

DELVER

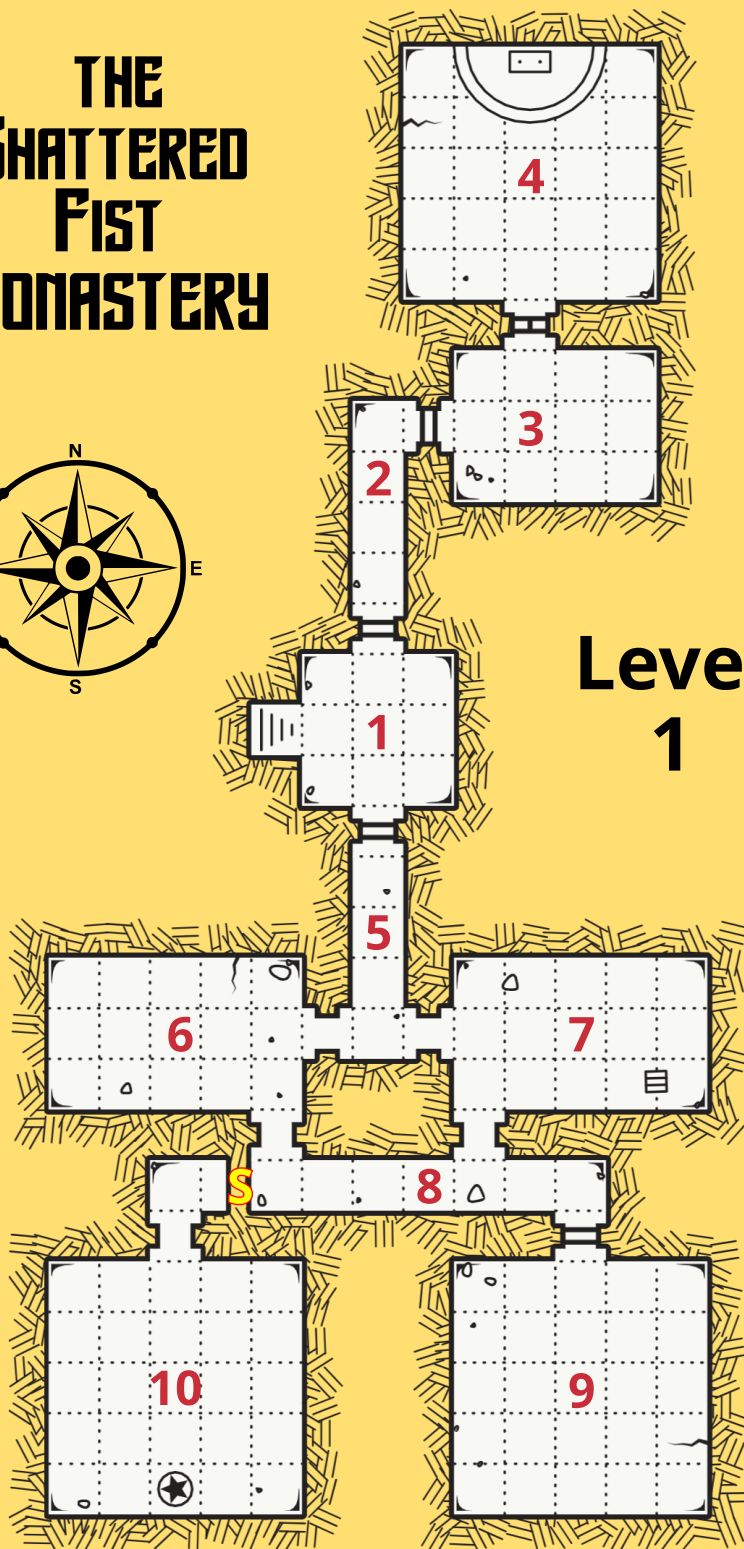
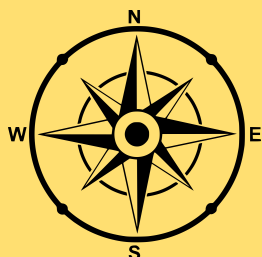
Issue #1

Resources for the Random-Rolling Referee



DESIGNED FOR USE WITH
**OLD-SCHOOL
ESSENTIALS**

THE SHATTERED FIST MONASTERY



Level
1

DELVER

Issue #1

Created by James Floyd Kelly
1st Printing

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Resources for the Random-Rolling Referee

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DELVER

Issue #1

WELCOME!

Thank you for your support of the first issue of Delver. My goal is to provide referees of Old-School Essentials with a number of resources in each issue that they can drop into their games.

I welcome your feedback, and I'd love to know what kinds of resources you find most useful and would like to see in future issues of Delver.

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That Ogre is Waving!

d6 - Name

- 1 Hurgy. Me a guide!
- 2 My name Marp the Strong
- 3 Me Brave Talcot!
- 4 Prox help you!
- 5 Call me Kriket.
- 6 Me not have name.

d8 - I help you...

- 1 You need guide?
- 2 I strong. Protect you.
- 3 I know way through!
- 4 What I help with?
- 5 Need strong ogre?
- 6 I fight for you.
- 7 Me carry stuff!
- 8 Me go in first. Always.

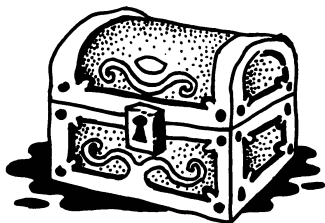
d8 - I need...

- 1 food
- 2 weapon
- 3 shiny stuff (3d8gp will do)
- 4 help find home.
- 5 help find friend, Lurg.
- 6 Hurt! (1d8 hp healing)
- 7 water
- 8 shield

d12 - What me know...

- 1 Me found secret door in wall but me too big. Me show you!
- 2 Me show you shiny sword! (random magic sword OR standard sword)
- 3 Sleepy friends nearby! (dead party with loot)
- 4 I know water place. Clean water! (natural spring)
- 5 Me hurt in trap. Me show you trap!
- 6 I see bag like yours. Show you! (random adventurer pack)
- 7 Ugly things nearby. Want me show you? (wandering or lair creatures)
- 8 You want go deeper? Me know staircase down.
- 9 I find this. Want it? (random magic wand or staff)
- 10 Me trade. Tiny sword for that! (+1 dagger for random PC item)
- 11 Fingers big! Cannot open! (random magic potion bottle)
- 12 Chest hurt me! Stings! You open? (trapped chest, random treasure)

Listen! You Smell Something?



d4 - What?

- 1 Smell - roll on d6 chart
- 2 Sound - roll on d8 chart
- 3 Sight - roll on d10 chart
- 4 Roll on d12 chart

d10 - Sight

- 1 Flicker of a flame
- 2 Shifting shadow
- 3 Fleeing rats
- 4 A door closing
- 5 A foot? Maybe a claw?
- 6 A ripple in a puddle
- 7 A plume of smoke
- 8 A glow around the corner
- 9 A pair of glowing eyes
- 10 Movement in corner

d6 - Smell

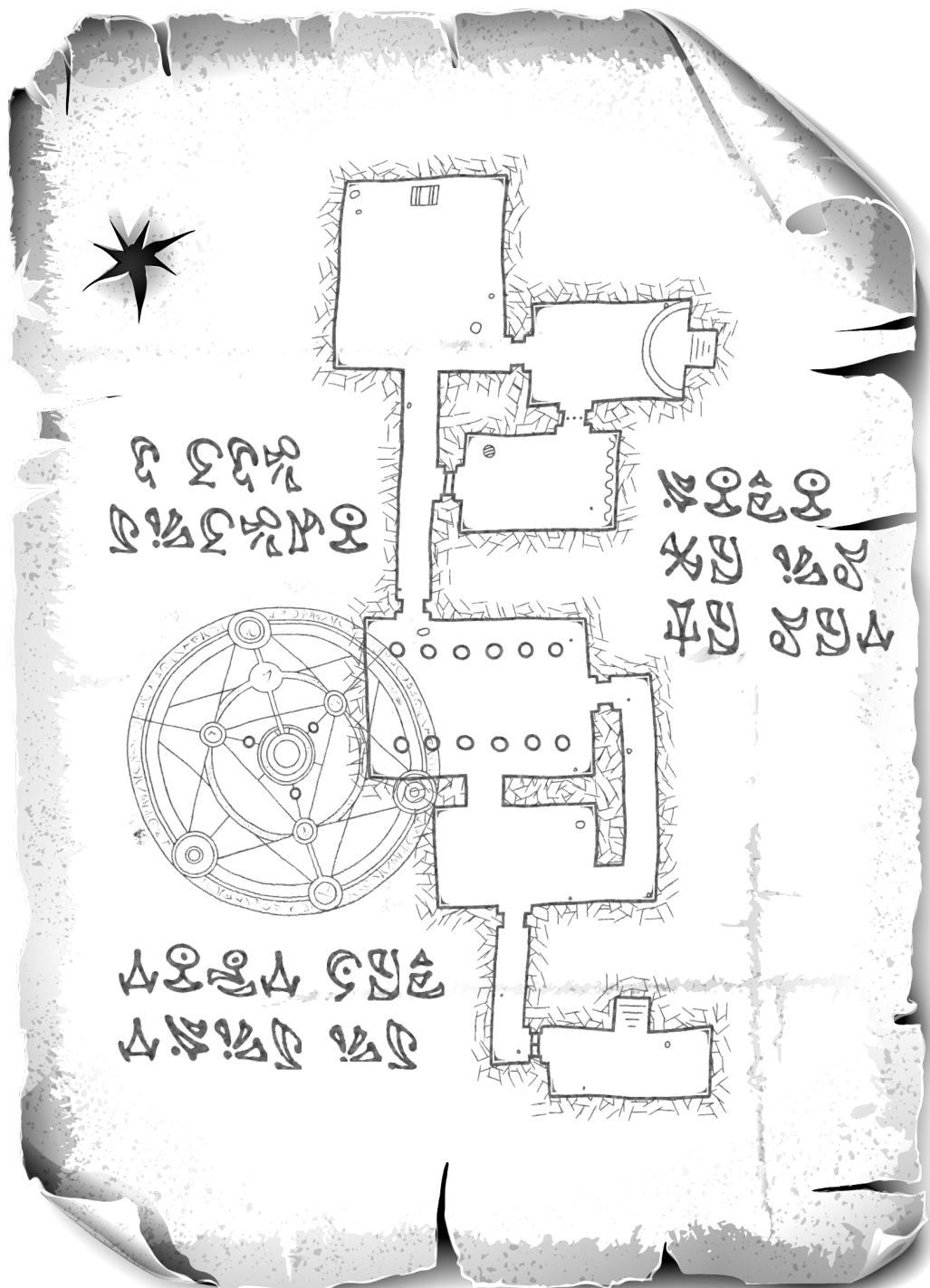
- 1 Something died!
- 2 Something is burning...
- 3 That smells like cooking.
- 4 That's fresh air!
- 5 Smells like sulfur...
- 6 Smells like rain...

