

BEGINNER BOX BASH: RELICS

By JOHN COMPTON & MARK GARRINGER



RUNNING THIS DEMO

Beginner Box Bash: Relics is a *Pathfinder RPG Beginner Box* demo adventure for 4–6 *Beginner Box* characters of 1st level. It is meant to be run as part of the *Beginner Box Bash* special event, but can be run as a stand-alone demo of the game at other events as well. Players are encouraged to use the provided pregenerated characters, but may create their own 1st-level player characters

if time permits at your event. Aside from the map, everything you need to run this demo can be found in the *Pathfinder RPG Beginner Box*.

Running Time: 45 minutes–1 hour

Map: *GameMastery Map Pack: Dungeon Sites* (PZO4030)

Pawns: 1 × human cleric, 2 × human fighters, 1 pawn per PC

Hundreds of years ago, select priests of Aroden carried ornate ceremonial scepters known as *shepherd's crosiers*. These signs of authority granted the high-ranking clergy diplomatic immunity even during the civil wars that tore across southern Avistan. One such scepter is rumored to lie in an ancestral vault near Sandpoint, and the family who owns the vault has fallen on hard times.

SUMMARY

Eberius Tauranor calls in a team of fledgling mercenaries to Sandpoint to “help” an ailing business contact and relieve him of his family’s *shepherd's crosier*. In order to retrieve the relic, the PCs must first survive or bypass a complex trap involving a series of collapsing columns. On the far side of the trap floor, they may search the ceremonial statues located

there to discover the hidden cache beneath and retrieve the *shepherd's crosier* they seek. As the PCs attempt to leave the chamber, however, the Bloody Knuckles gang ambush the PCs to snatch the relic for themselves.

GETTING STARTED

Read the following to get the adventure underway:

"Ah, so you're finally here," grumbles Eberius Tauranor as you pile into a private dining room. As the caked mud from your boots peels and flecks off, it disappears into the intricate pattern of the plush carpet in the private dining room. A pale reflection of the impatience that flashes across Eberius' bloodshot eyes sparkles in the light from the common room as you close the door behind yourselves. Although you are winded from your hasty preparations at his request to see you immediately, Eberius gives you almost no time to rest before giving you the lowdown.

"A business contact of mine has recently fallen on hard times, but he can't risk letting his rivals perceive his weakness. I offered him my assistance, and since then he has been... all too eager to try and pay back the favor with a single item from his collection. A few hundred years ago, one of his ancestors rose rather high in the hierarchy of Aroden—high enough to be granted a *shepherd's crosier*, a two-foot-long mithral rod covered in gold leaf and gems. My contact may not even be aware that he possesses such a treasure, and I'd rather you not jog his memory. Since we have so graciously been granted this opportunity to explore his family's property, I want you to recover that scepter.

"Do this," he purrs, pulling out a small sack that jangles as it lands on the table, "and I'll see you get your just rewards. Just be mindful of the Bloody Knuckles; I understand several just arrived in town, and we can't risk them sniffing out our find." Pulling out a crumpled note, he tosses it across the table. "This map will show you how to reach the vault. From there, you're on your own."

The PCs have no difficulty traversing Sandpoint's busy streets, reaching the edge of town, and traveling to the nearby estate. Once there, they enter the ill-maintained mausoleum and pass chamber upon chamber of crypts and memorials before coming across a secret door indicated on Eberius's map. As the PCs descend a narrow stairway, they enter the secret chamber rumored to hold the *shepherd's crosier*.

THE RUNE-COLUMN FLOOR

Magical, flameless torches illuminate this massive stone chamber, which features a strange series of columns rising from a deep chasm in the room's center. The top of each column is flush with the surface of the floor and features an arcane rune. At the far end of the room stand two stone thrones on a raised dais. On the wall behind the left throne is a relief of a king signing a document

while speaking to a crowd of featureless faces. Behind the right throne is a relief of a thief who holds a knife to a featureless man's throat while picking the pocket of a nearby woman.

