



tales of the demon lord



ROBERT J. SCHWALB

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WRITING AND DESIGN: ROBERT J. SCHWALB

EDITING: SCOTT FITZGERALD GRAY PROOFREADING: CARLOS DANGER

ART DIRECTION AND GRAPHIC DESIGN: HAL MANGOLD COVER ILLUSTRATOR: JACK KAISER

CARTOGRAPHY: CECIL HOWE INTERIOR ILLUSTRATIONS: JACK KAISER

Playtesters: Robert Adducci, Adam Barton, Nicholas Bobbie, Alan Brown, Jethro Barger, Pedro Barrenechea, Adam Barton, Bill Benham, Jacob Battius Bates, Nicholas Bobbie, Brian Borth, Eric Brinkley, Ben Buchanan, Tyler Carey, Tom Castelli, Don Cee, Dave Chalker, David Christ, Jennifer Clark Wilkes, Monte Cook, Bruce R Cordell, Mark Craddock, Adam Doochin, Kristi Eubanks, Amanda Fuqua, Will Fuqua, E Foley, Andrew Follett, Scott Fitzgerald Gray, Jim Haltom, Kevin Hamilton, C Thomas Hand, Keenan Harmon, Benjamin Harrett, Ian Harris, Christopher Heim, Dan Heinrich, Jared von Hindman, Ben Hofer, Miranda Horner, Cecil Howe, Fred Hurley, Tracy Hurley, Greg Jimison, Don Johnson, Steve Kenson, Martin Knoff, Shad Kunkle, Glen Kyle, Jon Leitheusser, Angela LeNeave, Jerry LeNeave, Ruchi Lilavat, Nicole Lindroos, Thom Little, Matt Lively, James Lowder, T.S. Luikart, Elizabeth MacDougald, Hal Mangold, Anthony Mardis, Greg Marks, Grant Martin, Forrest Melton, Molly "Stonewall" Mercier, Shawn Merwin, Kim Mohan, Scott Neese, Erik Nowak, Chris Pramas, Joseph Quarles, Marc Quinn, Mindy Quinn, Stephen Radney-Macfarland, Thomas Reid, Jeffrey Reimer, Chad Roberts, Heather Rose, Terrill Rowland, Daniel J. Ryan, Thomas Reid, Eric Samuels, Evan Sass, Steven Saunders, Marc Schmalz, Steve Schultz, Landon Schurtz, Chris Sims, Skyler Smith, Stacee Smith, Zach Smith, Chris Smythe, Jay Spight, Owen K. C. Stephens, Chris Stevens, John Stevens, William Straley, Jason Streger, Don Thorpe, Steven Townshend, Bobby Turman, Gabe Turman, Logan Turman, Kyle Turner, Ray Valles, Dennis Vaughan, Marcus Walrath, Chris Ward, Nat Webb, Kevin "Doc" Wilson, Steve Winter, Travis Woodall, Leslie Russell Yost, Troy Yost

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PO Box #12548 Murfreesboro, TN 37129

info@schwalbentertainment.com www.schwalbentertainment.com.com

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introduction

These are dark times for Urth. A shadow creeps across the land to corrupt, warp, and destroy whatever it touches. As the light dies and darkness reigns, the world speeds toward annihilation. Is this really the end? Is it the apocalypse long foretold by prophets and madmen? Or is the end not so certain?

Perhaps. Perhaps not.

The adventures presented in *Tales of the Demon Lord* present a single complex scenario by which the world might die or might be spared. For now.

USING THIS BOOK

This book is intended for would-be Game Masters. If you're going to be the GM, you need a copy of *Shadow of the Demon Lord*. Before you run one of these adventures, be sure to take a few minutes to read through it and make notes.

Most of the creatures that appear in this book are detailed in **Chapter 10: Bestiary** in *Shadow of the Demon Lord*. Monsters new to these adventures appear in this book's **appendix**, while NPCs with mechanics have their statistics boxes in the adventures. When a monster name or an NPC's character type appears in **bold**, refer to that statistics box to play the creature.

THE SETTING

The adventures in this book all take place in the Northern Reach, the northernmost province of the Empire described in **Chapter 8** of *Shadow of the Demon Lord*. With minor adjustments, you can drop these adventures into any part of the world you like, or into an entirely different world.

Most of the adventures occur in or around Crossings, the largest and arguably the most important city in the province. **Chapter 1** of this book describes Crossings in detail and includes a map of the city for your reference.

TALES CAMPAIGN

Tales of the Demon Lord includes eleven adventures to provide you with a complete campaign. If you run each adventure in order, you can take your characters from their ordinary beginnings to their heights of power. You can also take adventures from this book and connect them to other adventures to create your own campaign.

RUNNING ADVENTURES

An adventure is a lot like a road map, showing a final destination and a number of different routes the characters can take to get there. It is left to you to fill in the details, to find ways to connect the characters to the story,

and to present the world as a believable and coherent place. This might sound like a lot, but you're smart, capable, and more than up to the task. After all, you're the Game Master!

THE CAMPAIGN STORY

Most of these adventures deal with the efforts of the ancient society known as the Brotherhood of Shadows to bore a hole into the Void—the home of the Demon Lord and hordes of demons intent on destroying the world. For years, a halfling named Elder Fobb has secretly led a Brotherhood cult in Crossings, posing as a befuddled city councillor as he advances the cult's agenda.

However, Fobb has a rival for control of the cult. A human aristocrat named Pentachus Katandramus—one of a long line of wealthy deviants who have dabbled in dark magic—discovered that the dread artifact known as the *Eye of the Demon Lord* lies hidden in Crossings. Stolen from a legendary vampire known as Lucretia, the Lady of Sighs and Sorrows, the eye was brought to the city centuries ago by a demonologist named Moore. Gathering a cadre of cultists to him, Katandramus has set out to find it. The results of his efforts are described in **Chapter 2**.

As the characters are drawn into the story, Katandramus works to consolidate his power and start a coup against Elder Fobb. He achieves this by the time the characters choose their master paths, using the eye's power to take over the cult. Once the cult comes under his control, Katandramus sets out to complete the dreaded incantation revealed by the artifact, as described in **Chapter 12**.

EYE OF THE DEMON LORD

A physical incarnation of demonic will, the *Eye of the Demon Lord* exists to release its maker from the Void and plunge the world into ruin. The eye cannot act alone, however, requiring a mortal to carry out its dark purpose. The artifact is a smooth sphere of obsidian, warm to the touch and 4 inches in diameter when first found. The more its wielder calls upon its power, the larger the orb grows.

GAME EFFECT

Curse of the Demon Lord: Any creature that touches the artifact must get a success on a Will challenge roll with 1 bane or gain 1d3 Insanity, 1d6 Corruption, and become cursed.

While cursed, the creature is impaired if it is ever more than 8 yards from the eye. For each hour it spends away from the eye, the creature gains 1 Insanity. If the creature goes mad as a result of gaining this Insanity, the Demon Lord destroys its soul, leaving its body comatose until it dies.

Power of the Demon Lord: As dangerous as the *Eye of the Demon Lord* can be, it also offers great power. While cursed by the eye, a creature gains all the following benefits:

- Its Power is increased by 1.
- It learns three spells from any tradition.
- The artifact grants the creature 1 boon on attack rolls made when casting an attack spell, and imposes 1 bane on challenge rolls made to resist spells the creature casts.

Invoke the Demon Lord: A cursed creature wielding the *Eye of the Demon Lord* can use an action to invoke the Demon Lord's power. A pulse of crackling red energy spreads out in an 8-yard radius centered on a point the creature can reach. Each creature in the area other than the wielder must make a Will challenge roll. A creature takes 9d6 damage and becomes dazed and impaired for 1 minute on a failure, or just takes half the damage on a success.

Each time this power is used, the eye's diameter grows by 1 inch. When the artifact reaches 24 inches in diameter, the cursed creature is drawn inside and utterly destroyed. The eye then shrinks down to its normal size of 4 inches.

Whispers from the Void: The Demon Lord sometimes communicates through dreams or visions to creatures cursed by the Eye of the Demon Lord. When the artifact enslaves a truly capable mortal, the Demon Lord reveals a special incantation designed to breach the boundaries of the mortal world—and to let loose the darkness of the Void to consume reality.



THE CHARACTERS

Some of the adventures in this book have concrete “hooks” to draw the characters into the plot. However, most of these scenarios are organized so that you’ll create the setup that draws the group in by connecting the characters to the adventures.

STARTING CHARACTERS

Players should create characters using the normal rules of the game. The following are just some of the ways you can connect the characters to the city of Crossings, which is described in Chapter 1.

- **Academic Profession:** This character could know Caribodus, the wizard of Wizard’s Peak, or have a contact on the city council.
- **Common Profession:** Characters might have city residences in districts appropriate to their starting wealth. Poor characters should live in Griefings. Wealthier characters might live in Coins or Purse.
- **Criminal Profession:** Consider granting the character membership in the Guild—the organization that controls criminal activity in Crossings.
- **Martial Profession:** This character might be a member of the Brown Cloaks or the militia.
- **Religious Profession:** The Cult of the New God has a great deal of influence in the city, and characters of that faith might know Father Paulus.

- **Wilderness Profession:** Consider having the character come from one of the settlements outside Crossings that are featured in later adventures—Hamlet (detailed in Chapter 4), Carbuncle (Chapter 6), or Verge (Chapter 8).

NOVICE CHARACTERS

As the group gets more adventures behind it, the characters’ reputation as problem solvers can earn them an invitation to deal with new troubles in Crossings or its nearby communities. Additionally, once the characters complete the first adventure, a connection to an organization such as the Guild or the Inquisition can keep them in the thick of local events. You might also give the group a patron—perhaps Inquisitor Randolphus, Master Dreen, Commander Rena, or mayor Katrin Edgerton.

REPLACEMENT CHARACTERS

Characters are likely to die in the course of the campaign, as it leads them into increasingly dangerous scenarios and to sites teetering on the brink of annihilation. Since the adventures focus on civilized lands for the most part, replacement characters can come from Crossings or any of the smaller communities outside the city.

city in shadow

A backwater province of the troubled Empire, the Northern Reach covers the lands east and north of the Shield Mountains, stretching as far north as the Desolation and east to the Auroral Ocean. Littered with the ruins of vanished peoples, much of this land remains a wilderness—trackless, unexplored, haunted by the faerie, ravaged by beastmen, and shadowed by the undead that besiege the citadels of the Crusader States. But even with all the dangers afoot in these lands, civilization thrives.

This chapter presents the city of Crossings as a backdrop for the adventures that follow. Although you'll find information here about notable people and places, the city has plenty more features for you to define as you make it your own.

CROSSINGS

At the center of the Northern Reach, Crossings spreads across a ring of hills overlooking the lake known as the Dark Waters. Six pale spires rise above the city, obscured by the perpetual smoke spewing from the stacks of its industrial district. Miles of farmland spread to the east, while the rolling hills known as the Barrows form a natural border to the south, curling around to the Black Hills where the city pries iron ore from dwarf-dug mines deep within the earth.

The present city is the latest in a long line of communities that have stood on the shores of the Dark Waters. Evidence of previous settlements can be seen in the city's architecture, from looming faerie spires to the arches left by the First People, to the castles raised by the Edene when they ruled these lands. The city's cobbled streets, ancient cemeteries, and statues of people and events long forgotten have all withstood the tide of years.

The Crossings of today grew from exiles, bandits, and refugees fleeing the Empire's tyranny and squatting in the ruins of a town emptied by the plague. Though the new settlement was a lawless and dangerous place, the influx of settlers and the march of the crusaders to establish their citadels tempered the community's excesses and helped its people establish a rule of law that has made the last century a stable one. Isolation and wealth have given Crossings a great deal of autonomy, and the city acknowledges the rule of the provincial capital of Sixton in name only.

GOVERNMENT

A city founded by free peoples, Crossings has no interest in bowing and scraping before an aristocracy. Instead, the city elects a mayor to take charge for a term of a few years, with the position lasting until the people decide to put someone else in office.

A council advises the mayor, featuring members who represent the city's districts, industries, and other interests.

All council members are appointed by their predecessors, but the council can expand or contract its numbers based on a vote among its members. Council members check the powers of the mayor, and take a quiet role in goading the population to oust an uncooperative mayor for one more favorable to their positions.

THE BROWN CLOAKS

Law enforcement in the city falls to the Brown Cloaks—members of the watch who take their name from the drab brown cloaks they wear as part of their uniforms. With only ninety members, the Brown Cloaks focus their efforts on protecting the wealthier citizens of Crossings. They leave the poor to sort out their own affairs, unless those affairs threaten the rich and powerful.

THE MILITIA

The city maintains a small militia of two hundred to protect against outside threats. Members of the militia occupy the city's watchtowers, guard the gates, and patrol the lands around Crossings. Most militia members come from the lower classes, since the meager pay is better than nothing and the work is easy for the most part. They wear hard leather armor and metal caps, and carry spears and small shields. The brown tabards they wear over their armor display the city's device—two crossed spears.

NOTABLE CHARACTERS

As the characters spend time in Crossings over the course of this book's adventures, they are likely to cross paths with many of the city's important and influential people.

Katrin Edgerton (as commoner or professional) has been the mayor of Crossings for just over three years. Although her stint has proven beneficial to the city as a whole, Edgerton's focus on the poor has made enemies on the council and among the city's more powerful and influential members. Of late, she's been following up rumors about a hidden cult operating in the city. Katrin is a portly, middle-aged woman who wears comfortable clothing and keeps her graying brown hair tied up in a bun.

Elder Fobb (see below for mechanics) represents the city's halfling population on the council, and has done so for sixty years. Short, wrinkled, possessed of a prodigious belly, and afflicted with gout, he often loses the train of conversations and starts talking before others have finished. No one suspects that his absentmindedness is an act.

Elder Fobb is a secret member of the Brotherhood of Shadows (see *Shadow of the Demon Lord* for details), and he works to spread the cult's influence in the city. He and the other cultists keep their identities secret, with Fobb using illusion magic to disguise himself. The halfling pushes the powerful criminal Ambrose Quick (see below)



to oust Katrin as mayor and put someone else in charge—preferably someone in the cult.

Father Paulus (as acolyte of the New God) champions the Cult of the New God on the council. He gained his seat after his predecessor, Father Shankus, choked on a chicken bone. Paulus is gaunt, with a mess of gray hair crowning his head and cracked spectacles always sliding down his long, pointed nose. He wears the black habit of his faith and a simple wooden holy symbol. A staunch intellectual, he peppers his speech with fancy-sounding words, though it is unclear if he knows what many of those words mean.

Paulus is addicted to sex. Though he tries to remain chaste, he can stand only a few days of deprivation before slipping in through the secret entrance of the Gilded Purse brothel and indulging all manner of sordid diversions. He skims from the offering plates of the Temple of the New God to pay for his habits, leaving him a tortured man strong in his beliefs and despising his own weakness.

Commander Rena (as veteran) hails from Neverfall, one of the citadels of the Crusader States bordering the Desolation. She has a post on the city council to ensure that Crossings keeps the crusaders supplied in foodstuffs, arms, and clothing. In addition to her council seat, Rena also commands the militia.

ELDER FOBB

Difficulty 25

Size 1/2 halfling

Perception 13 (+3)

Defense 8; **Health** 20

Strength 8 (-2), **Agility** 8 (-2), **Intellect** 13 (+3), **Will** 9 (-1)

Speed 10

Uncanny Luck Whenever Elder Fobb rolls a 1 on a challenge roll or an attack roll, he can reroll the d20. He must use the second roll, even if it is another 1.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Cane (melee) -2 (1d3)

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Good Fortune Whenever a creature within short range of Elder Fobb rolls a 1 on any die, he can use a triggered action to let the creature ignore the roll and roll again.

Uncommon Courage When Elder Fobb becomes frightened, he can use a triggered action to make a Will challenge roll. On a success, he removes the frightened affliction.

MAGIC

Power 3

Illusion clamor (4), figment (2), decoy (1)

Magician sense magic (4)

Shadow nightfall blade (2), darkness (2), shadow monster (1)

Young and fit, with short black hair and blue stars tattooed on her left cheek, Rena wears comfortable clothing and boots, and has a sword belted to her waist. She is secretly involved in a romantic relationship with Ezekia (see below). If word got back to her superiors about her tryst, she would be stripped of her rank and cast out for consorting with a known witch. Ambrose Quick has discovered the relationship, and is blackmailing Rena. She has not shared her troubles with her lover.

Ezekia (as apprentice witch) is the youngest member of the council, and is dedicated to watching out for the interest of the poorer citizens of Crossings. She wears a homespun black dress, a pointed cap, and heavy boots. She's pretty, with pale skin, red hair, and bright green eyes.

Though she chafes at wasting time in meetings rather than spending her time helping people directly, Ezekia stays on the council for the opportunity it gives her to spend time with Rena. She keeps their relationship a secret, knowing Rena's situation. Recently, though, that relationship has become strained, and Ezekia suspects that Rena might have found someone else. Her worries have eroded her confidence, making her even less pleasant than normal.

Master Dreen (as pickpocket with a rapier in place of a small sword) is a striking man with dark skin, darker eyes, a smooth-shaved scalp, and a deep, sonorous voice. Representing the merchants of Crossings on the council, he wears a fine suit in the imperial fashion, with a slender rapier hanging from a jeweled belt. He's one of the mayor's closest advisors, for he offers good counsel and rises above the petty bickering that often afflicts his colleagues. Behind his back, people whisper that Dreen made his fortune in the Nine Cities.

Ambrose Quick (as hired killer) claims to be a businessman, but is in truth one of the most powerful criminals in Crossings. Quick covers his criminal ventures

INQUISITOR RANDOLFUS

Difficulty 25

Size 1 human

Perception 13 (+3)

Defense 9; Health 22

Strength 11 (+1), Agility 9 (-1), Intellect 13 (+3), Will 12 (+2)

Speed 10

Conviction Randolphus makes Will challenge rolls with 1 boon when he rolls to resist the effects of the frightening and horrifying traits.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Staff (melee) +1 with 1 boon (2d6 + 1)

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Shared Recovery Randolphus can use an action to heal 5 damage. He then chooses one creature other than him that is within short range of him. The target heals damage equal to its healing rate. Once Randolphus uses this talent, he cannot use it again until after he completes a rest.

MAGIC

Power 3

Celestial burning beam (4), persistent light (2), sunrays (1)

Life minor healing (4), cure (2), moderate healing (1)

with a brothel he runs. The Temple of the Gilded Purse is located in the city's destitute Griefings district—but along the edge of the temple district of Redemption and directly across the street from the Temple of the New God. He and Father Paulus spend most council meetings trading insults.

Despite their public hostility, Ambrose and Paulus are allies in their enmity for mayor Katrin Edgerton. Paulus is, after all, one of Ambrose's best customers. Katrin has a low opinion of the brothel, and as a devotee of the Old Faith, she sees the Cult of the New God as a destructive force. Ambrose and Paulus plot to oust the mayor and replace her with someone more sympathetic to their operations.

Jon Crawley (as veteran) commands the Brown Cloaks. He's been walking the streets of Crossings since he was old enough to scrap in Old Town. He knows the city inside and out, and loves it down to its last filthy cobblestone. Though Crawley is well past forty, he remains in good enough shape to kick the teeth out of anyone half his age. He has close-cropped gray hair and a crooked nose, and always has the stub of a cigar clenched between his teeth.

Gundren the Ironmonger (as dwarf) made his fortune in the mining business and represents that industry on the council. Serious and no-nonsense to the point of being gruff, Gundren becomes melancholy and quiet when he's drinking. It has been thirty years since he last saw his home in the ancient dwarfen city of High Stone, and he knows his chance of returning is small given the shame under which he left his people—and of which he has never spoken. Gundren stands 4 feet tall and weighs some 300 pounds. He is bald with a thick red beard, and is perpetually dirty.

Inquisitor Randolphus (see below for mechanics) came to Crossings five years ago, dispatched by the Cult of the New God to ferret out subversive elements in the north. Randolphus suspects that the Brotherhood of Shadows operates in the city, but his inquiries have turned up little useful information so far. The inquisitor is in his forties, and his formerly thick black hair is now receding and graying. He remains physically fit and wears a heavy beard. When working, he dons the black robes of his faith and wears the customary skull mask worn by members of the Inquisition.

PEOPLE OF CROSSINGS

Humans make up most of the people living in the city. Half that population can trace its ancestry to the indigenous peoples of the Northern Reach, and are distinguished by their auburn hair and dusky features. Many also have tribal tattoos that often depict divine symbols of the Old Faith gods. The rest of the city's humans hail from across the Empire's lands.

Halflings are the second most significant population in the city. However, their numbers are even larger in the countryside, where they maintain their farms and tend to their herds. Halflings mingle freely with humans, and marriages between humans and halflings happen from time to time.

Alongside those two races, Crossings features all the other peoples living in and around the Empire. Brutish orcs can be found haunting the taverns in Old Town or brawling with jotun exiles that ventured north to find their fortunes. Goblins tend to the city's sewers and keep its streets clean. Changelings infiltrate the city in human and halfling guise. And clockworks, either fashioned locally or having arrived from far-flung places, struggle to find their place on the frontier.

CITY DESCRIPTION

Crossings is a small city of some nineteen thousand people, with half again as many living on the farms and small villages that surround it. The city spreads across a ring of hills whose lower reaches are the southern shore of the Dark Waters, a misty lake speckled with forested islands. A wall of stone surrounds the city, and older, lower walls rise within it, marking the boundaries of its districts or serving as mementos of the other settlements that once stood here.

The Emperor's Road, built by crusaders bound for the north, ends at the city's center where it meets the Grain

Way headed east and the Iron Road to the west. Numerous smaller roads and trails lead in and out of the city by gates that pierce its outer wall. The river known as the Stream of Tears flows into the city from the Barrows, draining into the Dark Waters.

Thick clouds hover over the city most days, fed by the smokestacks rising from the Academy of Engineers crowning High Hill. Easterly winds move much of the smoke and pollution west over the Black Hills, but soot clings to everything and everyone in the city.

FAERIE SPIRES

Six slender towers of white stone climb above the city, each one standing exactly 33 yards tall. The folk of Crossings believe that the towers were built by the fey, and named them as such long ago. However, the true history and purpose of the faerie spires are long lost. No doors or windows pierce their walls, and efforts to dismantle them have all failed, as the spires are impervious to damage. Most locals consider the faerie spires to simply be part of the scenery, though a few believe they hold great secrets and magical power.



EXPLORING CROSSINGS

As a general rule, it takes an hour for characters to move from one edge of a district to the other edge. The tangled streets of the city make for few direct routes between specific locations.

COINS

The trade district, aptly named Coins, starts at the Old Arch under which passes the Emperor's Road, and extends into the city until it ends at the edge of Tankards. Warehouses, workshops, factories, and marketplaces are the most common structures here, and the district is busy at all hours.

BROWN CLOAK HEADQUARTERS

The Brown Cloaks base their operations here in a square, blocky structure of soot-stained gray stone. In addition to housing the members of the watch, the headquarters also holds the city's dungeon.