d8 - Sound

- 1 Clank of metal
- 2 A scream
- 3 Claws scraping on stone
- 4 A growl
- 5 Running water
- 6 A howl
- 7 Something large running
- 8 A laugh

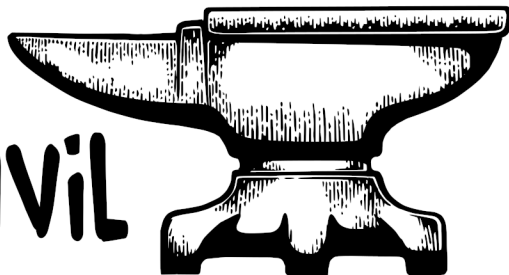
d12 -- This can't be good...

- 1 A pile of skeletons in the corner smelling of garlic
- 2 An freshly extinguished campfire with splatter of blood on the ground
- 3 The beginnings of a snare trap that looks unfinished
- 4 Wet footprints of an unknown creature on the floor
- 5 The words "Leave Now!" on the wall and written in blood
- 6 A torn backpack with a flask of water leaking over the floor
- 7 Three smoking candlesticks in the far corner
- 8 A swarm of rats scurrying over a fresh corpse
- 9 A tremor beneath your feet and blast of warm air from the south
- 10 A door slam followed by someone screaming "No! Noooooo!"
- 11 A dead adventurer staked to wall and "Trespasser" written above him
- 12 A glowing magical rune that slowly fades on the north wall



Print out map on white paper. Brew two cups of tea or coffee, wait to cool. Pour liquid into cooking pan or plastic bin. Soak printed map in liquid for 20 minutes. Remove and let dry. (Placing under something heavy will prevent curling. Crumple paper before soaking for distressed look.)

Gurch's Anvil



d6 - Working on

- 1 ... a shield
- 2 ... a short sword
- 3 ... chainmail armor
- 4 ... a battle axe
- 5 ... a two-handed sword
- 6 ... plate mail armor

d6 - Negotiable?

- 1 No haggling!
- 2 Okay... 10% discount.
- 3 Anything to trade?
- 4 20% is best I can offer.
- 5 Make me an offer.
- 6 30% off and a favor?

d4 - Gurch's Mood

- 1 Cordial and chatty
- 2 Grumpy and curt
- 3 Frustrated but determined
- 4 Focused and excited

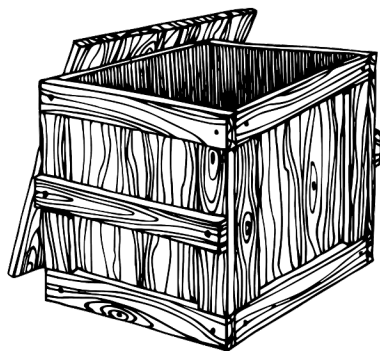
d4 - Weight

- 1 +10% (in coins)
- 2 No change
- 3 -10% (in coins)
- 4 -20% (in coins)

d12 - This month's specials... (x3 rolls)

- 1 That battle axe over there has an extra sharp edge! +2gp, +1 damage
- 2 I can lighten your shield up a bit! 1gp, -5% weight (in coins)
- 3 That's my last spear... half off just for you.
- 4 My best sword this month! +1gp, +1 damage
- 5 Don't get many requests for dwarf plate mail. All yours for 30% off.
- 6 I don't remember making that mace. -1gp
- 7 Tell you what, you buy those 12 iron spikes, I'll toss in 6 more for free.
- 8 Yeah, that crowbar didn't come out quite like I wanted. 5gp
- 9 You like that old lantern? How does 3gp sound?
- 10 That small iron box is only 7gp if you need some storage.
- 11 I've got a saw over here that'll cut through hard elven oak. 2gp
- 12 Sure I've got some pots and pans. Who does your cooking? 2gp

"Strange Place for a Crate..."



d4 - Condition

- 1 Falling apart, holes
- 2 Good but weathered
- 3 Missing planks
- 4 Perfect condition

d4 - Sealed?

- 1 ... with nails only
- 2 ... nails and padlock
- 3 ... strong chains
- 4 ... magically warded

d6 - Observations

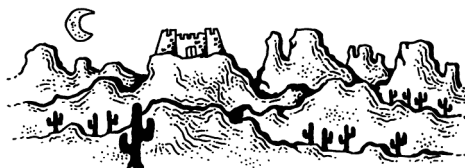
- 1 Are those claw marks?
- 2 Stinks of fish!
- 3 What's that writing?
- 4 Is that the King's seal?
- 5 What's that green stuff?
- 6 Shuffling noise inside?

d6 - Give it a push!

- 1 Something rattles
- 2 Did something break?
- 3 It's heavy!
- 4 I think it's empty...
- 5 Did you hear that?
- 6 This thing isn't moving.

d12 - Contents

- 1 Moldy scrolls & blank journals, broken quills, shattered ink vials
- 2 Dishware and cutlery (3-in-6 chance shattered), serving utensils
- 3 2d6 bolts of cloth (1-in-6 chance half moth eaten) - 3d10gp each
- 4 3d10 +10 arcane tomes - 2d10 gp each, 2d10 blank scrolls
- 5 2d10+10 long bows (1-in-6 chance half are destroyed)
- 6 4d10+20 gold bars (100gp each)
- 7 RATS! A swarm of rats attacks anything within 20 feet.
- 8 3x battle axes, 3x shields, 3x chainmail armor
- 9 6x crystal decanters (4d8+10gp each), 12x goblets (1d10gp each)
- 10 2d8+4 sacks of 100 gold coins!
- 11 ZOMBIES! 1d4+2 zombies crawl out of the crate!
- 12 Full plate armor, 1d4 long swords, 2d8 daggers, 1d4 shields



d6 - Weather

- 1 Cold but clear skies
- 2 Light drizzle, cloudy
- 3 Warm, full moon
- 4 Cool, storm clouds close
- 5 Cold and windy
- 6 Cool with heavy fog

d8 - Seen on Patrol

- 1 Fallen columns/ruins
- 2 Freshwater spring
- 3 Mama bear and cubs
- 4 Giant hawk circling
- 5 Pack of jackals hunting
- 6 Smoking campfire
- 7 Old campsite and debris
- 8 Cave entrance

d4 - Nearby Sounds

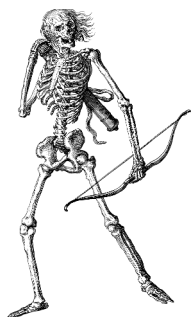
- 1 Quiet, no animal sounds
- 2 Howling and scratching
- 3 Movement in brush
- 4 Growling and tearing

d10 - Found on Patrol

- 1 Quiver and six arrows
- 2 Waterskin, empty
- 3 Strange animal carcass
- 4 Two spears in a tree
- 5 A dirty cloak; 20gp inside
- 6 Hilt from broken dagger
- 7 A bag of nails
- 8 A giant snail shell
- 9 An ancient monolith
- 10 Skull of a giant

d12 - Strange (but Distant) Sights and Sounds

- 1 Dragon outline emerging through a distant cloud
- 2 Six dark figures on hill with torches, marching single-file
- 3 Blue and red lightning strikes originating from two figures dueling
- 4 An active lighthouse near no known body of water
- 5 A lone citadel with a single lit windows that flickers with shadows
- 6 A music-playing merchant's wagon rolling silently down unseen road
- 7 Screams of an obviously undead creature... or ten
- 8 The voice of a woman singing; the sound comes from the clouds
- 9 A distant thunderstorm; the lightning display reveals a marching army
- 10 A flying sailing-ship heading south towards a known body of water
- 11 A goblin funeral procession with burning effigy of the deceased
- 12 Two orcs stalking a lion; four lionesses are stalking the orcs



THAT SKELETON LOOKS FAMILIAR!

d4 - Reception

- 1 Friendly and speaks!
- 2 Wary and on guard
- 3 Confused, mumbling
- 4 Violent, non-speaking

d6 - Class

- 1 Fighter
- 2 Magic-User
- 3 Cleric
- 4 Thief
- 5 Dwarf
- 6 Elf

d4 - Formerly

- 1 ... a rival
- 2 ... a friend
- 3 ... an old party member
- 4 ... a famous delver

d8 - Possessions (roll 2x, re-roll duplicate)

