

DESCEND INTO THE DARK, DEPRAVED DEPTHS OF THE

FANE OF THE FLY GOD

FANE
#01
OCT. 22

FROM
THE MIND
BEHIND
"INTO THE
MADLANDS",
COMES
NEW HORRORS
THAT WILL
TURN YOUR
STOMACH AND
TWIST YOUR
MIND!

EXPLORE A
ROTTING
LAND
FILLED WITH
PESTILENCE
AND DISTURBING
BEINGS

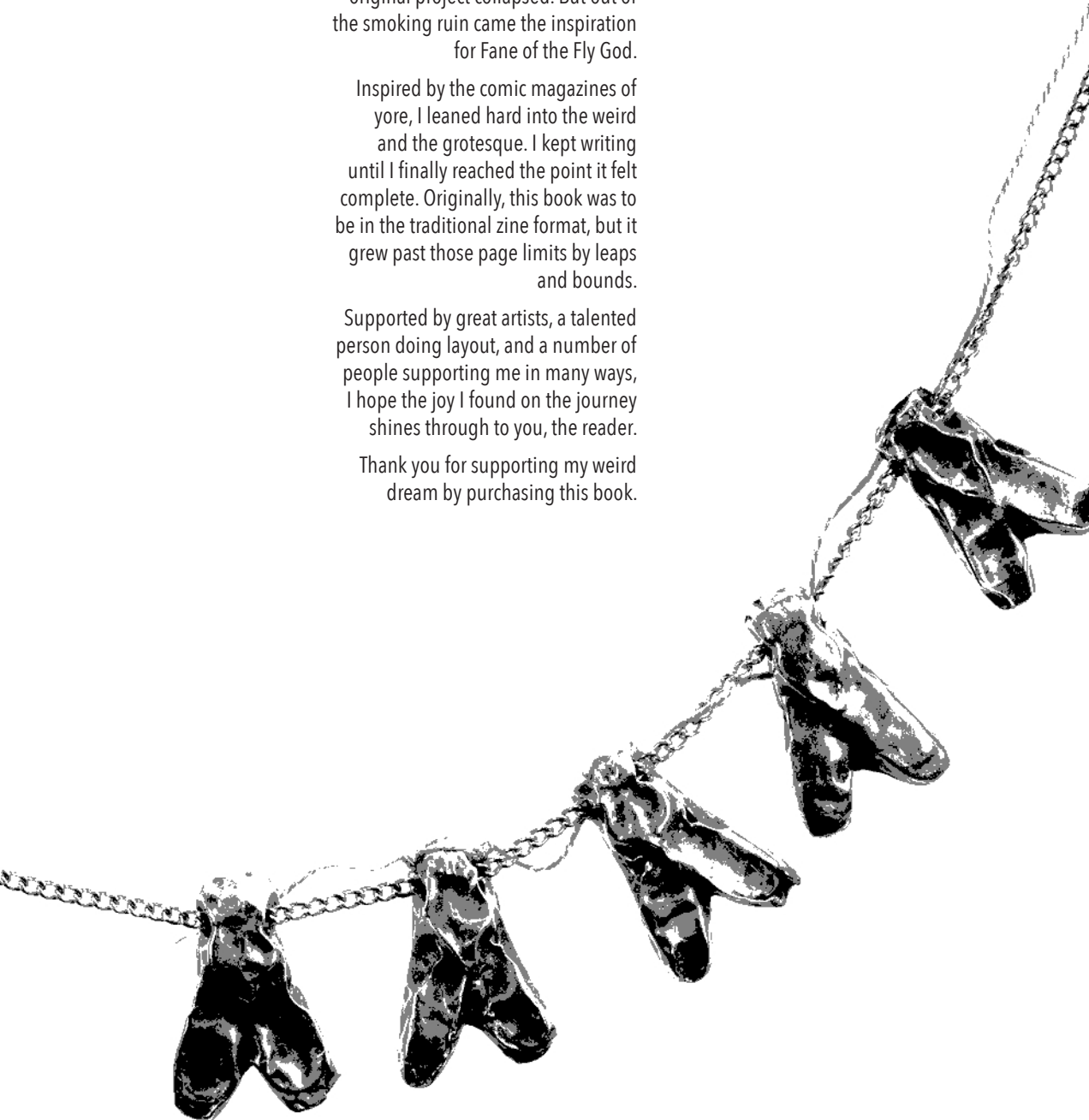
Introduction

The book you are now holdin is the result of a long and winding road. Initially this was going to be a Hyperborean-style setting that with the flavor of Afghanistan. Life takes its twists and turns and my vision for the original project collapsed. But out of the smoking ruin came the inspiration for Fane of the Fly God.

Inspired by the comic magazines of yore, I leaned hard into the weird and the grotesque. I kept writing until I finally reached the point it felt complete. Originally, this book was to be in the traditional zine format, but it grew past those page limits by leaps and bounds.

Supported by great artists, a talented person doing layout, and a number of people supporting me in many ways, I hope the joy I found on the journey shines through to you, the reader.

Thank you for supporting my weird dream by purchasing this book.



5mm



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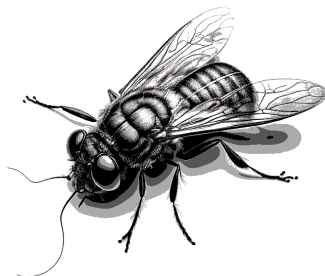
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THE CITY OF BAMIKAN

INTRODUCTION TO BAMIKAN

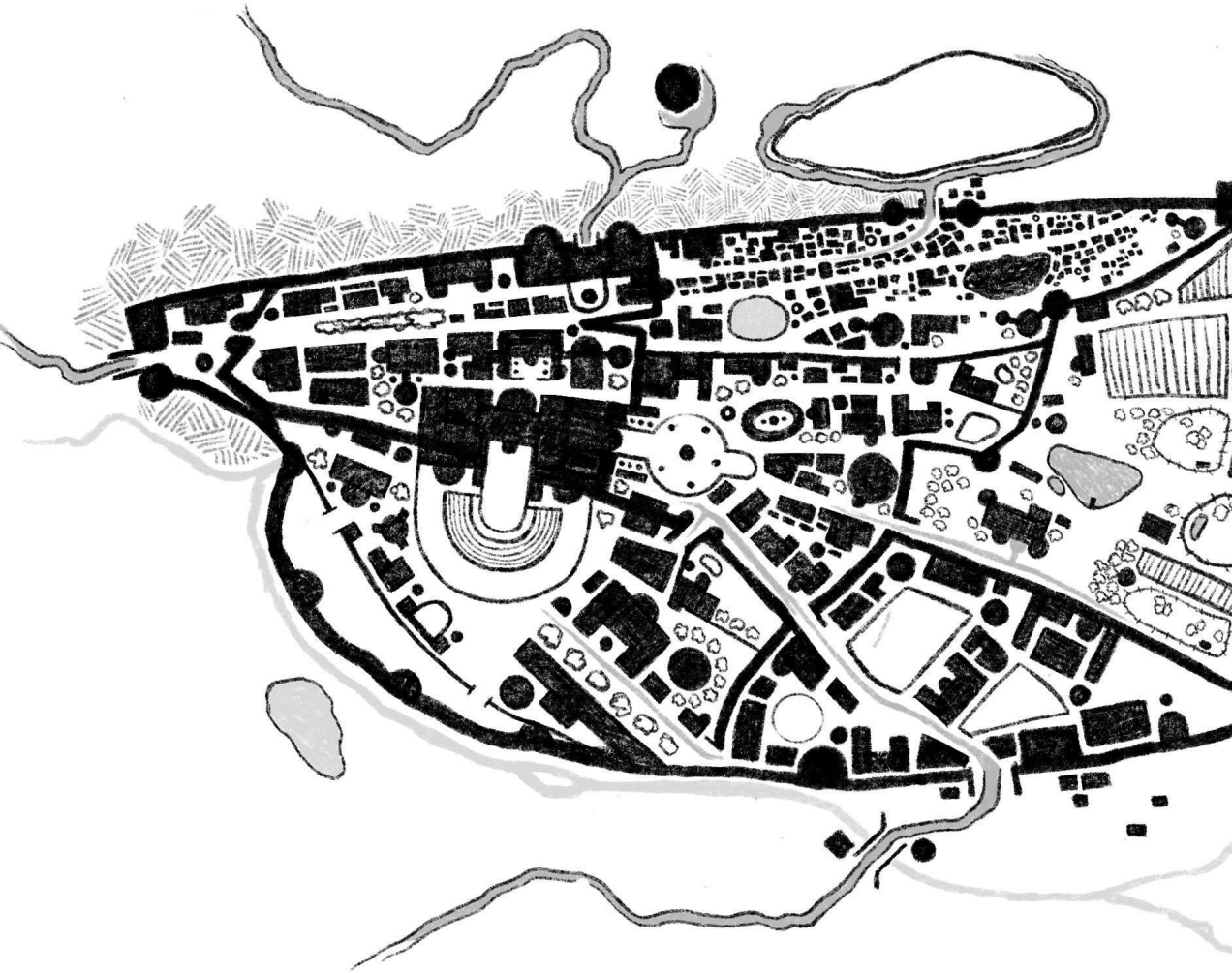
THE CITY

Characters entering the city gates find a place to buy and sell wares and goods. While it lacks the many of the extravagant comforts, pleasures and vices of more metropolitan cities, the comforts and hedonistic experiences it does offer surpasses those of any other city within a five days' ride from here. Many visitors leave the city much poorer than when they arrived.

HISTORY

The city of Bamikan arose from a modest settlement nestled in the Hinju-Kutch valley. After generations of sojourning, a minor tribe of the Kapisi people settled there, having grown weary of their constant migration. The settlement's location next to the river provided the city with a reliable source of water for the people and their livestock. The Aad-Vaju mountain range sheltered them from the violent Jergaddi people that terrorized the region.

Within two generations of its founding, Bamikan became a center of trade for the many nomadic tribes dwelling in the region. With this wealth came the need to establish an army and defenses to ward off the attack of warlords and bandit kings. These petty bands never grew weary attempting to plunder the city of its riches, but Bamikan kept those despoilers at bay.