Trap: The 20-foot-by-40-foot pit in the center of the room is 40 feet deep. The 25 rune-topped columns arranged in the pit are level with the floor, allowing the PCs to walk across with a DC 5 Acrobatics check. Each time a rune column is stepped on, the rune changes color. All runes begin inactive, but when a character steps on a rune it begins to glow. The runes first glow bright yellow, and change color each subsequent time they are stepped on, moving from yellow to orange, to deep crimson on the third activation. When a column turns crimson, the entire pillar drops 20 feet straight down, shuddering the entire fall. A character standing on a crimson column can attempt a DC 15 Reflex save to jump to safety before the pillar begins descending. If the character is unable to jump to safety, he must make an additional DC 15 Reflex save to avoid falling off the column when it suddenly stops after its rapid descent. Failing the save means the character falls into the pit below, taking 2d6 points of damage. The rune stops glowing after a column falls and all columns return to their unlit, raised state after 1 hour.

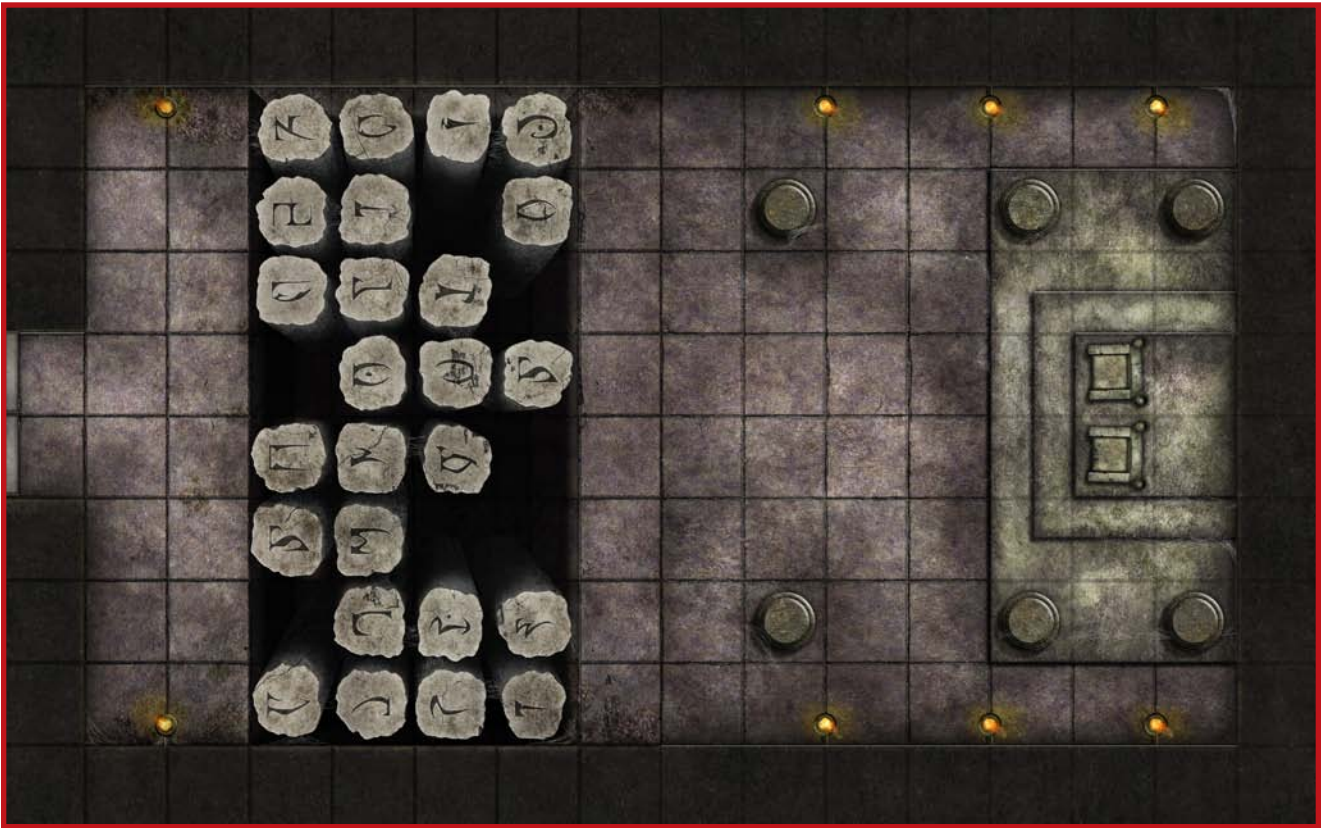
ANCIENT THRONES

At the far end of the room sit two dust-covered stone thrones, and ancient Azlanti words are carved into the stone walls. Many holes and gaps exist in suspicious places, but none bear traps. A successful DC 15 Perception check allows a PC to notice that the thrones can be lifted up (DC 20 Strength check), revealing hidden caches underneath. Religious scholars might note that one of the relief carvings does not depict an aspect of Aroden—a point that might help them identify which scepter is fake. PCs may make a Knowledge Religion check upon reaching the thrones and studying the wall relief carvings.

Check DC Details

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| 10 | Aroden—also known as the Last Azlanti—was a god of culture, humanity, and innovation, but he died around 100 years ago. It is said he walked Golarion in several different guises. |
| 15 | Aroden's 12 guises were the artist, beggar, craftsman, farmer, fisherman, hunter, merchant, scholar, shepherd, soldier, tailor, and thief. |

Treasure: On the wall behind the right throne is carved a scene showing an artist, a beggar, a craftsman, a scholar, a soldier, and a tailor. Beneath the throne is a small cache containing the *shepherd's crosier*, wrapped in a ceremonial cloth covered in holy sigils of Aroden, and 400 gp. The scepter is approximately 2 feet long and 2 inches in diameter, is covered in gold leaf and small semi-precious gems, and terminates in a shepherd's crook. Anytime the scepter catches the light, the bluish outline of a small winged eye framed by the hook shimmers into view.