- 1 Class-specific random armor (if allowed)
- 2 Class-specific weapon (choose or roll random)
- 3 Magic ring (choose or roll random)
- 4 Light backpack (roll 1x on Pack Contents table)
- 5 Lantern (1-in-6 chance broken)
- 6 Medium backpack (roll 2x on Pack Contents table)
- 7 Keyring (1d4 keys, 1-in-6 chance a key is useful on level)
- 8 Heavy backpack (roll 3x on Pack Contents table)

d12 - Pack Contents (re-roll duplicates)

- 1 Partial map of current level (no secret doors revealed)
- 2 1d4 flasks of lantern oil
- 3 1d2 torch bundles (6 per bundle)
- 4 Coil of rope (100')
- 5 1d6 vials of holy water
- 6 1d2 waterskin(s) - filled
- 7 1d8 rations (iron, 7 days)
- 8 +1 dagger
- 9 Vial of poison
- 10 1d2 single-spell scroll(s) - choose or roll random
- 11 Potion of healing
- 12 Treasure map (1d12 for Map Type)

d4 - Location

- 1 Dark alley
- 2 Back of a wagon
- 3 Far corner of a tavern
- 4 Beneath a bridge

d6 - Outfit

- 1 Dirty gray cloak
- 2 Cracked leather
- 3 Courtier clothing
- 4 Faded guard uniform
- 5 Prisoner's tunic
- 6 Unusual shiny robe

d8 - Demeanor

- 1 Friendly and smiling
- 2 Suspicious and jumpy
- 3 Paranoid and quiet
- 4 Angry and hurried
- 5 Fidgety with a tic
- 6 Out of breath
- 7 Shifty eyes and a smirk
- 8 Threatening

d10 - Offer

- 1 Jeweled belt
- 2 Map
- 3 Oak wand
- 4 Magic dagger
- 5 Spell book
- 6 Two spell scrolls
- 7 Large gemstone
- 8 Strange lantern
- 9 Jeweled gloves
- 10 Potion bottle

d12 - Special

- 1 **Offer item is legitimate**
- 2 Item value: 4x paid amount
- 3 **Offer item is legitimate**
- 4 Item value: 3x paid amount
- 5 **Offer item is legitimate**
- 6 Item value: 2x paid amount
- 7 **Offer item is a fake**
- 8 Item value: 1/4 paid amount
- 9 **Offer item is a fake**
- 10 Item value: 1/2 paid amount
- 11 **Offer item is a fake**
- 12 Item is cursed



**A
SHADY
CHARACTER**



IXRA'S WONDROUS TOMES

Book of the Guardian

This tiny holy book has an encumbrance of 5 coins and may be sold for 300 gold coins.

Cover

Magic

Complication

Roll 1d4	Roll 1d4	Roll 1d4
<p>Bound in mantichore hide, gold locking clasp on right edge, gold gilding on front cover, slight perfume scent.</p> <p>1</p>	<p>When held within 10' of a healing spell being cast, provides a bonus 1d3 hp.</p> <p>1</p>	<p>Divine casters (neutral) opening book: Change alignment to lawful.</p> <p>1</p>
<p>Bound in lizard skin, twine loop hooks, bamboo spine, scratch on back cover of unknown origin.</p> <p>2</p>	<p>Any Divine casters (lawful) holding the book may reroll a 1 for one healing spell per day.</p> <p>2</p>	<p>Arcane casters (chaotic) opening book: Must save versus death or die.</p> <p>2</p>
<p>Covers of thin slate, oak spine, two racing horses etched on cover.</p> <p>3</p>	<p>Once per day, carrying this book allows a lawful character to detect chaotic within 120 feet.</p> <p>3</p>	<p>Non-caster classes (chaotic) opening book: Suffer 2d4 damage.</p> <p>3</p>
<p>Copper plate covers and spine, hand-shaped imprint melted into cover, star emblem on spine.</p> <p>4</p>	<p>One Undead creature may be shown this book once per day. Save versus Spells or delivers 1d4 damage.</p> <p>4</p>	<p>Divine casters (lawful) opening book: apply 1d3 hp healing to any ally within 30 feet.</p> <p>4</p>



***An Old-School Essentials Adventure
for 4 to 8 Level 1 Characters***

The disappearance of the monks of the Shattered Fist Monastery has remained a mystery for over a century. While the upper structures rotted and weathered and finally collapsed, the lower structures have remained intact with a single entrance hidden by sun-bleached planks large stones, and other debris placed to discourage the curious... and the adventurous.

PLAYERS: DO NOT READ ANY FURTHER

Referees,

Secret of the Shattered Fist Monastery is a level 1 adventure for four to eight players. The entire adventure should run between 3-5 hours and can be split over one or more sessions.

The maps for the adventure can be found on the inside of the front and rear covers; each room or area is numbered and corresponds to a numbered listing in the following pages.

It is recommended that you read through the entire adventure before running it; this will allow you a chance to make changes based on your own gaming style and what your players expect from an adventure as well as to familiarize yourself with the various creatures and NPCs that the players are likely to encounter.

There are a number of locations in the adventure that will make suitable places to "hole up" and rest or hide. Players can also choose to leave the monastery and return at their leisure; the monastery isn't going anywhere and the creatures inside will be there when they return. This makes this an ideal adventure for low-level characters.

If you should choose to run the game with higher level characters, you can consult the *Referee's Tome* and roll for wandering monsters of a higher HD value to keep the adventure challenging. For the unique creatures, use your best judgment for increasing armor, hit points, and special abilities.

Finally, you can place the monastery close to an existing town or village or drop it in a remote location; it all depends on the challenge you wish to place before your players.



For new players, consider providing a nearby town that will allow the players to rest, heal, and stock up on torches, food, water, and other supplies.

For more experienced players, a remote location will force the players to give serious consideration to supplies and travel time as well as the number of potential random encounters on the road to the distant monastery.

Ultimately, enjoy running *Secret of the Shattered Fist Monastery*!

The Story

For centuries, the Shattered Fist Monastery trained monks in a variety of martial arts and spiritual challenges. All that came to an end when the monks took in a group of wayward travelers, feverish and delusional, and gave them sanctuary and a place to rest and heal.

The sickness the visitors brought turned out to be incurable and more than the monks could handle. As the number of healthy members dwindled and the strange sickness spread like fire through the hallways and rooms, a handful of healthy monks lured the sick down beneath the above-ground structure and sealed up the lower levels of their monastery. The remaining monks left a warning with a local family to warn visitors away and then the group fled into the night for parts unknown.

The Dark Secret

The visitors and the monks who fell to the sickness were struck with a magical sickness that kills the living and then brings them back as undead. These undead are unlike standard zombies, however; the sickness provides a bit of extra strength and endurance to those it kills... and a few random victims return with a magical ability.

The Rumors

It was widely rumored that the monastery sat on top of an ancient vault containing dark magic items that the monks had sworn to guard for all time. The vault was also said to contain a massive amount of gold and gems. While the monks did their best to try and discredit these rumors, their denial seemed to only increase the fervor of the rumor-spreading.

The Gang

For the last year, a group of bandits has called the first level of the monastery's basement their home. They commit crimes abroad and then use the underground location as their hideout. The gang has given up searching for the rumored vault after many months of occasional searches while lying low, and now simply defends their domain from trespassers because it has served them well as a base.

The Vault

The vault isn't a vault at all, but a series of additional halls and rooms beneath the first level. It has only one entrance that was hidden well before the monks abandoned the monastery. And it is not empty...

BEGINNING THE ADVENTURE

Referees should choose how to best introduce the rumors of the lost monastery to their players. A couple of adventure hooks are provided below that can help introduce the adventure.

Following the adventure hooks are some notes for the Referee to keep in mind as they run the adventure.

Adventure Hooks

1. A found map (in a previous dungeon delve) has brought the players to the small village of Raven's Heart. Some of the older townsfolk recognize the spot on the map as the original source of the Shattered Fist Monastery that mysteriously closed its doors over fifty years ago. The single-story structure burned to the ground during a lightning storm, leaving behind nothing but rubble.

2. A rumor and a handful of stories of a magical mace (called **Janda's Fist**) protected by a band of monks have persisted in the area for years. After buying a shivering and wet stranger a meal recently, the adventurers were handed an old piece of parchment with directions to a specific spot outside the village of Raven's Heart. The stranger simply said "Maybe your kind and generous souls can provide my brothers and

sisters with a final rest and use Janda's Fist to cleanse this area of some of the more nasty element, huh?"

NOTES:

1. Wandering monsters for Level 1 will consist of gang members. Wandering monsters for Level 2 will be **eldritch shamblers**.

2. There is a more difficult path from Level 1 to Level 2 involving a ventilation hole between Area 7 and Area 16. This can be used if the player are unable to locate the hidden entrance to Area 10.

3. **Arkoros Coldleap** (gang leader) will fight to the death. Because his room (Area 9) has only one entrance/exit, it may be possible for players to find a way to barricade him in if they wish to avoid him in combat.

4. Area 11 can easily be used as a place to rest and recover if the door is not destroyed and is barricaded AND if the players were specific in closing the secret door in Area 8 and returning the statue (in Area 10) to its original closed position. Otherwise, there is a risk of wandering monsters finding their way into the now exposed opening of the monastery and the cleared out Level 1 areas.

Area 1

Entry Room. Stairs (west), two wood doors (north and south, unlocked).

Thick layers of dust and mold on floor. Numerous footprints (old and new) leading to and from both doors. Room also contains a mix of debris (stones, leaves, old cloth) pushed into all four corners.

25% chance of finding **lost locket** (100gp) if room is searched.

1-in-10 chance 1d4 members of the gang will moving through this room every turn.

NOTE: The total number of actual gang members is generated randomly in various areas.

