection of two corridors. To the east lies a room that appears to be a bedchamber.

CREATURES

Kaevos the lamia doesn't wait in her room. Instead, she and her troll bodyguards maintain a vigil at the intersection in the hallway. She's worried that at any moment, Lianahsa will send her slaves to attack her. She came to this region of Ghul's Labyrinth only a few months ago, but quickly mastered the trolls here and has even trained two of them to use bows (see Area 5). She's working on training the other two (which are here with her now).

Kaevos is a schemer who hates combat and personal risk. She's happy to send her troll bodyguards into a fray, but she will run to Area 5 at the slightest risk of danger. Kaevos is all too eager to parley with those who would threaten her. If given the chance, she offers aid against Lianahsa, perhaps even going so far as to offer her trolls to accompany player characters going off to fight the mummy (but probably only after a PC succeeds at an Intimidate check). She can also tell the characters about the pieces of Lianahsa's heart in the locked coffers (see Player Handout 2).

Note that Derrogma uses twenty levels of spells and four wizard disciplines, as detailed in the Experimental Might rules.

If the PCs negotiate with Kaevos, she can provide them with the key word to get them past the bluesteel door in Area 2. She does so willingly, in fact, because she'd love for them to fight the mummy rather than her.

DARK TIDINGS

Kaevos has recently used the pedestal in the round southern chamber of Area 4, and thus the Sartalin Sphere currently cannot affect her. Of course, the player characters have no way of knowing this. The trolls don't know all that much, so their dark thoughts and desires consist mainly of, "I hope Kaevos lets me eat these creatures eventually."



Some DMs may wish to recast the Area 4 encounter so that Kaevos assumes the form of a human female, pretending to be one of the Hunter party, to get the player characters to go and attack Lianahsa. This will be tricky, however, as Kaevos knows next to nothing about the Hunter party members or the surface world, and will have to deal with the PCs wanting her to accompany them if she does manage to fool them. Her spell-like abilities will help in these endeavors, of course.

DARK TIDINGS

There's nothing subtle about the trolls' dark thoughts. They love to fight, maim, and kill.

Feat Boosts

Feel free to give the trolls and the ettin a feat boost to use, per the rules in Chapter 4 of The Collected Book of Experimental Might or Chapter 2 of The Book of Experimental Might II ebook.

This is an extra complication, but it does give them a few more interesting options.

DARK TIDINGS

The ettin and the orcs are full of dark thoughts, but none of it provides any useful information.

If desired, some comedy relief could arise from the conflicting intelligent/stupid and particularly violent thoughts of the ettin's two brains.

Kaevos knows next to nothing about Thalia and Marcus—they never came this way. She only knows that a group of humans from the surface was here some days ago and messed about with the *Sartalin Sphere*.

Being evil and devious, however, Kaevos tries to kill the PCs after they destroy the mummy in Area 7, if possible (she spies on their battle).

Kaevos, lamia: hp 70. She has Charisma 13. Give her the Command, Commanding Presence, and Draw Attack Experimental Might feats. She has a +2 *dagger* (add a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls) and a *scabbard of keen edges*.

Trolls: hp 86, 80. Give both the Distraction and Elude Blows Experimental Might feats.

TREASURE

In Kaevos' bedchamber to the east, aside from rather nice furnishings and décor, the lamia keeps 1,500 gp and 200 pp in a secret niche in the wall behind her bed (Search DC 24 to find). The coins are wrapped in a *robe of powerlessness*. The niche is trapped so that it releases poison gas if opened.

Poison gas trap: CR 5; magic device; touch trigger; automatic reset; poison gas (Fort save DC 16, temporary Strength damage 1d6 primary/1d6 secondary); multiple targets (everyone in the room); Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 25.

AREA 5: TROLL ARCHERS (EL 6)

At the end of a long hall leading north of Kaevos' intersection, the characters find a large rectangular room.

This chamber likely was once a storehouse of some kind—boxes, crates, and barrels fill it in tall stacks. The chamber now has a pungent odor.