THE COST OF SUCCESS

Within four generations, because Bamikan's wealth waxed so great, the city garnered the unwelcome notice of neighboring kingdoms. These rulers fielded mightier armies and applied more advanced approaches to warfare than the bandit kings. They didn't desire to plunder the city of its wealth. Instead, they saw Bamikan as a key for establishing trade routes to the distant lands of Medka and Venishu.

In the seventh year of King Abdali, while waging war against their neighbor, the princes of the Duranni Empire made a hasty military grab for Bamikan. After a quick and bloodless siege, Bamikan fell, and the city has remained under the Duranni rule ever since.

CURRENT STATE

While the city maintains self-rule in most matters, the ultimate authority resides in the scepter of a satrap appointed by the Durrani-Empire.

BANDITS

Once the Durranni Empire began garrisoning troops, bandit kings put aside their dreams of placing the city under siege. Attacks upon caravans also declined, but bandits still roamed the hills, seeking to find easy pickings among the various caravans. The mountains that protected the city against neighboring armies also provide havens for the bandits that roam this land. Indeed, the numberless caves that pepper the mountains make perfect havens for these scoundrels.



CITY LOCATIONS

THE DUMP

Outside its city walls, Bamikan has a designated area, known simply as “the dump,” to discard, burn and bury its filth. The dry climate of the region keeps the odor of rot from invading the city, but during the spring rains, the humid and balmy air putrefies the dump’s contents and produces a malodorous stench that slouches into the city. During this season, the denizens burn sage to drown out the odors.

THE DISCARDED

Adjacent to the garbage dump is a shanty village, a dismal home for society’s outcasts. The squalid abode to the diseased, the infirmed that don’t have family to care for them, and those under judicial banishment.

The people possess scant rights and guards deny them entrance into the city. The denizens view them with disdain, believing their plight is judgment for some malfesance in this life or their past one.



THE PIT

The well-worn path to the pit leads the traveler up a sloping hill of bedrock that ends in a rough-hewn hole that measures fifteen feet in diameter. Around the pit are a series of steps that encircle and descend into it. Arranged around the hole are nine ancient pillars whose outward ornamentation wore away a century ago.

These steps allow those making the trip to discard their “offering” without being in danger of falling into the pit. Centuries of use, however, have worn the steps smooth and, with random slimy refuse scattered along it, make the use of the path a hazardous affair.

The dump is the place for the city to dispose of its “dry” garbage, but rotting and foul organic waste is for the pit. It is the place for dumping chamber pots, dead animals and even the bodies of vile criminals. Anything fleshy, rotting, or foul smelling is appropriate for the pit. To a casual observer, this pit appears to exist to serve the hygienic function of keeping miasma-producing waste away from the dump. This keeps the disease-causing gasses from entering the city. But the origins of this practice springs from the mandate of Vellez-Nev as King As-Tigor recorded in the Book of Ha-Labbot. Tradition also relates that the body of King As-Tigor himself was among the first of the sacrifices made in this pit. The city continues the tradition of human sacrifice, and the pit welcomes newcomers as it welcomed King As-Tigor hundreds of years ago.

The pit is a sort of “church” where people seek absolution of their sins. The ritual of confessing their misdeeds unto the sacrificial offerings and then casting those offering into the pit provides the supplicant hope that Vellez-Nev will accept that sacrifice and not hold them accountable for it in their afterlife. The Pit is also a means of damnation. The priests cast those that they determine to be moral reprobates into The Pit. This sends the guilty into the presence of Vellez-Nev so they might receive immediate judgment.

OSSUARY HILL

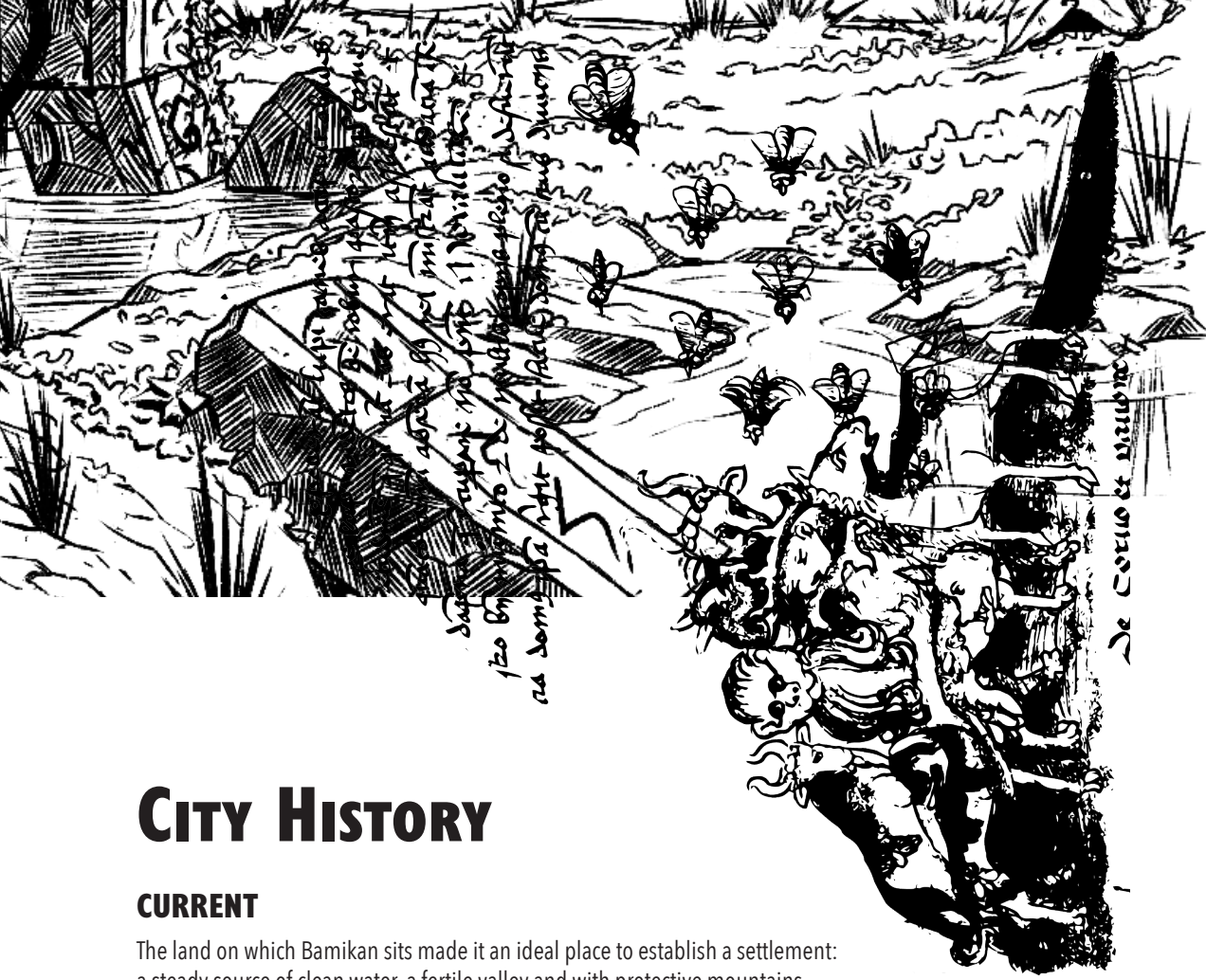
Innumerable passageways honeycomb the rocky hill, many of them predate the city. Early in its hill, the carved passage may have been the home to the various tribes whose existence has long vanished from the memories and legends of the living. There are some key passages with iron doors that deny passage to the curious explorers. The remaining part of the labyrinthine passages serve as an ossuary of the city, with prominent families having their own rooms for their use alone. There are many common areas designated for use by the poor and the foreigners.

While this location serves a macabre purpose, the cool passages offer a welcome refuge for those seeking shelter from the sweltering summer sun. People gather in the outer portions of the hill to enjoy an afternoon of respite from the heat.



THE TEMPLE

The temple is an extensive structure built of a red-orange stone quarried from the Tetu mountains. It has porticos on all four sides of the structure and is topped by a dome that is covered in light-blue colored tiles. There are two entrances to the main hall. The first is a large imposing entrance used for public celebratory rites and second is a smaller and more subdued private entrance for daily functions.



CITY HISTORY

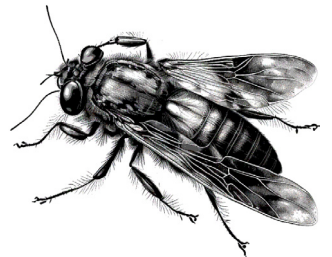
CURRENT

The land on which Bamikan sits made it an ideal place to establish a settlement: a steady source of clean water, a fertile valley and with protective mountains surrounding it. As the settlement grew, it became an important waypoint for caravans. Because it is in between multiple medium-sized cities, Bamikan became a natural nexus for trade.

Its growing wealth drew the unwanted attention of neighboring kingdoms. Indeed, a century ago, the Durrani Empire marched its armies into the valley and conquered the entire region and Bamikan remains a vassalage to the Durrani Empire. Fortunately, the Duranni's rule is remarkably lenient. While an appointed satrap governs the region, the Duranni Empire maintains a "hands off" attitude with the satrap if the silver continues to pour into its coffers.

Seventy-five years ago, the Great Satrap, Timur Durrani, approved the funding of civil improvements to the city. These improvements included buttressing the existing city wall and establishment of fortresses throughout the valley which made the region safer by deterring the larger threats to the region.

While it lacks the full glory of its former days, the city's economic fortune is on the rise. Over the last fifty years, its revenue continues to increase because of the completion of the Durkanan Road; a secondary trade route that opened after the Durrani's armies defeated the Mountain Kings.



THE WORSHIP OF VELLEZ-NEV

It is impossible for travelers visiting Bamikan to miss the abundance of fly motifs displayed throughout the city. From jewelry, to good luck charms, to reliefs cut into the architecture, the religion of the fly god is at the forefront of the lives of these people. Most denizens do not consider themselves as adherents to the actual religion, but they still celebrate the public rites and they engage in the ancient religious customs because as a matter of deep cultural tradition.