Area 2

North Hallway. Two wood doors (east and south, unlocked).

A layer of debris (mostly crate planks, ripped cloth, and fragments of books) conceals a single tripwire trap 5 feet north of the southern door. If the tripwire is triggered, a bell will ring and notify the 1d4 members of the gang in Area 3 who will hide and attempt to ambush anyone entering that room.

The debris in this area contains no valuables.

Area 3

Loot Collection Room. Two wood doors (west unlocked, north locked).

Three tables and six chairs are stacked with small crates and random items stolen by the gang from merchants on the nearby roads. Two gang members will always be in this room taking an inventory of the items; any valuable items will eventually be moved into Area 4 using the key on the gang leader's belt (Arkoros Coldleap).

Roll 1d6 3x times on the following table (ignore duplicates) for the valuable items in this room:

1	Ornate gold ring (200gp)
2	Painting of a royal courtesan (500gp)
3	Bag of mixed 2d6 gems (50gp each)
4	Unidentified magic wand
5	Fist-sized gold idol (750gp)
6	Four gold dishes (50gp each)

The lock on the door leading to Area 4 is a standard lock that can be picked or an attempt may be made to kick it in. This has a 3-in-6 chance of drawing attention.

Area 4

Locked Vault. Wood door (south, locked and trapped).

This room once served the monks as a meditation area, but the gang now uses it to store items they choose to keep. The room is filled with crates of various sizes, seven unmatched chairs, and two desks. The furniture is piled with small boxes, a mix of small and large crates, and eight backpacks.

A single-step platform to the north has an empty altar that is stacked with various clothing items.

NOTE: *All of these items have been stolen either from merchants or families in the nearby area and are not of significant value. Players who attempt to sell any of these items locally will most likely result in accusations of theft.*

The door to this room has a magical ward on it that will alert the gang leader, Arkoros Coldleap, when it is opened. If the trap is spotted, a thief may attempt to disable the trap. If the trap is not disabled, Arkoros (in Area 9) will immediately move to Area 4 and gather all gang members who have not already been encountered by the adventurers to follow him (takes 1 turn).

In addition to the items in the

room (Referee's discretion to drop a few valuable items in the mix), a small chest in the room (unlocked) contains the following:

25%: 1d6 x 1000cp

30%: 1d4 x 1000sp

25%: 1d4 x 1000gp

50%: 2d6 gems (25gp each)

Area 5

South Hallway. Wood door (north, unlocked), two open doorways with hanging blankets as cover.

Area 6

Prisoner Room. Open doorways (east, south, covered by blankets).

There are two (2x) unarmed gang members guarding a shackled prisoner and gambling at a table with dice (50gp). Their weapons are on another table.

The prisoner is a merchant named **Tygol Graypage** who is being held for ransom. He isn't much of a fighter, but will reward his rescuers with 200gp each if he is escorted safely back to a nearby town. If freed, he will make his way to the exit (Area 1) and wait outside for the adventurers for up to two days. If the locket from Area 1 is found and shown to Tygol, he will pay 1000 gold as it belonged to his late wife.

Area 7

Sleeping Quarters. No doors, four plank beds with old blankets, one small grate in floor (southeast corner).

Large blankets hang from the western and southern doorways to block light and sound. Two beds are against the north wall, one against the east wall, and one against the south wall.

Four (4x) members of the gang will be sleeping in this room, with the volume of snoring drowning out all conversation. unless they have been woken by Arkoros to go to Area 4 OR the gang members in Area 6 had time to raise an alarm (2-in-6 chance of waking the sleepers). Their weapons rest on a small table.

NOTE: *For gang members, use the **bandit** creature and game statistics from the OSE books.*

A ventilation hole in the southeast corner of the room is covered by a loose grate. The hole leads to Area 16. The grate is covered by a heavy wool blanket to mask a foul odor. It will take one (1x) turn for a person to squeeze and crawl through the hole to drop into Area 16. It is possible to climb back up through the hole but will require a way to reach the hole that is 10' above the floor.

Area 8

East-West Hallway. Two doorways (north to Area 6 and Area 7 with blankets for cover) and one wood door (south to Area 9 and locked).

Secret Passage on west wall leads to Area 10. A small alcove holds a broken statue of an ancient monk priest. A successful search (1-in-6 chance) of the statue will reveal the switch that opens a hidden door to Area 10.

Area 9

Arkoros Coldleap Lair. Wood door (north, locked).

Arkoros Coldleap

AC 5 [14], **HD** 2 (8hp), **Att** 2x weapon (1d6), **THACO** 17 [+2], **MV** 120' (40'), **SV** D12 W13 P13 B16 S14 (Thief 2), **ML** 12, **AL** Chaotic, **XP** 20, **TT** V

The is the private bedroom of Arkoros, leader of the gang. He keeps the room locked when in or outside of it using a special key on his belt. (This key also opens the lock to Area 4.) Inside are one bed, a desk and chair, a wardrobe, two chests, and a collection of various bladed weapons.

There is a 1-in-6 chance Arkoros will be asleep if the adventurers have not triggered the alarm in Area 4.

Arkoros keeps a collection of scrolls in one chest and coins and jewelry in the other.

Roll 1d8 three times for each chest and ignore duplicates.

Chest 1

1	Protection from Magic
2	Scroll of Cure Light Wounds
3	Protection from Undead
4	Scroll of Detect Evil
5	Treasure Map: II
6	Scroll of Light
7	Treasure Map: III
8	Scroll of Shield

Chest 2

1	1d4 x 1000gp
2	2d4 x 1000sp
3	2d4 x 1000cp
4	1d8 gems (50gp each)
5	Jeweled crown (1500gp)
6	Gold ring (400gp)
7	Ruby necklace (600gp)
8	Magic ring

Area 10

Private Meditation Chamber. Open hallway (north) to secret passage.

Originally used by the senior monks, this private room contains the skeletons of six monks. Their robes are tattered and moth-eaten and they have no possessions. A number of threadbare mats are evenly placed across the dusty floor.

A single carved statue of a jippac tree (10' tall) rests near the center of the southern wall.

The statue sits over a thin set of stairs that descend to Area 11. The gang has inspected the statue numerous times but has never discovered the secret. An inspection of the area will reveal that the statue can be easily pushed by one person if two individuals are kneeling on the two mats nearest the statue.

A successful inspection of the skeletons reveals bite marks on various bones and hint at the cause of death.

The statue must be returned to its original position from the stairs (to Area 11) OR someone remaining in Area 10. This is done by using a lever that is visible to someone on the stairs or by someone in Area 10 pushing the statue back.

Area 11

Hall of the Enlightened. Wood door (east, unlocked) and stairs up to Area 10. Twelve statues of various monks in meditative poses. A large crack on the floor extends towards a larger fracture in the north wall.

This large room was designed to celebrate ancient monks but now feels like a tomb. Horrific smells come from the direction of the eastern door.

Investigating the crack on the north wall reveals a single (1x) **eldritch shambler** that will exit the fracture and attack.

Eldritch Shambler

A dark-magic-powered zombie with increased chance of infecting.

AC 8 [11], **HD** 2* (9hp), **Att** 1 × weapon (1d8, no weapon), **THACO** 18 [+1], **MV** 60' (20'), **SV** D12 W13 P14 B15 S16, **ML** 12, **AL** Chaotic, **XP** 25, **NA** 2d4 (4d6), **TT** None

- **Magical Infection:** On a successful attack, target must make a **save vs. poison**. On failure, target becomes an eldritch shambler if it dies.
- **Initiative:** Always lose (no roll).
- **Undead:** Make no noise,

until they attack. Immune to effects that affect living creatures (e.g. poison). Immune to mind-affecting or mind-reading spells (e.g. charm, hold, sleep).

Area 12

Split Hallway. Wood door (west, unlocked) and two open doorways to Areas 13 and 14.

The quantity of debris in the northwest and southwest corners of this hallway is enough to block one of the open doorways (to Area 13 or Area 14), but not both.

There is a 2-in-6 chance the noise from this action will alert the eldritch shamblers in the nearest Area to the barricade.

Peering around a corner into Area 13 or 14 may alert the eldritch shamblers if an adventurer is spotted.



Area 13

Living Quarters. Wood door (south - unlocked, north - locked) and two rotten beds with ruined blankets.

A single ancient corpse on the floor is surrounded by 1d4+1 eldritch shamblers.

If the adventurers pull back and any combat takes place in Area 12, this will draw the attention of any eldritch shamblers in Area 14. The eldritch shamblers cannot open doors.

Area 14

Living Quarters. Wood door (south - unlocked, north - unlocked but **stuck - requires Forcing**) and two rotten beds with one monk corpse underneath each bed.

One eldritch shambler sits on the floor against the north door. Another eldritch shambler rests against the south door. 1d4 additional eldritch shamblers sit on the floor.

If the adventurers pull back and any combat takes place in Area 12, this will draw the attention of any eldritch shamblers in Area 13. The eldritch shamblers cannot open doors.

A search of the corpses will reveal a +1 dagger and a small leather

pouch containing 1d4 gems (20gp each).

Area 15

Living Quarters. Wood door (north - unlocked) and five rotten beds pushed up against the north door.

Five eldritch shambler corpses are piled against the south wall.

A single skeleton wearing monk robes rests on a bed with arms crossed and holding a journal.

Searching the corpses (these are the adventurers the monks gave sanctuary) reveals the following:

2d8 Iron rations

1d4 coils of rope (50')

1d8 oil flasks

1d4 torches (6)

1 lantern

1 short bow

1d4 sword

small chest - 1d4 x 1000sp

backpack - 1d8 gems (500gp each)

The journal contains information on the day-to-day activities of the monastery, but the last page contains a final statement from the monk who chose to stay behind in Area 15.