THE EMPORIUM

The Emporium is the greatest marketplace in the city. A four-story brick building at the center of Coins, it offers a wide range of mundane and exotic goods. From swords to spices, dresses to livestock, anything can be had here for a price. Rumor holds that the Emporium has a private area where strange and terrible merchandise is sold to individuals of rare wealth and discerning taste.

GAVEL

Southwest of Coins, the city's political district consists of just a few buildings cordoned off by an old wall. In Gavel, one can find the courthouse, the city hall, the mayor's residence, and other buildings set aside to serve the bureaucracy. By day, Gavel is crowded with couriers, lawyers, petitioners, and criminals. By night, the district empties of all but the watchmen who patrol its streets.

GALLOWS

The city's courthouse, Gallows takes its name from the early days when the crusaders occupied the city and cleaned it up by hanging all those they named as criminals. This imposing building was once a castle, and judges hear cases in what used to be the throne room.

LIQUID SMOKE

A popular tavern on the border between Coins and Gavel, Liquid Smoke caters to patrons from both districts, creating an interesting blend of bureaucrats and merchants, lawyers and ne'er-do-wells. Its gloomy interior makes the place ideal for clandestine meetings.

GRIEVINGS

Griefings is the poorest and also the most densely populated district in Crossings. Positioned above the Tankards and below Smokestacks on the eastern slopes of the city, it is a tangled, crowded place of tall row houses and narrow streets, made narrower by the tents and shacks lining them.

Griefings is a desperate, dangerous district, whose people work as servants in Coins, toil in Smokestacks, and labor anywhere else they can find work in the city. Although the district is infested with vermin and riddled with disease, Griefings' people are proud and independent. They look after each other, and mete out their own brand of justice to those who cross them.

MERCY HILL

A crumbling mansion perched atop the hill from which it takes its name, this site was once home to the city's mayor. When the neighborhood became a slum, the city turned the mansion into an asylum for the insane. The place is filled with raving and drooling lunatics, and the barbaric methods of the staff help to ensure that most people given over to Mercy Hill's care rarely leave it. People whisper that the asylum sells cadavers to necromancers and others for experimentation, though no one has been able to prove the rumors true.

THE GUILD

Some fifty years ago, three gangs and one crime family came together to organize the criminal elements in Crossings, hoping to keep the city from spiraling into chaos and—more importantly—to keep the Empire out. The Guild established rules of conduct for criminals in the city, placing strict limits on targets, areas, and amounts of wealth that could be taken. As long as Guild agents stay within their boundaries, the Brown Cloaks look the other way. The Guild also runs the city's orphanages, using them as a source for characters who show promise for a career in the underworld.

OLD TOWN

Old Town marks the beginning of Crossings, as it was from this small district that the city first grew. A largely residential area, the district contains old shops, taverns, and restaurants tucked between small brick houses that crowd the narrow streets. A number of inns cater to travelers coming in along the Iron Road.

BONEYARD

With graves dating back to the First People, the Boneyard is one of the oldest and most intact graveyards in the Northern Reach. Locals claim that this eerie, sprawling maze of tombs and vaults is infested with rats, giant beetles, and ghouls, and point at a recent rash of disturbed graves as proof.

PURSE

Purse overlooks the Dark Waters from the top of the cliffs that rise above the lake's western shore, and is home to Crossings' wealthiest citizens. Gardens and walls surround palatial homes where suspicious and dour guards watch passersby. The streets are wide, bordered by spreading oak trees and lit by new gas lamps. The shops operating here cater to the well-off and trade in luxury items.

WIZARD'S PEAK

Constructed by an eccentric wizard named Caribdus almost a century ago, the tower known as Wizard's Peak displays its maker's unhinged personality. As crooked as a hag's finger and capped with a red-shingled roof, the tower features poles jutting out at various points, each of which blooms by night with green flames. The weed-choked lawn is littered with broken statuary, strange machines, and other rubbish, but few people have the courage to confront the often-erratic wizard about the disheveled state of his tower and its grounds.

Caribdus lives here still, though he rarely leaves the tower these days. When he does, he goes about wearing heavy red robes and a wide-brimmed red hat. The wizard takes on apprentices from time to time, but he accepts only worthy pupils who have the courage to knock on his door and the character to withstand his scrutiny.

REDEMPTION

Redemption is a district confined to a narrow sliver of territory carved out from the edge of Griefings, where the people of Crossings come to worship. Temples of every major religion and denomination in all lands can be found here, with the Cathedral of the Ascended next to the Shrine of Astrid, and both across the street from the Palace of Revel and the Mausoleum of Father Death. Countless other places of worship offer meaning and purpose for those seeking supernatural answers.

OFFICES OF THE INQUISITION

The Inquisition operates from this somber gray building bearing the symbol of the New God on its face. Inquisitor Randolphus and his team of four henchmen conduct investigations into rumors about cults and obscene relics unearthed in and around the city.

SMOKESTACKS

To the east of Griefings rises the dirtiest and most polluted district in the city. Originally the site of the Academy of Engineers, the Smokestacks district has evolved whole industries devoted to supporting the academy, from wire-spinners to foundries. Smokestacks is also home to Crossings' undesirable trades, including dyers, tanners,

and slaughterhouses. The place is unsettling to newcomers, for its atmosphere is thick with chemical odors mingled with smoke and rot. The streets are befouled with blood, chemicals, and filth, while forge fires paint everything in a garish light.

ACADEMY OF ENGINEERS

The great Academy of Engineers is a massive, sprawling complex built by the Empire to compete with the chaotic, uncontrolled development of magic in the Nine Cities. The academy first established itself in Sixton to the south, but moved on after the public outcry following a string of disastrous experiments that burned down a full third of that city. Here, some of the Empire's greatest minds push the boundaries of technology to produce marvels of both science and magic, including the city's great gasworks, ballistic weapons, bombs, steam engines, air ships, and clockworks. The lead engineer is Reena Frent, a studious and awkward woman of unsurpassed intellect. Her current project is the creation of a set of clockwork giants called iron titans (see Chapter 10).

TANKARDS

The Tankards district includes the docks jutting out over the Dark Waters and the businesses and homes huddled along the lakeshore. The area is redolent with the smell of dead fish, burning oil, and sweat. Its steep streets climb up toward the rest of the city, and are each set with a deep channel that carries water and waste to the lake below. The buildings nearest to the lake serve the fishing industry, and include fisheries, taverns, and brothels. Farther up, one finds the homes of those working in the fish trade, along with a few shops and restaurants.

THE OLD FISHERY

The most famous brothel in Crossings is the Old Fishery, a three-story building where courtesans—neither attractive nor altogether clean—serve the fisherfolk. Old Madge, a young woman of great beauty, runs the establishment, though she does not work in the trade. Madge supplements her income from the brothel by trading in secrets, smuggling black-market goods in and out of the city, and pushing drugs in the streets.

DARK WATERS

The lake known as the Dark Waters feeds the people of Crossings with fish and waterfowl. But despite this bounty, the lake is also a source of fear. Many believe that spirits and fey haunt the islands that dot the lake, and that such wicked entities yearn to lure fisherfolk to their dooms. Some intrepid explorers claim that many of the lake's islands sport ruins featuring fabulous treasures and deadly guardians.

harvester of sorrows

An adventure for starting characters

After a long search, cultists from the Brotherhood of Shadows recently unearthed the *Eye of the Demon Lord* from a vault beneath a rotting house—the residence of a notorious demonologist centuries before. While hunting for the artifact, the cultists accidentally let loose an organ filch held in the vault. In the aftermath, the monster has been hunting the people of Grevings, and a beloved priest has disappeared while searching for missing victims.

The player characters complete this adventure when they infiltrate the organ filch's lair, end its threat, and rescue the missing priest.

FATHER GREGORY

A true champion of the downtrodden, Father Gregory works in Crossings' poorest district, Grevings, where he maintains a small shrine connected to the larger Temple of the New God in Redemption. When locals started disappearing at the hands of the organ filch a week ago, the Brown Cloaks' halfhearted investigation turned up nothing. Unwilling to let the disappearances continue, Gregory set out to find the person responsible. No one has seen the priest since.

THE SHRINE OF THE ASCENDED

Father Gregory's small shrine features a modest worship area with pews, an altar, and an icon of Astrid pierced by swords. A door in the worship area leads to a short hall with doors to either side. One leads to a small room with a pair of bunk beds for any of Gregory's flock who need shelter. The other is the priest's apartment.

The apartment contains a cot and a writing desk, on which rest a holy book, papers, a quill, a pot of ink, and a bag of fine sand. A chest holds Gregory's clothing, and a holy symbol of the New God hangs from a nail on the wall. Searching the desk turns up a scrap of paper bearing a sketch of a horned skull, a *healing potion*, and an incantation of the *denounce* spell from the Theurgy tradition.

THE INVESTIGATION

Sergeant Alyse (as patroller) investigated the disappearances and had made some progress, but was ordered by the council to abandon the case. Despite these orders, Alyse continues to patrol the district during her off hours, hoping to bring the culprit to justice. She is easy to track down.

Alyse is a young woman in her twenties. She has thin brown hair cut short, plain features, and a well-muscled body. She shares what she's learned with anyone looking into Father Gregory's disappearance, but can meet with the characters only at night (since she works during the day).

She knows that the missing people are drunkards, petty criminals, and others whose absence won't be missed. All were regulars at the Fallen Soldier, a rundown tavern on the border between Grevings and Tankards. The victims, in order of their disappearance, are:

- Asa Myn. An aging, down-on-her-luck prostitute with a reputation for being a drunk.
- Old Pete, a paraplegic who lived in the alley behind the Fallen Soldier.
- Trout, a young orphan who survives by picking pockets.
- Enid, a fortune-teller.
- Tyrus, an ex-soldier, touched by the mercurial god Revel.
- Vern, a blind beggar with a filthy mouth.

THE FALLEN SOLDIER

The Fallen Soldier is a rundown taproom situated between a burned-down tenement and a brothel. Querian Verge, a portly man with shaggy black hair and a sweep of blisters on the back of his neck, owns the place and is here at all hours. The taproom reeks of vomit and piss, and boasts a single bar with a few stools, a couple of tables, and a hearth that's never lit.

Talking to Verge or anyone else in the tavern reveals some or all of the following information:

- A strange man wearing a hooded cloak has been seen skulking through the alleys of Grevings. He always runs off when approached.
- Before Tyrus went missing, the half-mad soldier claimed he saw the boy Trout snatched by an odd man wearing a hooded cloak.
- About a week ago, two men dressed far too finely for Grevings and obscuring their faces with pomanders were in the tavern, talking to some local toughs about the old Moore House. Everyone in the district knows the house, which belonged to an infamous demonologist and has been abandoned for decades.
- Everyone liked Father Gregory, even if he did try to get people to moderate their booze.

THE ORGAN FILCH

Each night, an *organ filch* emerges from Moore House to hunt. It prowls the alleys and side streets of Grevings, preying on people who will not be missed. The monster captures one creature each night for six more nights, or until the player characters stop it. Each night the characters patrol the streets, roll a d6. On a roll of 6, they stumble across the killer. The *organ filch* flees if attacked by three or more characters, who can then easily follow it back to Moore House.

THE RUDE BOYS

Not knowing how best to deal with the monster they unleashed, the cultists recruited a local gang to keep watch on Moore House and ensure no one investigated or disturbed the building. By day or night, 2 gang members (as **hired killers**) watch the house from hidden positions. If the characters approach the house, the Rude Boys step out with weapons drawn and tell them to be on their way. If the characters refuse, the killers attack.

If the characters manage to capture one or both gang members, they learn that the rude boys were hired by “some posh nobs” to keep people away from the ruined house. They don’t know the names of their patrons, but remark that they wore fine suits beneath hooded cloaks. The rude boys have observed the organ filch leaving and entering Moore House, but they have kept their distance from the creature and have no idea what it is.

MOORE HOUSE

In the most rundown part of Griefings, Moore House stands as a two-story building of stone with a partly collapsed peaked roof. Dead grass chokes the small yard out front, and boards cover the house’s windows and front door. The boards that once covered the back door lie on the ground.

The house’s interior is strewn with rubbish and rat droppings. Water spots stain the ceiling on the main floor, caused by rain coming in through gaping holes in the roof. Graffiti and intermittent blood spatters cover the walls. All locations are dark at night, but the second floor is lit by day thanks to the collapsed roof.

A pack of 8 large rats (as **tiny animals** with the diseased affliction and the Pack Fighting talent) infests the house. Characters exploring encounter the rats at your discretion in groups of $1d3 + 1$. As well, the organ filch is in the house from just before dawn until midnight, when it creeps out to hunt.

1. MAIN FLOOR

If the characters are on the main floor between midnight and dawn, an apparition of a beautiful woman manifests in the kitchen, walks down the hall, and enters the sitting room. There, she draws a spectral knife and slices her own throat, then slumps to the floor and disappears. Any character who sees the apparition must get a success on a Will challenge roll or gain 1 Insanity.

The study has been ransacked, and the rats and the dripping water have ruined the books that lie in heaps on the floor. A tremendous stench is noticeable as the characters move north (see below).

2. SECOND FLOOR

The bedrooms making up the second floor are all in terrible condition, with furniture crumbling and floors

rotted through. The first character to explore this area must make an Agility challenge roll. On a failure, the character steps on a rotted floorboard and falls through to the floor below, taking $2d6$ damage on landing.

3. SECRET CHAMBER

Characters examining the north wall find the secret door with a success on a Perception challenge roll. The mutilated corpse of a cultist killed by the organ filch lies just inside the door. Any character seeing the corpse must get a success on a Will challenge roll or gain 1 Insanity. Inspecting the corpse reveals a horned skull in black tattooed on the inside of one of its arms.

4. DEMONOLOGIST’S VAULT

The horrific smell comes from down the stairs beyond the secret door, where a large chamber holds six dismembered corpses. An iron vault stands in the center of the room, its door open. A **ghoul** (originally a pet of the cultists) feeds on the corpses and attacks intruders.

Father Gregory lies unconscious in the corner. The priest is missing an arm, a leg, and one eye, with all the injuries crudely stitched up. He’s alive, but his mind is broken.

A magical ward makes the contents of the vault immune to Divination spells. Inside is the sarcophagus that once held the organ filch, the inside of its lid covered in scratch marks. A dusty podium in the vault features a single clean section suggesting it once held a book. Inside the sarcophagus are a mundane sword made of green metal, black robes covered in diabolic symbols, a sacrificial knife, a graven skull, and numerous stained bottles.



BORN to die

An adventure for novice characters

Members of the Brotherhood of Shadows recently hired a gang of toughs called the Rude Boys to keep people away from Moore House (see “Harvester of Sorrows”). But when the cultists never paid up, the gang members became eager for revenge. Knowing only that the person who hired them was a figure of power and wealth, the Rude Boys kidnapped Candace, daughter of Master Dreen—a member of the city council and representative of the merchant factions operating in Crossings. What the gang members didn’t realize was that Candace has a deadly secret.

The player characters complete this adventure when they deal with the kidnappers and discover the truth about Dreen’s daughter.

THE VICTIM

Candace Dreen is Master Dreen’s only daughter. She’s sixteen and attractive, with dark skin, long black hair, and green eyes. She is also a member of the Brotherhood of Shadows, having been inducted into its local cult by way of her paramour, a young man named Phineas Phrent (as cultist). Son of a minor merchant family, Phineas is a devout slave to the Demon Lord. Candace and Phineas were part of a group that performed a rite using the *Eye of the Demon Lord*, calling forth a demon from the Void that promptly possessed Candace—and which plans to use her to bring an even more powerful demon into the world. The demonic presence reveals itself in her eyes when she becomes angry, causing her pupils to glow red.

Candace and Phineas were attacked as they made their way back to Master Dreen’s house from a secret cult meeting. Phineas escaped, but Candace was taken by the Rude Boys and carried off to one of the islands of the Dark Waters. She has been held there since, while the Rude Boys wait for her father to pay her ransom.

While the demon remains dormant in Candace, use the cultist mechanics for her. When the demon takes control, use the following mechanics instead. While under the demon’s control, Candace grows larger and heavier, and a single black horn emerges from the back of her head. She is ferocious and violent, lashing out at anything that displeases her.

THE DEMANDS

The kidnappers sent a note to Candace’s father listing their demands, along with a lock of her hair. To get his daughter back, Master Dreen must leave 100 silver shillings in the alley behind the Old Fishery brothel (see Chapter 1) at midnight. The Rude Boys have marked a crate in the alley where the ransom is to be left. If Dreen does this, Candace will be home the next morning.

POSSESSED CANDACE

Difficulty 10

Size 1 horrifying human

Perception 11 (+1); **darksight**

Defense 11; **Health** 12

Strength 12 (+2), **Agility** 11 (+1), **Intellect** 9 (-1), **Will** 8 (-2)

Speed 12

Spawn Demon When incapacitated, Candace dies and gives birth to a blood-slick **small demon** that leaps out from her space and attacks.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Claws (melee) +2 with 1 boon (2d6)

SPECIAL ATTACKS

Frenzied Attack Possessed Candace attacks two different creatures with her claws, making each attack roll with 1 bane.

MAGIC

Power 1

Enchantment bewitch (2), charm (1)

Forbidden harm (2), obedience (1), tongue rip (1)

Dreen has not informed the Brown Cloaks of the kidnapping, for the Rude Boys claim they will kill Candace if the authorities become involved. Furthermore, he isn’t interested in having the kidnappers arrested—he wants them all dead. If Dreen does not already know the characters, he hears of their exploits in Chapter 2 of the adventure and seeks them out. He wants the characters to kill all the kidnappers and bring his daughter home, and he is happy to let them keep the ransom money if they are successful.

PHINEAS

If the characters want to interview Phineas, he is with Master Dreen, hoping to learn where Candace is so he can report this information to the cultists. He can tell the group that five hooded men attacked him and Candace as they were leaving Liquid Smoke on the border between Coins and Gavel. They gave him a savage beating as they grabbed Candace, and he didn’t get a good look at them. Phineas asks to accompany the characters on their mission. If he is allowed to do so and he survives to find Candace, he attacks her to free the demon as his masters have commanded.

Phineas never reveals his affiliation with the cult. He has the horned skull tattooed on his arm, but is careful to keep it covered.

THE DROP

The alley where Dreen is to make the ransom drop can be seen from a number of nearby locations, including the windows in the Old Fishery overlooking the rubbish-strewn street, and the rooftops of nearby buildings. The crate described in the note is marked with an “X” in charcoal.

Dreen delivers the coins as instructed at midnight. A few minutes after he leaves, a battered, human-shaped clockwork named Gears enters the alley and retrieves the bag. Unless it is stopped, Gears makes for the docks, where it delivers the sack to 2 Rude Boys (as **hired killers**), who then row a boat to the nearest island in the Dark Waters.

Gears is hopelessly addicted to a weird substance called dream grease, which causes intense physical pleasure when applied to a clockwork's inner mechanisms. The clockwork is only a courier, having agreed to retrieve the bag for the Rude Boys in exchange for a canister of dream grease. It knows nothing of the kidnapping.

If the characters get the drop on the Rude Boy at the docks, the red-haired youth surrenders at the first threat. He tells the characters where his gang is holding Candace. Several boats are tied off at the docks, any of which can be used by the characters to reach the island.

THE CULTISTS

Any rescue mission for Candace is complicated by the fact that the Brotherhood of Shadows wants her back as much as her father does. The cultists suspect that their rite caused a demon to possess her, and they want to draw it forth to coerce it into serving them. Alerted by Phineas, a group of 5 cultists follows the characters from a distance. When they see the clockwork deliver the ransom to the docks, they head off toward the island to retrieve the girl.

Depending on the characters' actions, they might encounter the cultists before, during, or after the drop. The cultists aren't interested in fighting the group, though they defend themselves if necessary.

The cultists do not reveal their affiliation or their purpose, even under pain of death. All the cultists have black horned skulls tattooed on the inside of their forearms.

If Phineas is with the characters and a fight breaks out, he joins whichever side has the obvious advantage (most likely the characters). If the cultists call him out, he later denies any involvement with them, and feigns ignorance about how they knew his name.

If the characters don't go to the island, the cultists do. There, they kill all the Rude Boys and murder Candace. Freed from its host, the **small demon** then attacks and kills the cultists before swimming to shore to wreak havoc in the city.

THE ISLAND

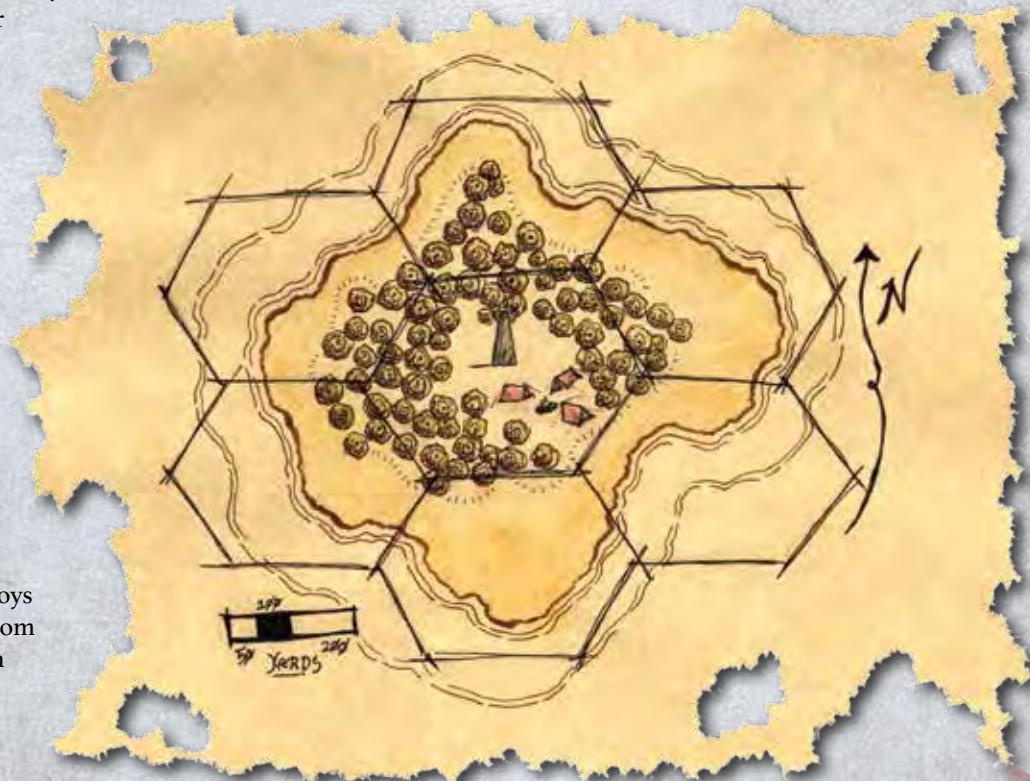
Two rowboats have been dragged up and hidden along a rocky beach on a densely wooded island. The Rude Boys have made a camp farther inland, on a site littered with ruins bearing ancient Elvish writing. Their six tents are arranged around a campfire near a tall stone monolith, whose inscriptions offer invocations to the Faerie Queen to curse all mankind. The campsite is stocked with enough food and water for nine people to live for a week. The gang members also have 20 yards of rope, and a total of 12 silver shillings, 26 copper pennies, and 31 bits between them.