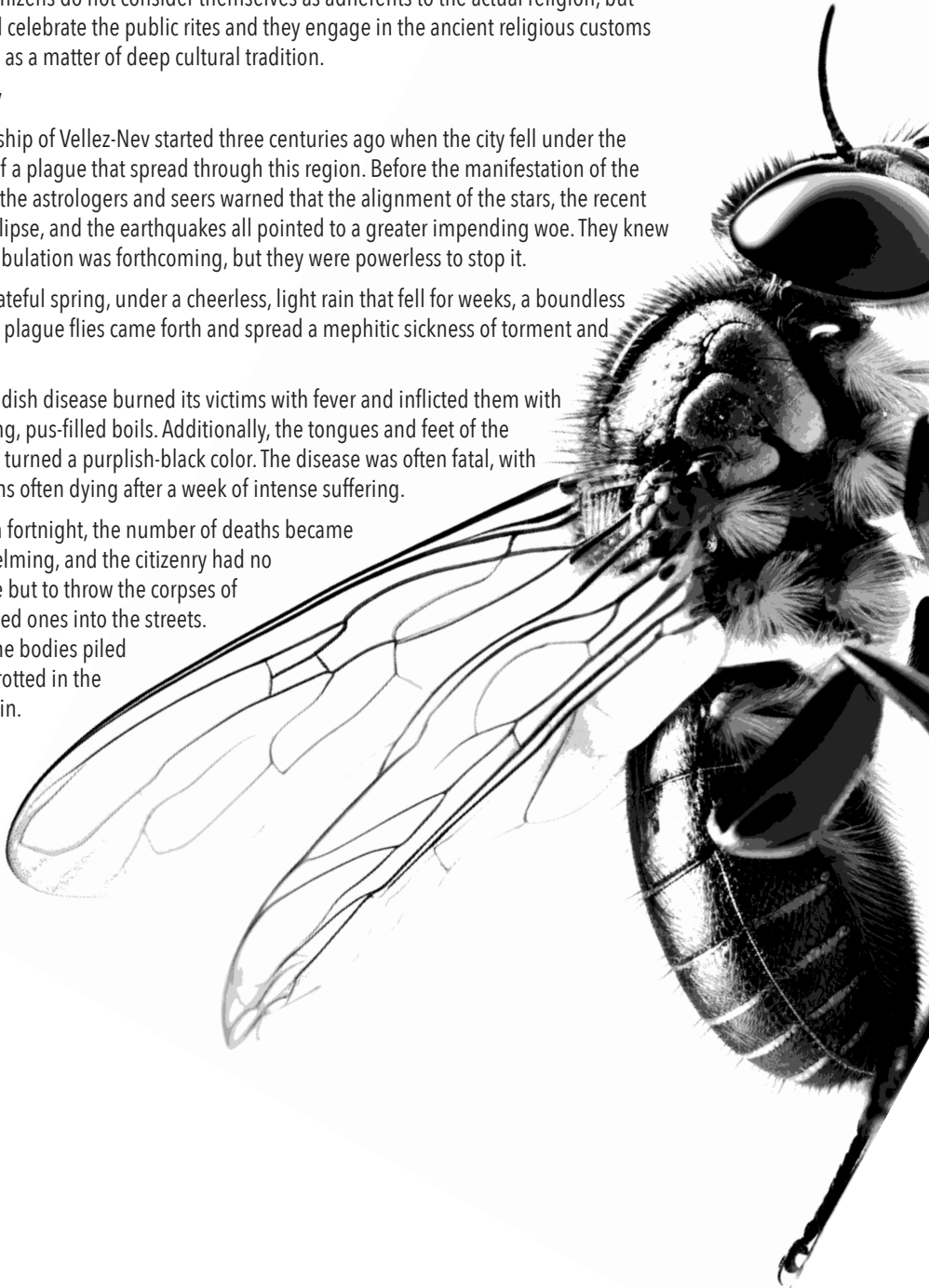
History

The worship of Vellez-Nev started three centuries ago when the city fell under the effects of a plague that spread through this region. Before the manifestation of the plague, the astrologers and seers warned that the alignment of the stars, the recent lunar eclipse, and the earthquakes all pointed to a greater impending woe. They knew that a tribulation was forthcoming, but they were powerless to stop it.

In that fateful spring, under a cheerless, light rain that fell for weeks, a boundless cloud of plague flies came forth and spread a mephitic sickness of torment and death.

This fiendish disease burned its victims with fever and inflicted them with agonizing, pus-filled boils. Additionally, the tongues and feet of the afflicted turned a purplish-black color. The disease was often fatal, with its victims often dying after a week of intense suffering.

Within a fortnight, the number of deaths became overwhelming, and the citizenry had no recourse but to throw the corpses of their loved ones into the streets. There, the bodies piled up and rotted in the warm rain.



The King's Vision

During the city's darkest hour, Vellez-Nev gave a vision to King As-Tigor. Appearing as a fly with the head and arms of an emaciated child, the deity promised salvation for the city if the people provided her the obeisance and obedience that was due her. This included the erection of a suitable temple and the establishment of a proper priesthood.

King As-Tigor agreed to the fly god's terms without reservation. The king retired to his library and entered into a trance that lasted for a week. While under a guided state of consciousness, he dictated to scribes for seven days without stopping. On the eighth day, the oracle ended. The scribes completed transcribing the sacred Book of Ha-Labbot, which contained the instructions, requirements, rituals, and practices of the religion.

On the ninth day, under the burning afternoon sun, King As-Tigor read the incantation from the thirteenth page of that book, completing the Rite of Sacred Absolution. Suddenly, a stench of rot filled the palace chamber and a torrent of blood-red flies poured out from As-Tigor's ears, mouth, and nostrils. Abruptly, the issuance of flies ended and the king's body fell to the floor, withered, embrittled, and dead. Thus, Vellez-Nev accepted the king's sacrifice and removed the plague.

A New Age

Vellez-Nev placed her hand of protection on the city and it entered into an age of peace and prosperity that lasted for generations. During this time, the city of Bamikan remained free from the outbreaks of diseases that raged through the cities that neighbored it. Vellez-Nev's protection also extended beyond the realm of physical health. Under the countenance of the fly god, Bamikan remained free from the common conflicts and wars that embroiled the surrounding territories.

The Lapse

Prolonged peace lulled the people into taking the protection of Vellez-Nev for granted. They neglected the ceremonies and rites of the god who kept them safe. Wars and troubles once again plagued them as the religion of Vellez-Nev devolved into mere superstitious practices. The once prosperous city slouched into poverty and squalor.

Vellez-Nev did not forget Bamikan. Ninety-seven years ago, during the city-wide Celebration of the Figs, a vast plague of biting flies descended upon the city, bringing back the disease of judgment.

The remnants of the Vellez-Nev's Alkahin Alakbirs came forward and declared that this plague returned as a judgment for neglecting the temples, rites and worship of Vellez-Nev.

The satrap and the city elders went before the temple to grovel for forgiveness. They, and the people, vowed to reestablish the religion and its practices if the fly god would remove her left hand from the city. Vellez-Nev heard their pleas and removed her hand of judgment.

Since that time of repentance, the people have maintained their worship of Vellez-Nev and continue their observance of her festivals and rituals.



THE PRIESTHOOD

The priests act with an air of permanence and authority, if not arrogance. They are the devoted adherents of the faith and are the undisputed protectors and arbiters of the faith.

The priesthood is divided up into the following categories: Alkahin Alakbirs, MaswuwI, Mansibls, and Musaeidins.

MUSAEIDINS

The Musaeidins are at the lowest rank of the clerical structure, performing the menial duties necessary for the upkeep of the temple and the shrines. While the role is not glamorous, their employment provides them with food, clothing, and shelter. For that reason, many of the Musaeidins are orphans or children of destitute families who abandoned them at the temple.

Performing tasks for the priests consumes all waking moments of a Musaeidin's life, carrying out the mundane tasks of the temple. They clean the quarters, tend the grounds, maintain the archives, study and learn the tenants of the faith. Their superiors expect them to perform personal services for them, without question. Failure leads to expulsion from service and their superiors remind them that there are plenty of other people willing to take their place.

MANSIBLS

The Mansibls bear the responsibility of ensuring that the temple and religious sites are maintained and tended. The temple leaders assign each Mansibl with a specific realm of responsibility. For instance, one Mansibl keeps the temple's pantry filled while another Mansibl oversees the cleaning of linens. While they are accountable for the temple's upkeep, the Musaeidins are the ones that perform the bulk of the actual work.

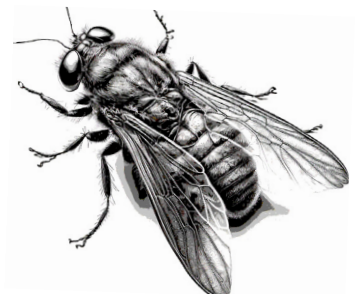
THE MASWUWLS

These priests carry out the daily rites and rituals prescribed by the tenants of the faith. They also maintain the temple's records, both spiritual and accounting. Because their duties require literacy and schooling, this office is out of reach for most of the city's citizens and are filled with the children of local nobles and stationed merchants.

People of wealth and influence pay large donations to the temple to provide a place in the priesthood for their offspring.

THE ALKAHIN ALAKBIRS

Membership to the Alkahin Alakbir requires that the applicant's bloodline ties into those of the original priesthood. The temple limits the highest offices to those who have the lineage that are the least diluted. Because of careful maintenance of their bloodlines, this limits the Alkahin Alakbir to members of two families. While others may take on some duties, only the original families can perform the rites, engage in the quarterly feast, and enter the catacombs.



THE ALHADRINS

While part of the priesthood, they do not fall into the organizational structure outlined above. They are a sacred group that lives deep in Ossuary Hill, attending things that remain a mystery to the rest of the priesthood. Their heads are devoid of hair, whether from shaving, plucking or their hair falling out due to their living conditions is unknown. The only time the Alhadrins interact with the world is when they open the Green Door to receive the consecrated servant or chosen (see Religious Observances).