NOTE: *If the journal is recovered, provide a copy of Handout 1 to the players.*

Area 16

Living Quarters. Wood door (south - locked, north - unlocked) and two broken beds that have been piled against the north door.

NOTE: *If an adventurer used the ventilation hole in Area 7, a grate will be on the floor. Otherwise, the grate will be in the ceiling. This hole can be used as an exit to Level 1 if a way to reach the 10' high ceiling can be found.*

This room is empty except for the broken beds stacked against the north door.

Area 17

Closet. Wood door (east - unlocked, south - unlocked).

Two simple but moth-eaten robes hang on pegs on the north wall. A search of the robes reveals a sash that is in perfect condition.

Training Sash

When worn by a lawful individual, once per day the wearer may make a Dexterity ability check during combat to dodge and avoid 1d3 damage of any type.

The sash is -1 AC for a chaotic wearer, although the dodge ability may still be attempted once per day.

Area 18

Training Room. Wood door (west - unlocked, south - unlocked). Tapestry against east wall.

This room was used for combat training by the monks; seven staves of various length hang on the walls.

Trapped in this room is the **ghost** of a former monk, Hilk, who died in combat with a number of eldritch shamblers. The ghost will appear to anyone who enters the room and prevent them from moving forward to Areas 20 and 21.

Hilk will attempt to communicate with the adventurers to determine their intentions. If the adventurers give any answer other than to either cleanse the monastery of the evil creatures or deliver Janda's Fist to the Temple of Janda, the ghost will attempt to scare using its Aura of Fear ability. It will not ever use its draining touch ability. Finally, Hilk will use non-lethal damage against all adventurers in an attempt to make them flee if he is not pleased with their answer.

If Hilk gets the answer he wants, he will smile and dispel and leave the monastery forever.

Area 19

Storage. Wood door (west, secret door). Tapestry on east wall.

A single tapestry runs along the entire eastern wall. It depicts an ancient monk negotiating a peace agreement between a human king and an orc warrior.

Resting on a small green pillow in the center of the room is a single mace.

Janda's Fist

Janda's Fist is a +1 mace.

Once per day, a lawful wielder may place the mace against an injured individual or creature and heal them for 1d8+1 hp.

NOTE: *For a further adventure, if the mace is returned to the Temple of Janda, the brothers and sisters there will provide 1d8 retainers to the party for no more than 3 months of service.*

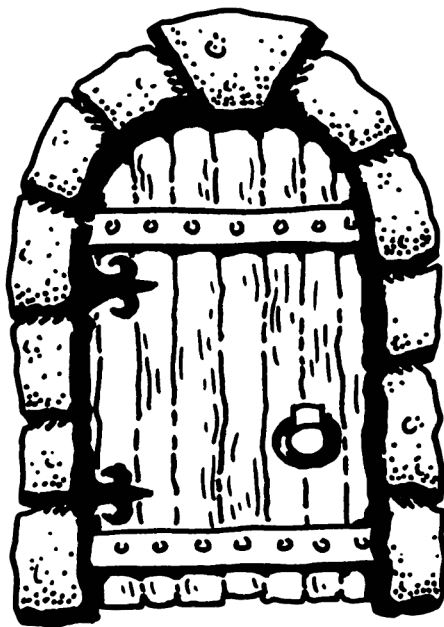
In addition to the retainers, the party will also be provided with a deed for the old monastery's plot of land if the members agree to seal the monastery forever. This deed is worth 1d8 x 1000gp.

Area 20

Preparation Hallway. Wood doors (north - unlocked, south - unlocked).

There is a 1-in-6 chance that **Vaggek the Shambler** may make a noise that is heard by anyone listening at the south door.

On the ground is an expensive helm (30gp). It is not magical but anyone carrying it into Area 21 will become the primary target of Vaggek as the helmet belonged to him while he was alive.



Area 21

Chamber of Janda the Wise. Wood door (north - unlocked).

The walls are scratched and destroyed in many areas from decades of mindless attack. Dried blood streaks cover the floor and walls, all leading to a huddled mass crouched on a raised platform near the south wall.

Janda's Fist (+1 Mace) was removed from this chamber by the monk who chose to remain behind while the last six monks sealed off the lower chambers (Levels 1 and 2) to contain the magical sickness. The monk was concerned that the magic of the mace might empower the eldritch shamblers after seeing what it did to the sick adventurer who stumbled into this room. She removed the mace, sealed the sick adventurer in the room, and then hid the mace in Area 19 before sealing the secret entrance with a powerful ward and then barricading herself in Area 15.

The secret to dispelling the magic ward is found in this room and in the last page of the journal (Area 15).

On the pedestal near the south wall are five fist-sized circles of carved granite. Each circle has a symbol chiseled on one side. The symbols are a closed fist, an open

palm, a foot, a staff, and a kneeling figure.

The granite circle with the foot must be placed against the flat surface of the secret entrance (hidden behind the curtain in Area 18) to dispel the magic ward. If an incorrect granite circle is placed against the surface, the holder must save vs. paralysis or be paralyzed for 6 turns (one hour).

The clue to picking the correct granite circle is in the statement on the final page of the journal -

"As followers of Janda the Wise, we all walk the path of understanding. And now... as I feel my life draining, I know I take the first step towards my destiny. I trust my brothers and sisters of Janda will take that first step as well."

If the players do not discern the words "walked" and "first step" as clues to pick the granite circle with the foot, the Referee may allow an Intelligence check made in Area 21 to reveal the secret.

Between the door and the pedestal with the granite circles is a single creature on the raised platform; this eldritch shambler recalled his identity after being further corrupted while in close proximity to the +1 mace. His mind is damaged and he will not relent from his attack against any intruders to this room.

Vaggek the Shambler

This eldritch shambler was formerly a fighter named Vaggek. The sickness turned him into a shambler, but exposure to the magic of Janda's Fist has provided him with intelligence and he desires nothing more than to be in the presence of Janda's Fist to further his corruption and add to his power.

AC 7 [12], **HD** 3* (13hp), **Att** 1 × weapon (sword +1), **THACO** 17 [+2], **MV** 60' (20'), **SV** D13 W13 P14 B15 S16, **ML** 12, **AL** Chaotic, **XP** 55, **NA** 1 (1), **TT** T

- **Magical Infection:** On a successful attack, target must make a **save vs. poison**. On failure, target becomes an eldritch shambler if it dies.
- **Undead:** Make no noise, until they attack. Immune to effects that affect living creatures (e.g. poison). Immune to mind-affecting or mind-reading spells (e.g. *charm*, *hold*, *sleep*).

Final Notes

The most successful adventurers will rid the old monastery of all shamblers and find the hidden mace, Janda's Fist. There is a

chance, however, that the heroes may not discover the secret entrance to Area 19 or may not be able to decipher the clues in the journal to find and retrieve the mace.

It is up to you, the referee, how much help you wish to provide with finding the hidden location of the mace.

If the mace is recovered, an additional adventure can revolve around the mace being returned to the Temple of Janda if the adventurers decide not to keep it.

Additionally, an adventure can be created to revolve around the source of the original sickness brought to the monastery by the original adventurers. A hint or clue could be provided by a map or piece of parchment found on Vaggek's corpse (if he is defeated).

There should be enough treasure recovered in this adventure to get some of a six-member group of level 1 characters to level 2. If you feel the players have played well and should all level up, it's a simple matter to add some secret treasures held by the monks to Area 19.

Handout 1

and after that, we knew we had to protect the artifact. I was the most injured, so I agreed to stay behind and hide it. Should you find me, I ask that you consider returning this journal to my brothers and sisters at the Temple of Janda. They will know what to do with it.

As followers of Janda the Wise, we all walk the path of understanding. And now... as I feel my life draining, I know I take the first step towards my destiny. I trust my brothers and sisters of Janda will take that first step as well.

LEVEL 3 - EXTRA CONTENT

NOTE: *The Level 3 content is not required to finish the adventure, but it can provide some additional experience and a magic item to players as well as a slightly more dangerous encounter.*

Monks & Magic

During the construction of the Shattered Fist Monastery, a third level was carved out from the hard earth and stone. The purposes of these additional rooms was to provide advanced students with a place to experiment with a mix of meditation and magic. Magic skills were normally not possessed by those seeking to learn the ways of Master Janda, but occasionally students possessing existing magical talents would find their way to the monastery, and the senior monks hoped these talents might benefit the monastery in time.

Night of Bad Dreams

With good intentions, the third level was opened to students with magic skills. But one naive student, Mosril Grib, snuck down to the main chamber one evening and began a mix of meditation and conjuration magic, opening a gate for a brief moment but long enough for something to come through.

The monks above, asleep and

unaware, were pulled into a shared dream that terrorized them until one of the masters was able to successfully wake. Rushing to the chamber, the monk found Mosril alive but controlled. Realizing what had occurred, a ward was placed on the meditation room door on the third level to prevent anyone from entering... and something from leaving. For extra safety, the entire third level was closed and its entrance hidden.

Area 22

Mindfulness Room. Wood doors (west - unlocked, east - unlocked, north - locked and warded). Twelve thin stone pillars in a circle around the room.

NOTE: *To enter this room, the raised platform in Area 21 must be pushed aside to reveal a staircase going down. A successful search for a secret door will reveal the hidden entrance.*

This room is as clean as the day the entire third level was closed off. No dust, no debris, and no indications of any combat or other disturbances. Any attempt to detect magic will alert Mosril in Area 25 to the opening of the third level, although Mosril is still trapped in Area 25 and a ward will need to be dispelled to enter it.