In all, the gang consists of 9 **hired killers**, one of which has the leader role. Two stand watch on the beach, smoking cigars and peering out over the dark water. The rest are with Candace.

The demon has charmed one of the gang members, allowing Candace to convince him to turn against the other Rude Boys. The demon has no intention of seeing Candace go back to Master Dreen, however, instead hoping to wreak havoc in the city. If given the chance, the demon forces Candace to slip away from the camp under the protection of her guardian, then has her make for the city in one of the Rude Boys' boats.

GREMLINS

All the islands of the Dark Waters are infested with faeries. The iron, smoke, and pollution of Crossings is a blight to them, and they regard anyone coming from the city as an enemy. The 2 **gremlins** on the island have been stealing and sabotaging the Rude Boys' possessions, though if a fight breaks out, they torment both sides equally.



the curious case of the errant swine

An adventure for novice characters

A small forest known as Sentinel Wood covers the ruins of an ancient elf city abandoned when mankind began settling the Northern Reach. Not far from Farmer Ham's famous pig farm lies a forgotten shrine holding fragments of a magical stone. These fragments, called *chaos shards*, offer great power and pose great danger to people who use magic. It is the promise of this power that recently lured a team of explorers to locate the shrine and throw open its doors for the first time in nearly a thousand years. In doing so, they released the shrine's tormented guardians—bloody bones that have gone mad during their captivity and now scour the countryside for victims whose flesh can ease their suffering.

The player characters complete this adventure when they destroy the bloody bones and enter the shrine, removing the other threats posed by the treasure hunters' discovery.

THE FARMER'S DILEMMA

Farmer Ham has a problem. Two nights ago, something stole one of his fine hogs. Last night, another went missing, and Ham has had enough. He wants the thieves caught and his hogs returned, if possible. He offers 1 gold crown as a reward to anyone who can put a stop to the thefts.

FARMER HAM

Ham (as **commoner or professional**) is an older man in his midsixties. Stricken with a severe case of the gout, he uses a cane to hobble around his property and constantly smears grease on his feet, claiming it keeps the condition under control. Ham is rather heavy, with a large belly hanging over his belt and not a hair on his egg-like head.

The missing hogs aren't Ham's only problem. For some time now, the farmer has been taking in halfling travelers, who remind him of his dead sons. Ham's most recent guest is named Theodore, who he keeps locked up in the spare room. The halfling has tried to escape a few times, which has forced Ham to beat him senseless with his cane. The halfling is in poor condition. If rescued, he might help out the characters at some point in the future, as you decide.

THE FARM

Ham's farm stands in the center of a field overgrown with high grass. The edge of the Sentinel Wood stands 100 yards west of the farm. The farmhouse features a kitchen, a bedroom, a spare bedroom where Theodore is held, and a sitting room for guests.

A pen holding twelve hogs is close enough to the house to make the air rich with their stench. A shed makes up the pen's back wall, and a wooden overhang features several hay-covered stalls for shelter against inclement weather.

The shed holds a large tub full of blood, in which floats a dead halfling kidnapped by Ham before Theodore's arrival.

A small graveyard behind the house holds markers for Ham's wife, Hilda, and his two boys, Ham the Lesser and Hugh. Dates on the markers indicate they all died twenty years ago.

CLUES

The characters might find some or all of the following clues by investigating the pig farm:

- A path cuts through the tall grass from the hog pen to the edge of Sentinel Wood.
- Farmer Ham was sitting inside last night when he saw a goat-headed person through the window, wandering around his property.
- Farmer Ham remembers hearing thunder coming from the woods three days ago.
- Ham's nearest neighbor can tell the characters that a ranger who came to trade a few pelts reported seeing beastmen in the woods.
- A bloody print of a skeletal hand stains the outer wall of the shed.

HOG THIEVES

The treasure hunters released **3** **bloody bones** from the shrine, which quickly flensed the skin from one of their liberators before pursuing the others into the woods. The creatures have since scoured Sentinel Wood for more skin with which they might cover themselves. Though Ham would make a worthy target, the farmer's gout keeps him housebound most of the day and night, and the creatures have so far not noticed him. Driven by desperation and pain, they have taken to stealing the skins of Farmer Ham's hogs instead.

The bloody bones are cautious. They creep through the tall grass, watchful for anyone who might see them. If they spot one or two characters that have skin, the bloody bones attack. If they see three or more characters, they hide in the grass to wait for a chance to target a smaller group.

If the fight turns against them, the bloody bones flee for the trees. Upon entering the forest, they hole up in Fetor Cave or lead pursuing characters to the **beastmen camp** (see below for information on both locations).

HAMLET

Ten miles from Ham's farm stands a tiny community aptly named Hamlet. It consists of a poorly stocked general store, a pub, a flophouse with a few rooms for let, an abandoned house, and a temple of the New God. The temple is maintained by a shifty-eyed vicar named Brayan. He secretly worships an entity he calls the Red Light of the Woods and frequently leaves Hamlet to make offerings of his own blood to his god at Fetor Cave.

SENTINEL WOOD

Sentinel Wood forms a small crescent to the west of the farms and fields of Hamlet. Boulders and chunks of old statuary from the elf city that once stood here make the forest floor uneven and difficult to traverse. Check for random encounters every 4 hours the group spends in the forest by rolling a d20 and consulting the following table.

SENTINEL WOOD ENCOUNTERS

| d20 | Result |
|-------|---|
| 20 | A level 1 priest of the Old Faith warns the characters about beastmen in the wood. |
| 18-19 | A shelter of trees magically woven together offers the characters a safe place to rest for one night. |
| 14-17 | It rains or snows for 1d6 hours. |
| 8-13 | Nothing happens. |
| 4-7 | 1d6 + 2 wolves (as small animals with the Pack Fighting talent) attempt to ambush the characters. |
| 2-3 | 1d6 + 1 wargs attack the group. |
| 1 | 1 ogre with a medium animal pet spots the characters and lumbers in to attack. |

A. FETOR CAVE

The bloody bones make their lair in a shallow cave dimpling the side of a low, flat hill. A wedge of stone juts up from the hilltop, and gore darkens the birch trees around the entrance. Inside, bones and scraps of skin litter the floor while bloody handprints stain the walls. A skinless human corpse lies near the back of the cave, surrounded by shredded clothing, a pouch containing 4 copper pennies, and a map of the woods with a red "X" helpfully marking the shrine's location.

B. SURVIVOR

The characters hear screaming not long after they enter the woods. Delia (as **patroller**, with Defense II and no weapons) is one of the treasure hunters who foolishly opened the shrine. She escaped the bloody bones released by her and her companions, but became lost in the woods until found by 5 **fomors** who plan to kill and eat her. If the characters attack the fomors, Delia snatches up a spear from the first beastman to fall, then helps to fight them off.

Delia is a muscular woman in her midthirties. She has dusky skin, short hair, and a few wounds from her escape from the bloody bones. She can tell the characters the following:

- She was part of a team of four searching for an ancient shrine said to contain a jewel of power.

- Delia and her companions found the shrine, but released "two skinless demons" when they opened it.

- One demon killed the expedition's leader, Lara. Delia has no idea what happened to Gerald (the body in Fetor Cave) and Franz (currently a prisoner in the beastmen camp).

Delia might choose to accompany the characters, depending on how she's treated and if she has assurances that the monsters from the shrine will be dealt with. If Delia is with the characters when they near the shrine, she recognizes the location and can lead them the rest of the way.

C. BEASTMEN CAMP

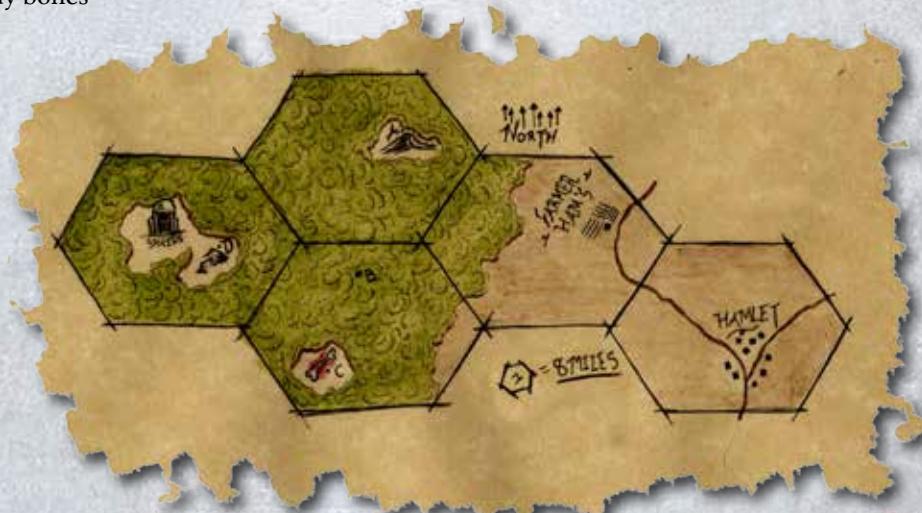
The beastmen camped here intend to take Hamlet by force and sacrifice its people to their dark god. They found and captured Franz not long after he escaped the bloody bones, and have kept him a prisoner here. They've been cutting on him for a day, eating the tender morsels from his body while he watches. Franz has been driven quite insane by the experience and can offer no assistance to the characters.

In addition to the fomors hunting Delia (see above), the beastmen band consists of **5 fomors** and **2 wargs**. They are lax about security, and can be easily surprised. None of them know about the shrine, nor do they have any interest in it.

The beastmen have a few weeks worth of rations, a barrel of sour wine, an old sword, a longbow, a quiver of 30 arrows, and a sack filled with 15 silver shillings, 76 copper pennies, and silverware and other valuables worth 3 silver shillings, all looted from nearby farms.

D. ABANDONED CAMPSITE

What's left of the treasure hunters' campsite stands within sight of the shrine. Bedrolls lay strewn around a ring of firestones, along with a shovel and a pick, 20 yards of rope, a lantern, and two flasks of oil.



THE SHRINE

The shrine stands in a clearing a few miles from Ham's farm. It resembles a turret with a domed roof, and is covered in ivy that conceals the flowing runes etched across its surface. Anyone who reads Elvish discerns that the writing is a warning to not disturb the site. A stone plug once barred entry, but the treasure hunters used a bomb to shatter it. Its blackened fragments are now spread around the open doorway, whose edges are marred by scratch marks and bloody handprints.

1. PIT

Inside the shattered entrance, a ledge wraps around the walls and looks down into a pit 10 yards deep. The bottom of the pit is a pool of dark water. A staircase 2 yards wide descends from the ledge, following the wall until it disappears under the water's surface.

The pool is 4 yards deep and conceals a **chainbound** and **2 animated corpses**. The undead creatures lurch to the surface to attack anything that disturbs the water.

Beneath the water, the wall of the pit is set with a corroded grate that leads to area 2.

2. WATER-FILLED PASSAGE

A grate partly blocks access to a 2-yard-diameter tunnel filled with water that ends at area 3. An **animal swarm** (carnivorous fish) lurks inside the tunnel and attacks any living creature swimming into it. Characters fighting underwater make attack rolls and challenge rolls with 1 bane.

3. ANTECHAMBER

Water covers most of the floor in this room, to a depth of 3 yards. To the south, a shelf of rock rises just above the water, and is covered with bones and rubble. The ceiling is a dome 6 yards overhead, painted with images displaying humans suffering horrific torture at the hands of faerie folk.

A round stone door in the center of the south wall opens into the room by pulling on a bronze ring set at its center. An invisible magical glyph secures the door, causing a ring of fire to erupt outward when the door is opened. Everything within 2 yards of the door takes $1d6 + 3$ damage

FRIENDSHIP TOKEN

A shiny gold coin bearing the profile of a beautiful elf maiden on one side and a staring eye on the other, a *friendship token* holds great magical power. A creature bearing the coin can use an action to activate it. Each living creature within short range of the wielder and that can see the coin must make a Will challenge roll. On a failure, the creature becomes compelled for 1 minute. Each time the *friendship token* is used, the wielder must roll a d6. On an odd number, the magic leaves the token forever and it becomes an ordinary coin worth 1 gold crown.

from the flames. A character in the area must make an Agility challenge roll, taking half the damage on a success.

An opening on the east wall, hidden just under the water, leads to area 4.

4. BLOODY LAIR

The passage from area 3 climbs up to this circular chamber, where the bloody bones guarding the shrine made their lair. An enormous cube of bloody meat occupies the room's center. Each day, the cube is magically replenished, allowing the bloody bones to survive here for long years.

Of the shrine's original inhabitants, **2 bloody bones** remain. One wears the skin stolen from Lara, the treasure hunters' leader. Unless the characters come here first, the bloody bones hear the trap triggered in area 3 and investigate. They bide their time if they can, attacking when the characters are engaged with other enemies.

5. CHAMBER OF LIGHT

A short passage ends at a circular chamber with a domed ceiling showing wild animals tearing humans apart. A bubble of red glass rises from the center of the floor and emits a soft red light. Doors to the east, west, and south each feature carvings of stern elf warriors holding swords, the points between their feet.

About a minute after the characters enter this area, the image of an elf woman dressed in a flowing gown manifests in the light above the bubble. She appears anguished, clawing at her face to tear away her skin and rip out her eyes, then showing them to the characters before fading away. Anyone who sees this must get a success on a Will challenge roll or gain 1 Insanity. On a success or a failure, a character cannot be affected by the image for 24 hours. The image returns once each hour.

The red glass dome has Defense 5 and Health 10. Breaking it causes the light to fade. The glass covers a 1-yard-diameter pit in the floor that leads 30 feet straight down to area 7.

6. ETERNAL SENTINELS

The eastern door of area 5 opens onto a long columned hallway that ends at an open doorway. A ramp beyond winds downward and back under area 6, ending up in area 7 (directly beneath area 5). Two **boneguards** stand against the walls and move to attack anyone entering the room.

7. FALSE BLOOD OF THE ELDERS

The ramp from area 6 ends at a circular chamber below area 5. A shaft opens up in the center of the ceiling here, climbing to the glass dome in area 5. Bright red light fills this room, whose every surface is mirrored. In the center of the chamber floats a shallow golden bowl. The light radiates from three pieces of red glass lying on the floor. A character with the academic (magic) profession can make an Intellect challenge roll with 1 bane. On a success, the character recognizes each piece of glass as a *chaos shard*—a dangerous substance prized

for its magical properties and feared for its unpredictable effects. A character who can see magical auras can also make an Intellect challenge roll. On a success, the character knows the shards are illusions.

The illusions conceal a magical trap. If any creature attempts to pick up a shard, bright light explodes from the bowl. Each sighted creature in the room must make a Strength challenge roll. A creature takes $1d6 + 3$ damage and becomes blinded for 1 minute on a failure, or just takes half the damage on a success.

8. DWELLERS IN DARKNESS

The door opens onto a shelf that stretches 6 yards into a large cavern. The cavern floor is 10 yards beneath the shelf. Two huge statues of grim-faced elf warriors flank the door.

Characters descending to the cave floor find it strewn with rubble, bones, excrement, and broken weapons, as well as numerous troglodyte tunnels branching off in all directions. Scouring the area takes 10 minutes and turns up a stone axe, an idol of a fat toad-like monster (worth 1 silver shilling to a collector), and a purple gemstone worth 2 silver shillings. Searching the area also draws the attention of $1d6 + 2$ troglodytes intent on making the characters their next meal.

9. ALLURING STATUE

The south door in area 5 opens onto a long passageway whose south end is blocked by a statue of a striking elf woman—the same that appeared as a vision in area 5. One of the statue's eyes has been replaced by a golden coin.

The first creature to move to within short range of the statue causes it to become a **large construct**. Each creature in the corridor must then make a Perception challenge roll. On a failure, a character is surprised. In addition, any character who can see the construct must make a Will challenge roll. On a failure, the character becomes compelled and is ordered to attack its companions until the construct is destroyed.

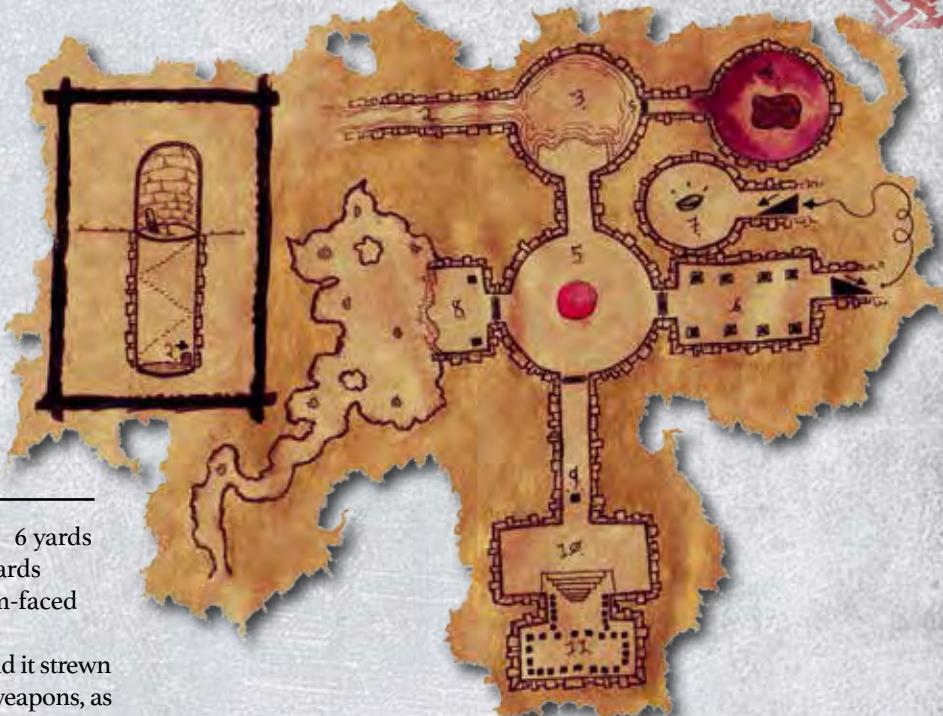
If the characters destroy the construct and search its remains, they find the gold coin—an enchanted object called a *friendship token*.

10. INFESTATION

The walls, floor, and ceiling of this area are set with countless eyes that move as they watch intruders approach. A staircase leads down to area 11. The first creature to step onto the stairs causes **2d6 lash crawlers** to detach from the walls and attack.

11. SANCTUARY OF THE CHAOS SHARDS

The stairs end in a chamber lined with statues carved to resemble warped and mutated humans. All sport strange and terrifying forms, bizarre anatomies, and anguished



expressions. The chamber widens at the end, where sixteen more equally horrid statues stand around a golden bowl that emanates a pale light. Three *chaos shards* rest in the bowl.

Behind the statues, **5 tiny demons** linger in hiding. They wait until the characters take the *chaos shards* before they attack. The unstable energy radiating from the shards grants each demon 1 boon for attack rolls it makes against characters holding a shard.

CHAOS SHARDS

The faerie folk created six jewels of power during the Troll Wars—a terrible conflict that raged across the continent long before the coming of mankind. The chaos shards found in the shrine resemble tiny flecks of luminescent red crystal, and are all that remains of a jewel shattered by the *Sword of Sorrows*. That fabled weapon was forged in the burning bones of dead trolls and quenched in the blood of six hundred and sixty-six elves.

A creature can use a shard by consuming it. When a shard is consumed, roll a d6. On a roll of 1 to 5, the creature gains a number of castings equal to the number rolled. Whenever the creature would cast a spell it has learned, it can expend a number of these castings equal to the spell's rank in place of expending the casting from the spell. As well, if the spell deals damage, it deals $2d6$ extra damage.

Rolling a 6 on the die indicates that the shard has a deleterious effect on the creature. Its body bubbles and warps, causing the creature to become defenseless for 1 minute. At the end of this time, the creature's body reverts to its normal form but with an odd cosmetic mutation. The creature's skin might change color, its hair could fall out, it might grow $1d6$ inches taller or shorter, gain a useless appendage, and so on.

temple of shadows

An adventure for expert characters

A vile plague sweeps through Purse, the wealthiest district in Crossings, driving its victims mad even as it destroys their bodies. Those who succumb to this scourge rise from the dead as demon-possessed animated corpses, attacking the living to spread the contagion. The Brown Cloaks and the militia have attempted to seal off Purse to contain the plague, though people are slipping through (often with the help of well-placed bribes) and new cases are breaking out all over the city.

The authorities in Crossings remain unaware that cultists from the Brotherhood of Shadows are inadvertently responsible for the outbreak of plague. In addition to having located the *Eye of the Demon Lord*, the cultists recently stole a powerful relic of great demonic power called the *Enigma Stone*—not knowing that it is the source of the outbreak.

The player characters complete this adventure when they find the *Enigma Stone* and contain the spread of its deadly contagion.

GIBBERING FEVER

When he lived centuries ago, the demonologist Moore stole the *Eye of the Demon Lord* from a vampire named Lucretia. When rumors reached her that cultists in Crossings had uncovered the eye, Lucretia dispatched a group of hoods to recover the artifact. A pitched battle ensued in a fine house in Purse (one of the cult's many clandestine meeting places), culminating in the *Enigma Stone* being broken, the demonic plague spreading throughout the district, and a stalemate between the hoods and the cultists. To contain the threat, Inquisitor Randolphus (see Chapter 1) located the house and entered it to eradicate the evil.

The disease crippling Purse has come to be known as gibbering fever. Stricken individuals go mad even as the disease erodes their vitality, causing them to rant and rave until they exhaust themselves, die, and rise up as animated corpses.

The fever spreads through physical contact. Any creature that comes into contact with a carrier must make a Strength challenge roll with 2 banes. On a failure, the creature becomes diseased. In addition to the normal effects of being diseased, each time the creature takes a penalty to its Health from a failed challenge roll, the creature also gains id_3 Insanity. If this Insanity would cause the creature to go mad, the madness effect is violence and it persists until the creature rolls a 6 instead of a 5.

If the diseased creature's Health drops to 0 or it becomes incapacitated, it dies and rises id_6 rounds later as a **zombie** possessed by a **tiny demon**. The demon breaks free once the zombie host becomes incapacitated, appearing in an open space of its choice within short range of the destroyed undead.

RUMORS

Characters asking questions about the outbreak can learn the following information:

- An explosion destroyed much of the house of Pentachus Katandramus, a wealthy aristocrat. Now dead people wander around outside.
- Before the explosion, weird hooded dwarfs were seen slipping into the Katandramus house.
- Inquisitor Randolphus and his henchmen entered the house earlier today, but have not yet emerged.

ROVING DEAD

Packs of $1d6 + 2$ zombies wander the streets of Purse. Each hour that the characters explore the district, roll a d6. On a roll of 1 to 3, they encounter a zombie pack. Each zombie carries the disease and is possessed by a **tiny demon**.