Their faces are gaunt, their eyes are large, yellow-y and have a moist sheen. On their foreheads, they bear the mark of Vellez-Nev. Because they continually abide underground, they possess pasty-colored skin, greasy hair, and large, watery eyes. They often have patches of open sores that weep clear fluids. They do not speak, nor appear to have any desire to communicate to the others.

The origins of the Alhadrins remain a mystery and speculation; they are members of an ancient priestly family that the fly gods blessed (or cursed) to serve the fane forever.

THE SEXES

While labeled "the priesthood" this is a general term used to describe both men and women. While the priesthood is open to both, only women can be Chief Maswuwl or the Most Alkahin Alakbir. The Book of Ha-Labbot proclaims that Vellez-Nev is the key component to the cycle of creation and she alone will bring about the restoration of this world to a state of harmony. Both acts are tied to the miracle of birth and men are only inferior partners in the act of the blessed procreation.





OBSERVANCES

THE DAILY OFFERINGS: (DAILY)

Piety is part of the everyday life of the city' denizens. Citizens reflexively recite rote prayers as they collect their garbage and dispose of their waste. The act of taking discarded material to the dump, and the pit, become a regular pilgrimage for the devout.

THE WEEKLY WALK: (1X WEEK)

A procession of priests walks along the interior perimeter of the city while three Maswuuls spin bull roars overhead, producing a loud buzzing sound. While they proceed through the city, the priests and the citizens vocalize a buzzing sound to match that of the bull roar.

While they march around the city, they pull a goat or sheep along to be a sacrifice for the Pit. After the seventh time they march around the city, they proceed to the Pit to complete the ceremony. Once they arrive, an Alkahin Alakbir speaks the prescribed prayers and then an Alkahin Alakbir throws the sacrificial animal into the Pit.

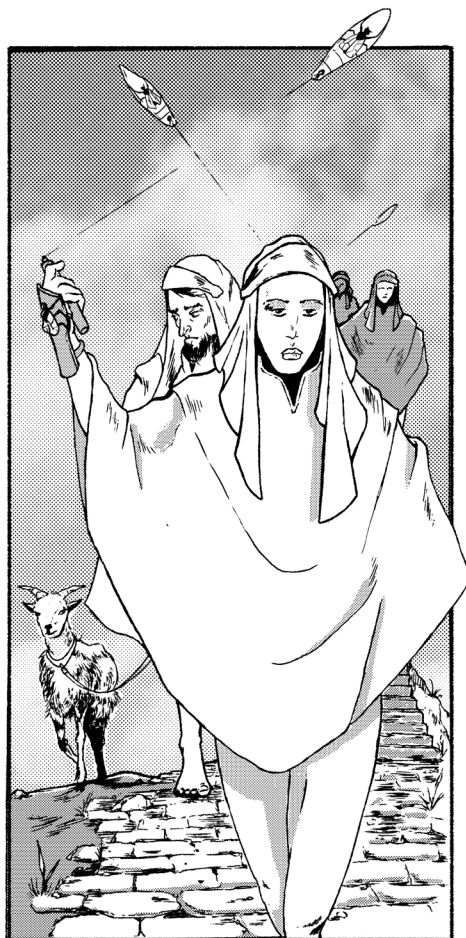
Because the Book of Ha-Labbot does not prescribe that the sacrifice must be free of defects, they use diseased and dying specimens for this purpose. The only requirement is that the animal must be able to walk with priests the entire distance.

THE QUARTERLY FEAST - (4X YEAR)

For two weeks preceding this feast, citizens leave "food" at the various shrines throughout the city. The food collected varies wildly, and it includes portions of vegetables, melons and carcasses that people inedible or undesirable.

Musaeidins go around the city collecting the food sacrifices from these shrines and take them to the Shrine of Feasting and cast them into a pile in the center of the floor. The pile of food remains there until the Quarterly feast. The priests do nothing to prevent the food from rotting, nor do they attempt to remedy the food's foul odor.

At the seventh hour during the day of The Quarterly Feast, the Alkahin Alakbirs walk to the shrine attended by Maswuuls. Only the Alkahin Alakbirs enter the shrine. After crossing the threshold, they close the tall doors and lock them from the inside. The doors remain barred for three days while the priests feed on the food. Rumors abound regarding what activities the priests engage in during that week of celebration.



CONSECRATION OF THE SERVANT - (2X YEAR)

The Alkahin Alakbirs select a Musaeidin to become a consecrated servant of Bhuzeel-Nev. According to tradition, they select the servant after divining auguries and consulting celestial charts.

Being chosen is a high honor and, for a week, the priests dote upon the Musaeidin and provide the chosen with an abundance of rich food, sweets, fine linen clothing, entertainment and narcotics.

When their week is up, with great fanfare, a parade of priests takes the Musaeidin to Ossuary Hill. There, two of the Alkahin Alakbirs take the Musaeidin deep into the catacombs until they reach the locked door with geometric designs made of green copper welded to the iron. After passing through the door, the chosen Musaeidin is never seen again.

FEAST OF THE KING (1X YEAR)

Every year, the citizens greet this celebration with joy and excitement. This holiday marks a week filled with food, music and dance. This is the commemoration of the wisdom, piety and sacrifice of King As-Tigor who interceded for the city to assuage the wrath of Vellez-Nev.

The week is filled with reenactments of that pivot event. Actors, in garish makeup and festive costumes, take on the roles and retell the tale with humor and paunch. The crowds are exuberant and laughter fills the echoing streets.

On the last day of the celebration, a more serious reenactment takes place. The costumes and makeup use muted tones and there is a gravity in how the actors perform their roles. The actors travel to the locations in the story, faithfully reenacting the places and moments of history.

At the point in the play when the king falls over, dead, they substitute the actor playing King As-Tigor for a drugged criminal picked for this occasion. The priests place the drugged criminal upon the litter and secure him to the seat. They proceed to finish out the story and, upon reaching the pit, cast the still-living criminal into the pit.

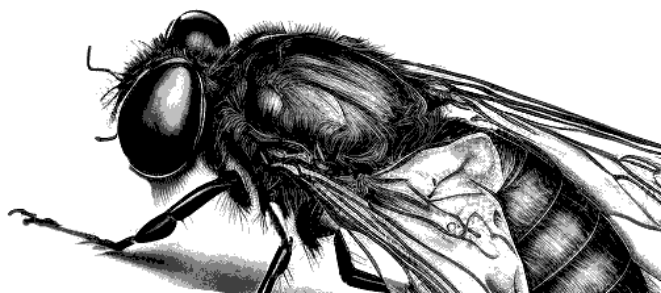
CONSECRATION OF A CHOSEN (OCCASIONAL) -

Sometimes Vellez-Nev and Bhuzeel-Nev take interest in a specific person to serve them in their fane that is buried deep under the moldy catacombs. The choosing does not come by augury or by consulting astrological charts. The sign of the person to be consecrated comes through a swarm of flies vomited from the Pit that journey quickly to the person Vellez-Nev (or Bhuzeel-Nev) chooses for sacred service. In a display of pure adulation, the swarm of flies encase the Chosen with their bodies while fervently depositing the unholy contents of their stomachs into the mouth of the Chosen.

The choice that Vellez-Nev makes often bewilders the priests. Despite their efforts to find a pattern in the people she chooses, each theory is proven wrong. The selected people vary in age and sex. They are rarely from the priesthood and sometimes they are not a citizen of the city.

The ceremonial act is much shorter than the consecration of the servant. The priests, after performing some short rites, escort the willing sacrifice through the catacombs of Ossuary Hill and through the ominous green door.

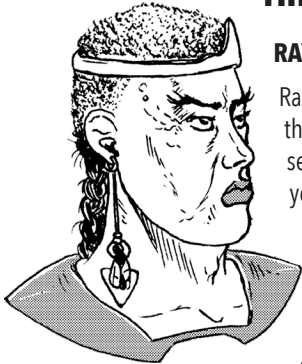
The Chosen exhibit little reaction to the whole affair. From the time of the swarming, they are entranced and remain compliant as the priest leads them to their fate.





NPCs

THE RULERS



RAYI DURRANI, SATRAP (*sophisticated, insightful*)

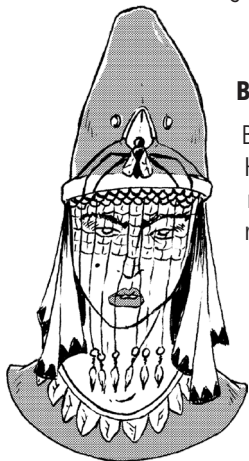
Rayi is part of the expansive genealogy of the Durrani lineage. His father was the satrap of Kubha, but once Rayi reached his thirteenth birthday, his father sent him to the capital to receive the tutelage of scholars and priests. After years of service, the empire bestowed upon Rayi mantle the office of Satrap of Bamikan. While he does not shirk the responsibility of office, he does not relish the responsibilities and weight that comes with the wielding of the scepter.

As a collector of books and knowledge, he frequently compels traveling strangers into his palace to gain news and to gain insights.

NI-LAMM, THE SATRAP'S SON (*quarrelsome, fierce, reckless*)

Rayi placed his son, Ni-lamm, in charge of the regional army and the city's garrison to protect the region from bandits.

To break up the monotony, Ni-lamm inspects the city's remote defensive outposts and occasionally goes on patrol with his men. Rayi frowns at this activity, but Ni-lamm's position gives him this sort of latitude and he often uses this to escape the monotonous duties of a ruling official.



BEREZIRA, MOST ALKAHIN ALAKBIR (*unpredictable, daring*)

Berezira is the first woman of her clan to hold the position of Most Alkahin Alakbir. Her rivals could not deny her ascension because, after the deaths of key rivals, the rules of lineage made her the most eligible. Over the decades, the priesthood's religious fervor grows tepid. The ecclesiastical leadership keeps the faith's ecstatic heritage restrained and labor to keep it a respectable backdrop of the people's everyday lives.

