

THE PAPER NEST OF GABBRO GROVE

Roger SG Sorolla * One Page Dungeon Contest 2021 * <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0>

Many years ago, a woodpecker hatched a serpent egg. The peckatrice that was born turned twenty sequoias to stone before druids killed it.

The central stone trunk, Old Lofty, was once a hermit's retreat, and now houses a nest of giant paper wasps, and the scribe Marinzel.

Furtive and antisocial. Marinzel works paper magic. She is suspected of 4 thefts via origami magpies, all written objects (see scrolls).

Bailiff Medrow tried to serve papers on her but ran back, his face fat and red as a tomato from a wasp sting! The Circuit Judge needs to put some pros on the case ...

Gibburn's will, his 20,000 gp estate: "10% to wife, 10% to mistress, the rest to daughter"; numbers easily altered. Each heir will bribe up to 10% of their take to show the preferred version to the judge.

59 Theses of Lutin the Martyr: merchants will pay 2000 gp to save them and spark religious reform; Church pays 1500 gp for evidence of their destruction.

Deed to Tarx Manor: Haunted fixer-upper with rumours of treasure. Young Tarx, named on the deed, is eager to sell, and can be haggled way down from 10,000 gp.

A narrow spiral stair carved into the stone trunk leads up 100 feet to the lower hermitage door.

HERMITAGE: Three chambers in the tree trunk, doors in 1 and 3. Trapdoors with crudely lashed ladders connect them.

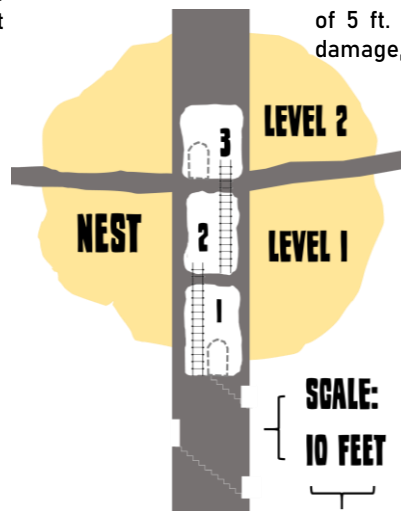
1. **LOWER CHAMBER:** 4 human-sized paper doll guardians deliver 2 paper cuts with arms, immune to cold and blunt weapons, vulnerable to fire.

2. **MIDDLE CHAMBER:** Don't read the scrolls on the walls! N: curses the literate with illiteracy, E: explosive runes that randomly activate any other scroll they burn, W: flash paper that blinds for 1 day; S: elder god tentacle tries to drag you into the howling void.

3. **UPPER CHAMBER:** Marinzel is here: paper dart magic missiles, conjured origami animals, paper charms protecting her. She'll bargain for her life, taking any chance to flee for good. Her fine calligraphy inks and pens are her treasure (700 gp value).

Door to area 6, bolted from inside. On and around her writing desk are the four writings you seek, the spellbook as loose pages. But with close inspection, any scribe, or an expert in law, religion or magic as appropriate, will notice that they're only ingenious copies.

NEST: Fire will burn the paper (and the real documents) at a rate of 5 ft. per 10 seconds. Walls can be cut by doing 10 slashing damage, but 1% chance / damage point that the floor collapses.



Stone branches make a 3 ft. bump above the floor of level 2.

A hole connects levels 1 and 2.

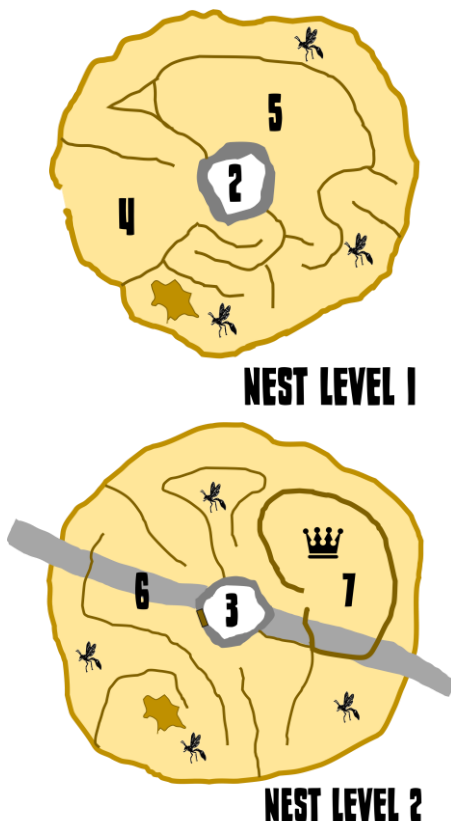
In each Wasp icon area entered, or stayed in for 5 minutes, ¼ chance to meet d4 angry giant wasps.

4. **GUARD CHAMBER:** 6 giant wasps and a giant praying mantis who has a 10% chance of going berserk per round. Gibburn's will is pasted into the north wall. A hole opens to the outside.

5. **BREW CHAMBER:** 3 giant ant-centaurs stir two vats of fig pulp, one half-fermented, one an alcoholic slurry that 2 drunk giant wasps are sipping from. The brew-ants are peaceful; one wears the Theses as a parchment apron.

6. **BROOD CHAMBER.** Symbiotic giant mites (6 beetle swarms) guard a deer, 3 wolves, and a half-awake gnome rogue, all paralyzed by venom, with giant wasp eggs inside that fatally hatch in d6 days unless cured. The crumpled Tarx deed is stuffed in the gnome's mouth to shut him up.

7. **QUEEN'S CHAMBER.** 4 giant wasp guards, 2 giant scorpions, and the Queen, a human-sized, woman-headed wasp who reads random spells from Zardathra's book with 50% chance of a mishap. She sits on a mud throne inlaid with 6 amber gems, each encasing a normal wasp, worth 600 gp each.



Zardathra's spellbook {mishap effects}:

1. trip (fly)
2. erase memory {false memory}
3. invisibility {high visibility}
4. ice shard ball {fire ball}
5. levitate {rotate}
6. fog cloud {frog crowd}