This room has peculiar magical effects that remain from the night Mosril opened a gate. There is a 2-in-6 chance when a spell is cast that an unusual side effect may occur. Roll a d6 and consult the Spell Special Effect table when a side effect triggers.

Spell Special Effect

1	Spell damage is enhanced; add 1d6 to any damage done to target.
2	Target and caster switch positions.
3	Target becomes invisible for 1d4 rounds.
4	Two instances of the spell occur. Treat as if two casters cast same spell; targets may differ.
5	All allies and enemies within 40 feet of caster are blinded for 1 round.
6	All bladed weapons within 60 feet glow with power and become +1 and magical for 1d4 rounds.

Area 23

Storage Room. Wood door (east - unlocked). Half a dozen crates and a stack of meditation mats (3d10gp) and various sizes or robes (2d10gp).

Used by the monastery for storage, this room is in good condition and appears undisturbed. The combined contents of the crates (if searched) are as follows:

1d8 rations (iron), 2d8 water skins, 1d8 gardening tools (2gp each), 3d6 seed boxes (3gp each), 1d8 construction tools (3gp each), 2d8 art supply bags (2gp each), 4d8 blank journals (1gp each), 3d8 boxes of candles (24 candles per box, 1gp per box), 1d4 lanterns, 2d8 flasks of oil, 6d6 quality blankets (1gp each), 4d6 plain dinnerware sets (1gp each)

Area 24

Empty Room. Wood door (west - unlocked).

This room is empty and has no hidden secrets. Spells cast in this room, however, are subject to potential side effects as in Area 22. The chance of the effect happening, however, is 1-in-6. Use the Spell Special Effect table to determine the effect if one is triggered.

Area 25

Meditative Magic Room. Wood door (south - locked and warded).

The ward can be removed with a *dispel magic* spell. Otherwise, the only way into the room is by excavating/tunneling from the right or left of the door into Area 25. If this happens, Mosril is no longer bound to Area 25.

The locked door will not matter if the ward is removed; X will simply destroy the door in a bid to escape.

If the players manage to get into Area 25, they are in for a fight... but also a nice reward if they are successful in vanquishing Mosril.

Mosril the Ghast

When Mosril accidentally opened a magical gate during an experimental meditation session, he unwittingly allowed an unknown creature to cross over and inhabit his body. Now, Mosril exists as a ghast, but with slightly more intelligence, a much more devious nature and a better smell.

AC 3 [16], **HD** 4* (18hp), **Att** 2 x claw (1d4 + paralysis), 1 x bite (1d8 + paralysis), **THACO** 16 [+3], **MV** 150' (50'), **SV** D10 W10 P12 B13 S13 (4), **ML** 10, **AL** Chaotic, **XP** 135, **NA** 1 (1), **TT** P

- **Paralysis:** For 2d4 turns (**save versus paralysis**). Creatures larger than ogres are unaffected. After paralyzing a target, ghasts will attack others.
- **Undead:** Make no noise, until they attack. Immune to effects that affect living creatures (e.g. poison). Immune to mind-affecting or mind-reading spells (e.g. *charm*, *hold*, *sleep*).

Mosril wants nothing more than to escape to the surface, but he's hungry and will try to disable one PC and then grab and run with the new meal. Mosril will go for the PC that appears to be the weakest or the most injured, and his magical enhancement will allow him to zero in on just that individual.

If Mosril escapes, you have the beginnings of another adventure. If Mosril is defeated, PCs will discover an unusual necklace on the corpse.

Mosril's Necklace

A simple necklace worn by Mosril was enchanted when the gate opened. Anyone wearing the necklace gains a slight resistance to magic; **save-versus-wand** and **save-versus-spell** are at +1.

NEMESIS FIGHTER

d6 - Grievance

- 1 Jealousy over an old love
- 2 Embarrassed in public
- 3 A perceived theft
- 4 A loss of reputation
- 5 Saved during a battle
- 6 Mentor's second favorite

d6 - Ultimate Goal

- 1 Steal something valuable
- 2 Embarrass PC publicly
- 3 Frame PC for a crime
- 4 Ruin PC's reputation
- 5 Kill a companion/ally
- 6 PC's death

d8 - Advantage

- 1 Wealthy
- 2 Powerful ally
- 3 Political connection
- 4 More training
- 5 Insider information
- 6 Special magic item
- 7 Famous & respected
- 8 Made an arcane pact

d8 - Disadvantage

- 1 Easy to anger
- 2 Low intelligence
- 3 Conspicuous & loud
- 4 No close friends to call on
- 5 Suspected of major crime
- 6 Cursed
- 7 Always offensive to elves
- 8 Always offends dwarves

d12 - Armor, Weapons, Possessions

- 1 Crossbow, leather armor, shield, 1 potion, 1 magic ring
- 2 Mace, chainmail armor, 1d10 gems (30gp each), 1 magic item
- 3 Sword, plate mail armor, 1 magic item
- 4 +1 war hammer, leather armor, 2d20 x 5gp, 1 magic ring
- 5 Spear, +1 leather armor, 1 potion
- 6 +1 short sword, chainmail, deed of property (1500gp), vial of poison
- 7 Short bow, +2 leather armor, quiver arrows, 1 magic item
- 8 +1 intelligent sword, leather armor, 4d10 gems (10gp each)
- 9 2x silver daggers, +1 leather armor, 1 magic item, 1 scroll
- 10 +1 spear, +1 leather armor, 4d20+20gp, 1 magic rod
- 11 Short sword, +1 chainmail armor, +1 shield, 6d10+10gp
- 12 +1 battle axe, leather armor, shield, 2 potions, 1 scroll

Strange Statue

d4 - Condition

- 1 Undamaged
- 2 A few parts on ground
- 3 Many parts missing
- 4 Crumbled

d6 - Figure

- 1 Female warrior
- 2 Male warrior
- 3 Creature, humanoid
- 4 Creature, monstrous
- 5 Animal
- 6 Unusual geometric

d12 - Special

- 1 Statue answers one question
- 2 NONE
- 3 One weapon enchanted +1
- 4 NONE
- 5 Gold part found (value 250gp)
- 6 NONE
- 7 Statue teaches one new spell
- 8 NONE
- 9 Wandering monster called
- 10 NONE
- 11 Heals party (1d8 hp each)
- 12 NONE



d10 - Closer Look

- 1 Hidden compartment
- 2 Trap
- 3 Valuable gem found
- 4 Trap
- 5 Magic item found
- 6 Trap
- 7 Magical ward
- 8 Trap
- 9 Secret door revealed
- 10 Trap

d8 - Facing

- 1 North
- 2 Northeast
- 3 East
- 4 Southeast
- 5 South
- 6 Southwest
- 7 West
- 8 Northwest

WANTED



DROG
TROLL
9 FEET
RED EYES
CLUB

LAST SEEN NEAR VURGIN'S FARM

450 GOLD

Print out Wanted poster on white paper. Brew two cups of tea or coffee, wait to cool. Pour liquid into cooking pan or plastic bin. Soak printed Wanted poster in liquid for 20 minutes. Remove and let dry. (Placing under something heavy will prevent curling. Crumple paper before soaking for distressed look.)

THE ALLY

CLERIC

d6 - Motive

- 1 Views party as honorable
- 2 On a holy quest
- 3 Vision of helping the party
- 4 Seeking redemption
- 5 Repaying a debt
- 6 Seeks knowledge of evil

d6 - Ultimate Goal

- 1 Forgiveness
- 2 Greater knowledge
- 3 Fight evil where it exists
- 4 Finance new temple
- 5 Return a holy relic
- 6 Convert a party member

d8 - Advantage

- 1 Aggressive in a battle
- 2 Takes smaller cut of loot
- 3 Creates 1 holy water/day
- 4 Senses undead (60 feet)
- 5 Healthy (+1d6 hp)
- 6 Turn undead +1 to roll
- 7 From wealthy temple
- 8 Level = Avg of party +1

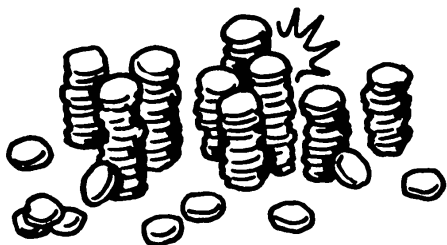
d8 - Disadvantage

- 1 Disavowed by high priest
- 2 Believed to be a bit crazy
- 3 Always trying to convert
- 4 Refuses to fight to kill
- 5 Not respected by temples
- 6 Untrusting of elves
- 7 Untrusting of dwarves
- 8 Untrusting of magic-users

d12 - Armor, Weapons, Possessions

- 1 Mace, no armor, 1d4 vials holy water, holy symbol
- 2 War hammer, leather armor, holy symbol, 2x magic scrolls (random)
- 3 Sling, leather armor, 1 magic item, holy symbol
- 4 Club, chainmail armor, 1d4 healing potions, holy symbol
- 5 Mace, leather armor, 1d4 healing potions, holy symbol
- 6 War hammer, plate mail armor, 3x healing potions, holy symbol
- 7 Sling, chainmail armor, 2x healing potions, holy symbol, magic ring
- 8 +1 mace, leather armor, 1 magic ring, holy symbol, 2x magic scrolls
- 9 +1 club, leather armor, 1 magic item, holy symbol, 1d4 vials holy water
- 10 +1 sling, no armor, 2 magic items, holy symbol
- 11 +2 mace, plate chainmail armor, holy symbol, 3x magic scrolls
- 12 +2 war hammer, plate mail armor, holy symbol, 1d4 vials holy water

THE AUCTION HOUSE



d4 - Items on View

- 1 Not many - 1d4
- 2 A few - 1d8+4
- 3 Many - 1d12+8
- 4 Private Viewing - 1 item

d6 - Beat this Bid?