This is where Kaevos' troll servants live. There are always two of them here—she likes to keep secret the fact that she has four trolls, not two. Other than the trolls' bows, there's nothing of value here.

CREATURES

The trolls here use the cover of all the boxes and crates to their advantage, having made a defensive wall of them near the back of the room. From here, they make ranged attacks with their bows.

Troll archers: hp 86, 80. Give both the Point Blank Shot, Weapon Focus (longbow), and Rapid Shot Experimental Might feats. Each has a composite longbow (+6), so they each make two +8 ranged attacks that inflict 2d6+7 points of damage (assumes point blank range).



AREA 6: SLAVES OF PAIN (EL 7)

West of a wide hall, the characters pass through an opening into a chamber of generous size.

A huge, green-painted face carved from stone dominates the southern wall, its gaping mouth providing a low but wide doorway into a room beyond. The walls of the entire chamber sport fading, chipping frescoes that depict hideous acts of torture. The southeast end of this chamber contains a shallow, round pool with a raised lip around its circumference. A stone bench sits next to the pool. The northern end of the chamber has four crude beds fashioned from wrecked furniture. One of the beds looks gigantic.

Once a divinatorial chamber, this room holds a pool that is now dry and filled with dirt and trash. The furnishings here lie in ruin. They are used by the room's current inhabitants: an ettin and three orcs.

CREATURES

The undead creature in Area 7 has enslaved the creatures here, and they do her bidding. If attacked, at least one of the orcs runs to Area 7 to alert Lianahsa. They will not surrender—they are much more terrified of their cruel mistress

than even death. They will, however, all retreat to Area 7 if they need to, in order to fight their foes alongside the extremely powerful mummy.

The ettin is a unique specimen: One head is quite intelligent and the other is almost catatonic, responding to any situation with only nonsensical grunts and violence. The three orcs are **Toruk-Rul**, bred by Ghul himself, and aren't happy at all about their lot in life. None of them has any valuable possessions other than their weapons and armor, for Lianahsa takes everything. All of them, however, wear half-plate rather than studded leather or hide armor.

The orcs and ettin know nothing about Thalia, Marcus, or their group.

Ettin: hp 84. Give it the Hamper Defense Experimental Might feat. One of its morning-stars is a +1 *acidic weapon*, giving it an additional +1 attack bonus and 1d6+1 extra points of damage. Add +4 to its Armor Class from better armor.

Toruk-Rul orcs: hp 18, 15, and 13. Add an extra +1 attack bonus, +2 bonus to damage from greater Strength, and +6 to their Armor Class from better armor and natural armor. Their speed is only 20. Replace their Alertness feat with the Increased Vigor Experimental Might feat.

DEVELOPMENT

The ettin and the orcs, if left undisturbed, will likely explore areas east of here, coming into conflict with Kaevos. They know there are some trolls over that way, but they don't know about the lamia or the ogre.

AREA 7: MOUTH OF

MONSTROSITY (EL 10 OR 11)

South of the ettin's and orcs' domain, the characters enter a room of horror.

Through the green devil's mouth lies a temple of some kind. Two massive pillars hold up the high, angled ceiling; each is painted with images of torture and gut-churning violence. The walls and even the ceiling are similarly adorned. A dirty, worm-eaten carpet runs between the pillars toward a twelve-foot-tall statue of a sinister hooded figure. Steep, narrow steps up to a high-placed loft flank the statue. A black iron box on a tall stand sits next to each staircase.

This temple is not devoted to a particular god, but to the concept of pain. The ceiling here is 25 feet high. The two sets of steps in the southern half of the room are very steep, halving the speed of anyone using them.

Careful observers (Search DC 15) will note that the lines, angles, and even the sight-lines of the figures in the paintings throughout the room are all focused on the farthest point in the loft. At 20 feet high, the loft is very close to the ceiling. Most characters who climb up there will need to crouch, which is intentional ("all must bow before pain"). Physical actions in this cramped area suffer -2 penalties.