Berezira intends to shake things up. She performs the rites and rituals with unfeigned avidity. This puts her in contrast to the more recent Alkahin Alakbirs, who see these activities as being merely customs tied to superstition. Berezira seeks to draw upon the spirit and power of Vellez-Nev to ignite a spiritual revolution to envelop the world with the fly god's presence. With unreserved joy, she embraces

the apocalypse to come.

YESAL, BISHOP (*goals, obsessive, daring*)

An accomplice to Berezira who guaranteed Berezira's ascension by methodically poisoning others who had greater claim to direct lineage. Yesal carried out the foul deeds because she knew Berezira was the easiest means to elevate her own position. Berezira is ignorant of Yesal's assassinations, but she would have no misgivings if someone enlightened her.



THE NOTABLES



RANTAH (*busybody, shows up at inopportune times*)

He takes special notice of newcomers to the city and makes an incessant inquiry into their business. A filthy man who incessantly begs people to buy his wares.

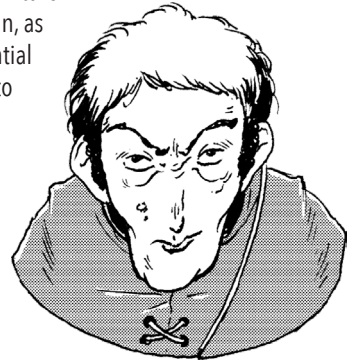
Rantah is never seen without a thick woolen cap, even on the hottest of days. He refuses to remove it if asked. He resorts to violence if any attempt to remove it. Should something separate him from his hat, viewers will notice that he has three large holes in his scalp. Based on their appearance; those holes have been there for years. Anyone peering within will see maggots writhing inside his skull.

AZEEZ-BAHDEE, MERCHANT/INVESTOR (*intuitive, defiant, vain*)

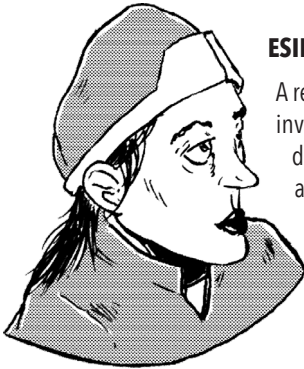
A well-known and successful merchant, Azeez-Bahdee is a long-time fixture in Bamikan. While not born of this place, he invested heavily in Bamikan, as the trade routes shifted, and those investments made him an influential citizen. Not a believer in the fly gods, he still makes large donations to ensure that he, or his family, never becomes the "target" of sacrifice.

Azeez-Bahdee seeks to ruin Esin's business. While initially posing as a friend, mentor and confidante, he turned his countenance against her, knowing her failure ensures the financial ruin of Esin's family.

His wealth, combined with his generosity with the civil authorities and priesthood, has afforded him much in the way of protection, and after many years, Azeez-Bahdee has taken that for granted.



in



ESIN, MERCHANT (*able, shrewd, deadly*)

A relatively new-comer to the city, Esin set up a trading company through the investments of close family members and loans from Azeez-Bahdee. Esin will do anything to turn the situation around, short of murdering Azeez-Bahdee, and only because that would only create significant problems for her.

OUTSIDE THE CITY

1 OSSUARY HILL

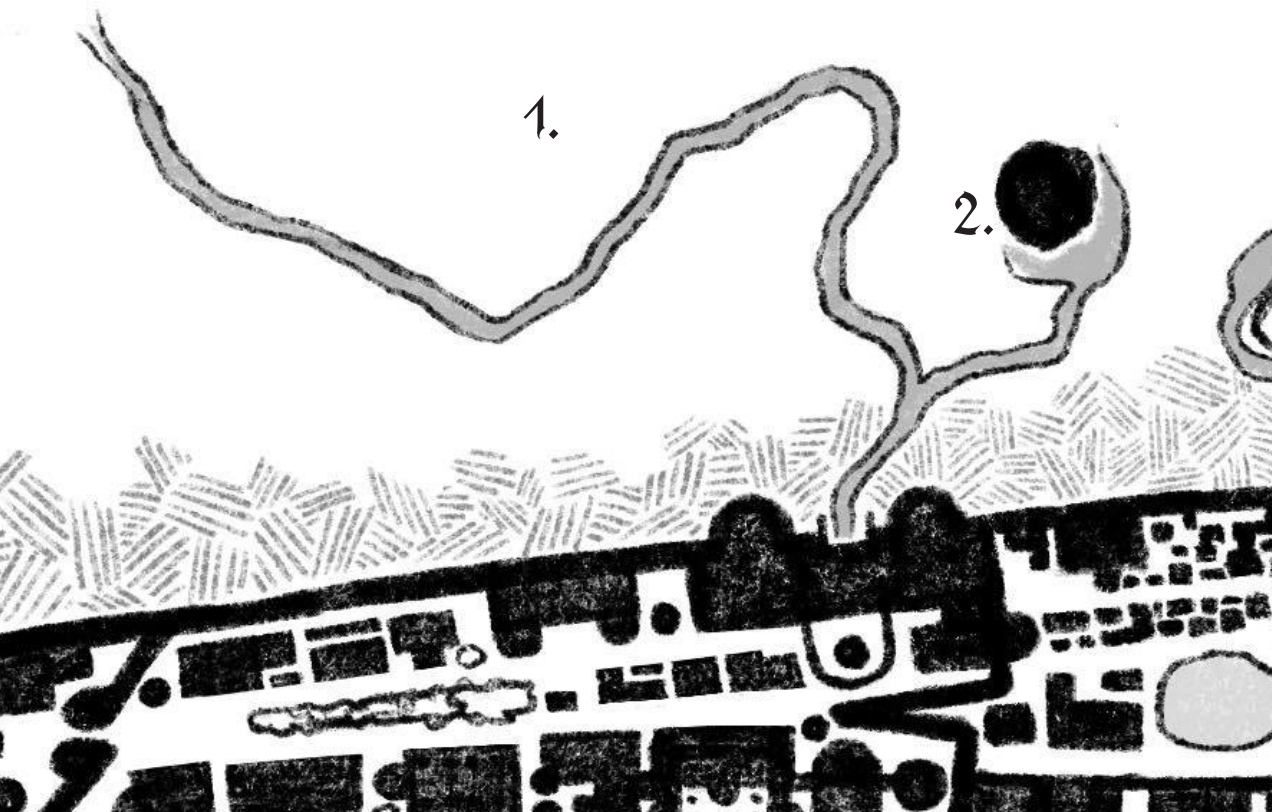
A thousand years ago, the natural caves that pockmark the hill served as ossuaries for the herdsman that sojourned through this valley. As Bamikan grew from a village to a city, those caves ran out of space to store the bones of so many people. In response to this need, the people burrowed into the hill's soft stone and created new funerary rooms. This practice continued through generations with the number of passages and rooms increasing until it became the haphazard labyrinth of connected passages.

Before the funeral, the priests make a large abdominal incision to remove the soft organs. Afterwards, they pack the body cavity with salts. The family then wraps the body of their deceased beloved in loose cloth and places the deceased on a shelf carved from the rock.

Over a period of years, the body sufficiently dries and makes the bones easy to remove from the embrittled flesh. The family caretaker places those bones in a family box, intermingling them with the bones of those who preceded the new occupant. The remaining flesh is collected to be thrown into the pit.

There is a limited number of ossuary rooms with each one owned by a wealthy or long-established family. If a person dies without a family connection, then the person making preparations for the deceased may either pay an established family for the use of their ossuary room. If that is not affordable or available, people make use of the large public ossuary room that is littered with forgotten corpses.

Ossuary hill is a popular place for people to visit during the summer. The cool passages and rooms provide a cool respite from summer's burning sun. Friends and family gather to play games, gossip and drink.



2 THE PIT

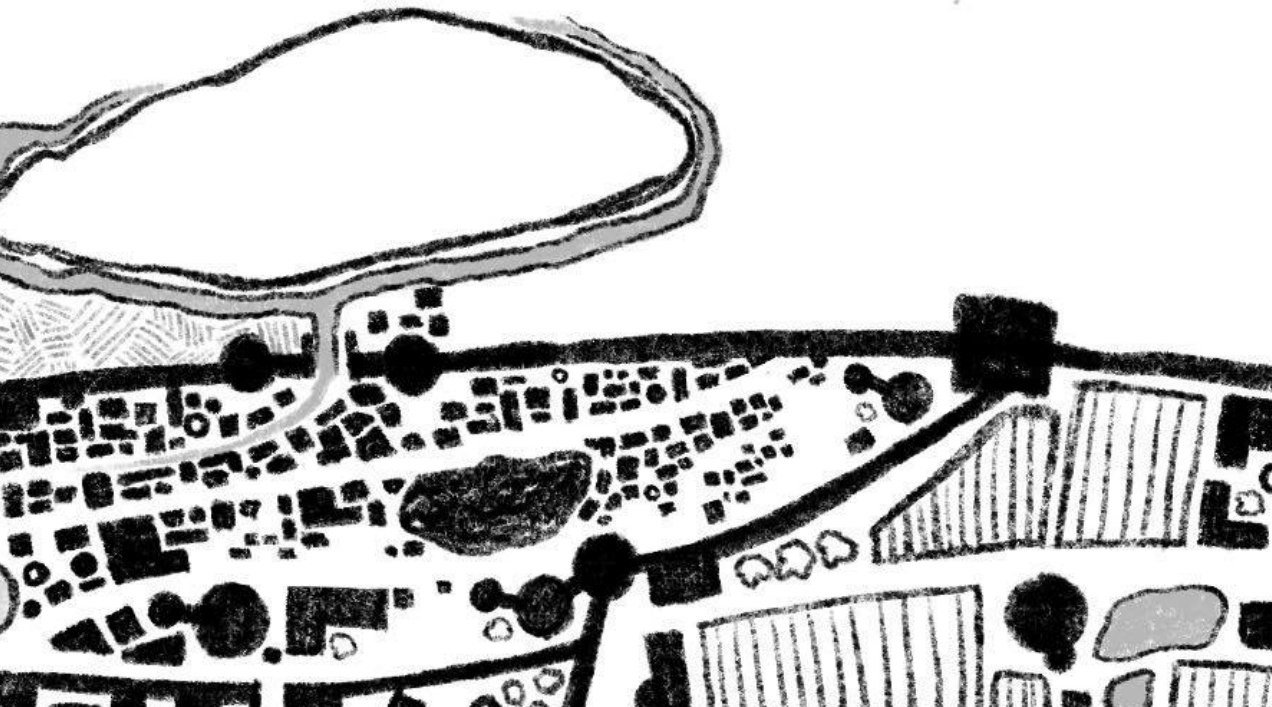
At the top of a sloping hill, thousands of feet from the city, is the pit dedicated to Vellez-Nev. The denizens of the city tread the well-worn path to dispose of garbage that the priests declare to be holy offering to their city's god. Daily, hundreds of people make the trek to dispose of sewage, rotting material, foul carcasses, and the living bodies of the most repugnant criminals. Staggered around the Pit's outer perimeter are various worn and weathered monoliths that are adorned with fly motifs. The Pit itself is a series of steps that descend like an antechamber. Piles of filth and garbage "litter" the area as people often hurl their refuse a suitable distance from the edge of The Pit for fear of falling into the abyss.