KATANDRAMUS HOUSE

The ruins of the Katandramus house stand atop the highest hill in the Purse district. Once one of the most striking homes in the district, it has been largely destroyed in the battle between the hoods and the cult members, with the top floor collapsing to fill the main floor with rubble.

Randolphus and his henchmen managed to clear a path to the cellar and a dark temple beyond, but **2 shadows** block access to the depths and have managed to kill most of the inquisitor's henchmen. If the player characters enter the ruins by day, they find **Randolphus** and 3 henchmen (as **mercenaries**) standing back-to-back and using the magic of the box Randolphus carries to hold the shadows at bay. If the characters enter at night, all the henchmen are dead and Randolphus stands alone.

Randolphus carries a specially prepared vessel to contain the *Enigma Stone*—a lead box carved with prayers and symbols of the New God. The box fills an area within short range of it with sunlight, and has so far kept Randolphus safe from the shadows. (Any dead henchman panicked and tried to fight their way past the spirits.) When the lid of the box is closed, any magic inside the box cannot reach beyond it, and is effectively removed from the mortal world.

THE TEMPLE

The cult has been working from this temple under Katandramus house for a decade or more. Unless otherwise specified, all areas of the temple are dark, and feature stone walls, floors, and ceilings covered with profane symbols and despicable invocations to the Demon Lord.

Two groups presently fight for control of the temple. When the characters enter an area for the first time, roll a d6. On a roll of 1, $1d_3 + 1$ hoods working for the vampire

Lucretia are in the room. On a 6, $1d6 + 1$ cultists are in the room. The characters can encounter a maximum of 8 hoods and 12 cultists in this way.

1. ENTRANCE

Stairs descend from the ruined house to a landing, from which two more staircases offer access to a large room. A mosaic on the floor depicts the horned demon skull that the cult uses as its symbol.

2. PILLARED HALL

Wide pillars carved from pink marble support the ceiling. Hiding in the corners of the hall are **3 small demons** that attack anyone entering this area.

3. LIBRARY

Shelves line the walls of this room, loaded with books, scrolls, odd statues, sacrificial knives, goblets, and bones. Most of it is worthless, but characters scouring the room find one enchanted object and a scroll containing two incantations of rank 1 spells.

4. ORGY ROOM

Filthy pillows cover the floor of this huge chamber, used by the cult for its debased orgies. Two archways lead to cells where the cultists hold prisoners for use in profane ceremonies.

5. BLOOD-SMEARED PASSAGE

An **ettin** in service to the cult roams this long passage. Blood streaks the tiled stone floor, with bits of broken bone sticking up from between the cracks.

6. ANTECHAMBER

Tapestries cover the walls here, depicting humans and demons engaged in bizarre sexual acts. At the center of the floor lie the shattered remains of the *Enigma Stone*. Any living creature entering the room must get a success on a Strength challenge roll with 1 bane or become infected with gibbering fever.

7. BATHS

Seven large basins hold scummy water the cultists use to bathe themselves and their victims. The eighth is empty, thanks to a large hole in the bottom that leads to area 8.

8. LAIR

An **oculus** makes its lair in this bone-strewn cave. It investigates any noise in area 7 by creeping up the tunnel and filling the basin that connects to this area. Size 1 creatures must squeeze through the tunnel from area 7.

9. WELL OF DARKNESS

A 10-yard-deep pit fills much of this chamber, and is home to a **living tar** that feeds on victims thrown down to it. The

creature clings to the walls and oozes up to attack anyone that lingers here for more than a minute.

10. GALLERY OF HORROR

Grotesque statues depicting monstrous demonic forms are scattered across this room.

11. HALL OF SHADOWS

Square black pillars support the ceiling of this long hall, whose floor is rent by huge cracks. Anyone passing along the hall is attacked by **2 shadows** lurking in the darkness.

12. RITUAL CHAMBER

A stepped pit drops 3 yards into the floor of this chamber, and features a blood-red pentagram at its center. Standing on that pentagram, the cult leader Katandramus is in the process of completing an incantation when the characters arrive. They get a glimpse of a bald human wearing black robes trimmed in red, and the dark orb he clutches in his hands—the *Eye of the Demon Lord*. Then he and the eye teleport away to safety, leaving **6 cultists** and a **medium demon** behind to face off against the characters.



the moon spire

Of all the small towns and villages scattered across the Northern Reach, Carbuncle has earned its reputation for being the strangest and most off-putting. Unknown to local folk, their oddness originates in an old and failing magic used by the faerie to secure a dangerous relic known as the *Oracular*. The spectral tower that holds the relic appears on nights of the full moon, during which the folk of Carbuncle celebrate the strange happenings that plague their community—even as one of their residents engages in a more destructive rite.

The player characters complete this adventure when they enter the moon spire, find the *Oracular*, and destroy the demonic relic.

CARBUNCLE

A tiny, unremarkable hamlet, Carbuncle gathers around an old caravan track east of Crossings. The community boasts a single public house called the Stump, which does double duty as the town hall. Several shabby homes cluster around the tavern, and farms surround the community for a mile in all directions.

Carbuncle's people are odd. Everyone living here displays some oddity of form—a misplaced eye, an extra digit, a hump on the back, or a spare limb. The locals accept their physical abnormalities, believing themselves to be touched by the gods. As such, they are genuinely puzzled when others comment on their appearance.

THE BITTER HEATH

The folk of Carbuncle avoid this field just north of their community—a stretch of weeds and brambles speckled with fleshy white flowers sprouting from thorny vines. More than one person has witnessed apparitions roaming the Bitter Heath at night. Characters who explore this place feel a chill in the air and find that sounds are dulled and distant while they remain in the area.

THE BEAST

Although strange and given to odd behavior, most people in Carbuncle are harmless. Crushal Verd is the exception. Verd became a **skinchanger** ten years ago, after being bitten by a vicious brute passing through the area. In all that time, he has managed to hide his true nature from his family, and to keep a tenuous grip on his bestial fury.

THE TOWER

Thousands of years ago, the elves discovered a demonic stain on an ancient relic known as the *Oracular*. Knowing that the demons within the item would be freed if they destroyed it, they sealed the *Oracular* in a tower resembling the faerie spires in Crossings, then shunted the tower into a

pocket dimension where it would stay hidden for all time. Over centuries, however, the tower's magic has weakened. Now, when the moon rises full, the tower briefly returns to the world and grants access to the wonders it holds.

EVENTS IN CARBUNCLE

This adventure unfolds while the characters are in Carbuncle just before the full moon.

FIRST NIGHT

The night before the full moon, the tower appears in the center of the Bitter Heath as a translucent and insubstantial presence. While the tower breaches the mortal world, weird but harmless happenings occur within 6 miles of it. Ordinary objects disappear and reappear in unusual locations, furniture stacks itself up in piles, water turns to blood, milk spoils, and so on.

Late that first night, Verd spots the tower and loses control. He decides that the tower will cure his malady, provided he can make a suitable sacrifice to it. By the light of the near-full moon, he takes his beast form, drags a citizen out of the village, and tears his throat out. (If the characters know someone in the village, use that NPC as the victim.)

SECOND NIGHT

When the moon rises full, the tower manifests fully in the center of the Bitter Heath. On the tower's shadowed side, a black portal opens near the base. Anything passing through the portal enters and appears in area 1 of the tower (see below).

At midnight, **1d3 shadows** emerge from the portal to drift toward the village and attack any locals they can find. Additionally, if Verd is still at large on the second night, he kills again.

THIRD NIGHT

The night after the full moon, the tower appears once more on the Bitter Heath in its translucent and insubstantial state. One last night of strange happenings plagues Carbuncle before the tower vanishes for another month.

EXPLORING THE TOWER

The tower is a thin spire of opalescent stone, 12 yards in diameter and terminating in a sharp tip 40 yards high. Creatures can freely enter and exit the tower while the moon is full. Any creature still inside the tower when the moon sets becomes trapped inside until the next full moon.

When any mortal creature dies inside the tower, its soul wriggles free as a shadow 1d6 minutes later. Shadows created in this way are under your control and retain none of the original creature's mechanics.

The same magic that sustains the tower also alleviates the need for living creatures to eat or drink while exploring it.

RANDOM DESTINATIONS

Many of the rooms inside the spire lead to random destinations. Whenever the adventure directs you, roll a d6 and consult the following table to find out where a character goes. If any character would leave a location and reappear in the same location, you can instead have that character appear outside the tower.

RANDOM DESTINATIONS

| d6 | Destination |
|----|-------------|
| 1 | Area 4 |
| 2 | Area 6 |
| 3 | Area 8 |
| 4 | Area 9 |
| 5 | Area 10 |
| 6 | Area 12 |

THE MOON SPIRE

Each area of the tower is an extradimensional space resembling an open level with a diameter of 10 yards and a ceiling 3 yards high (except where otherwise indicated). Rather than showing individual levels, the map for this adventure shows how the different areas of the moon spire connect to each other.

The walls, floors, and ceilings of the tower are the same white stone as the exterior. Magic infusing the stone makes the tower impervious to damage and prevents spirits and other bodiless creatures from moving through its walls and floors. Unless described otherwise, faintly glowing motes drift through the tower to leave each level obscured by shadows.

1. ENTRANCE

Blue light shines from a hole in the ceiling to light the room. A fragile staircase takes an indirect path around this chamber, ending at an open portal in the ceiling leading to area 2.

2. PILLAR OF AZURE FLAME

A pillar of blue, heatless fire rises from the center of the room, licking the ceiling overhead. A staircase ascends around the wall of the room to a portal that leads to the extradimensional space of area 4. Anything that touches the flames is teleported to area 3.

3. DOOR TO THE STARS

A ball of blazing-hot blue plasma hangs in the air, filling the room with light. A glowing green portal covers a section of the wall 1 yard in diameter. Lying flat on the floor between the plasma and the portal are six irregularly shaped glass panels set within bronze frames.

Anything that touches the plasma takes 2d6 damage from the heat.

Each frame has feet allowing it to be stood up perpendicular to the floor. One panel is a circle. The others have two, three, five, eleven, and thirteen sides, respectively. Placing one or more panels between the plasma and the portal causes the light shining from the fiery ball to change the portal's color. The circular panel changes the portal to blue. The other panels—or combinations of panels—change the color as you choose.

Anything touching the portal while it is green is teleported to area 6. While the portal is blue, anything that touches it is teleported to area 5. While the portal is any color other than blue or green, anything touching it is teleported to a random destination (see the table above).

4. FUNGI GARDEN

Fungi of all kinds grow in soft earth covering the walls, floor, and ceiling of this level. At the center of the room stands an enormous mushroom with a red cap.

A fungal hulk hunches down behind the giant mushroom, worshipping the fungus as if it were a god. A few yards away, 6 fungal mites grow on a mound of dirt. The fungal hulk attacks anyone that moves to within 2 yards of the giant mushroom. The mites join the fight at the start of the third round.

The dirt on the walls and ceiling is bound there by magic, though this magic does not allow characters to walk on the walls or ceiling.

The mound of dirt in which the mites grow covers the remains of a long-dead elf, along with a rotten leather pouch containing 3 silver shillings, 2 healing potions, and an enchanted object.

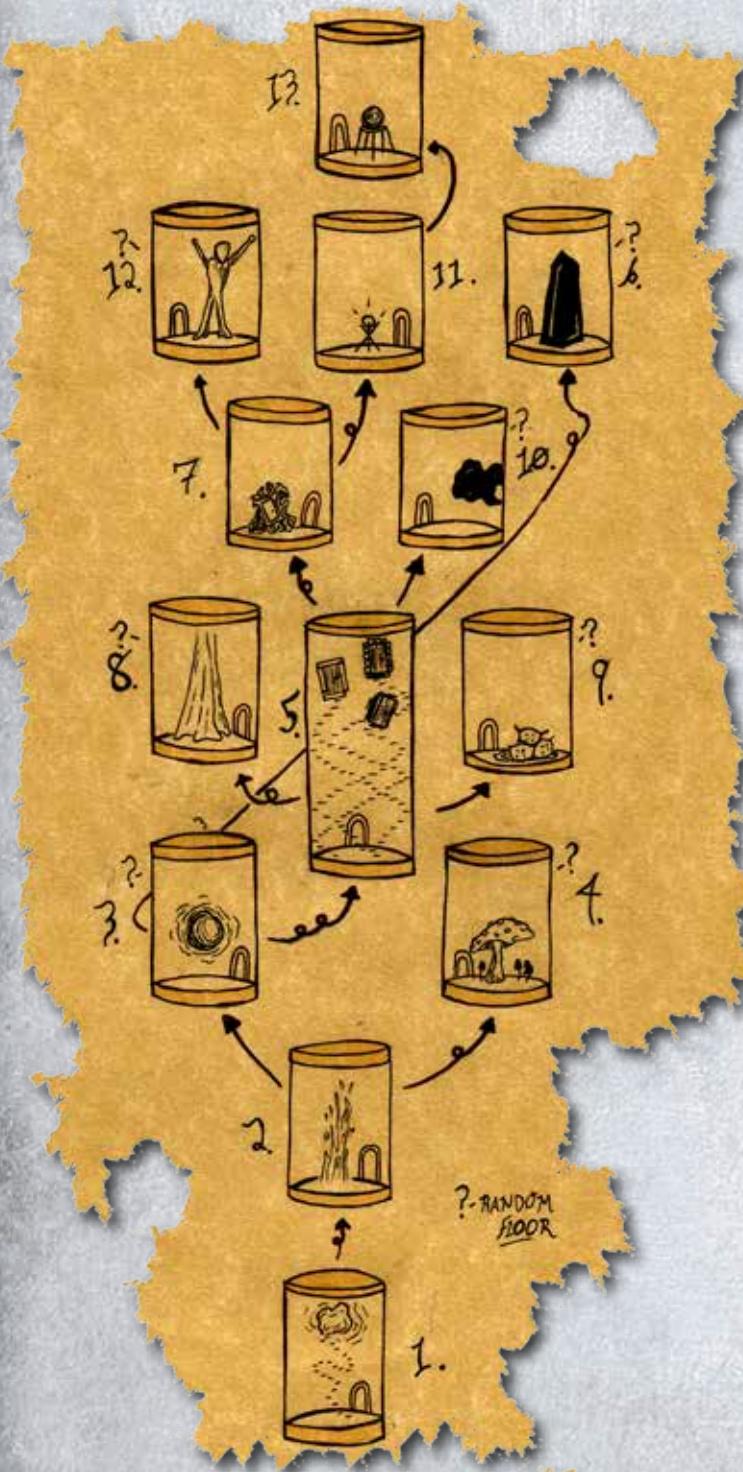
The giant mushroom is magical. Any creature that breaks a piece from its cap and eats it is teleported to a random destination. As well, any creature that spends 1 hour or longer in this room is automatically teleported to a random destination.

5. GALLERY OF DOORS

This unusually high chamber has a ceiling that looms 10 yards overhead. Three spiral staircases wind up from the floor, ending at closed doors standing in midair at three different heights. Opening any door accesses a portal to another of the tower's extradimensional spaces.

Door one features a great eye in its center. It opens into area 8. Door two sports a bas-relief carving of an androgynous elf with eyes closed. It opens into area 9. Door three is smooth and cold to the touch. It opens into area 10.

On the floor between the three staircases stands a podium on which rests a stone tablet bearing a magical inscription that changes to match a language known by the creature reading it. If a character with Power 2 or less reads the words, the character must make an Intellect challenge roll with 1 bane. On a failure, the character gains 1 Insanity and can no longer see the writing on the tablet. On a success, or if the character has Power 3 or greater, a portal springs into existence a few yards away and remains for 1 minute.



The portal has two sides—one white and one black. Anything that touches the portal's white side is teleported to area 7. Anything that touches its black side is teleported outside the tower, 1d6 yards away from it and 2d6 yards above the ground.

6. OBELISK

A black stone obelisk stands at the center of this level, 2 yards wide, 2 yards long, and 3 yards tall. The floor around it is strewn with round black stones, each one the size of a human fist. When any creature moves to within 4 yards of the obelisk, bright green lines twist and writhe across its surface. When any creature moves to within 2 yards of the obelisk, the stones littering the floor awaken and become **3 tomb scarab swarms** that attack at once.

Scattered among the scarabs are twenty-four semiprecious stones of various hues and sizes, each one worth 1 silver shilling.

Any creature that touches the obelisk is teleported to a random destination. The obelisk then releases a pulse of chilling darkness in a 5-yard radius around it. Each creature in the area must get a success on a Strength challenge roll or take 2d6 damage.

7. CLUTTERED CHAMBER

Decaying furniture fills this level. Narrow paths twist through the mess, leading to a bronze ladder that climbs from floor to ceiling. Any creature that climbs up the ladder and reaches the top is teleported to area 12.

A character who succeeds on a Perception challenge roll with 2 banes while searching the room discovers a wardrobe whose handle holds a silver medallion and chain, and which is filled with moldering fur coats. A character who climbs inside and pulls the wardrobe door closed activates a portal that leads to the extradimensional space of area 11. If the door is opened, the portal disappears.

The medallion is an enchanted object whose face has been scribed to resemble a grinning faerie. A creature wearing the medallion makes Perception challenge rolls with 3 boons and makes Will challenge rolls with 1 bane.

8. ROOM OF WHISPERS

A ring of white gossamer curtains hangs from the ceiling to heavily obscure the center of this level. Behind the curtains stands a statue of a nude male elf, with **2 amphisbaenas** coiled around its torso that attack any creature coming through the curtains.

The statue holds a hand out, palm up. Any creature that takes the statue's hand is teleported to a random destination.

9. DREAMING CHAMBER

Plush cushions and rich fabric cover the floor and walls of this level. The air smells of incense, and any creature that breathes in this area must make a Strength challenge roll

THE ORACULAR

The great crystal orb can be lifted from its cradle but weighs 50 pounds. (If you're using carrying capacity rules, the *Oracular* counts as three items). A creature holding the artifact can attempt to shrink the sphere by making an Intellect challenge roll with 1 bane. On a success, the artifact shrinks down to 1 inch in diameter, though its weight remains unchanged.

Any creature holding the artifact can use an action to peer into its misty interior. The artifact offers the creature 1 Corruption. If the creature accepts, it gains the Corruption and gains one casting of the *clairvoyance* Divination spell. The creature must expend the casting within 1 minute or it is lost.

The *Oracular* has Health 18. Destroying it releases 5 small demons that appear in open spaces within short range of the broken artifact and attack any creatures they see.

with 1 bane. On a failure, the creature becomes fatigued and does not willingly leave the area. Leaving the area removes the fatigued affliction.

At the end of each minute a fatigued creature remains in this area, it must get a success on a Strength challenge roll or fall prone and fall asleep. The creature remains asleep until it takes damage or another creature uses an action to wake it up. A creature sleeping for 1 minute in this room is teleported to a random destination, then wakes up.

A search of the room turns up an *alertness potion* and 2 *healing potions*.

10. GLOOM CHAMBER

Shadows partially obscure this empty, frigid chamber, thwarting all natural light and reducing the area of magical light by half. The wall opposite the entrance is a rippling pool of darkness 2 yards in diameter. The pool teleports anything that touches it to a random destination.

Invisible in the gloomy conditions, 3 shadows whisper and whine, taunting any creature that enters the area before they attack.

Ice covers the floor of this level. Any creature that moves across the floor must make an Agility challenge roll if it moves half its Speed or more during its turn. On a failure, the creature falls prone and its turn ends.

11. BLAZING ORB

A glowing glass orb sitting in a bronze tripod at the center of this level fills the area with light. Images of stars and planets seem to move where they cover the walls and ceiling. The orb contains a fiery substance that emits light, though it's cool to the touch. Lifting the orb from the tripod extinguishes the light, while returning it causes the light to glow once more.

Whenever the wardrobe door in area 7 is closed, a portal appears on the wall of this area, leading back to area 7. Additionally, when the orb is extinguished, another portal appears opposite the portal to area 7, revealing a staircase that climbs up to the extradimensional space of area 13.

12. GUARDIAN OF THE TOWER

At the center of this room, a 12-foot-tall clay statue depicts a man with his arms stretched out to the sides. Three

waterfalls are spaced around the statue. Two are streams of pink liquid that spill from cracks in the ceiling and drain through cracks in the floor. The third is a thick orange sludge that bubbles up from a crack in the floor, sending shuddering droplets upward to disappear through a crack in the ceiling.

Touching the statue or moving to within 1 yard of any waterfall causes the statue to become a **promethean** that attacks any creatures in the area.

Any creature that touches or drinks the pink liquid becomes wispy and insubstantial for 1d6 minutes. While in this form, the creature takes half damage from all sources, but its attacks deal only half their normal damage. As well, the creature makes Strength challenge rolls and Strength attack rolls with 1 bane.

Any creature touching or drinking the orange sludge is teleported to a random destination.

13. CHAMBER OF THE ORACULAR

This level of the moon spire houses the artifact known as the *Oracular*. This glowing sphere of crystal is 1 yard in diameter, with wisps of blue smoke swirling inside it. The sphere sits in a bronze cradle with five legs.

Five statues of well-armored elf warriors stand against the walls in the room. When any creature touches the *Oracular*, 5 phantoms step out from the statues and attack.

If the characters destroy the *Oracular* (see the sidebar) or take the artifact from the moon spire, the magic holding the tower in its hidden realm ends and the tower enters the mortal world. Any teleportation effect inside the tower that would teleport creatures to outside the tower ends, though the magic connecting the extradimensional areas of the tower continue to function. The portal granting access to the tower's interior closes 1d6 minutes later, forever trapping any creatures still inside it.

THE CRADLE

The bronze cradle that holds the *Oracular* is fused to the floor and cannot be moved. An inscription on the cradle is an incantation of the *travel* spell from the Teleportation tradition. If the characters are trapped inside the tower, you might grant an automatic success to the character attempting to cast the incantation.

Mines of Madness

An adventure for expert characters

When ore shipments from Gundren the Ironmonger's North Mine stopped coming to Crossings, the dwarf began to worry. When agents dispatched to discover what was amiss never returned, his worry turned to fear.

Unknown to the dwarf, miners searching for a new lode of ore stumbled into a treasure-filled burial vault deep in North Mine. When they entered the chamber, they discovered an ancient evil there—barrow wights that broke out of their sarcophagi and tore the miners apart. A few miners managed to escape the wights' life-draining claws, using explosives to collapse the tunnel behind them. However, the explosion stirred up a dormant nest of cartuls (see the appendix) who emerged from the depths to deal with the "intruders."

Gundren needs experienced and capable agents to uncover what happened and put things right, if possible. He's offering a princely sum of 50 gold crowns for this service.

The player characters complete this adventure when they destroy the cartul queen to end the infestation, defeat the barrow wights and other undead roaming the mines, and rescue the surviving miners.

NORTH MINE CAMP

North Mine is the northernmost of Gundren's excavations in the Black Hills west of Crossings. The camp that supports the mine stands at the base of a high hill. It consists of a dozen tents, each large enough to comfortably sleep eight miners; a wooden mess hall with outdoor kitchen; and the mine manager's office and one-room quarters.