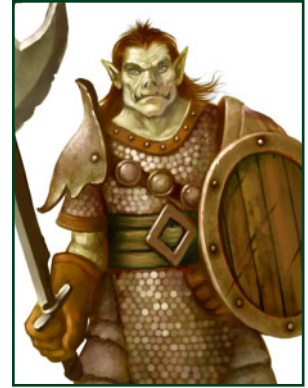
At the very back of the loft lies a niche that holds a small font. This sacred oil of the **Sadist Priests of Jol** contains the very essence of pain. Anyone who touches the oil suffers 3d6 points of damage and must make a Fortitude save (DC 20) or be sickened with pain for 3d6 minutes.

Holy water or a *consecrate* spell destroys the oil. Good-aligned characters who do so should gain experience points equal to that of a CR 5 challenge.

CREATURE

A mummy, Lianahsa, dwells here. Lianahsa served her master Ghul in the ranks of the Sadist Priests of Jol, a cadre of evil clerics dedicated to studying and perfecting pain. After her death, he entombed her here in this temple of pain. He split her heart in half and put each piece in the iron boxes to tie her to this locale and grant her unlife and power. In her existence as an undead creature, she seeks mastery of as much of Ghul's Labyrinth as possible. So far, she has had little luck in amassing power, but hopes that the ability to open the door in Area 2 will change that.

However, she is trapped in this temple until the *Sartalin Sphere* is deactivated, and she cannot



Toruk-Rul orcs: Ptolus, pages 58 and 492

INFO CHECKS

A Knowledge (Religion or History) check offers the following information about the Sadist Priests of Jol:

The Sadist Priests worked for Ghul, studying and ultimately worshipping pain (DC 18).

The Sadist Priests no longer exist as a group in any form (DC 20).

Jol was their leader. The priests served no particular deity (DC 23).

Area 7's encounter is very difficult, but if the player characters have some form of aid from Kaevos the lamia, they may know about the vulnerability of Lianahsa's heart. They may even have trolls fighting for them.

DARK TIDINGS

Being undead, Lianahsa is immune to the effects of the Sartalin Sphere.



If you're not using this adventure with Ptolus, you may want to change the ratmen to some particularly filthy, degenerate orcs.

DARK TIDINGS

The ratmen are awash in evil thoughts and dark, disgusting desires. If the DM chooses, one of the ratmen might consider using the secret door to abandon his comrades to the tender mercies of the PCs, or one might consider sneaking over to the treasure stash to steal some of it for himself while the rest fight.

In the Experimental Might rules, the Sneak skill replaces Move Silently and Hide.

Note that Lianahsa uses twenty levels of spells and two clerical disciplines, as detailed in the Experimental Might rules.

Crystal shard: The Collected Book of Experimental Might, page 115, or The Book of Experimental Might ebook volume, page 56



accomplish that until she has mastery of the entire Demesne. All she knows about the region to the east is that trolls dwell there, and she's not yet ready to send her only servants against them until she feels certain that they can win.

Within her temple-tomb, Lianahsa gains a +4 luck bonus to Armor Class, 50 bonus hit points, and turn resistance +5 (all already figured into her statistics). She loses these benefits if she leaves or if the two halves of her heart are destroyed.

Lianahsa

Female mummy (Lawful Evil)
Medium undead

Cleric **CR** 10
Init +1 **Speed** 20 feet

HD 8d12 + 5d8 **hp** 132
AC 25, touch 15, flat-footed 24

BAB/Grapple +7/+16

Attack +17 slam (1d6+13)

SA Mummy rot and despair

SQ Divine Presence discipline (heals 1d6+5), Divine Inspiration discipline (+2), darkvision 60 feet, damage reduction 5/—, turn resistance +5, undead traits, and vulnerability to fire

Fort +2 **Ref** +3 **Will** +11

Abilities Str 29, Dex 13, Con —, Int 10, Wis 20, Cha 15

Crucial Skills: Balance +7, Climb +16, Intimidate +11, Jump +6, Listen +14, **Sneak** +6, Spot +10.