On the wall behind the left throne is carved a scene showing a farmer, a fisherman, a hunter, a monk, a shepherd, and a thief. The left throne hides a trove of holy texts, a *scroll of daylight*, and a fake *shepherd's crosier*. This fake looks identical to the true scepter, which is located in the right cache. The false scepter has been altered by a permanent magical effect to make it radiate magic like the true relic, but a DC 15 Knowledge Arcana or Spellcraft check reveals it to be a fake. The false scepter, while not genuine, is nevertheless worth 150 gp.

RIVALS ATTACK (CR 3)

As the first PC makes his way back across the rune columns, a band of thieves from the Bloody Knuckles gang enters the room on the far side and threatens the party.

Creatures: The Bloody Knuckles have learned of the vault and followed the PCs, lying in wait so the PCs could take care of the traps and other dangerous elements of the vault. The three ruffians pour into the room through the door the PCs came through and block the way. They demand that the PCs give up the *shepherd's crosier* and threaten to kill them all and leave them as the newest corpses in the ancient tomb if they refuse. The Bloody Knuckles are amenable to embarrassing this new group without resorting to violence, however, so the PCs can use the Bluff skill on these rivals, convincing them to take the fake scepter and leave the PCs in peace if the new arrivals can be made indifferent (they begin the encounter with an

attitude of hostile); see page 36 of the *Hero's Handbook* for information on NPC attitudes. The Bloody Knuckles use ranged attacks to target foes on the far side of the chasm, and they hope to hold the first PC to make it to their side hostage until they get the scepter.

BLOODY KNUCKLES LEADER

CR 3

XP 800

Evil Cleric (*Game Master's Guide* 67)

hp 32

BLOODY KNUCKLES THUG (2)

CR 1/2

XP 200 each

City Guard (*Game Master's Guide* 65)

hp 11 each

CONCLUSION

If the PCs defeat the Bloody Knuckles or otherwise trick the thugs into leaving with the fake scepter, Eberius awards them with rationed praise. As an added bonus, he slips them a pouch containing a handful of gold coins and tells them to celebrate in style while here in Sandpoint. If, however, they allowed the Bloody Knuckles to make off with the true *shepherd's crosier*, Eberius rages for a few painful moments before muttering to himself that he'll need to find another team to hunt down the Bloody Knuckles before the relic disappears from Sandpoint for good.



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The Pathfinder Roleplaying Game rules can be found online as part of the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Reference Document at paizo.com/pathfinderRPG/prd



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