The camp is deserted, its cook fires cold and everything left in place as if the people here simply vanished. If the characters scour the camp, they turn up personal effects, coins, and other bits and pieces worth a total of 5 gold crowns, as well as the following clues:

- Unusual tracks spread throughout the camp, but they don't look like footprints. A character who succeeds on an Intellect challenge roll deduces that the tracks resemble the spiked foot of some insect of considerable size.
- A faint buzzing whine fills the air. Though it's not noticeable at first, after 1 hour in the camp, all the characters can hear it.
- The mine manager's cot is covered in blood. Looking under the cot reveals a severed hand wearing a silver ring worth 5 silver shillings. The hand looks as if it was torn from the wrist.

TREES

Two small groves of trees stand close by to the camp, one of which conceals three dead miners. The mangled corpses show signs that some creature has been eating them. One of the corpses carries an enchanted object.

POLLUTED LAKES

Just south of the camp, a small lake has been befouled by the mine's activities. Lurking in its murky red depths is a mutated frog (as **huge monster** with the hero role) with four glowing eyes. The creature comes out at night to snatch any camp worker it can catch unawares, though it's clever enough to avoid attention by not feeding too often. If the characters linger near the lake at night, the creature emerges to cause trouble.

NIGHTFALL

An hour after dusk, the cartul emerge from the mines to forage. If the characters are still in the mine camp, **10 cartul drones** and a **cartul soldier** descend the hillside. They attack any living creatures they encounter, fighting to the death.

THE MINES

Mine shafts burrow into the hill above the camp all the way to its summit. Scrub grass and tree stumps cover the hill, and several dirt paths wind up to the top. Four buildings stand in a line up the slope from the opening to the first shaft. That shaft can be descended or ascended freely but is difficult terrain.

ELEVATORS

Three wooden shacks cover vertical elevator shafts with heights as indicated on the map. Each elevator car has a Size 3 capacity (able to hold creatures whose total Size does not exceed 3). Elevator cars can be raised and lowered using winch controls at the top or bottom of each shaft, or by a clockwork motor in each car that can be started by getting a success on an Intellect challenge roll. The motor moves the car at a rate of 10 yards per minute in either direction.

Additionally, iron rungs anchored in the wall of each shaft allow characters to climb up or down.

VENT

A slanted roof held up by wooden posts acts as a ventilation shaft for the mine. Iron rungs are hammered into the shaft wall for climbing.

TUNNELS

The mine's tunnels are 3 yards wide and 2 yards tall. Wooden posts support the ceilings and shore up the walls.

every 4 yards. Bundles of torches and barrels of pitch stand at each tunnel entrance.

Each tunnel features two sets of iron rails on which stand 1d6 ore carts. An ore cart has a Size 2 capacity (the total Size of creatures inside the cart cannot exceed 2). Creatures inside a cart are half covered from creatures outside it.

CARTUL TUNNELS

Cartul drones excavated these narrow, twisting tunnels in an attempt to help the colony escape the barrow wights. These passages are large enough to accommodate Size 1 creatures, though following them often involves unexpected turns and climbing.

PERILS

The mines are dangerous. Whenever the characters reach a spot marked "P" on the map, roll a d20 to see what occurs.

ENCOUNTER RESULTS

| d20 | Result |
|-------|---|
| 20 | The characters hear a rumbling, a distant shriek, or mad laughter. |
| 19 | 1d6 dead cartul drones are strewn across the tunnel. |
| 17-18 | Nothing happens. |
| 14-16 | 2d6 cartul drones are spotted ahead, digging new tunnels. |
| 10-13 | 1 or 2 muttering maws wander into the group. |
| 8-9 | 1d6 destroyed animated corpses are piled up along the tunnel walls. |
| 1-7 | A mob of animated corpses* (dead miners) led by 2 barrow wights spots the group and races in to attack. |

* See the **appendix**.

CAVE-INS

The well-constructed mineshafts are at no risk of collapse unless the characters detonate a bomb, destroy the supports, or do something similarly foolish. In such an event, debris falls in a 2d6-yard radius around the damage. Any creature in the area takes damage equal to its Health and dies.

1. TRAPPED MINERS

The cartul keep a dozen miners in this chamber for later eating, cemented to the walls with a mixture of spittle and dung. Half the

captives are still alive, and are guarded by a **cartul incanter** and **3 cartul soldiers**.

2. CARTUL NEST

The **cartul queen** resides in the upper section of this enormous cave, protected by **2 cartul soldiers**. The adjoining caves hold 24 cartul larvae (noncombatants), four dozen fleshy eggs, and **3d6 + 6 cartul drones** that tend to the larvae.

3. TOMB OF THE DEATH LORDS

This great domed chamber houses ten stone sarcophagi whose lids bear the likenesses of powerful human warriors. The painted walls and ceiling show elaborate scenes of battles against the faerie. At present, **5 barrow wights** occupy this chamber. Their funerary goods consist of a mix of coins, gems, art objects, armor, and weapons worth a total of 25 gold crowns. In addition, characters searching the chamber find two enchanted objects.

4. ANTECHAMBER

One hundred stone statues of armed and armored human warriors are arrayed here in ten rows of ten. Haunting this chamber are **5 phantoms** that emerge from the statues to attack intruders.

5. BLOCKED PASSAGE

The miners collapsed this passage to seal off the undead. Burn marks on the walls suggest they used explosives.



in the Name of Love

An adventure for expert characters

Silas Branson did a bad thing. Three days ago, the woodcutter killed Salla Reed, his betrothed, within sight of the Black Thorn—an accursed tree marking a place where the boundary between reality and the Void has grown thin.

Silas never intended to kill Salla. In truth, he wanted to save their relationship, and to make her understand that rumors she had heard about him were lies. But the more he explained, the angrier he became. She tried to flee and tripped, falling to strike her head on a rock. The blood sluicing from the mortal wound caused the Black Thorn's trunk to split, revealing a demonic figure trapped within.

Because only a trace of Salla's blood touched the ground near the Black Thorn, the demon was forced back inside. However, the creature's near-appearance combined with Salla's death to break Silas's mind. As he dug a shallow grave, the woodcutter came to the conclusion that the figure in the tree must be an old god trapped by dark magic—and waiting to be freed by a blood sacrifice.

If Silas succeeds in his plan, he will loose a demon from the Black Thorn and most likely destroy his community and everyone in it.

The player characters complete this adventure when they stop the mad Silas from releasing the demon from the Black Thorn, or when they destroy the demon if it slips free.

VERGE

Founded several hundred years ago, the small settlement of Verge once kept much of the Northern Reach supplied in timber from the Old Wood. For years, the town grew and its people were prosperous—until a string of disasters some two decades past plunged Verge into a rapid decline.

Increased logging in the Old Wood angered the faerie. Children began to go missing, unexplainable accidents claimed lives, and people began to fear the forest. A wave of beastmen laid siege to the town, and the bodies of the dead became a host for plague that nearly wiped out the rest.

Once home to thousands, Verge presently holds only one hundred souls in its largely empty ruins. Nearly all those people live in the old center of town, behind ramshackle walls built from materials reclaimed from abandoned buildings. Beyond the inner community, a large stretch of burned-out and crumbling structures is home to wild animals, squatters, and the occasional horrifying monster.

Most intact buildings in Verge are built of wood on stone foundations, and have steep, peaked roofs. Half the people here follow the Old Faith, decorating their homes with the symbols of their gods.

EXPLORING VERGE

A number of sites within the central settlement are of potential interest to the characters.

A. THE EXCHANGE

Verge's general store is owned by Gladys Fremp, who sells common goods for standard prices. Comfortable in her middle age, Gladys has a doughy body with odd bulges on her neck, arms, and lower legs. She has a warm and inviting nature, and goes to great lengths to make visitors comfortable.

Gladys has a nasty secret. She worships a demon known as the Glistening Prince in a shrine she keeps hidden in the back of the building. This small room contains a wooden altar almost lost in a mound of wax from melted candles. A small soapstone idol on the altar is carved to resemble an old man fondling himself. The idol emanates an unwholesome aura, and causes people near it to hear a high-pitched, buzzing whine.

A **small demon** with the hero role dwells in the shrine, goading Gladys to cut herself, embed rocks under her skin, and pleasure herself with the idol. The demon manifests if anyone except Gladys touches the shrine, fighting interlopers to the death.

In addition to the demonic statuette, Gladys possesses an old manuscript from the idol's previous owner. Though it appears to contain only feverish writings and mad ravings, hidden inside its pages are three incantations *charm* from the Enchantment tradition, and *desire's end* and *obedience* from the Forbidden tradition.

B. GREEN MAN PUBLIC HOUSE

This tavern attracts locals for meals and drinks every day of the week. One of the oldest businesses in Verge, it has been handed down from generation to generation to its current owner. Anise is an attractive young woman with straight black hair and a quick smile, who tends the bar and chats up patrons. Her employees are Trent, who cooks in the back; servants Marissa and Thom; and Pete the stable boy. The Green Man rents two rooms above the bar for a copper penny a night, each of which can sleep three comfortably.

C. THE OLD WELL

This ancient well is believed to have been the first dug in Verge, and the mortar between the stones forming its upper edge has all but crumbled away. Locals customarily write wishes on scraps of paper, then insert the folded scraps into the cracks between the stones. Characters inspecting the notes find a new bit of paper wedged between the stones. It reads, "I wish Silas Branson loved me."

No one in Verge is aware that the old well opens up to a small, cramped cave at the halfway point of its depth. The previous night, 3 **tear thieves** slipped into the settlement,

slithered down the well, and took up residence in the cave. They wait for the right time to emerge from hiding so they can begin harvesting tears from the locals.

D. STANDING STONES

A cluster of huge stone slabs arranged in a circle stands about a mile south of Verge. This site was once the main gathering place for worshippers of the Old Faith, and magic still lingers here. Any Nature or Primal spell cast inside the circle doubles its duration.

E. TEMPLE OF LIGHT

The Cult of the New God came to Verge twenty years ago to help contain the plague ravaging the community. Their efforts made converts of many of the locals, who built a modest stone-and-timber temple. Sister Matilda (see below) maintains the site and performs a religious ceremony at dusk every three days.

RUMORS

Characters who spend time in Verge and interact with its people can learn the following information:

- Salla Reed, a healer who some believe to be a witch, has been missing for three days. Silas Branson, her betrothed, is beside himself with worry, and has led a few fruitless searches into the forest for her.
- A stranger has been seen in the woods recently. People describe him as a wild old man in brown robes.
- Elder Zeke intends to propose to young Merry Peen, daughter of the midwife. His doing so will be scandalous, though, as she is far too young for him.
- The Criswell farm burned to the ground three days ago. No one survived. The constable, Delores, believes that wargs were responsible.
- Lesser Zeke, the village idiot, says he saw people climbing into the well a couple of nights ago.
- Merry Peen walked to the standing stones last night. She has been crying a lot lately.
- As a youth, Silas Branson had a reputation for violence and spoke more than once of hearing voices.

MAJOR CHARACTERS

The player characters might encounter any of the following people in and around Verge. Use the relationship map as a guide for how the various characters connect to each other. Each entry presents information that a character knows and might reveal.

DELORES THE CONSTABLE

Delores (as **veteran**) has kept order in Verge for nearly five years, leading a group of four deputies (as **patrollers**). Stern and middle-aged, with a muscular physique and silver-

black hair, Delores has few friends and leads a private life. She keeps a tattoo on her left arm hidden that marks her as a member of the crusaders. She deserted her post years ago and keeps her past a secret, since she faces death if she is ever returned to the citadels in the north.

- The constable suspects that Branson had something to do with Salla Reed's disappearance. However, she lacks proof and can do nothing until she finds it.

BLISTER THE SPY

Verge's only **goblin**, Blister is a filthy, pocked, and wretched creature in the employ of Elder Zeke. He has shifty eyes, lies continuously, and steals anything not nailed down. When not running errands for his master, Blister keeps the rat population of Verge down.

- Blister knows that Merry Peen has been carrying on with Craven, though he keeps this fact to himself. He knows that his master intends to wed Merry, and plans to turn a profit with this information.

CRAVEN

A child of the forest, Craven (as **changeling**) grew up in the care of the reclusive priest Xavian and learned the secrets of the Old Faith from him. Curiosity drew Craven to Verge, where he fell madly and hopelessly in love with Merry Peen. He has plans to run away with Merry if he can.

- Craven was knocked out and taken prisoner by Ezard (working for Branson), and is to be sacrificed to the Black Thorn. He currently wears Ezard's appearance, having lost his original appearance when he was incapacitated. Ezard gives Craven just enough food and water to keep him alive, and beats the changeling to keep him afraid.

ELDER ZEKE, MAYOR

Verge's mayor also happens to be its wealthiest citizen. Locals believe that Elder Zeke was once a skilled merchant, though in truth, he was nothing more than a lucky burglar. He is short and pudgy, with a weeping eye and a perpetual sneer on his face. Shame keeps him distanced from his brutish son, Lesser Zeke.

- Elder Zeke lusts after Merry Peen, and intends to wed and bed her whether she wants him or not. He's gathering funds to bribe her mother, Kyra Peen, to force Merry to accept his offer. He has no idea that Merry and Craven have been engaged in a tryst.

EZARD THE SCOUNDREL

An ex-crusader, ex-cultist, and sometime brigand, Ezard (as **brigand** with the champion role) drifted into Verge a few months ago to escape justice. He is in his twenties, with red hair, a thick beard, and a zigzag scar down the left side of his face. Cruel and vindictive, he masks his disposition with good-natured friendliness.

- Ezard knows Delores was a crusader, and hopes to use this information to his advantage. He's not yet sure how

to do so, though, since he's no friend to the crusaders either.

- When Branson was burying Salla Reed's body, Ezard happened upon the scene. After the devastated Branson confessed, Ezard's love of violence saw him offer to help. On Branson's orders, Ezard kidnapped Craven and has him tied up in the shed (area 3). Ezard is not loyal to Branson, however, and he betrays the woodcutter if doing so offers him any advantage—after sneaking off to murder Craven and conceal his own part in the conspiracy.

KYRA PEEN

A midwife in her middle years, Kyra Peen (as **cultist**) has thinning brown hair, a paunch, and thick eyebrows. Despite Silas having rebuffed her for Salla Reed, Kyra is in love with the woodcutter and does anything he asks.

- Kyra Peen will stop at nothing to make Silas Branson love her. She was the one who spread rumors about Silas, hoping to break up his relationship with Sala Reed. Now that Reed is out of the way, Kyra is helping the woodcutter carry out the mad rite at the Black Thorn, believing that when it fails, he will turn to her for comfort.
- Kyra beats her daughter Merry Peen for the slightest infraction, out of resentment for her great beauty. She has no idea her daughter is involved with the changeling Craven, who she knows only as the would-be sacrifice held prisoner in the shed.

LESSER ZEKE

The simpleton Lesser Zeke (as **cultist**) is the son of Elder Zeke and a friend to Silas Branson, who has always watched out for him. Lesser Zeke is big, bald, fat, and has drooping eyes. He speaks slowly and frequently soils himself.

- Lesser Zeke has no idea what Branson intends to do, or why, but he'll do whatever makes his friend happy. Though he would never intentionally sabotage Branson's plans, Lesser Zeke is not particularly cautious. Where he goes and what he says might reveal things Branson wants kept quiet.
- Ezard terrifies Lesser Zeke—the result of too many quiet threats and beatings. If the characters befriend him, Lesser Zeke confides that Ezard is a bad man.

MERRY PEEN

A human woman (as **commoner or professional**) with curly red hair and bright blue eyes, Merry Peen is one of the few young people left in Verge. A few months ago, she met the changeling Craven and fell in love. Since that time, they have



met frequently at the standing stones where no one would see them. Merry fears that the people of Verge would not understand their love, and that they might hurt Craven if the tryst was discovered.

- Craven missed a rendezvous with Merry two nights ago, and the young woman now fears the worst. She confided in Sister Matilda in the hope of gaining her help, and instead received a lecture about how she should break off the relationship lest she imperil her soul. Merry plans to look for Craven at the standing stones. If he doesn't appear, she will seek him out in the Old Wood—which might land her in trouble.

SILAS BRANSON

A woodcutter for twenty years, Silas Branson (as **cultist**) has been a lifelong devotee of the Old Faith, and resents the intrusion of the New God's cult into his community. Six months ago, he fell in love with Salla Reed, a talented healer and herbalist. But what Branson did not know was that Kyra Peen had kept her own feelings for him a secret, and was not about to let some strumpet take Silas from her. Kyra began spreading lies about Silas that reached Sala, making her question the nature of the man she loved.

- Branson is middle-aged, with brown hair going to gray, weathered features, and a missing finger on his left hand.
- Since returning from the Old Wood, Silas has been obsessive about washing his hands. He's voiced his concerns about Reed's absence and mounted a few searches for her, though never anywhere close to where she is buried.

SISTER MATILDA

A bent, gray-haired woman in her late sixties, Matilda watches over the Temple of Light. Dour and conservative, she has no patience with unconventional behavior.

- Matilda knows about Merry Peen's tryst with the changeling Craven, and counseled the young woman to break it off. Her advice angered Merry, who has not been back to the temple since.

XAVIAN

The priest Xavian (as **initiate of the Old Faith**) raised the changeling Craven and has spent a lifetime fighting the corruption blighting the Old Wood. Though he has been unable to destroy the Black Thorn for fear of releasing its evil, Xavian has at least slowed its influence on the woods.

The priest is an old man with wild gray hair, sad eyes, and a portly frame. He wears mud-stained brown robes.

- Xavian suspects that Craven has fallen for a local girl. He hasn't seen the changeling for several days, and is journeying to Verge to find him.

EVENTS NEAR VERGE

The relationships between the characters of Verge become even more tangled as the adventure unfolds over three days.

DAY 1

- Brigands (see area 4) attack a farm, murdering a family and leaving behind signs that resemble Dark Speech. (Meant to implicate beastmen in the attack, the signs are in fact meaningless scribbles.)
- Merry Peen confides in Sister Matilda.
- Silas Branson mounts another search for Salla Reed that turns up nothing.

DAY 2

- Ezard checks on Craven and beats him savagely.
- Thom, of the Green Man Public House, spots a warg in the woods.
- Either the bandits attack another farm or the tear thieves emerge from the well and kill Thom. They leave his corpse in plain view outside the Green Man.

DAY 3

- At night, Silas, Kyra, Ezard, and Lesser Zeke fetch Craven and drag him to the Black Thorn. They cut his throat, spraying the evil tree with his blood. The demon Catanka emerges (see area 1 for details), butchers its liberators, and attacks Verge.

RANDOM EVENTS

While the player characters are in Verge, roll a d20 twice each day to find out what happens.

RANDOM EVENTS

| d20 | Event |
|-------|--|
| 20 | Xavian arrives at Verge, or approaches the characters for help if you have rolled this result already. |
| 18-19 | A merchant caravan comes to town, stocked with uncommon goods. |
| 14-17 | Torrential rain falls for 1d6 hours. |
| 8-13 | Nothing happens. |
| 4-7 | A band of 2d6 brigands attacks another farm. |
| 2-3 | A hunting party of 3d6 wargs stalks the countryside. |
| 1 | From out of the forest, 2 drakes appear and attack. |

PLACES OF INTEREST

As adventure events unfold, the characters might be drawn to the following locations.

1. BLACK THORN

The Black Thorn corrupts and warps the Old Wood, turning an ordinary stretch of forest into a macabre

landscape infested by spirits and demons. The accursed tree rises from a patch of powdery soil in the center of a clearing. Black bark and finger-length thorns cover it, from its knotty roots to spindly branches clawing at the sky.

Each time blood is spilled in the vicinity of the Black Thorn, roll a d6. On a roll of 1, the tree's roots twist up above the ground where the blood was spilled, disgorging 2 small demons that attack any creatures they see. If blood is spilled onto the tree, it cracks open and 1d3 medium demons claw their way out to appear in open spaces within 1 yard of its trunk. One of those demons is named Catanka and has the hero role, and was bound to the Black Thorn eons ago.

2. TROLL'S TEETH

The Troll's Teeth stand about a mile from the Black Thorn. A cluster of large, moss-covered boulders arranged in a horseshoe pattern, the teeth are believed by locals to have once belonged to a mighty troll slain by the faerie folk at the dawn of the world. A band of 15 wargs and 10 large wolves (as medium animals with the Pack Fighting talent) makes its camp here.

3. SHED

This simple structure of wood and stone has a crumbling chimney and a roof that has largely surrendered to the elements. The interior of the shed is home to numerous rats, and its floor is a stinking mass of droppings. Craven is chained up in a corner until Branson and the rest cart him off to sacrifice him to the Black Thorn.

4. BRIGAND CAVE

A shallow cave two miles from Verge serves as a camp for 20 brigands and their leader (as brigand with the leader role). They prey on travelers and steal livestock. Recently, the bandits have begun attacking farms and leaving clues meant to put the blame on the beastmen.



shadows in the mist

An adventure for master characters

A vile hag named Toothsome Maera has learned of a prophecy predicting the end of world—of all things drowning in blood, consumed by fire, and utterly annihilated by the Shadow in the Void. Dragging a tormented soul up from Hell for questioning, the hag learned that the source of this dread foretelling was the city of Crossings. The solution thus seemed clear: wipe out the city and save the world.

The hag bargained with the devils of Hell for knowledge of an incantation powerful enough to eradicate everyone in Crossings, offering newborn babes plucked from their cradles in nearby farm settlements to feed the tormentors of the black pit. Armed with this incantation, Toothsome Maera will call up a thick fog, populate it with monsters, and summon a wind to drive death across the Dark Waters and smother the city.

The player characters complete this adventure when they defeat the hag and disperse the fog that threatens Crossings.

CURRENT EVENTS

Before the adventure begins, a number of things happen in Crossings. You can introduce these events in prior adventure sessions, or simply reveal that they occurred prior to the beginning of this adventure.

- Locals outside Crossings report several missing newborn babies.
- Fisherfolk report that a new island has appeared in the dark waters overnight. Thin, silvery mist surrounds the island, and boats that have entered the mist to investigate it have not returned.
- The Brown Cloaks are investigating the disappearance of several children from across the city.
- Enormous shrieking eels have been spotted in the Dark Waters, attacking two fishing boats and killing four people so far.

AN EERIE FOG

The fog rolls in off the lake at night, blanketing Tankards and creeping up the city's hills until only the tops of houses can be seen. The fog heavily obscures all outdoor locations in the city. Additionally, creatures in the fog make Perception challenge rolls with 1 bane when attempting to listen.

The fog is filled with monsters conjured from nightmares to hunt the living. Each hour that the player characters spend in the fog, roll a d20 to determine what happens.

RANDOM EVENTS

| d20 | Event |
|-------|---|
| 19-20 | Screams and wails echo in the swirling mist. |
| 17-18 | Nothing happens. |
| 13-16 | 5 mobs of animated corpses (see the appendix) emerge from nearby buildings to attack. |
| 7-12 | A killing mist lurks within the fog, hungry for blood. |
| 3-6 | 1d3 + 1 boggarts appear, looking for trouble. |
| 1-2 | 1d3 + 1 huge monsters wreak havoc. |

KEY EVENTS

In addition to random events, create a number of key events to keep the player characters busy while they move through the fog-shrouded streets. You can select key events from the following or create your own challenges.