Other Skills: Knowledge (Religion) +8.

Crucial Feats: Accept Attack, Blinding Strike (DC 25), Cleave, Combat Advice, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (slam).

Other Feats: Alertness.

Spells: 2/2/2/2/2; save DC 15 + half spell level (CL 5, +16 melee touch, +9 ranged touch).

5th—*bestow curse*, *protection from energy*

4th—*shatter*, *silence*

3rd—*bull's strength*, *spiritual weapon*

2nd—*divine favor*, *shield of faith*

1st—*crystal shard* (2)

Possessions: A scroll of *contagion*, a gold necklace (500 gp), and two gold bracelets (150 gp each).

Tactics

Lianahsa already has cast *bull's strength*, and it is figured into her current stats. If given warning, she casts *protection from energy* (fire), *divine favor*, and *shield of faith* on herself, in that order. These add a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls and +2 bonus to Armor Class. She will take the time to use Divine Inspiration and Combat Advice to aid allies if they are nearby, granting a total additional bonus of +3 to their attack and damage rolls. She uses *spiritual weapon* and *crystal shard* as ranged attacks if needed, but mostly she wades into melee.

DEVELOPMENT

The creatures in Area 6 may retreat here, where they can gain healing and succor from their mistress.

If Lianahsa's foes destroy both halves of her heart, or remove them both from this chamber, she loses all ability to cast spells (and the ongoing effects of spells she has already cast), her cleric disciplines, her rotting touch, 50 hp, 4 points of luck bonus to her Armor Class, and her turn resistance.

The coffers containing her heart are locked (DC 25) and affixed to their stands, which are in turn affixed to the floor.

TREASURE

Each locked iron box also contains a crystal flask with magical liquid that will cure mummy rot and restore any lost ability score points caused by mummy rot. The crystal flasks have ornate gold decorations studded with small emeralds, making each one worth 1,200 gp.

A leather bag stashed near the west staircase (Search DC 15) contains 155 gp, 397 sp, and three gems (45 gp, 100 gp, and 150 gp). All these items used to belong to the ettin and orcs.

AREA 8: THE LONG HALL

Statues in alcoves along this hall depict armored men with cruelly spiked maces.

Between each pair of statues stands a pedestal with three glass panels on its flat, top surface.

The statues are magical, in that they generate special fields that permit creatures to move down the hall from south to north, but make it impossible to move past them from north to south (treat as a *wall of force*).

For details on the pedestals, see page 5.

AREA 9: SLAVES OF THE SLAVES (EL 4)

The area north of the orcs' and ettin's chamber is actually three separate rooms. All of them, however, can be described the same way.

Piles of ruined furniture and debris fill this room, although it looks as though it may have once been a laboratory. Shattered glass lies everywhere. Strange substances of a time long gone stain the walls and floors. Remnants of tattered and faded diagrams hang on the walls. The place reeks of feces, as though some disgusting creature calls the wreckage home.



These chambers once served as one of the many laboratory complexes used by Ghul's minions to experiment upon and alter living creatures. Now they provide a home to six **ratmen** and a particularly large dire rat.

CREATURES

These squirming, mewling rat-creatures sycophantically serve the ettin and the orcs out of fear for their lives. They have done so for so long that they know nothing else. There used to be more of them, but Thalia left Area 11 and killed a few two nights ago while she was trying to find a way out. The ratmen drove her off, ate those she killed, and now believe her to have been slain by the hydra.

Ratmen: hp 20, 13, 12, 8, 7, 6. Give them all the Low Blow Experimental Might feat as a bonus feat, just for fun.

Dire rat: hp 23. Give it a +2 bonus to attack and damage from its Strength 14.

Tactics

The ratmen do what the ettin and orcs say. However, their masters think too little of them to call them if attacked, so the player characters face the ratmen only if they come here.