Hundreds of feet past the Pit is a great hillside, known as Ossuary Hill, that juts up like a giant beehive. The hillside is made of soft stone and with sparse vegetation dotting it. The hillside is honeycombed with caves, tunnels and rooms carved out over the millennia.

The flies here are very large and fierce. To the strangers visiting the city, this is a landmark of disgust. To the devoted, this is a holy place.

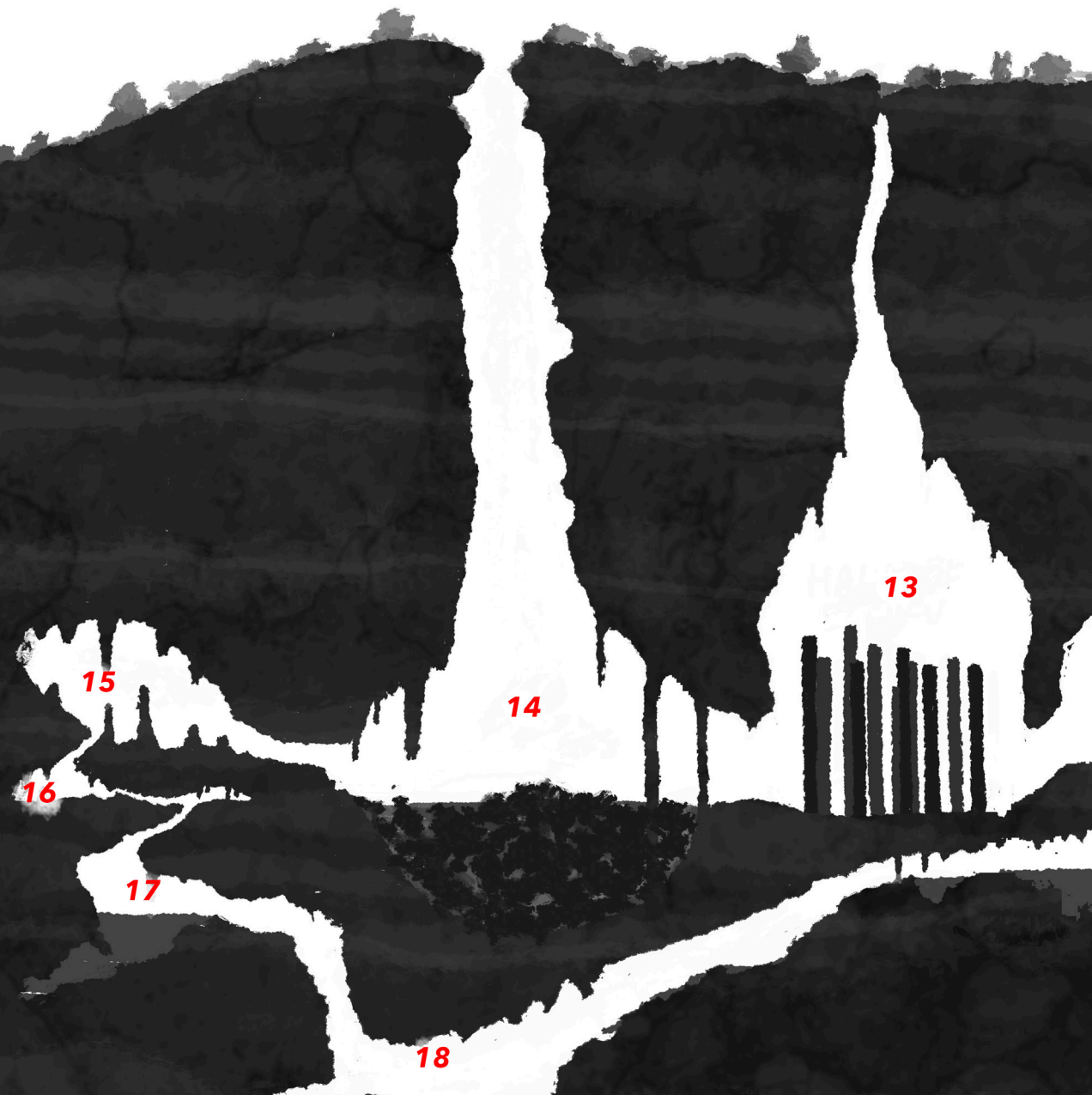
ENTRANCE TO THE FANE

Wide is the mouth of the cave that greets the pilgrims and gawkers who met their way into the entrance. Steps leading up to here are wide and provide an easy climb for those making the trek.



THE UPPER CAVERNS

1. Entrance
2. The Reception Room
3. Corridor to the Vestibule
4. The Vestibule of Remnants
5. The Watch of Those Who Were From Before
6. The Apartments and Commons.
7. Bila-Judhurs' Barracks
8. The Shrine to Bhuzeel-Nev
9. The Joyous Passage
10. The Chamber of the Thirteen Obeli
11. The Birthing Chamber
12. The Library
13. Hall of the Eleven Pillars
14. The Sanctum of the Vellez Nev
15. The Alcove of the King As-Tigor
16. The Abode of the Blessed
17. The Pool of the Profane
18. Passages