- Citizens come under attack by boggarts, killing mist, and mobs of animated corpses (see the appendix). Helping these citizens could create important allies for the characters.
- A jack-o'-lantern appearing as a torch could lead the characters to 1d3 mobs of animated corpses.
- A group of terrified citizens needs help reaching safety.
- A group of 1d6 + 1 chainbound attacks a building filled with people.

THE FOG'S ORIGINS

If the characters reach higher ground granting a view over the city, they can see that the fog originates from a large island in the Dark Waters—an island that wasn't there before the fog appeared. The island resembles a giant skull sitting atop a rocky hill flanked by thick forest, with the fog swirling above it.

THE ISLAND IN THE MIST

The hag Toothsome Maera lives on an island that normally lies outside the bounds of the world, much like the other hidden kingdoms of the faerie folk. As a precursor to unleashing her magic, Toothsome Maera has drawn the island into the mortal realm, where its appearance has attracted an assortment of reclusive faeries and dark creatures to the hag's cause.

It takes 2 hours to reach the island by rowboat from Tankards, and the route is fraught with peril. If the characters cross the lake by boat, 8 shrieking eels attack them at the halfway point.

A number of interesting and challenging locations are revealed to the characters as they explore the island.

A. RAVEN'S ROCK

A jumble of rocks stab up from the swirling, foaming waters on the island's broken and jagged south shore. Several fishing boats have shattered on these rocks, which are strewn with the bodies of dead sailors and home to 3 harpies on the lookout for approaching enemies. The harpies sing when anyone comes within long range of them, hoping to lure their victims into the water. If attacked, the harpies fight until two of them fall. The third then flies off to warn the hag at area H.

B. FEY FIELDS

A field of tall grass and wild flowers covers the south side of the island, concealing 3 boggarts and 2 gremlins. The boggarts are sleeping while the gremlins play games. If the gremlins notice the characters approaching, one rouses the boggarts while the other uses its wicked magic to torment the intruders.

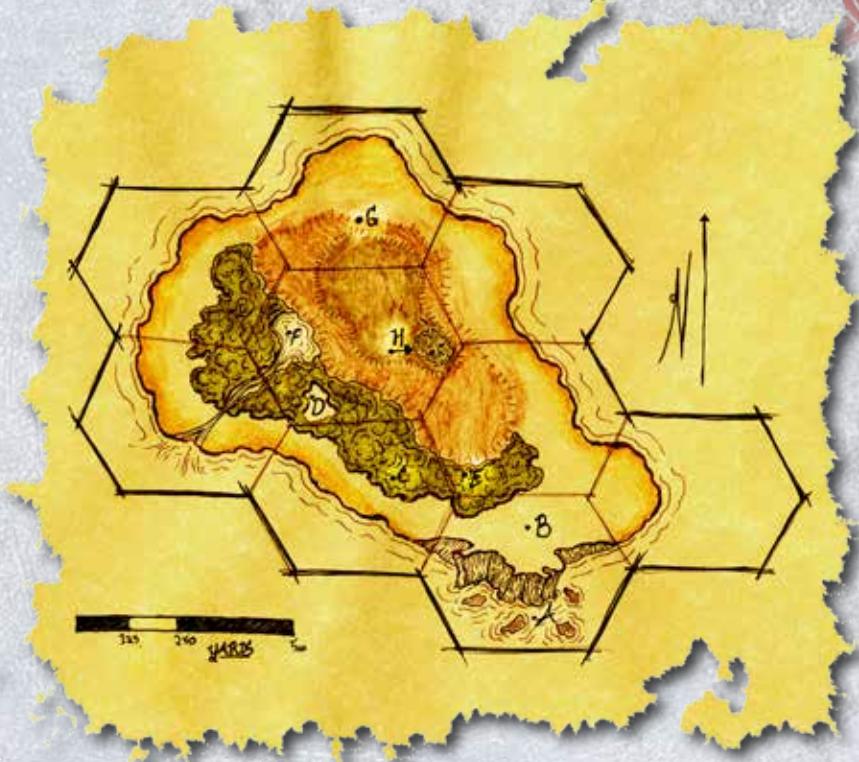
If the characters prevail against the boggarts, any surviving gremlins surrender and offer to help the characters in exchange for their lives. Either gremlin can tell the characters that the elves at area D possess a key for the portal to the hag's audience chamber, thus bypassing her lair's manticore guardian (see area H). If pressed, the gremlins can also tell the characters about the enchanted pool at area F. They then flee at the first opportunity.

C. FOREBODING FOREST

A thick and tangled forest covers the west side of the island, curving around the great hill on which the hag makes her lair. This enchanted wood is difficult terrain, and dense overgrowth limits visibility to just a few yards.

Any mortal, living creature entering the forest must get a success on a Will challenge roll or become dazed. With a success, a creature is immune to the forest's influence for 24 hours. While dazed by the forest's magic, a creature can repeat the roll each time it takes damage, removing the affliction on a success. Each hour that a dazed creature remains in the forest, it must make a Will challenge roll with 1 bane. On a failure, the creature becomes cursed and falls asleep. The creature cannot be awakened for 1d6 years or until the curse is removed.

Many sylvan creatures inhabit these woods, including 1 jack-o'-lantern that appears in an open space within medium range of the characters 1 minute after they enter the forest. Any character who becomes compelled by the jack-o'-lantern is led deeper into the woods to the dryad grove (area E), after which the jack-o'-lantern drifts off in search of other mortals to hunt.



D. SYLVAN CLEARING

In this large clearing at the center of the Foreboding Forest, 4 elves loyal to the hag make their camp. The elves investigate any sounds of battle, explosions, or other obvious signs of intruders.

Two of the elves have enchanted objects, and a third possesses a special key. A creature holding the key can use an action to cause a portal to open in an unoccupied space within short range. Upon doing so, a second connected portal opens inside the hag's audience chamber (see area i, below). The portals remain open while the key's wielder concentrates and holds the item. Anything moving through one portal exits from the other.

E. DRYAD GROVE

A group of 4 dryads dwells in the thickest part of the forest. Bloodthirsty and cruel, they mark the borders of their territory with bleached skulls mounted on poles. The dryads toy with any mortals that wander near their grove, using magic to manipulate and torment them.

F. ENCHANTED POOL

A spring of clean, pure water pools at the base of the hill before flowing away west to the lake. A Size 4 water genie with Health 120 lurks here, dedicated to protecting the pool and its magic from intruders. The pool has potent healing powers, and any creature drinking from it immediately heals all damage and removes all afflictions. A creature can benefit from the pool's magic once per day. The water loses its magic if taken from the pool.

G. CAVE OF THE SEER

An opening burrows 10 yards into the hillside before ending in a watery grotto 6 yards in diameter. Crooked stone columns rise from floor to ceiling, surrounded by pools of burning oil that fill the room with blue shadows.

A ghastly chorus lurks in the water here, its body made from the faces of mortals slain by the hag. This monster experiences visions, and sometimes cries out prophecies of the future. (It was from the chorus that the hag first learned of the coming doom originating in Crossings.) The chorus doesn't want a fight, though it defends itself if attacked. If the characters attempt to communicate with it, the creature might reveal a clue regarding future events, at your discretion.

H. HORNED HILL

A great, rocky hill rises to the northeast of the forest, its peak looming above the rest of the island. Characters who reach the hill can see eight evenly spaced vents along its top, from which thick plumes of fog erupt and drift toward Crossings, carried on an eldritch wind. The slopes of the hill are littered with bones, and its south face has the appearance of an enormous horned skull. The jaw of the skull opens onto a cavern leading down into the heart of the hill, where Toothsome Maera works her foul magic.

The hag has set a manticore with the champion role to guard the entrance to her lair. This vile and aggressive beast attacks any creature except faerie or those obviously in the hag's service. A staircase descends into the hill at the back of the cave.

THE HAG'S BLACK HEART

Toothsome Maera used magic to carve out her lair inside the hill dominating the island, creating a network of rough caves connected by narrow, twisting corridors. The thick, moist air reeks of decay, and the walls are slick with noisome ooze. Pools of slippery slime collect along the floor, dripping from puckered growths sprouting on walls and ceilings. Intermittent shrieks echo from the depths of the lair, followed by low chortles and soft weeping. Candles made from human fat burn in all areas to leave them obscured by shadows.

MOBILE HAG

Toothsome Maera doesn't wait for the player characters to come and kill her. Instead, she moves through the lair, harrying them at every opportunity, then withdrawing before the characters can make an effective counterattack. She won't fight to the death unless cornered in area 8.

1. AUDIENCE CHAMBER

Pools of oily liquid cover the floor of this large cave, leaving only narrow walkways between them. Three thick stone columns hold up the ceiling. A narrow passage heads off to the west and a winding staircase burrows through the floor to area 4 below.

If the characters enter this cave from area H of the island, a shadowy, humanoid shape materializes before them 1 minute after they arrive. The shape has Defense 10 and Health 1, and ignores any attack made against an attribute. This figure is a manifestation of the hag, through which she can perceive intruders to her lair.

If her shadow manifestation is not attacked at once, Toothsome Maera warns the characters to turn back and keep what's left of their pathetic lives. If the characters engage with her, she might reveal why she sent the fog, speaking of the darkness that will come if she's stopped. If the manifestation is incapacitated, its shadowy form dissipates and a **promethean** rises up from one of the cave's pools to destroy the intruders.

2. CHAMBER OF MISTS

Thick mist heavily obscures this room, venting from the mouths of eight children chained to wooden chairs in the smaller round chambers adjoining the main chamber. The fog rises up through vents in the ceiling that open up across the top of the hill. Anyone breathing the concentrated mist in this area must get a success on a Strength challenge roll or take 2d6 damage and become poisoned for 1 minute. A creature already poisoned takes 2d6 extra damage instead.

The imprisoned children continue to spew fog for three more days. At the end of that time, they die and the fog stops leaking from their mouths. Any magic that removes a curse frees a child from this grisly fate, stopping the mist flowing from that child and wiping the horrid memory of its incarceration. The mist continues to flow even from a child that is dead, but destroying the hag negates the magic here and frees the children.

In the center of the main chamber, a magical gateway offers one-way passage to area 3. Characters searching the smaller side chambers can find the secret door indicated on the map by getting a success on a Perception challenge roll with 1 bane, revealing a passage sloping downward.

3. BONE VAULT

Skulls line the walls of this circular chamber, whose stone floor is covered with countless teeth. The bones of the hag's victims are heaped in great piles throughout the area. When any living creature appears in the room, a **bone machine** rises up from the nearest pile and attacks.

The exit from this room cannot be seen or detected by normal means. A character able to see magical auras automatically discerns an invisible one-way portal on the east wall. Touching this portal activates it for 1 minute,

allowing characters to step through and into the shaft connecting area 5 and area 7.

Any character examining the skulls spots an intact human eyeball with a red iris in one skull's eye socket. The eye has an aura of magic. A character can gouge out one of his or her own eyes and replace it with the new eyeball, which heals the wound instantly. Doing so grants the character 1 casting of the *arcane sight* spell from the Arcana tradition. If the character already has castings of this spell, the eye increases the number of castings by 1. Expended castings from the eye are regained when the character completes a rest.

4. LABORATORY

The hag conducts magical experiments in this chamber, which features tables and shelves laden with gruesome objects, tools, and heavy glass canisters. A selection of tools and substances are worth a total of 100 gold crowns. In addition, if the characters spend 1 minute searching the room, they find $1d3$ enchanted objects. A character who searches the south wall and gets a success on a Perception challenge roll with 1 bane reveals a secret door that opens with a touch.

5. CHAMBER OF SORROW

This small round room holds everything the hag lost when bitterness corrupted and transformed her. Fancy dresses, masquerade masks, books of poetry, pressed flowers, ribbons, and other worthless trinkets are piled high here.

A full-length mirror stands at the center of the area, with the image of a beautiful nymph reflected on its surface. Any living creature that looks upon the image must get a success on a Will challenge roll or gain $1d6 + 1$ Insanity and become dazed for a number of rounds equal to its Insanity total. If this Insanity would cause the creature to go mad, the dazed affliction becomes permanent.

The mirror has no substance. Anyone or anything that touches it is teleported to area 8. A trapdoor in the floor hidden by a rug reveals a shaft that slopes downward to area 7.

6. CAPTURED SOULS

The souls of some of the mortals the hag has tortured and murdered over the centuries are stored here as twelve mirror fragments, displayed on shelves constructed from her victims' bones. Any character who picks up a mirror fragment notices a faint smudge on its surface. A second later, the smudge balloons into a screaming face. The character must get a success on a Will challenge roll or gain 1 Insanity.

Breaking a mirror fragment releases its trapped soul, causing it to manifest and then sink through the ground to descend into the underworld. Each time the characters destroy a fragment, roll a d6. On a roll of 1, the hag is drawn to this area and attacks 1 round later.

7. CHAMBER OF VISIONS

This room features a wide pool of toxic silvery liquid. Any creature that touches the liquid takes damage equal to half



its Health and must make a Strength challenge roll with 1 boon. On a failure, the creature takes damage equal to half its Health and becomes poisoned for 1 minute. While poisoned, the creature takes damage equal to its healing rate at the end of each round. The silver liquid loses its potency if removed from the room.

A creature that has Power 1 or more can harness the magic of the pool by getting a success on a Will challenge roll. Doing so allows the creature to manifest a shadowy copy of itself at any location within six miles of the pool that the creature has been to before. The shadowy figure has Defense 10 and Health 1, and ignores any attack made against an attribute. The creature using the pool can communicate and perceive through the manifested figure. The effect lasts while the creature concentrates, or until the manifestation is incapacitated.

8. A ROTTEN WOMB

Crammed into the back of this large cavern is the corpse of a mutilated giant—a monstrosity Tothsome Maera defeated centuries ago and has preserved with incantations. The hag has excavated her sleeping chambers inside the giant's belly, crawling inside to rest and dream of past victories. She makes a last stand here beside 2 boneguards that protect her, fighting to the death if she is cornered.

OFF the rails

An adventure for master characters

Three years ago, the emperor commissioned the Academy of Engineers in Crossings to produce prototype soldiers that could replace the Empire's increasingly unreliable orc forces. Engineers drew up designs for a new kind of construct called the **iron titan** (see the appendix) and arranged for the construction of eight prototype units.

Under the guidance of the academy, the final armoring of the massive iron titans was completed in the industrial town of Foundry. From there, the academy would move the clockwork giants using the *Emperor's Fury*—a steam engine built by the dwarf engineers of Foundry to pull a dozen fully loaded cars at speed. The *Emperor's Fury* would carry the iron titans to Sixton, provincial capital of the Northern Reach. From there, they would be flown by airship to the beleaguered Imperial forces fighting to regain control of the capital.

But in a brazen act of sabotage, the *Emperor's Fury* was attacked and destroyed en route, and its cargo was lost. Now, the provincial governor recruits the player characters to recover the iron titans and bring the saboteurs to justice.

The player characters complete this adventure when they destroy or capture the two stolen iron titans and end the threat of the rebel orcs that arranged the destruction of the *Emperor's Fury*.

DRUDGE LOYALISTS

When word of the uprising in the imperial capital made it to the Northern Reach, many orcs abandoned their posts to find their own way in the world. A growing number have joined a band of rebels who call themselves the Drudge Loyalists. Organized to prepare the way for the coming of the Orc King Drudge, they have been raiding and pillaging across the southeast, gaining admiration and support from orcs across the province.

This support has reached as far north as Foundry, and many orc laborers and workers there secretly support their brethren fighting in the south. It was from those laborers that the Drudge Loyalists learned about the iron titans hauled by the *Emperor's Fury*. The orc rebels laid a trap for the train, intent on taking the cargo for themselves. Planting stolen explosives where the train tracks follow the cliffs overlooking Mirror Lake, the orcs derailed the *Emperor's Fury*, sending the train and its cargo tumbling hundreds of feet into the water.

A salvage effort by the orcs managed to drag two working iron titans from the wreckage. Those constructs are now being used to defend the orcs' camp and to mount attacks against settlements around the lake.

FOUNDRY

Far to the east and north of Crossings stands Foundry, a large industrial town that grew from the camps of the workers who laid the first train rails across the Northern Reach. Merchants now use those rails to transport goods across the rest of the Empire, making Foundry a major trade hub. The town is now a sprawl of warehouses, workshops for building new locomotives and cars, inns and taverns for travelers, and identical redbrick houses.

ORC LABORERS

The rail lines of the Northern Reach were laid down by orc labor on loan from the Empire. After work had been completed, many of the orcs moved on, with those that remained finding work hauling cargo, building rail cars, and maintaining engines. When the orcs heard about the troubles in the capital, many continued to work even as they wanted to contribute to the cause. When they learned of the constructs being shipped out on the *Emperor's Fury*, orc workers tipped off the Drudge Loyalists operating to the south.

A group of **15 orcs** in Foundry work directly with the loyalists, passing on news and rumors. Led by Stinkfist (see below), the orcs confront and attempt to kill any characters they see snooping around and making noise about tracking the missing train.

STINKFIST

Difficulty 25

Size 1 orc

Perception 9 (-1); shadowsight

Defense 13 (brigandine); **Health** 25

Strength 15 (+5), **Agility** 11 (+1), **Intellect** 8 (-2), **Will** 9 (-1)

Speed 12

Rising Fury When Stinkfist takes damage, he makes his next attack roll before the end of the next round with 1 boon.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Melee maul +5 with 1 boon (3d6)

Orcs captured by the player characters might reveal their part in the attack on the locomotive, though they remain loudly loyal to the orc freedom fighters and their cause.

IGOR IRONSON, ENGINEER

Igor Ironson (as dwarf) was a junior engineer on the *Emperor's Fury* who managed to survive the attack on the train by jumping clear. Somehow, he made it back to Foundry and has been laying low, avoiding the orcs for fear that they will finish the job their comrades started. He has a few friends in town, through which the characters can arrange a meeting with the engineer.

Ironson is young, with dark brown skin, black hair, and brown eyes. He has a broken arm in a sling and bruises all over his body. He lost a lot of good friends in the attack, and willingly shares the following information:

- Workers loaded up eight huge crates onto flatbed cars about a week ago, attaching those cars to the Emperor's Fury.
- Each crate contained a man made from metal, easily 25 to 30 feet tall.
- As the train was passing above Mirror Lake, a tremendous explosion took out the rails. The Emperor's Fury spilled over the edge, dragging its cars and cargo into the water below.
- Workers have been dispatched to the crash site to repair the rails.
- There were no other survivors.

HEADED SOUTH

The destruction of the *Emperor's Fury* is a great loss to the Northern Reach, but the engineers of Foundry have not been idle. Two similar engines are already operational, and work progresses on three even more powerful models.

Until the rails can be repaired, no engines can leave Foundry on regular cargo runs. However, if the characters befriend Igor Ironson, he volunteers to run the *Pride of the Dwarfs* to the site of the ambush, though doing so will land the dwarf in trouble with his superiors.

Traveling by train, the characters reach the crash site in three days. They can also reach the site in a week by foot or four days on horseback. Twice each day the characters spend traveling, roll a d20 to see what events transpire.

TRAVEL EVENTS

| d20 | Event |
|-------|---|
| 20 | A friendly cattle drover offers to share news and a meal with the characters. |
| 18-19 | The characters see an animal herd in the distance or a murmuration of starlings in the sky. |
| 14-17 | A sudden fall of rain or snow lasts 1d6 hours. |
| 8-13 | Nothing happens. |
| 4-7 | 1d3 huge monsters approach the characters, looking for food. |
| 2-3 | A minotaur hunting for slaves with 5 wargs spots the characters. |
| 1 | A dragon swoops out of the sky to attack. |

AMBUSH SITE

The destruction along the rail line above Mirror Lake is devastating. The rails have been twisted and warped by



the explosion, with sections melted into slag. The cliff face has broken away and collapsed into the lake 300 feet below, where the train's wreckage can be seen in the water. Recently, 3 drakes arrived to settle on the debris, and are currently picking through the mess to feed on the corpses of the crew.

Handholds along the cliff make it possible to climb down. When the drakes notice the characters, they take to the air and attack, interested in fresher meat.

WRECKAGE

The *Emperor's Fury* rests at the bottom of the lake, its cars piled on top of it to form an island of twisted metal and broken timber. Corpses torn apart by the drakes, bits of clothing, and other rubbish float on the water.

Any investigation of the site shows where something large was pulled from the wreckage. Two flatbed cars have been dragged to the shore, the canvas and ropes that once covered them shredded and scattered to the ground. The tracks of some massive, heavy creature lead off to the east, accompanied by the footprints of a dozen humanoids. The tracks lead toward Crow's Foot, a farming village two miles from the lake. Another set of identical tracks heads off south toward the Drudge Loyalist camp, twelve miles away.

Sometime after the characters reach Mirror Lake, but before the first nightfall, they hear an explosion to the east, followed by a plume of smoke. The orcs and their iron titan are attacking Crow's Foot.

TROGLODYTE CAVES

The drakes aren't the only creatures feeding on the dead. Several dark caves worm into the cliff below the waterline, leading to warrens housing nearly a hundred troglodytes. At night, the troglodytes emerge from the caves to loot the wreckage. If any of the characters camp on the shore near the wreck site, **3d6 troglodytes** (including one with the leader role and one with the veteran role) come out of the water to attack.

CROW'S FOOT

One of dozens of tiny farming communities scattered across the eastern lowlands of the Northern Reach, Crow's Foot appears to be an unremarkable place. However, this entire settlement has fallen under the sway of evil, and its people carry out obscene rites and practices in the Demon Lord's dark name.

Some hundred people live in and around the village, which boasts eighteen buildings. Half of those are mud-brick houses with sod roofs, standing alongside a trader's depot, an abandoned temple of the New God, a public house, a smithy, a leatherworks, and a few other businesses. Wheat and millet fields stretch around the settlement for 2 miles in all directions.

THE ORCS

Crow's Foot is the community nearest to Mirror Lake, and the Drudge Loyalists have chosen it to test out one of their iron titans. If the characters investigate the source of the smoke they saw, they come upon an **iron titan** and **8 orcs** attacking the settlement. The iron titan has already blown up several houses, while the orcs drag people from the wreckage and chop them up with axes.

THE CULTISTS

In response to the attack, a group of **13 cultists** is performing an incantation in a cellar to call forth a **large demon** to protect Crow's Foot. It takes them 10 minutes to complete the incantation. When the demon appears, it focuses on the cultists first, tearing them apart before erupting from the cellar to continue the killing.

DEVELOPMENT

What the characters find in Crow's Foot depends on when they arrive. If they make it to the settlement within 10 minutes of hearing the explosion, they find the orcs and the iron titan as described above. After 10 minutes, the demon breaks free, then emerges from a house 1 minute later to attack the orcs and the iron titan. It then turns its attention toward the player characters.