The rats actually work fairly well together. They like to all fight a single foe, and if that foe has a high Armor Class, they will use the aid another option to give one of them the best chance of hitting, likely with a Low Blow. Should the PCs encounter the ratmen before the ettin and orcs, the ratmen will retreat to Area 6 if seriously threatened. Otherwise, they'll just scatter. They are terrified of the hydra and won't go into Area 10.

TREASURE

The ratmen have managed to scavenge a cache of valuables from here and there and have hidden it from their masters amid the wreckage. In a well-concealed burlap bag, PCs who Search (DC 22) will find 34 gp, 841 sp, 454 cp, a gold candlestick (75 gp), and a small silver statue of a dragon (350 gp).

SECRET DOOR

The secret door between two of the rooms is a section of wall that pivots (Search DC 20 to find it). Lianahsa, the ettin, the orcs, and the ratmen know about it, but no one else does.

AREA 10: HYDRA (EL 9)

North of the ratmen's lair, the characters find an expansive room.

This sprawling chamber lies in ruin, with not only wrecked furnishings, but even the stones of the floor smashed, overturned, and demolished. A large balcony in the southeast corner has a small archway leading south away from it, while another archway on the ground level heads east under the balcony.

The place stinks with an acrid odor.

This area sometimes houses a hydra. The creature cannot move farther south or east out of this chamber—it won't fit through the doorways. However, it can move around in a range of chambers farther west (off the map and out of the scope of this adventure).

What is left of Marcus lies here dead on the floor. He and his sister had hoped to get an egg from the hydra, but instead it slew him. She is now hiding in Area 11.

TREASURE

Some of Marcus' gear remains intact. This includes a *wand of darkvision* (22 charges), a scroll of *woven bolt*, +1 *bracers of armor*, and a small pouch with 15 gp and 87 sp.

DEVELOPMENT

When the player characters arrive, the hydra is not here. It arrives 6 rounds after they begin to investigate, and attacks savagely. A Spot check (DC 20) allows the PCs to notice that the hydra cannot get through the south or east doors here. (Give characters automatic success if they actually try to determine whether the hydra can fit through the doors.) The hydra can, however, use its reach through one of these doors and use ranged attacks, the hydra will retreat to the west again after a round or two.

Hydra, ten-headed: hp 128.

Ratmen: Ptolus, page 625

DARK TIDINGS

As with the dragonnes, the thoughts of the hydra revealed by the Sartalin Sphere are little more than disgusting images of it eating the PCs alive. It also wishes it could fit through the archways to get at the ratmen, orcs, and ettin that it knows are there.



DARK TIDINGS

Thalia's dark thoughts reflect her despair at the loss of her brother and other comrades, her self-recrimination for leading all of them to their doom, and the feeling that she let down her father and his life's legacy. Dark indeed.



In the Experimental Might rules, the Sneak skill replaces Move Silently and Hide.

Korben Trollone: Ptolus, page 361

AREA 11: THALIA

East of the hydra's domain lies one last room.

This large chamber has four pedestals with flat glass panels on top.

There's nothing interesting about this room other than the fact that Thalia Hunter now hides here. She has used the power of the magical pedestals to heal herself, but she can't get south out of the long hallway (Area 8) and won't go back into Area 10 under any circumstances (she doesn't know about the secret door in Area 9). She's been out of food for three days and out of water for a full day now.

She has Sisha's +1 *keen longsword* and Janix's +1 *studded leather armor* along with her own gear. She will gladly give these items to the characters if they promise to get her out of the Dungeon. She certainly won't squabble over any of her comrades' possessions other than those of her brother found in Area 10 (assuming the PCs tell her about them—she won't raise the issue on her own).