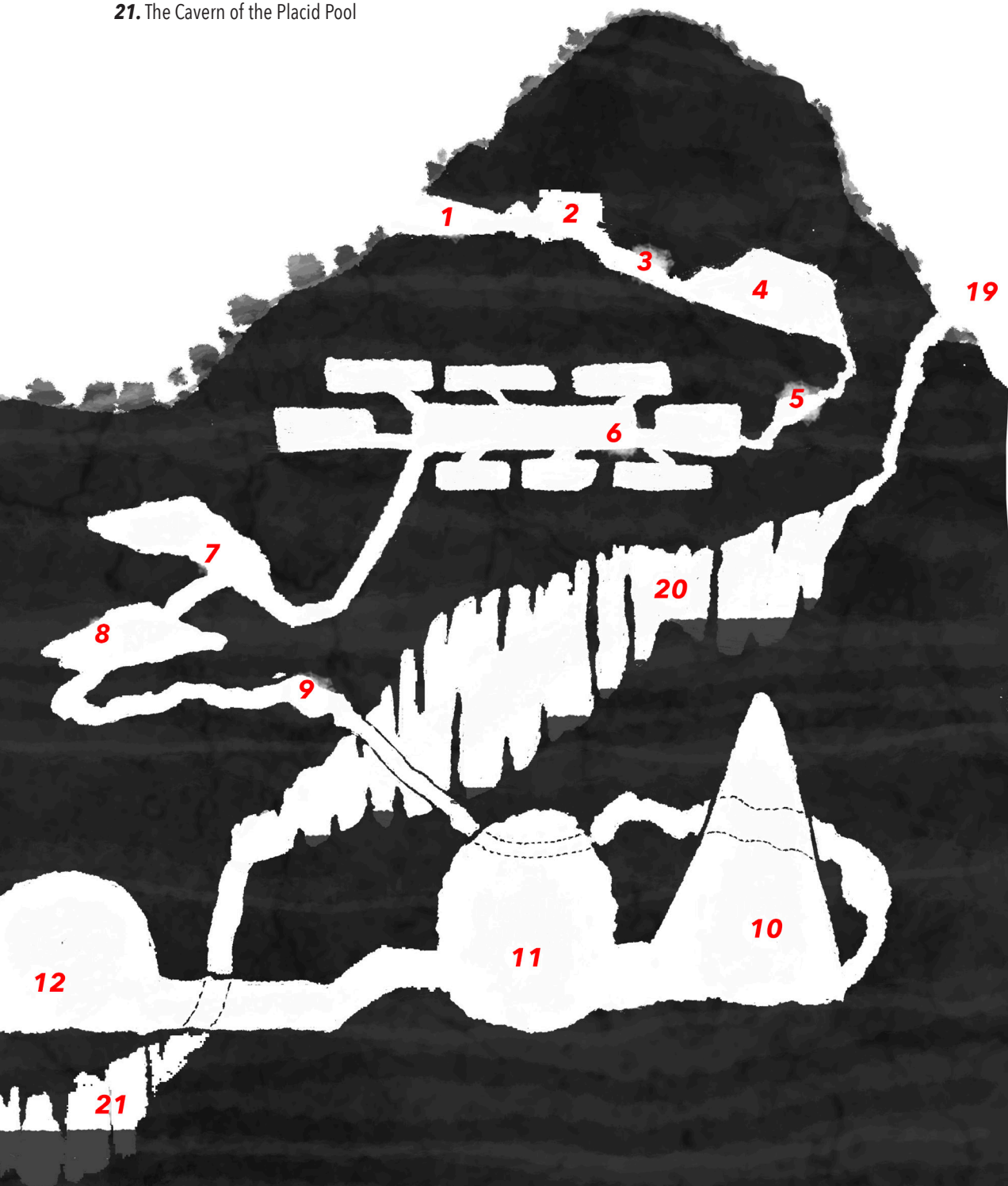


THE LOWER CAVERNS

19. The Entrance

20. The Caverns of Del-bai-arth

21. The Cavern of the Placid Pool





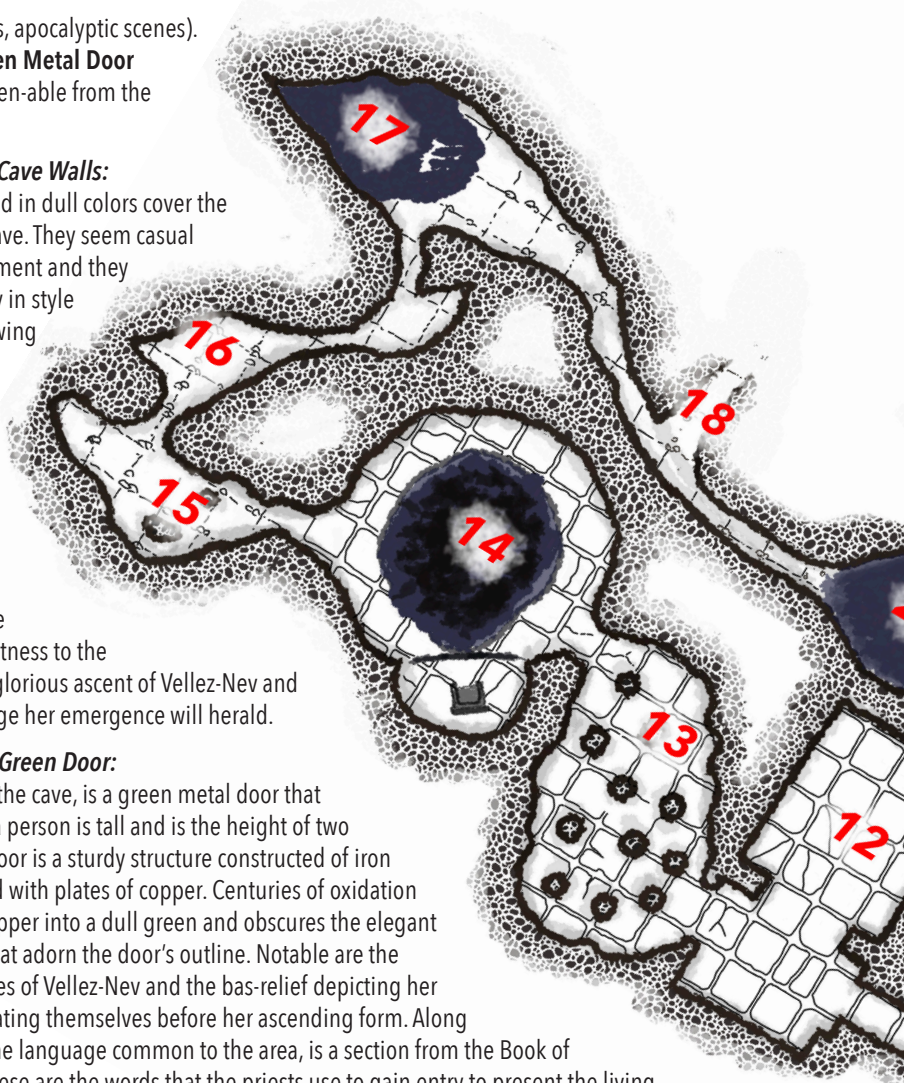
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ENTRANCE

Frescos (dull colors, apocalyptic scenes).
Copper drum. **Green Metal Door** (copper clad, unopen-able from the outside).

- **Viewing the Cave Walls:**
Murals painted in dull colors cover the walls of the cave. They seem casual in their placement and they appear to vary in style and size, showing that they originated from different decades or even different centuries. The images on the mural bear witness to the forthcoming glorious ascent of Vellez-Nev and the utopian age her emergence will herald.
- **Viewing The Green Door:**
At the end of the cave, is a green metal door that is as wide as a person is tall and is the height of two people. The door is a sturdy structure constructed of iron and brass clad with plates of copper. Centuries of oxidation turned the copper into a dull green and obscures the elegant engravings that adorn the door's outline. Notable are the stylized images of Vellez-Nev and the bas-relief depicting her priests prostrating themselves before her ascending form. Along the door, in the language common to the area, is a section from the Book of Ha-Labbot. These are the words that the priests use to gain entry to present the living sacrifice, or a food offering, to the Alhadriins.
- **Door to 2:**
The door has no handle on its exterior and only those inside the Reception Room can open it. Next to the door is a large drum which is used to signal that a person desires entry. When someone sounds the drum, a tiny panel in the door slides to the side, allowing the occupant to view who stands at the door. If the visitor provides the words of entry, as found in the Book of Ha-Labbot, the Alhadriin will open the door and allow entry.





2 THE RECEPTION ROOM:

Room (Clean but with a dingy feel, musty smell). **Large Tapestries** (hangs from the ceiling, covers all the walls). **Seventeen Statuettes** (on pedestals, dark stone). **Mosaic floor** (tile and glass, scene of Vellez-Neve ascending). **Servants** (emaciated, threadbare clothing).

- **Viewing the Tapestries:**
Large tapestries hang from the ceiling and cover the walls. Tapestry one depicts Vellez-Neve in a consummation flight with Bhuzeel-Neve. Tapestry two shows a young woman fleeing across the sky while she presses her hands against the vicious wound in her abdomen. The third tapestry depicts a scene of Vellez-Neve in flight with a host of winged attendants. Below them are a multitude of prostrating people. Tapestry four shows a forlorn king sitting upon a throne inside an enormous cavern.
- **Examining the Statuettes**
There are seventeen pedestals, each waist high and bearing small, stylized statues of various deities. These are depictions of Vellez-Neve, other fly gods, and unknown deities. The artisans crafted these idols from a dark, smooth stone and embedded each work with precious gems. These are cold to the touch and emanate a malevolent feeling.
- **Plundering the Statuettes**
They range between one and two feet long and weigh approximately 10 pounds. Those seeking to pry the gems from the idols must make an Open Doors attempt. If they fail, the knife or object used to pry the stone free breaks. Each stone is worth 1d20 gp, and each idol has 1d10 gems embedded in it.

Once someone leaves the fane with an idol, they are under a curse and suffer several "fun" symptoms such as having several flies always flying around them, nightmares of a fly-headed person hunting them down, or effusive sweat that smells of rotten meat. The curse causes the victims to have a -1 on all attacks and saves. If the thief finds a buyer, each idol is worth 1d20x1d20 gp.

- **The Alhadrins:**
There are always three Alhadrins assigned to stand behind the green door, ready to open the door to welcome those worthy of crossing the door's sacred threshold. Unless a priest sounds the drum, the door remains locked. 1d4 additional Alhadrin's sweep the floor, and polish the statuettes, and burn incense.
- **Sounds from 3**
Occupants of the room hear the echoing sound of chanting coming from 3. These are the rote prayers, spoken in unison, by a group of 2d4 Alhadrin carrying out the prescribed rites. There is a 3-in-6 chance that the procession is heading towards 6. Likewise, the procession heads towards 2. If they find anyone unaccompanied by an Alhadrin, or not following the rites, they raise an alarm.

3 CORRIDOR TO THE VESTIBULE

Descending Corridor (50' long, echoes, steep steps). **Graffiti** (haphazard writing, different languages). **Doorway** (open, sign above opening)

- **Reading the Graffiti**
Covering the walls along this passage are phrases scrawled in chalk. They bear the appearance of graffiti because of their haphazard appearance. For those who can read the writings, these are the ecstatic writings of people describing an impending apocalypse with each work dripping with vivid word-imagery.

In a tongue that the characters can read is a series of verses from Book of Ha-Labbot. If the characters chant those verses, the Alhadrin's believe the chanters to be among the faithful.

- **Doorway to 4**

Above the doorway to this room is the following message written neat and steady hand: "Remove The Fetters That Hinder Rebirth." Two of the Alhadrin, devoid of clothing, stand here waiting to receive the new sacrifice. They then lead the person into the vestibule for disrobing.

4 THE VESTIBULE OF REMNANTS

Circular room (20' diameter, rough hewn). **Piles of clothing** (heaping, musty-smelling).

- **The purpose of the Room**

The room contains the discard garments and items that adorned the sacrifices throughout the centuries. Here, the sacrifices shed their clothing and symbolically walk away from their old life and enter the new life that awaits them.

Examining the Clothing

Those that have the luxury of looking through the mounds of discarded robes find rings, necklaces, brooches and earrings. Every turn a character spends looking through the clothing reveals 1d20 gp worth of jewelry and trinkets. If the characters spend a combined total of 2 hours searching through the clothing, they will find 2,000 gp worth of treasure.

5 THE WATCH OF THOSE WHO WERE FROM BEFORE

Corridor (narrow passage, worn steps). **Room** (standing corpses, dust-filled air)

- **Standing Corpses:**

While their lifespans exceed those of their fellow mortals, the Alhadrins do not live forever. The bodies of their dead are dry husks which makes their physical remains unsuitable for the pit because they are incapable of decaying. Instead, their bodies stand here in haphazard rows, guarding the hallway in death. They stand in rapt attention, that stand forever serving their god in death, like statues in a temple.

- **Aggrieving the Dead**

If someone sounds a warning, the dead priests animate, becoming Alhadrin zombies. Armed with clubs, they seek to subdue intruders and throw them into the pit (14).

- **Doorway to 6**

While the Alhadrin do not speak, as they go about their normal day-to-day activities. For those taking the time to listen, they hear several people going about their daily activities. If characters stop to listen, there is a 1-in-6 chance that a group of 2d4 Alhadrin are heading to 5 as part of their ritual.



6 THE APARTMENTS AND COMMONS.

Circular Room (40' diameter, sweet but moldy smell). **Filthy Floor** (strewn with uneaten food). **Adjoining rooms** (asymmetrical, dissimilar). **Small pool of water** (natural basin in the floor, polluted, community water). **Pictographs** (adorn the walls, disturbing).