If the characters don't investigate right away, they arrive to find Crow's Foot utterly ruined, seeing the destruction where the demon has torn apart the iron titan, the orcs, and the villagers alike. At your discretion, the demon might be hidden in the smoking ruins or at large in the countryside, perhaps happening upon the characters later in the adventure.

LOYALIST CAMP

The Drudge Loyalists make their camp south of Mirror Lake in a cliff-side settlement overlooking a river.

River: A fast-flowing river runs from the northeast to the southwest. Shallow within a yard of the shore, it drops to 3 yards deep beyond.

Woods: A thin stand of young cedar trees rises to the south of the path. The orcs have left their second **iron titan** in these woods, with the instruction to attack any creatures approaching the caves except orcs or those under orc escort.

Rope Bridge: A bridge of rope and timber stretches from two wooden posts driven deep into the east riverbank to the caves on the other side. A half-dozen severed human heads hang by their hair from the posts.

THE CAVES

The ceilings in the caves are all as high as a cave is long or wide, whichever is greater. Unless otherwise mentioned, smoky torches leave all areas obscured by shadows. The caves are filthy, featuring floors covered in bones, bits of rotting meat, and discarded equipment. If the characters search any cave, roll a d6. On a roll of 6, they turn up **6d6 silver shillings** and double that number of copper pennies. In addition, roll a d20, with a 20 indicating that the cave holds an enchanted object.

See below for statistics on the orcs and ogres in the caves.

1. COMMON AREA

This central cavern is home to **ogres** serving the Drudge Loyalists and a mustering point for the **orcs**. The ogres share a nest built of rubbish and poorly cured furs. Crude, pornographic pictures drawn in filth cover the walls.

2. GRIMFANG'S LAIR

The orc leader **Grimfang** lives in this chamber, usually with two or more **orcs** taken as his lovers. Thick furs cover the floor and hide a strongbox filled with 100 silver shillings. A bronze brazier filled with incense stands against a wall bearing a crude portrait of King Drudge.

3. COMMON AREA

The other **orcs** of the loyalist pack all live in this foul cave. Numerous fire pits dimple the floor, and the ceiling overhead has been blackened by smoke. Piles of furs, tattered blankets, and other makeshift bedding covers the floor, all of it infested with lice and crawling with flies. The orcs use a narrow cleft in one wall of the cave as a toilet, its sides streaked with filth.

4. LARDER

Seven metal-and-wood cages stand around this cave, with two holding **1d3 goats**, one with **2d6 chickens**, and another

holding a forlorn cow. The remaining cages can be empty or occupied by prisoners as you decide. Grimfang posts 2 orc guards here to keep the other orcs from pinching a snack for themselves.

5. TUNNEL

This tunnel descends deep into the earth, running several miles before it reaches anything of interest. You might connect it to the troglodyte warrens on Mirror Lake, or develop this area for an adventure of your own.

6. CISTERN

Water dripping from cracks in the ceiling forms a pool that fills much of this deep cave. The orcs use the pool as a source of drinking water, but they know to be wary of the 4 oozes lurking at the bottom. They offer prisoners as sacrifices to the oozes to keep them well fed. At the bottom of the cistern, 8 yards down, characters can find numerous bones, bits of metal, a few dozen copper pennies, a rusted sword, and an enchanted object.

THE REBELS

The Drudge Loyalists are a force made up of 40 orcs and 3 ogres, plus bosses Pig and Snout, and their leader Grimfang. At any time, one of the orc bosses, an ogre, and 2d6 + 3 orcs are away from the camp, raiding and pillaging. Half the time (4 to 6 on a roll of d6), Grimfang is gone as well, in the company of 2d6 + 3 orcs and looking for new recruits. Orcs that leave the camp return every 1d3 hours, and a new force departs 1 hour after a previous force returns.

Place the remaining orcs wherever you wish. The Drudge Loyalists are a freakish mob of castoffs and misfits from the Empire. All sport horrific scars and disfigurements, largely from their time spent serving as slaves. The orcs festoon their armor with bizarre trophies, including children's toys, bits of skin, teeth, and colorful rocks.

PIG AND SNOUT

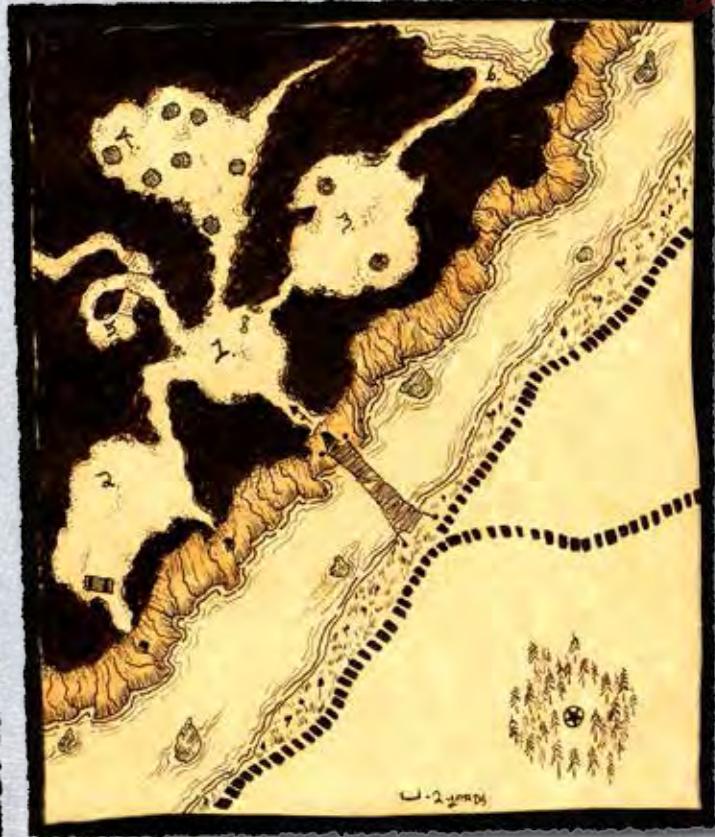
Difficulty 25

*Size 1 orc***Perception** 11 (+1); shadowsight**Defense** 15 (hard leather); **Health** 25**Strength** 15 (+5), **Agility** 13 (+3), **Intellect** 10 (+0), **Will** 11 (+1)**Speed** 12**Rising Fury** When the orc takes damage, it makes its next attack roll before the end of the next round with 1 boon.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Battleaxe (melee) +3 with 2 boons (2d6 + 2)**Spear** (short range) +3 with 1 boon (1d6)

Pig and Snout both fought for the Empire but drifted north after the uprising, hoping to rouse orcs in the provinces to turn against the humans. Big and brutish, Pig has small, beady eyes beneath a pronounced brow. Snout had his nose chopped off a few years ago, and now uses leather straps to hold a beak-like prosthetic on his face.



GRIMFANG

Difficulty 50

*Size 1 orc***Perception** 9 (-1); shadowsight**Defense** 13 (brigandine); **Health** 48**Strength** 14 (+4), **Agility** 12 (+2), **Intellect** 8 (-2), **Will** 9 (-1)**Speed** 12**Rising Fury** When Grimfang takes damage, he makes his next attack roll before the end of the next round with 1 boon.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Greataxe (melee) +3 with 1 boon (4d6, or 6d6 on attack roll 20+)**Rifle** (long range) +2 with 2 boons (4d6, or 6d6 on attack roll 20+)**Combat Expertise** When Grimfang uses an action to attack with a weapon, he either deals 1d6 extra damage with that attack or makes another attack against a different target at any point before the end of his turn.

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Catch your Breath Grimfang can use an action or a triggered action on his turn to heal 12 damage. Once he uses this action, he cannot use it again until after he completes a rest.

Grimfang stands nearly 9 feet tall and weighs 600 pounds. Two tusks jut from his huge lantern jaw, and crude stitching holds together the left side of his face. He hates humans, blaming them for the plight of his people, and attacks human characters without provocation.

PRINCE OF DARKNESS

An adventure for master characters

The world stands on the brink of annihilation when a demon takes possession of a demonologist's ancient stronghold. The demonologist Sunionius Roo is long dead, his soul languishing in Hell and tormented by the devils feeding on his corruption. But somehow, that soul escapes its captors, allowing the demonologist to return to the mortal world in a clockwork body, seeking to make right all that he had done wrong in life.

As the characters are caught up with Roo, they discover that the demonologist's fallen stronghold is being consumed by the spreading darkness of the Void. A powerful demon named Agony of the Rotten Molar is the new master of the demonologist's citadel, having broken free from a group of misguided cultists who sought to bind it. By seizing the dark magic still present in the ruins—a relic known as the *Sword of Unmaking*—

SUNIONIUS ROO

Difficulty 25

Size 1 clockwork

Perception 10 (+0)

Defense 14 (natural, small shield); **Health** 36

Strength 12 (+2), **Agility** 8 (-2), **Intellect** 11 (+1), **Will** 11 (+1)

Speed 8

Immune damage from disease or poison; asleep, diseased, fatigued, poisoned

Key Roo has a key somewhere on its body that it cannot reach. When the key is cranked and turning, the clockwork counts as a creature, becoming an object when the key stops. Its key stops turning when the clockwork becomes incapacitated. It also stops turning at the end of any round in which Roo got a total of 0 or lower on an attack roll or challenge roll.

While it is an object, Roo cannot use actions, move, talk, or perceive its surroundings. Any creature that can reach the clockwork can use an action to wind up the key; if not incapacitated, the clockwork becomes a creature once more.

Grind the Gears Roo can increase the number of actions it can use on its turn by one. When it finishes its turn, roll a d6. On an odd number, the clockwork becomes an object at the end of the round.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Sword (melee) +2 with 1 boon (2d6 + 2)

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Spell Recovery Roo can use an action to heal 9 damage and regain one casting of one of its spells. Once it uses this talent, the clockwork cannot use it again until after it completes a rest.

MAGIC

Power 1

Arcana *arcane armor* (2), *arcane sight* (1), *unerring darts* (1)

Forbidden *harm* (2), *tongue rip* (1)

Necromancy *spectral grasp* (2), *grave grasp* (1), *harvest soul* (1)

the demon has been able to use the people of a nearby town as fuel for a powerful ritual, ripping open a rift to the Void that slowly devours the fortress and everything around it.

The player characters complete this adventure when they destroy the demon or cast the *Sword of Unmaking* into the Void.

SUNIONIUS ROO

A thousand years ago, Sunionius Roo was one of the most infamous men to ever walk the world. A devoted servant of the Demon Lord in the aspect of the Destroyer of Worlds, Roo stained his hands with the blood of sacrifices, sullied his soul with dark magic, and plunged the lands that would become the Northern Reach into darkness. But then at some point, the demonologist realized the true nature of his master, seeking to undo his own dark deeds. For his change of heart, his confederates killed him and his soul tumbled into Hell.

Sunionius Roo is a plain construct made from brass clockwork and plating, with a porcelain face resembling that of a kindly old man. Though the clockwork seeks to avert the world's destruction, its soul remains corrupt and prone to evil actions. Roo gladly betrays the characters if doing so brings it closer to its goals.

Roo knows a great deal about the past, including the lore of its former master. It is sparing in the details it shares, though you can use it to reveal elements you want to introduce about the world.

FURIOUS INTRODUCTIONS

The characters can encounter Roo anywhere you like. When they find the clockwork, it is fleeing from 2 furies that have flown out from Hell to drag Roo's soul back. If the characters help the clockwork, it talks of its mission to stop the demon lord from destroying the world and begs them to fight for it.

If Roo has no chance to interact with the characters because the furies kill him, you can let a character attempt to read the clockwork's programming with an Intellect challenge roll, or allow Roo's tracks to mark a course for the ruins that the characters can follow.

THE BARGHEST

As the characters travel with Roo, they might spot a large black dog following at a distance. This creature is a barghest, sent from Hell to drag the demonologist back when the furies were destroyed. The barghest avoids direct confrontation, running off if attacked and returning to assault the characters when they are vulnerable.

OBLIVION

At the base of the mountain that is the site of Roo's ruined stronghold stands a deserted large town named Oblivion. Agony of the Rotten Molar came here after destroying the cultists who sought to bind it, slaughtered the townsfolk, then returned to the stronghold with their bodies and souls. The town's dozens of buildings show signs of blood and carnage, but only a few corpses can be found. The many farmsteads outside the town are likewise empty, except for occasional farm animals that now wander the countryside in a state of terror.

ON THE EDGE OF DARKNESS

On the slopes of the Iron Peaks stands the ruin of an ancient stronghold—a once-mighty fortress ruled by the demonologist Sunionius Roo long before the Empire's founding. After Roo's death, the stronghold passed through a number of owners, each more corrupt than the previous. The site was abandoned a century ago, and is now little more than an ill-omened curiosity avoided by all.

North of Foundry, the ruins stand halfway up the south side of the Spear—a sheer mountain stabbing up from the western arm of the Iron Peaks. A switchback path of cobbles, weeds, and dirt climbs the lower slopes before straightening to reach the citadel's front wall, and a gate flanked by massive turrets pierced with arrow slits.

INTO THE VOID

When the characters come to the fallen stronghold, they see the results of the demon's ritual as a shadowy, rippling corona surrounding the ruins. The power of the Void has already eroded much of the ruins and the surrounding mountainside, but the rift remains closed until the ritual that spawned it is complete. Unless Agony of the Rotten Molar is slain, the rift will continue to expand, allowing more of the world to slide into the Void before finally being devoured by the End of All Things.

The Void: The edges of the Void appear within the ruins as areas of darkness, torn through by a storm of debris that shrouds wispy beings assuming a fast-changing array of horrible shapes. Every now and then, the characters might catch a glimpse of monstrous forms, giant red eyes swiveling to look upon them, or limbs and tails of incalculable size whipping through the darkness.

Any character who looks upon the Void must get a success on a Will challenge roll with 3 banes or gain 1d6 Insanity. A character who goes mad as a result of gaining this Insanity must use his or her next action to rush toward the edge and leap into the darkness. On a success, the character is immune to this effect for 24 hours.

Any character who enters the Void is immediately pulled 5d20 yards away from the mortal world, and is then torn apart by demonic entities and dies instantly.

THE STRONGHOLD

Each hour that passes from the time the characters reach the stronghold, the Void creeps 2d6 yards closer to the ravine (area 2). When it completely devours the stronghold, the ritual is complete and the Void opens fully. Unless other forces rally to avert this fate (as you decide), the end of the world begins when the stronghold falls.

Unless otherwise mentioned, all locations within the stronghold are dark, and have stone floors, walls, and ceilings covered with magical symbols, glyphs, and profane imagery.

1. APPROACH

The last stretch of path before the ravine is in poor repair, badly pitted and littered with bones and chunks of masonry. The bridge that once crossed the ravine collapsed long ago.

2. RAVINE

The ravine stretches 50 yards across the ground in front of the ruins. It is 10 yards wide at its widest point and drops 20 yards to a rubble-strewn floor. Characters can avoid descending the ravine by moving around it, making Strength challenge rolls to climb the slope before the ruins.

Numerous holes excavated by stone worms dot the walls of the ravine and connect to an extensive network of tunnels and chambers. Each time a character climbs down to the bottom, **1d3 stone worms** come out from the walls to feed, until a total of 20 stone worms have appeared.

A great heap of skulls stands just north of the ravine. If the characters come within short range of the mound, **2d6 animated corpses** tear their way out from the mound and attack.

3. IRON DOORS

Two iron doors stand closed in the stronghold's outer wall. Demonic activity has stirred up a number of genies local to the area, causing them to become violent. Any character with a Perception score of 12 or higher notices writing in High Archaic carved into the wall and traced through the rubble on the ground. The words include "Flee," "Death," and "Hate," among others.

If any attempt is made to open the doors, **2 earth genies** rise up from the ground and **1 wind genie** gathers in the air. All the genies attack to destroy or drive off the characters.

4. HALL OF DARK SUMMONS

The iron doors open onto an enormous room, 20 yards long and 10 yards wide. Staircases climb to collapsed chambers above, while archways lead to adjoining chambers on either side. In the center of the room is a giant pentagram that glows red and leaves the area obscured by shadows. Behind it is a ledge reached by stairs and flanked by two iron braziers filled with smoldering dung. The ledge holds



a pair of iron doors. On the wall flanking the landing is an ornate bas-relief depicting hideous demonic matrons pulling demons from their wombs.

A hulking **horned ogre** guards this chamber to prevent intruders from climbing the stairs to area 7. Any combat here draws the attention of $1d6 + 3$ **tiny demons** that attack anyone beyond the ogre's reach.

5. TOWER OF THE DEAD

Stairs climb up to the northeast turret, whose upper floors and roof collapsed long ago. A huge mound of corpses—six hundred and sixty-six men, women, and children, almost all of them human—stands in the center of the rubble-strewn floor. Each of the bodies of the townsfolk of Oblivion has been mutilated, with eyes gouged from skulls and tongues pulled from mouths. Any character seeing this must get a success on a Will challenge roll or gain 1 Insanity.

Restoring even one of the bodies here to life interrupts the demon's dark ritual (see area 7). However, doing so brings **Agony of the Rotten Molar** (see below for mechanics) shrieking in from area 7 to add the characters to the corpse pile.

6. PIT

The southwest turret is an empty shell, its upper floors and roof long gone. Cracks and fissures spread out from a yawning chasm that drops away into darkness. The floor of

this room collapses under the weight of the second creature to enter here. Any creature in the room at the time must get a success on an Agility challenge roll or fall 2d20 yards into the rocks littering the floor of a deep cave below. From out of the gloom of the cave, **10 ghouls** spring forth to feed on fresh meat.

7. HALL OF UNMAKING

Arched window frames edged with broken bits of stained glass look out upon an expanse of endless darkness. Floating before the windows is an orb of crimson light, in which screaming faces can be seen. Descending staircases drop down through the floor to either side of the orb. Columns constructed of humanoid skeletons in lascivious poses line the walls, and the cracked ceiling shows a monstrous demonic figure whose body is made of innumerable twisted faces.

Agony of the Rotten Molar (see below for mechanics) clings to the ceiling in this chamber, awaiting the Demon Lord's arrival. When the characters enter the room, the demon releases its grip and swoops down to attack. The demon fights until it takes 90 or more damage, after which it attempts to flee and seek refuge elsewhere in the stronghold. Destroying the demon causes the ritual to fail, the orb to disappear, and the sword held within the sphere to fall to the ground.

THE SWORD OF UNMAKING

The crimson sphere is the result of the demon's wicked work, and might be the engine of the world's destruction if the characters cannot undo its magic. Any character inspecting the sphere can see the relic called the *Sword of Unmaking* (see Chapter 9 of *Shadow of the Demon Lord*) suspended at its center, feeding on the souls torn from the bodies in area 5. The energy released by the sword manifests as the roiling sphere of light, whose faces belong to those souls it destroys. Each destroyed soul draws the Void closer, and when the weapon eats the final soul, the Demon Lord will come forth.

In addition to restoring life to one or more of the dead bodies fueling the ritual (see area 5), a character can also disrupt the ritual by reaching into the red light to grasp the blade and drag it out. If the sword is cast into the Void, the

remaining souls fly free and the ritual and its effects end. If Sunionius Roo is with the group, the clockwork attempts this if given the chance.

The blade doesn't want to be taken, however. Any creature that tries to wield the sword must get a success on an Agility challenge roll with 3 banes as the sword attempts to strike it. On a failure, the creature takes 5d6 damage and must make a Strength challenge roll with 3 banes. On a second failure, the creature dies and its soul is devoured, which releases one of the ritual's bound souls. That soul comes forth to confront the characters, explaining that if they rescue any other souls, the ritual will be temporarily interrupted.

AGONY OF THE ROTTEN MOLAR Difficulty 250

Size 3 horrifying demon

Perception 15 (+5); truesight

Defense 19 (natural); **Health** 120

Strength 18 (+8), **Agility** 14 (+4), **Intellect** 13 (+3), **Will** 17 (+7)

Speed 18; flier

Immune damage from disease or poison; gaining Insanity; dazed, fatigued, frightened, immobilized, impaired, poisoned, slowed, stunned

Spell Defense A demon takes half damage from spells and makes any challenge roll to resist a spell with 1 boon. A creature attacking the demon with a spell makes the attack roll with 1 bane.

Demonic Shadows Lit areas out to 4 yards around the demon become shadows.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Natural Weapons (melee) +9 with 3 boons (4d6)

SPECIAL ATTACKS

Frenzied Attack The demon attacks two different targets with its natural weapon, making each attack roll with 1 bane.

MAGIC

Power 3

Destruction *ruin* (4), *rend* (1), *sunder* (1), *entropic power* (2), *erode* (2), *detonate* (3)

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Void Step The demon uses an action or a triggered action on its turn to teleport to a space it can see within medium range. Roll a d6. On a roll of 1, the demon cannot use Void Step again for 1 minute.

END OF THE ROUND

Shed Void Larvae The demon sheds white worms that transform into **1d6 - 2 void larvae** (minimum 0) and appear in open spaces within its reach. The void larvae

remain until destroyed.

Agony of the Rotten Molar stands 18 feet tall and weighs 2,000 pounds. Rotting teeth spout from the twisted faces that cover every inch of the demon's body, with each face sporting foul-smelling holes crawling with white worms. Any worm that falls from its body becomes a **void larva**.

8. HAUNTED PASSAGE

Characters moving down this passage hear faint whispers coming from the walls. Where the Void intrudes on the passage, characters seeking to continue on must leap from the floor to the floating rocks. Each leap requires a successful Agility challenge roll. Failure causes the character to tumble into the Void.

9. DAMNED APOSTLES

The restless spirits of the fortress linger here as **8 phantoms** whose voices can be heard through the walls. The phantoms manifest and attack when any character comes into this area.

Characters searching these chambers turn up 3d6 gold crowns, 5d20 silver shillings, and two enchanted objects.

10. SHADOWS OF THE VOID

Shattered fragments of the walls that once bounded this room can be seen floating in the Void. Each time the characters enter this area, roll a d6. On a roll of 1 or 2, **1d6 shadows** enter the area from the Void.

11. VAULT

A locked iron door with no keyhole bars the way to this room. The door opens only if it is splashed with blood drawn from an unwilling victim, and in enough quantity that the victim takes damage equal to its Health. (Death need not be the result, but the creature must come close to death.)

Opening the door reveals a vault filled with an assortment of paintings, statuettes, rugs, jewels, and unidentifiable relics worth a total of 100 gold crowns. Searching the room also turns up 3 enchanted objects.

12. FALSE VAULT

This door is identical to the door to area 11 and opens in the same way, but the room is empty. The first character to enter the room is teleported 5d20 miles away in a randomly determined direction, after which the door closes.

the end is near

An adventure for master characters

Years of planning and countless sacrifices bring the Brotherhood of Shadows to the brink of success, ready to bring the Eternal Darkness screaming into this world and ushering in a new and final age. One last incantation and the end of days begins. However, the world will not go quiet into the endless night, as the characters undertake a final heroic effort to uncover and destroy the cult.

The player characters complete this adventure when they kill the cult master Katandramus, recover the *Eye of the Demon Lord*, and save the world.