Thalia Hunter

Female human (Neutral)

Rogue 4 **CR** 4

Init +4 **Speed** 40 feet

HD 4d6+8 **hp** 35

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14

BAB/Grapple +3/+4

Attack +5 shortspear (1d6+2)

SA Sneak attack +2d6

SQ Trapfinding, evasion, trap sense +1, and uncanny dodge

Fort +3 **Ref** +8 **Will** +1

Abilities: Str 12, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 11

Crucial Skills: Bluff +7, Disable Device +10, Disguise +7, Escape Artist +11, Intimidate +9, Jump +10, Listen +1, **Sneak** +11, Swim +6, Tumble +13.

Other Skills: Appraise +9, Diplomacy +9, Gather Information +6, Knowledge (Local) +4.

Crucial Feats: Defensive Move, Canny Eye, Fleet of Foot, Run, Running Circles.

Other Feats: n/a

Possessions: +1 *studded leather of silent moves*, +1 *shortspear*, 75 gp, 82 sp, 17 cp.



CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Returning to the surface with Thalia earns not only her gratitude, but that of the nobles in House Kath as well. Rather than a financial reward, they offer to use their substantial influence for the player characters in other ways. This could include clearing their names of any past legal difficulties, sponsorship in an organization or guild they may wish to join, and so on. If this doesn't serve the PCs' needs, another 1,000 gp each may be in order.

If the PCs track down the friends and relatives of the fallen adventurers and return their gear to them, grant the party full value of the items as an additional reward, either from the families or from House Kath.

CONTINUING THE ADVENTURE

To the west of the Demesne of Dark Tidings lies unexplored territory where the hydra can go. In fact, stalwart adventurers who risk traveling here can locate the nest with the hydra egg that **Korben Trollone** is so keen to acquire. To the east lies a region of the Dungeon where Derrogma once dwelled. These areas are ripe for exploration and DM creativity. Consult Chapter 19 of *Ptolus* for ideas of what could lie beyond.

Also, the player characters may want to investigate Korben Trollone further. See Chapter 16 of *Ptolus* for information on him, his operation, and his connections.

Dark Tidings: Player Handout 1

THE HUNTER PARTY

The group that went down into the Dungeon about two weeks ago includes these individuals:

Marcus Hunter: A male human wizard of unknown ability.

Thalia Hunter: A female human rogue of unknown ability.

&

Ihamin Errendi: A male human wizard of unknown ability.

Nistra Falial: A female human cleric of Tardeshou (Goddess of Truth), fairly inexperienced.

Drey Forenbran: A human ranger. He is a mercenary hireling, likely fairly inexperienced. He is Stilman's partner.

Stilman Goldmour: A dwarf fighter. He is a mercenary hireling, likely fairly inexperienced.

Unter Jaum: A human porter. He is a hireling with no combat experience, brought along to carry gear and, hopefully, treasure.

Sisha Mallean: A female human fighter of some experience.

Janix Nieran: A female half-elf rogue of some experience.

Dark Tidings: Player Handout 2

~~and into the pit forevermore.~~

Lianahsa, the Exalt

Lianahsa should have risen to be the greatest of the Sadist Priests of Jol, but she was struck down by her rival, Kisselin of the Black Blood. Placed within the Labyrinth and given the kiss of unlife, she now serves as an eternal guardian of one of the Master's Great Keys.

Deactivate the Sartalin Sphere to allow Lianahsa to leave her temple-tomb. Within each of the temple coffers lie the two halves of her heart. Keep them safe, for without them, her prayers go unheard. However, should you need them, the vials in those coffers not only cure the rotting disease she can confer but immediately remove any damage from the debilitation caused by her touch.

~~Devannar, the Eater of Wounds~~

~~Devannar was the greatest of the Hunter Knights of the lost region~~

USE THIS INFORMATION TO
DESTROY THAT BITCH
if you can

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DARK TIDINGS

An Experimental Might Adventure By
MONTE COOK

The Dungeon below Ptolus is sometimes called Ghul's Labyrinth. Carved out of the earth by slaves and spells to house that evil lord's armies and dark laboratories, this is a place where the wise tread carefully, if at all. And when adventurers run afoul of the threats hiding in these deeps, it takes an even greater band of delvers to find and rescue them.

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