- 1 1d4x100gp and yours!
- 2 1d6x100gp and yours!
- 3 1d8x100gp and yours!
- 4 1d12x100gp and yours!
- 5 1d20x100gp and yours!
- 6 1d20x200gp and yours!

d12 - Sore Loser*

- 1 Magic-User/Chaos - curious
- 2 Collector - offers +10%gp
- 3 Fighter/Law - revenge
- 4 Historian - +5%gp
- 5 Thief/Chaos - ambush
- 6 Royalty - +20%gp
- 7 Dwarf/Neutral - jealous
- 8 Wealthy Widow - +10%gp
- 9 Elf/Law - offers +30%gp
- 10 Merchant - +10%gp
- 11 Drow/Chaos - danger
- 12 Priest - +5%gp

* NPC to deal with and their offer or demeanor

d4 - Item

- 1 Magic Weapon
- 2 Magic Armor
- 3 Magic Ring
- 4 Magic Wand

d10 - Closer Look

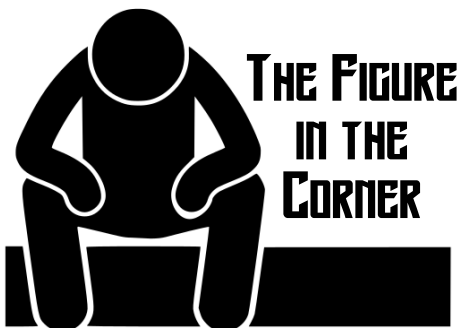
- 1 Poor Condition -30%gp
- 2 A fake! Stay away!
- 3 Overpriced! -20%gp
- 4 Slight damage -10%gp
- 5 Good condition
- 6 Good condition
- 7 Good condition
- 8 Cursed! Stay away!
- 9 Historic item! +20%gp
- 10 Perfect! +30%gp

For Referee

1. Roll for # of items (d4 chart #1)
2. Choose or roll random for details of items rolled (d4 chart #2)
3. Determine bid to win (d6 chart)
4. Adjust bid to beat (d10 chart)
5. Determine any interested party when bid is complete

d6 - Appearance

- 1 A studious gnome cleric
- 2 A nervous half-orc fighter
- 3 A sulking halfling thief
- 4 A fidgety elf magic-user
- 5 A sad dwarf ranger
- 6 A frightened human bard



d10 - Waiting for

- 1 ... a translator for a map
- 2 ... their food
- 3 ... the rest of their party
- 4 ... a rival to show up
- 5 ... a seller of magic rings
- 6 ... a ransom request
- 7 ... the local priestess
- 8 ... nothing - leave me be!
- 9 ... the arrival of a mage
- 10 ... two bounty hunters

d10 - Will chat about

- 1 ... local ruins
- 2 ... a PC's magic item
- 3 ... a PC's unique weapon
- 4 ... local politics
- 5 ... the topic of the undead
- 6 ... the local weather
- 7 ... thief working the room
- 8 ... a local dungeon
- 9 ... rudeness of strangers
- 10 ... arrival of a ship

d12 - What they know and might share...

- 1 Tonight's secret arrival of six royal subjects of Elven blood
- 2 The location of a secret mine revealed by a recent landslide
- 3 The bounty for capturing the two large half-orcs near the fireplace
- 4 Tomorrow, there will be an attempt on the life of a local merchant
- 5 An evil wizard is casting a curse in three days on the nearby farmers
- 6 Two bounty hunters are here to capture one of the PCs for theft
- 7 A friend's daughter has been kidnapped; a ransom is expected soon
- 8 The "old sword" hanging over the bar is actually a +1 magic sword
- 9 The drunk at the bar doesn't know he's wearing a Ring of Protection
- 10 The six dwarf miners a table over are looking to hire some escorts
- 11 A band of tomb robbers are hitting a local mausoleum tonight
- 12 The three human archers in the corner are only 3gp a month to hire



by James Floyd Kelly

As an *Old School Essentials* Referee, we should always strive to provide the players who choose a seat at our table a memorable few hours of escapism and enjoyment. Our players could choose other hobbies in which to spend their time, but for those of us lucky enough to fill the chairs around us with players who are anxious to play, we need to recognize that they have come to the table

with a variety of expectations. Some are looking for glorious combat and battles that they will be able to talk about for weeks to come. Other players come for the mystery, not knowing whether the night will bring fame and fortune... or the end of their favorite adventurer. And some players come for the camaraderie and social part of the game, looking to spend a few hours with friends (or strangers who they hope will become friends by end of game) to have some laughs and maybe some nail-biting moments when the dice aren't going their way.

Whatever the reason your players have joined you for the night, count yourself lucky as a referee that you get to enjoy the next few hours with them as an epic adventure begins, continues, or even ends. During our game session, there are so many things that we, the Referees, are called upon to do in terms of the game's rules and story. We've got a lot on our plates to track and remember, so I'm hesitant to add more TO-DOS to the list. Let's just call them discussion points at *The Referee Roundtable*.

It's a Fantasy Game - Locomes Should be Fantastical

When your players enter a tavern, is it just a tavern? Bartender? Check. Barmaid? Check. Sulking stranger in the corner? Check. Or maybe you go a few extra steps and add a bard singing bawdy tunes and two dwarves arm wrestling in the corner and being watched by a menacing hooded figure near the door? Don't get me wrong; there's nothing wrong with this tavern. Let's be honest here, though... it's just a tavern.

But remember this - we are playing a fantasy roleplaying game! Yes, there are rules for this game, but this game resides in a world filled with dragons, sorcerers, magic swords, lost tombs, haunted forests, and castles in the sky. If this is the world the characters live in, why do we (Referees) often give our players the most mundane locales in which to visit?

We've all seen amazing fantasy artwork from artists who don't limit themselves to painting simple landscapes or buildings. A wizard tower stretches high into the sky and bends in the wind. A dragon slumbers at the base of a mountain, blocking access to the yawning mouth-shaped dungeon entrance. An ice-city is reflected in a frozen lake filled with trapped ships of the most unusual design.

Here's my point. We need to stretch our imaginations and our descriptions for the sake of our players. A tavern shouldn't be JUST a tavern... not in a world like the one you've created and your players are inhabiting. Your players should come out of the woods, drawn by the smell of cooking and the hint of music to find a gravity-defying structure of multiple levels with a few crumbling walls that have been converted into tables with wood planks dropped over stones. A bartender on the second level of the structure lowers



drinks by buckets to the patrons who drop coins into the buckets to pay for the next round. An underground spring feeds a steady flow of fresh water down a trough that has been built to water the horses at the base of the odd-looking establishment. The barmaid? She's harnessed into a strange contraption of ropes and pulleys that allows her to drop down with food from an unseen kitchen that appears to be up on the fourth level. And that third level? A darkness, probably magical in nature, floats like a fog to cover the secret negotiations and dark plans being discussed by those individuals who pay for the privacy it provides.

Is this a tavern to which your players might want to return from time to time? If so, think about what they'll be expecting when it comes to

castles, strongholds, and dungeons! If a tavern can be epic in nature, just imagine what can (and should) be done with all the mysterious and dangerous locations that blanket your world.

Now, if you're getting a bit nervous about the time and energy you will have to spend to create such fantastical locales, keep in mind that you will also get a payoff for your efforts: all of these epic sites that your

players will encounter contain potential adventure hooks and jumping off points for future sessions. As the Referee, the more fantastic the locale, the more breathing room you give yourself to improvise believable situations when it comes to NPCs, rumors, secret chambers, traps, and more.

Remember — it's a fantasy game. Make it difficult for your players to compare the people, places, and things in this world to anything in our real world.



The Checklist

The following is a simple three-step checklist for helping you to turn a mundane location into an EPIC setting that will have your players wanting to explore every nook and cranny.

- **Give your locale a worthy name**

It's not a monastery. It's the Ringed Walls of the Shattering Fists. That's no magic shop. That's Belinstra's Wondrous Potions & Tonics.

- **Give your locale three unusual characteristics and two unforgettable ones**

An unusual characteristic is something that might require an adventurer to look around or accidentally stumble upon; A mirror that reflects a character's best trait in an exaggerated manner... or maybe a door that requires a bad joke to be told before opening. Three of these and your almost done.

An unforgettable characteristic is something that a character would never miss; constant snow falling from the ceiling of the Chapel of Infinite Thunder (see what I did there?), a mile-high cyclone of fire in the

center of a grassy field, or how about a forest filled with a hundred animated vines that each grip a weapon taken from the hands of dead trespassing adventurers? Two of these, and the players will never forget their visit.

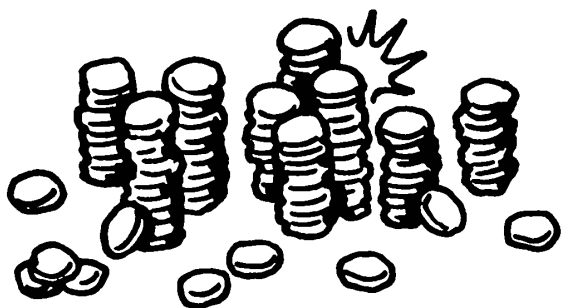
- **Give your locale a memorable NPC, creature or focal point... or any combination**

This one depends on the locale, of course. Not every locale will be inhabited, for example. An NPC waiting patiently for the heroes in a just-excavated treasure room seems a bit of a stretch. Likewise, the players might question an encounter with an undead minotaur in the waiting room of the town mayor's elegant new home.