DARK PLOTS

The Brotherhood of Shadows has been an insidious presence in Crossings for years. In recent months, Elder Fobb (who sits on the city council) vied for control of the cult with the newcomer Katandramus. But with the acquisition of the *Eye of the Demon Lord*, Katandramus emerged the victor.



KATANDRAMUS

Difficulty 100

Size 1 frightening human

Perception 14 (+4); darksight

Defense 11; **Health** 66; **Corruption** 10; **Insanity** 6

Strength 10 (+0), **Agility** 11 (+1), **Intellect** 14 (+4), **Will** 12 (+2)
Speed 10

Wielder of the Eye (with the *Eye of the Demon Lord*)

Katandramus gains 1 boon on attack rolls made when casting an attack spell, and imposes 1 bane on challenge rolls made to resist spells he casts.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Sacrificial Knife (melee) +1 (1d6)

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Counterspell When a creature Katandramus can see attacks him with a spell, Katandramus can use a triggered action to counter it. The triggering creature makes the attack roll with 1 bane and Katandramus makes the challenge roll to resist it with 1 boon.

Invoke the Demon Lord (with the *Eye of the Demon Lord*)

Katandramus causes a pulse of crackling red energy to spread out in an 8-yard radius centered on a point he can reach. Each creature in the area other than Katandramus must make a Will challenge roll. A creature takes 9d6 damage and becomes dazed and impaired for 1 minute on a failure, or just takes half the damage on a success.

Improved Spell Recovery Katandramus can use an action to heal 16 damage and regain two castings of spells he has expended. Once he uses this action, Katandramus cannot do so again until after he completes a rest.

MAGIC

Power 5 (6 with the *Eye of the Demon Lord*)

Conjuration conjure useful item (6), conjure small monster (3), conjure steeds (2), conjure large monster (2), conjure huge monster (1)

Fire (with the *Eye of the Demon Lord*) fire blast (3), fireball (2), bind flame genie (1)

Forbidden harm (6), obedience (3), ravenous maggots (2), part bone from flesh (2)

Protection secure site (6), force field (3), evade (3), protection from spells (2)

Teleportation fetch (6), division (3), remove (2), portals (2), travel (1)

Corruption has twisted Katandramus into a monster. Sores cover his hairless body, whose mottled skin weeps at any touch. His eyes are rings of fire that burn inside sunken sockets, and his teeth have become blackened nubs. Thoroughly mad, he believes that the Demon Lord will transform him into an immortal demon for his service.

Katandramus leads a force of 18 dark brothers, each bearing scars, tattoos, and piercings as signs of their devotion.

DARK BROTHER

Difficulty 25

Size 1 human

Perception 12 (+2)

Defense 17 (mail, large shield); **Health** 25

Strength 13 (+3), **Agility** 12 (+2), **Intellect** 11 (+1), **Will** 10 (+0)

Speed 10

Mad Certainty When a cultist makes a challenge roll or an attack roll, it can make the roll with 1 boon. On a failure, the cultist takes 1d6 damage.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Sword (melee) +3 with 1 boon (2d6 + 2)

Since gaining the *Eye of the Demon Lord*, Katandramus has directed his cultists to gather the ingredients and knowledge required to complete an incantation revealed by the artifact. In two days, he will be ready to perform the incantation atop the tower known as Wizard's Peak, harnessing the magical energy within Crossings' faerie spires to bore a hole to the Void in the sky above the city.

THE LADY OF SIGHS AND SORROWS

Centuries ago, a demonologist named Moore slipped into the tower of the vampire Lucretia and stole from her a prized treasure—the *Eye of the Demon Lord*. Fearing her wrath, the demonologist sealed the artifact inside a warded vault under his home in Crossings, leaving the vampire to scour the world for the eye in vain. When it was freed from the vault (see Chapter 2), Lucretia's magic finally located the artifact, and she dispatched agents to recover it. When they failed, she came to Crossings to recover the eye herself.

LUCRETIA

Difficulty 250

Size 1 horrifying undead (vampire)

Perception 16 (+6); darksight

Defense 20; **Health** 100

Strength 14 (+4), **Agility** 15 (+5), **Intellect** 14 (+4), **Will** 16 (+6)

Speed 14

Immune damage from cold, disease, poison; gaining Insanity; asleep, diseased, fatigued, immobilized, poisoned, slowed

Resilience Lucretia takes half damage from weapons.

Celestial Vulnerability Lucretia takes double damage from Celestial spells and makes challenge rolls to resist Celestial spells with 1 bane.

Fear of the Gods Lucretia makes attack rolls with 1 bane against a creature wearing or wielding a holy symbol.

Pass for Human Lucretia appears human until she takes damage or makes an attack roll, at which point her features contort to assume a monstrous appearance. She retains this appearance until she uses an action to resume her human appearance. While she appears human, Lucretia loses her horrifying trait.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Claws (melee) +5 with 3 boons (2d6 plus the target is grabbed on attack roll 20+)

Fangs (melee) +5 with 1 boon (3d6)

SPECIAL ATTACKS

Double Attack Lucretia attacks twice with her claws.

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Blood Drain Lucretia makes a Strength attack roll against the Strength of one target living creature of flesh and blood that she is grabbing. On a success, the target takes



3d6 damage and becomes fatigued until it completes a rest. Lucretia heals the same amount of damage. If the target is already fatigued this way, it must make a Will challenge roll. On a failure, it instead becomes charmed until it completes a rest.

Flowing Mist When Lucretia takes damage, she can use a triggered action to turn her body into mist, fly up to her Speed, and then resume her normal form. While in mist form, she is immune to all damage, her movement does not trigger free attacks, and she can move through openings wide enough to permit the passage of air and through spaces occupied by other creatures.

MAGIC

Power 4

Divination eavesdrop (5), augur (2), locate (1)

Shadow nightfall blade (5), darkness (2), shadow stride (2), black bolts of the Underworld (3), dark portals (4)

END OF THE ROUND

Burned by Sunlight Lucretia takes 2d6 damage if she is in an area lit by sunlight.

Lucretia appears to be a human woman with long red hair, pale skin, and red eyes. She wears a black gown of lace and satin and keeps her hair piled on her head with long pins bearing skull handles.

A group of **12 hoods** came to the city before Lucretia to prepare the abandoned temple described in **Chapter 5** for her arrival. She also has **24 ghouls** in her employ. When Lucretia's efforts to locate the *Eye of the Demon Lord* using her magic are frustrated by the city's size, she turns her attention to the leaders of Crossings—killing the mayor, Katrin Edgerton, and leaving a demand for the return of the eye. Her plan is to kill one member of the council each day until the eye is in her hands.

THE DEAD MAYOR

The adventure begins when the characters are called to investigate the mayor's murder, whether through one of the group's contacts or based solely on the characters' reputation. The crime occurred inside the mayor's residence in Gavel (see **Chapter 1**)—a fine two-story house whose main floor is used for conducting business, with the upper floor used for living quarters. Investigating the residence might turn up some or all of the following clues.

- Four guards in the residence were found dead, all of them torn apart and one drained of blood.
- A fifth guard assigned to the house remains missing—a young man named Lawrence who joined the mayor's guard detail a month ago.
- Father Paulus discovered the crime, having been summoned to the mayor's office for a late-night meeting. The priest is uncertain what was to be discussed, though he secretly fears the mayor had discovered his dirty secret (see **Chapter 2**).
- Katrin's remains are still in her office, but all that remains of her is her spine, a few fingers, and her head. The first character to see the remains must get a success on a Will challenge roll or gain **1 Insanity**.
- The office window is shattered, and bits of broken glass litter the floor. Painted in blood on the wall is a message “Return the Eye!”
- On Katrin's desk, a blood-soaked notebook is open to a page holding two names, Katandramus and Fobb. The mayor has been pursuing rumors of the Brotherhood of Shadows for months, and noted the names of the suspected cult leaders.

THE INVESTIGATION

The characters can pursue leads found in the mayor's residence as they choose, with possible avenues for investigation described below. The characters have two days before Katandramus completes the incantation. At midnight on the second day, jump ahead to “Hole in the Sky.”

THE MISSING GUARD

If the characters ask the mayor's staff about the missing guard, they learn that Lawrence lived above the Liquid Smoke tavern (see **Chapter 1**), not far from the mayor's residence. If the characters make inquiries there, they find the guard in the taproom, drinking to forget the horrors he's witnessed.

Lawrence is young and dark skinned, with black hair and kind eyes. He tells the characters, “I heard a commotion from the mayor's office. I went to investigate and saw darkness shaped like a woman grip the mayor by the neck, demanding something called ‘the eye.’ I'm ashamed to say I ran back downstairs, but I saw horrid, naked men ripping apart the other guards and eating them. I ran out the front door and have been here ever since.”

RUMORS

The characters can gather rumors about current events to gain potential insight into what's going on. A number of different rumors can be uncovered in the various districts of the city.

COINS

A train of windowless black carriages came through the Old Arch a couple of days ago, then headed toward Purse.

GAVEL

Strange dwarfs wearing hooded cloaks have been seen skulking the streets the last few nights. Characters following up on this rumor might encounter **1d6 + 1 hoods** in search of the eye.

GRIEVINGS

Bats of unusual size and aggression have been attacking by night, and people are afraid to go out after dark. The vampire's presence has attracted **2d6 vampire bats**. Characters in Grevings at night might encounter **1d6** of them at a time.

OLD TOWN

Someone has been plundering the graves in the Boneyard again. Characters following up on this lead encounter **2d6 ghouls** working for the vampire that come to the graveyard to feed. If any of the ghouls are captured, they might reveal what the vampire is after or where she's lurking.

PURSE

A half-dozen children have gone missing in recent days, all of them living within blocks of the ruined Katandramus House. Locals whisper about the evil said to dwell there, but the Brown Cloaks ignore them. If the characters follow up on this lead, go to “The Vampire's Lair.”

If the characters are in Purse on the second day, locals report hearing explosions coming from Wizard's Peak. If the characters follow up on this rumor, proceed with "Wizard's Peak."

MORE MURDERS

Each night after the mayor's death, a member of the council dies, as determined on the following table. (Reroll if the indicated councillor is already dead.) If the characters are with the indicated councillor that night, they encounter Lucretia and a pack of $1d6$ ghouls. Characters who talk to the vampire learn what she seeks. If they convince her that they can find the *Eye of the Demon Lord* for her, she agrees to stop the killing for one day.

DEAD COUNCILLORS

| d6 | Councillor |
|----|----------------|
| 1 | Elder Fobb |
| 2 | Father Paulus |
| 3 | Commander Rena |
| 4 | Ezekia |
| 5 | Master Dreen |
| 6 | Ambrose Quick |

Each new crime scene is similar to that seen in the mayor's office, complete with bloody message. Introduce additional clues and witnesses to direct the characters to the vampire as you choose.

ELDER FOBB

When the upstart Katandramus replaced him, Elder Fobb vowed to see his rival destroyed. However, when a member of the council is killed (and assuming Fobb is not that victim), the halfling decides it's time to cut his losses. It takes a day for Fobb to get his affairs in order, and he disappears from Crossings the evening of the second day.

If the characters get to him before he leaves, Fobb drops his pretense of absentmindedness and reveals his true power. He casts an idol to the ground to release $1d6$ small demons, then fights to the death if the characters prevent his escape.

THE VAMPIRE'S LAIR

Lucretia uses the now-abandoned temple underneath Katandramus house (see Chapter 5) as her lair. In addition to the vampire, **6 hoods** and **6 ghouls** are here at all times, placed as you choose. Alongside the vampire's forces, area 9 still contains a living tar in the well. Additionally, when the characters enter any area of the temple, roll a d6. On a roll of 1, that area is haunted by **1d6 phantoms**.

During the day, Lucretia sleeps in a coffin the hoods have placed in area 12. By night, she scours the city for the missing artifact. If the characters storm the lair while the vampire is there, she fights to destroy them. If she takes 70



or more damage, Lucretia uses Flowing Mist and flees the temple. She then takes revenge against the characters by killing their loved ones and allies in the city, doing her best to make the characters' lives unbearable.

If the characters peacefully engage the vampire in her lair, Lucretia deals with them if they show her proper respect. She warns the characters of the destructive power the *Eye of the Demon Lord* might have in mortal hands, and vows to leave Crossings once the artifact is returned to her for safekeeping.

WIZARD'S PEAK

The tower known as Wizard's Peak was constructed by its master Caribdus to bolster his own magical abilities. A place of power, the site is the key to performing the incantation revealed by the *Eye of the Demon Lord*. It takes two days for the cultists to overcome the magical traps of Wizard's Peak, dispatch its guardians, and slay Caribdus, after which Katandramus gives the order for his cultists to gather and prepare for the Demon Lord's arrival.

Wizard's Peak is larger on the inside than it appears, with numerous portals connecting different areas protected by magic. With Caribdus dead, that magic shuts down access to the tower's pocket dimensions, so that it resembles a single empty room with a staircase leading up the wall. At the top of the stairs, an observatory features a large telescope surrounded by well-stocked bookshelves.

If the characters come to the tower before Katandramus finishes the incantation, the cult leader is in the observatory, having stationed **6 dark brothers** and **4 medium demons** in the chamber below. Katandramus abandons the incantation and joins the fight if the demons are destroyed, bringing the *Eye of the Demon Lord* with him.

If the characters assault the tower after the events described under "Hole in the Sky" begin, the vampire Lucretia, **1d6 hoods**, and **1d6 ghouls** join the fight, attacking the characters and the cultists.

HOLE IN THE SKY

This final scene occurs only if the characters fail to recover the *Eye of the Demon Lord* from the Brotherhood of Shadows.

At midnight on the third day, the following events occur, proceeding until the characters kill Katandramus or until you reach the final event.

12:00 AM

A deafening noise sounds out from above Crossings, shattering all glass within the city. Any character in the city

must get a success on a Strength challenge roll or become deafened. This affliction is permanent until removed by magic.

A crimson light then appears around Wizard's Peak until the incantation is ended or completed.

12:06 AM

The six faerie spires across the city emit a white-hot light that turns night to day. Any object or creature within 50 yards of a spire takes damage equal to its Health and turns to ash. Any creature that can see one or more of the towers when the light first appears must get a success on a Strength challenge roll or become blinded. This affliction is permanent until removed by magic.

12:12 AM

Each blazing spire looses a ribbon of light that drifts toward a point in the sky 600 yards above the city. When the ribbons meet, they form an undulating mass of vibrant color.

12:18 AM

A blot of darkness appears in the center of the colorful mass, heralding the arrival of the Void. Anyone looking at the darkness can see a massive, baleful red eye peering out from within, and must make a Will challenge roll with 3 banes. On a failure, the creature gains 2d6 Insanity.

12:24 AM

From out of the widening darkness, **1d6 tiny demons** with the flier trait descend on Crossings and attack any creatures they encounter.

12:30 AM

Following the first demons, **2d6 small demons** with the flier trait join the assault.

12:36 AM

A group of **3d6 medium demons** with the flier trait emerge from the Void.

12:42 AM

A group of **3d6 large demons** with the flier trait come forth.

12:48 AND 12:54 AM

Another **3d6 tiny demons**, **small demons**, **medium demons**, or **large demons** (all with the flyer trait) join the others.

1:00 AM

The Demon Lord emerges from the Void and begins to devour the world. The End.

New Creatures

Most of the creatures that appear in this book are detailed in *Shadow of the Demon Lord*. Creatures new to these adventures are described here. For guidelines on how to use the mechanics for creatures, see Chapter 10: Bestiary in *Shadow of the Demon Lord*.

CARTUL DRONE

Difficulty 1

Size 1/2 monster

Perception 10 (+0); darksight
Defense 17 (natural); **Health** 5
Strength 11 (+1), **Agility** 11 (+1), **Intellect** 5 (-5), **Will** 10 (+0)
Speed 14; climber, Tunnel

ATTACK OPTIONS

Mandibles (melee) +1 (1d6 + 1)

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Tunnel The cartul moves up to its Speed through earth, sand, or other material of similar consistency. It leaves a 1-foot-diameter tunnel behind it.

END OF THE ROUND

Fall Back If the cartul drone is able to move, it moves 1d6 yards (up to its Speed) in a randomly determined direction.

The insectoid cartuls dwell deep underground, excavating miles of tunnels, gathering food for their colony, and fortifying their nests to protect their young. Much of a colony's work falls to the cartul drones—short, humanoid-shaped cockroaches that creep and crawl through the gloom. They communicate simple ideas such as food, danger, and safety through excretions from their sphincters.

CARTUL INCANTER

Difficulty 25

Size 1 frightening monster

Perception 19 (+9); darksight
Defense 19 (natural); **Health** 30
Strength 11 (+1), **Agility** 12 (+2), **Intellect** 14 (+4), **Will** 11 (+1)
Speed 14; climber, flier

ATTACK OPTIONS

Mandible (melee) +2 with 1 boon (1d6 + 1)

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Pheromones The incanter uses an action or a triggered action on its turn to squirt juices from its sphincter at a point within short range of it. The air within 3 yards of the point is filled with pheromones that last until the end of the next round. While the pheromones are active, each cartul creature in the area makes attack rolls and challenge rolls with 1 boon. Once the incanter uses its pheromones, it must wait 1 minute before it can use this action again.

MAGIC

Power 2

Destruction ruin (3), dissolve (2), erode (1)

Protection secure site (3), force field (1)

One in a thousand cartul eggs hatches to become an incanter, one of the colony's highly intelligent, magic-using protectors. Incanters resemble other cartuls except for their metallic green carapaces and the wings that speed them through a colony. Incanters lead the colony on the queen's behalf.

CARTUL SOLDIER

Difficulty 25

Size 1 monster

Perception 15 (+5); darksight
Defense 18 (natural); **Health** 25
Strength 13 (+3), **Agility** 11 (+1), **Intellect** 10 (+0), **Will** 12 (+2)
Speed 14; climber

ATTACK OPTIONS

Mandibles (melee) +3 with 1 boon (2d6 plus Sting on attack roll 20+)

Sting The target must make an Agility challenge roll with 1 bane. On a failure, the target takes 1d6 extra damage and becomes poisoned for 1 minute. If already poisoned, the target takes 1d6 extra damage.

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Guard the Colony When a cartul creature within short range of the soldier takes damage, the soldier can use a triggered action to move up to half its Speed toward the triggering creature.



New creatures

Cartul soldiers watch over the working drones and guard the entrances to a colony against predators. One in every twenty cartuls is a soldier. They resemble other cartuls but are larger and have stingers extending from their abdomens.

CARTUL QUEEN

Difficulty 100

Size 8 horrifying monster

Perception 20 (+10); sightless

Defense 8 (natural); **Health** 150

Strength 15 (+5), **Agility** 1 (-9), **Intellect** 15 (+5), **Will** 14 (+4)

Speed 1

Immune gaining Insanity; blinded

Death Cry If the cartul queen dies, each cartul creature within 1 mile of it becomes stunned until the end of the next round, and is dazed for 1d6 days thereafter.

SPECIAL ATTACKS

Corrosive Pheromones The cartul queen sprays corrosive pheromones in a 6-yard-long cone originating from a point it can reach. Everything in the area takes 3d6 + 10 damage. Each creature in the area must make an Agility challenge roll, taking half the damage on a success. Until the end of the next round, whenever a cartul creature attacks any creature that took damage from this attack, the cartul creature makes the attack roll with 1 boon.

MAGIC

Power 3

Destruction *ruin* (4), *dissolve* (2), *rend* (2), *erode* (1), *evaporate* (1)

Song *song of courage* (2), *song of valor* (2), *song of dread* (1)

All cartul are ruled by a queen—a massive, bloated monstrosity that reclines in a heap of her own excretions at the center of the colony. The queen has a beautiful humanoid face set atop a 10-yard-long, 6-yard-wide body resembling a maggot, and which weighs 2,000 pounds. The queen communicates her wishes by squirting pheromones from her sphincter to drench her attendant drones, which then carry her scent throughout the rest of the lair. Like her incanters, a cartul queen wields magical power used to protect the colony.

IRON TITAN

Difficulty 100

Size 5 construct

Perception 10 (+0); darksight

Defense 15 (natural); **Health** 120

Strength 17 (+7), **Agility** 10 (+0), **Intellect** 8 (-2), **Will** 14 (+4)

Speed 8

Immune damage from disease or poison; gaining Insanity; asleep, charmed, diseased, fatigued, frightened, poisoned

Explosive Death When an iron titan becomes incapacitated, it dies instantly and explodes. The blast extends into a 20-yard-radius sphere centered on a point within its former space. Everything in the area takes 6d6 damage. Each creature in the area must make an Agility challenge roll, taking half the damage on a success.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Fist (melee) +7 (3d6)

Arm Cannon (long range) +0 with 2 boons (3d6). If the total of the attack roll is 0 or less, the arm cannon

becomes jammed until the iron titan uses an action to clear it.

SPECIAL ATTACKS

Double Attack The iron titan attacks with its fist and its arm cannon.

Flamethrower A nozzle in the iron titan's chest sprays flames in a 10-yard-long cone from a point it can reach. Everything in the area takes 6d6 damage. Each creature in the area must make an Agility challenge roll, taking half the damage on a success. Once the iron titan uses its flamethrower, it cannot use it again until after the end of the next round.

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Self-Repair The iron titan uses an action or a triggered action on its turn to heal 30 damage. Once the iron titan uses this action, it must wait 1 hour before it can use it again.

An iron titan is a 25-foot-tall giant made from metal. Its chest features a nozzle from which a tongue of flame constantly burns, while its left arm ends in a massive gun fed by a belt of ammunition stored in a shoulder compartment. The titan possesses dim intelligence from the soul bound to its metallic body.

MOB OF ANIMATED CORPSES

Difficulty 25

Size 3 frightening undead

Perception 5 (-5); shadowsight

Defense 8; **Health** 40

Strength 10 (+0), **Agility** 8 (-2), **Intellect** —, **Will** 15 (+5)

Speed 6

Immune damage from cold, disease, or poison; gaining Insanity; asleep, blinded, charmed, dazed, deafened, diseased, fatigued, frightened, poisoned, stunned

Mob A mob takes half damage from attacks that target individual creatures and double damage from attacks that affect an area. The mob acts as a single creature, but it counts as ten creatures for the purpose of choosing targets. A mob makes Strength, Intellect, and Will challenge rolls with 1 boon.

Creatures can move through a mob's space, but they treat the area as difficult terrain. The mob can squeeze through openings large enough to permit the passage of an individual member and can move through spaces occupied by other creatures.

Spawn When the mob becomes incapacitated, it dissipates and **1d6 animated corpses** appear in open spaces within the space it formerly occupied. They can take the next available turn.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Fist (melee) +0 with 2 boons (1d6 + 1, plus 2d6 extra damage if the mob is not injured)

END OF THE ROUND

Overwhelm If the mob is not injured, each creature that isn't a swarm or a mob that is in the mob's space or within 1 yard of it must make an Agility challenge roll. On a failure, the creature takes 2d6 damage.

Great shuffling bands of animated corpses, these mobs lurch toward the living to smash and tear with their rotting claws.