

effects of a pool, a creature must completely submerge itself in its liquid. The pools and the double door radiate transmutation to a *detect magic* spell or similar effect.

Double Doors. The lock on the double doors opens with a key granted by passing the trials of the pools (see below). If the characters have that key, they can open the doors without consequences.

Opening the lock without the key requires a successful DC 17 Dexterity check using thieves' tools. Any unsuccessful attempt to pick the lock triggers a trap (see below). The door cannot be broken down or otherwise smashed, and attempting to do so triggers the trap.

A successful DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check allows a character to spot faint runes etched among the ornate carvings on the lock. A subsequent DC 16 Intelligence (Arcana) check to study the runes reveals that they can emit a wave of transmutation magic throughout the room.

Blue Pool. A character fully submerged in the blue pool must make a DC 10 Charisma saving throw as images of horror overwhelm their mind. On a failure, the character has visions of terrible calamities such as rotting flesh, crumbling edifices, and political speeches. This trauma imposes disadvantage on initiative rolls. On a successful save, these visions put the character on edge, granting advantage on initiative rolls. Either effect lasts until the end of the character's next long rest.

Green Pool. A character fully submerged in this pool must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw as poison courses into their body. On a failure, the character takes 5 (1d10) poison damage and gains vulnerability to poison damage. On a successful save, the character takes no damage and gains resistance to poison damage. Either effect lasts until the end of the character's next long rest.

Clear Pool. A character fully submerged in this pool must make a DC 10 Intelligence saving throw as the infinite possibilities of the multiverse seep into their brain. On a failure, overwhelming theoretical possibilities impose one level of exhaustion on the character. On a successful save, the character gains a clarity of mind that grants advantage on Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma checks and saving throws. Either effect lasts until the end of the character's next long rest.

Cloudy Pool. A character fully submerged in this pool must make a DC 10 Wisdom check to endure the intense itching caused by the acid that fills it. On a failure, the character takes 5 (1d10) acid damage and gains vulnerability to acid damage. On a successful save, the character takes no damage and gains resistance to acid damage. Either effect lasts until the end of the character's next long rest.

Entropy's Parting Gift. If the same character is submerged in all four pools, that character receives the blessing of That-Which-Endures. This blessing comes in handy later in area 7.

Key. To make the key appear, one or more characters must enter all four pools, whether the outcome is good or bad. When a character is submerged in the last pool, a silver key studded with polished red garnets appears in midair in the center of the room.

Door Trap. Any creature in the room when the trap on the double doors triggers must make a DC 10

RESTING

No pressing matters force the characters to complete their investigation quickly. This episode is for 1st-level adventurers, and the characters are at their most vulnerable at this level. As such, it's important to allow them to take rests. However, if the players become overly cautious and attempt to take a long rest after every encounter, have wandering monsters interrupt their attempts to sleep. Any low-challenge cavern-dwelling beasts are perfect for prodding the adventurers along.

Constitution saving throw. On a failure, a creature is transformed into a **poisonous snake** for 1d4 rounds, as if affected by the *polymorph* spell. The snakes are compelled to attack any other creatures in the room.

Treasure. In addition to opening the door, the key is worth 25 gp.

3. TRAPS

This part of the underground complex contains a number of traps installed by the previous occupants. The traps were set up to scare people away rather than kill them. Mostly.

When the characters enter this area, read:

As the passage runs east, it widens to thirty feet for the next ninety feet. At the far end of the area, the chamber narrows to ten feet again, with an ornate double door sealing it off.

Four different traps protect this room, with each of their areas of effect marked on the map. The magic of traps A and C can be dispelled, or can be suppressed for 1 minute with a successful DC 10 Intelligence (Arcana) check.

Trap A. With a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check, a character notices that the floor in this area shows signs of charring that obscures faint runes. A weak fire trap triggers if any creature enters the area, which radiates evocation to a *detect magic* spell or similar effect. Each creature in the area when the trap triggers takes 2 (1d4) fire damage.

Trap B. This pit trap triggers when weight is put on it. Locating the trap requires a successful DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Perception) check, but the check is made with disadvantage unless the creature making it is within 5 feet of the trap. When the pit opens, the triggering creature drops into a 10-foot-deep pit and takes 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage. The lid remains open, and the pit begins filling with water flowing up from grates in the floor—along with small, glowing blue fish. These are harmless glowing cave fish, but it takes a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Nature) or Wisdom (Survival) check to recognize that. The fish immediately start to bite any exposed skin of a creature in the water, but the result is only healthful exfoliation.

With a successful DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check, a character can climb the rough walls of the pit, or can stay floating while the pit fills and eventually clamber out.