Here's a trick; if you think the players will be expecting one thing, give them the opposite. The warm and cheerful tavern should probably have an equally kind bartender, right? Not tonight. The fountain flows with a foul-smelling and stagnant water that is probably poisonous, but a dip in the pool can remove a curse and heal all wounds. And what will the players do when the cobweb-covered skeleton offers to guide them through the maze of caverns in exchange for a song that reminds it of its days as a minstrel?

Conclusion

The old phrase "the secret is knowing when to stop," certainly can apply to your game; it's not necessary to make each and every location in your world the most magical and wondrous of places, but given the world these characters inhabit, no one will blame you if you try. Your players haven't come to the table looking for the common or the expected. Their adventurers live in a world filled with magic and danger and mystery... so give them all those things. And lots of it.



MERCHANT BINGA

d6 - Location

- 1 Blanket in alley
- 2 Town center tent
- 3 Mule-pulled cart
- 4 Tavern corner booth
- 5 Merchant wagon
- 6 Storefront

d6 - Open to Haggles?

- 1 No
- 2 Only with a magic-user
- 3 Never with a fighter
- 4 Only with a cleric
- 5 Never with a human
- 6 Always

d8 - Wares

- 1 Mix of weapons & armor
- 2 Weapons only
- 3 Armor only
- 4 Magic rings
- 5 Magic wands
- 6 Magic items
- 7 Adventurer equipment
- 8 Stolen items

d8 - Demeanor

- 1 Rude & short-tempered
- 2 Jumpy & suspicious
- 3 Miserly & argumentative
- 4 Quiet but agreeable
- 5 Pleasant but nervous
- 6 Kind but all business
- 7 Professional & courteous
- 8 Friendly & negotiable

d12 - Special Item and/or Unusual Activity

- 1 A magic ring bought off of a stranger; open to trade for it
- 2 Being watched by local militia; suspected of selling stolen items
- 3 Cursed; will always sell an item for 20% lower than standard price
- 4 Member of Thieves Guild; reports valuable items carried by PCs
- 5 Will offer to buy any magic items PCs are willing to sell
- 6 1-in-20 chance that any item sold is cursed
- 7 While doing business, a thief will attempt to pick the pocket of a PC
- 8 A batch of healing potions kept hidden; cost is 10% less than normal
- 9 Attacked by robbers; if PCs intervene, 20% discount
- 10 If an item is purchased, merchant will offer vials of holy water 30% off
- 11 Will accept a reasonable offer for an unidentified magic wand
- 12 Willing to hire PCs to escort a valuable item to a fellow merchant

d4 - Members

- 1 2d8+4 townsfolk
- 2 1d4+4 retired warriors
- 3 1d10+5 trained soldiers
- 4 2d4 mercenaries

d6 - Behavior

- 1 Friendly & welcoming
- 2 Observant & fair
- 3 Thorough & cautious
- 4 Tired & overworked
- 5 Suspicious & untrusting
- 6 Antagonistic & cruel

d8 - Equipment

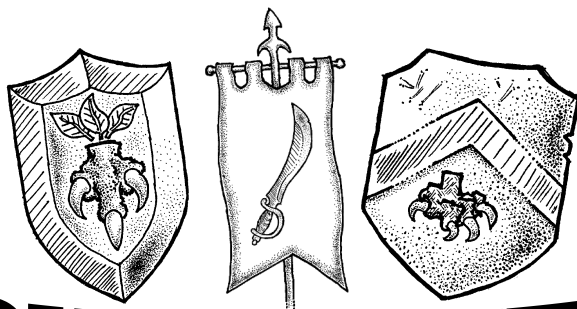
- 1 Sword
- 2 Polearm
- 3 Sword & Polearm
- 4 Javelin & shield
- 5 Sword & shield
- 6 Leather armor, weapon
- 7 Chainmail, weapon
- 8 Plate armor, weapon

d10 - Suspicious of...

- 1 Magic-users
- 2 Clerics
- 3 Dwarves
- 4 Elves
- 5 Parties of 3+ arcane
- 6 Paladins
- 7 Half-orcs
- 8 Gnomes
- 9 Half-elves
- 10 Parties of 6+ size

d12 - Special

- 1 Militia extorting townsfolk
- 2 Temple has slime problem
- 3 Needs help with goblins
- 4 Brigands troubling tavern
- 5 Harassed by local bandits
- 6 Local farm haunted by ghost
- 7 Undead infestation nearby
- 8 Knows of a nearby tomb
- 9 Leader needs healing
- 10 Preparing for ogre attack
- 11 Lycanthrope in town
- 12 Vampire lair in town



TOWN MILITIA

Ring of the Healer

A silver band with a single opal. The wearer may perform one healing per day.

Usage: Once per day, the wearer may touch a person to heal them for 1d4 hp.

Chaotic: If target of healing is chaotic, **save versus spells** or healing fails.

Lawful: If wearer is lawful, **save versus spells** to increase healing to 1d4+2.

Chaotic: If wearer is chaotic, **save versus spells** to inflict 1d4 hp damage to target.

Wand of Nightmares

Inflicts a waking nightmare on a target.

Range: A ribbon of dark smoke extends from the wand to a point up to 60' away.

Target: Any non-chaotic creature in the path of the smoke suffers 1d3 damage and is immobilized for two rounds unless a successful **save versus paralysis** roll is made.

Laughing Axe

A rugged-looking axe with copper banding around the handle.

Combat Bonus: +1 weapon.

Effect: In the hands of a chaotic wielder, the axe requires a lawful target to **save versus spells** or be struck with a fit of laughter that lasts three rounds in addition to any damage it delivers. Target is at -2 to hit until the effect ends.





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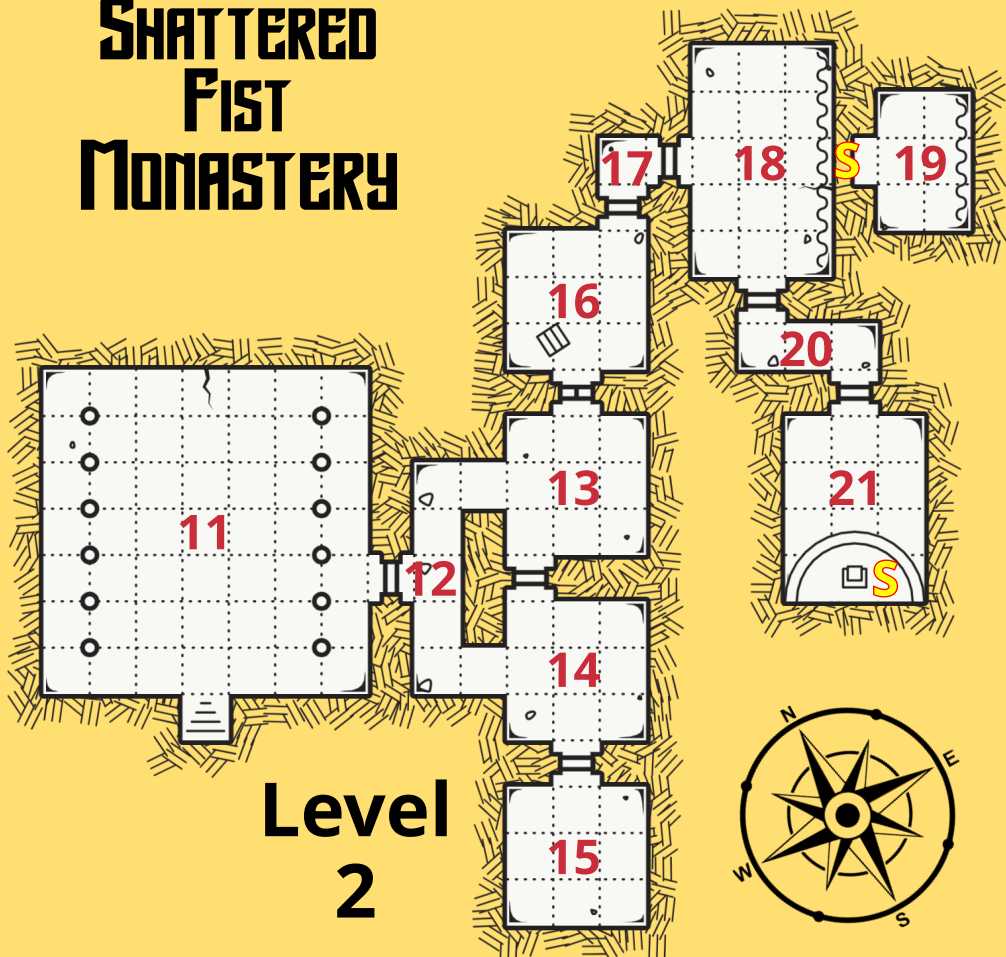
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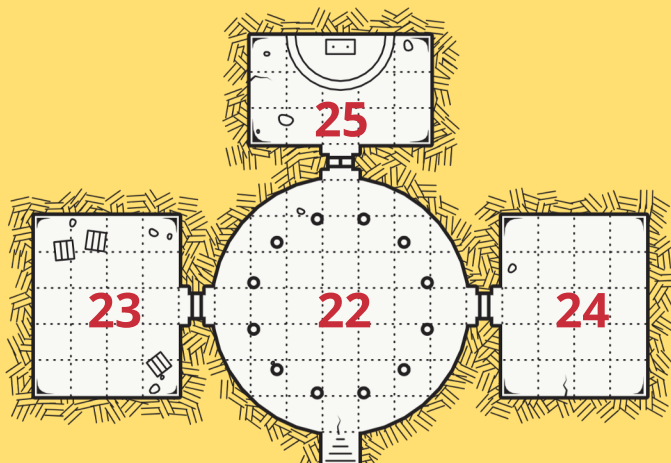
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THE SHATTERED FIST MONASTERY



Level
2



Bonus
Level
3

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