- **Purpose of the Common Room:**
They survive by the meager food offerings the temple brings to them. Once a month, they receive filth from the pit to consume as a holy meal. They regularly draw moisture by prostrating and lapping up the loathsome water from the pit.
- **Viewing the Pictographs:**
The pictographs adorning the wall depict ancient prophecies, fevered dreams, twisted visions of reality and scenes of despair. Scrawled like graffiti on the walls are phrases from the Book of Ha-Labbot.
- **Adjoining Room Of Voiding:**
The adjoining rooms are sleeping spaces, a chamber for expelling bodily waste, and a storeroom. Despite the lack of hygiene habits by the Alhadrins, and the proximity of a vast and open toilet, this area doesn't reek of filth.
Adjoining Sleeping Rooms
The sleeping rooms have no proper beds. The Alhadrins find a place to slump and take their daily rest in with their eyes open. While drowsing, they breathe with loud and raspy intakes of air. Sometimes they sleep together in piles on the floor.
- **Adjoining Storage Room**
The room holds odd discarded items, implements for various ceremonies and clubs studded with iron used for defending the fane.

7 BILA-JUDHURS' BARRACKS

Alcoves (beds, shelves, pottery),

- **The Purpose of the Room**
Bila-Judhurs come to and from these caves at will, often traveling via the long tunnel that adjoins these areas. Those tunnels connect to a large tunnel network which access various locations throughout the mountains in this area.
Bila-Judhurs rarely stay more than a few days before traveling on, and the accommodations reflect that. The room itself is spartan, but there are shallow alcoves with crude beds. Next to each bed are simple utilitarian items such as boxes, baskets, basins, crude shelves and hooks.
- **Is the Room in Use?**
There is a 1-in-6 chance that the room is in use by a Bila-Judhur. If the result is a success, roll again to determine additional Bila-Judhurs. Keep rolling as long as the die generates a success. While they travel light, each Bila-Judhur has 2d10 gp and 2d20 sp in the alcove they occupy. The money is not hidden, but it takes 2 rounds to find it.

8 THE SHRINE TO BHUZEEL-NEV

Statue of a maggot (soft red stone, effigy of Bhuzeel-Nev, foul offering litter the ground),
Kneeling adherents (three people prostrated in worship)

- **The Shrine**
 This room is for the adoration and worship of the foul, maggot god—Bhuzeel-Nev. The statue and surrounding area is littered with garbage. There are always three Alhadrin in a posture of worship, oblivious to what is going on around them.
- **Doorway to 9**
 There is a 2-in-6 chance that strange and ominous noises emerge from the long, narrow and serpentine passage. To those attempting to listen, it is the sound of indistinct but sinister whispering. They are the sounds of 2d4 Alhadrin talking with the chamber's acoustics echoing and distorting their voices.

9 THE JOYOUS PASSAGE

Passage (worn steps, exhausting path, echoes noises). **Room** (friezes on the wall, smooth floor)

- **Walking Down the Stairs**
 While traveling through the hall, the Alhadrins break from their normal silence and sing hymns from the Book of Ha-Labbot. The passage has an unusual resonance that becomes pronounced when those traveling the hall chant in a monotone voice. With only a few voices, the acoustic qualities of the chamber appear to amplify the number of voices, sounding like a choir. After the singing ceases, the song continues as if ghostly voices take the song to the upper reaches of the chamber and beyond.
- **The Room**
 Along the wall are friezes carved in an angular and rudimentary style. The artists depict: a person being led to a small pool of water followed by a person emerging with distorted features, a Bila-Judhur surround by devotees in pious postures, a maggot creature holding a dying woman, an image of Vellez-Nev in flight with a multitude exhibiting oversized eyes and diminutive mouths, scenes containing the random amalgamations of flies and humans.

10 THE CHAMBER OF THE THIRTEEN OBELI

This cone-shaped chamber with rough-hewn walls has thirteen obeli arranged with careful symmetry along the arc of the far wall. Their original form and purpose disappeared long ago. They are now worn smooth and devoid of their original features.

- **The Silent Procession**
 On the seventeenth and nineteenth days after a full moon, the Alhadrins proceed to this chamber in silent procession. One stands at the entrance and begins canting and crying out in a raspy voice. Another stands beside the canter and provides a dis-harmonic accompaniment. The remaining make their way to the obeli, to surround and swarm them like flies drawn to offal. They clamber and rub the worn monuments and often cry out in loud voices. This ceremony continues for seven hours and then ends with abruptness. The Alhadrins then collect themselves and proceed back to their duties.



THE BIRTHING CHAMBER

Room (40' diameter, smooth walls, sour smell). **Eleven pools** (3' in diameter, putrid water).
Floor (smooth, wet, slippery). **Humid**

- **Viewing the Room**
This room has a rounded wall that is oddly smooth and warm. There are no tooling marks found on the walls of this room.
- **Walking on the Floor**
Anyone moving across the floor faster than a cautious pace risks falling into the pools.
- **Examining the Putrid Pools**
The room contains eleven round and shallow pools filled with bodily waste. The pools are about two feet deep and can accommodate a person assuming the fetal position. That is their intent.

1d6+1 pools contain a person who is in a state of transformation. They remain in a fetal position unless disturbed and then they thrash about, splashing water until they finally calm down enough to re-assume their fetal posture.
- **What is this place?**
The Alhadriins escort the living sacrifices to this room and gently place them in the pools. The Alhadriins replenish the water levels of the pools by sucking up the vile nutrients from the Pit and then vomiting out the liquids into this room. Over time, the submerged sacrifices change, in both body and mind, to become more perfect servants of Vellez-Nev and Bhuzeel-Nev. The alterations are not quick; it may take years, or even decades, for those victims immersed in those putrid waters to achieve their last form.



THE LIBRARY

Rectangular room (30'x40'; holes, and alcoves fashioned into the wall). **Three stone slabs** (cart-sized, rectangular, back with veins of silver, odd designs and recesses).

- **Viewing the Room**
The masons that carved this chamber also fashioned a vast symmetrical array of holes in the walls that hold ancient scrolls or books.
- **Reading the books and scrolls**
Those that attempt to read the various works will determine that most of the texts are indecipherable because they were authored in languages long forgotten, or ones never penned by human hands.

Scholarly characters can read some texts and will gain insights into ancient mysteries. The works delve into complex mathematics that relate to astronomical bodies or treaties into matters of the cosmic arcana. If the character finds a buyer, each book or scroll is worth 1d10 - 1d10 thousand gold pieces.
- **Examining the stone slabs**
In the center of the room, sits three black rectangular stone slabs with silver veins running through them. They have runes and symbols carved on the outside and odd geometric alcoves and crevasses fashioned along the top.
 1. Those taking the time to inspect them conclude that these are receptacles for objects of some alien use.
 2. Each slab is large enough for a person to lie upon.
 3. All three give the appearance of being blocks quarried from the same location.

- **What are these slabs?**

The nature of these slabs is open to the GM. One potential use is that these are engines fueled by magic. If inspected, the person notices that a magical rod, staff, or wand fits nicely into one of those odd alcoves. Each use of the machine consumes a charge.

- **Potential uses of slabs**

1. Teleportation: It transfers a means of transferring people and items across great distances, even to other worlds.

2. Prison: The slab holds a creature in stasis OR will envelope a creature and place it in stasis. The size of the creature can exceed the size of the slab. Whatever is inside should be an interesting creature or person. Some ideas are a planar creature, a wizard from another world or a cleric from another aeon who seeks to awaken its primal master.

3. Magic Item Recharger: - instead of consuming charges from a rod, staff or wand, it recharges them by absorbing the life of the creature placed upon it.

13 HALL OF THE ELEVEN PILLARS

Thirteen dark stone pillars (30' tall, strange designs, warm, sticky). **Wet floor** (Water flowing 11, sewage-laden), **High ceiling** (echos, dome-shaped, moaning noise).

- **Entering the Room**

The room has a high ceiling, which narrows at the center, becoming a small opening to the outside. This opening is large enough for a person to squeeze through. The winds whipping across the hillside create a moaning noise that is musical, like that of an ethereal chorus.

- **Examining the Pillars**

The stone is not natural in this area and its origins are unknown to even the most experienced masons. Strange designs cover the pillar; alien motifs, odd recesses and geometric cavities. The stone is the temperature of a person's body. Touching it gives the sensation of sticky human skin, but the pillar remains hard as stone.

Those spending more than a few minutes examining the stones feel an affinity for the pillars and a growing desire to embrace one of them. Those doing so feel contentment and a desire to shed the cares of this world. They must make a Save vs. Spells to avoid being enchanted to remain here, embracing the stone. Those charmed by the pillar will resist (non-violently) attempts to remove them from the area.

- **The Effect of the Pillars**

The pillars subtly shift their form to return that embrace until, over the period of a week, the pillar subsumes the person. One hundred and seventeen weeks later, a Bila-Judhur emerges from the pillar, birthed by radical cosmic magics. The majority don't survive this process and they age rapidly until they collapse in an agonizing death.

What are the Pillars?

These pillars are the very Chaos fragments of Ishtan-Gorthep's sword. Bhuzeel-Nev, in a rare mood, sought out the Nevtherlin godling wizard to shape and repurpose the Chaos fragments. Bhuzeel-Nev saw this as a means to produce unpredictable pets. The arcane bindings the Nevtherlin wizard placed upon the pillars keep the shard of Chaos stable and prevent them from warping nearby reality.

- **Entrance To 14**

While in the room, characters hear the buzzing of a vast host of flies. Additionally, they hear (1) a cry and splash of a person falling into the pit, (2-3) the splash of garbage falling into the pit, (4-5) the laments of King As-Tigor, (6) the sounds of something splashing in the pool.

14 THE SANCTUM OF THE VELLEZ NEV

Chamber (cavernous, buzzing sound, putrid smell). **Pool** (dark, bubbling, noxious). **Ceiling** (opens to the surface, high ceilings). **The throne** (white, occupied, plain). **Floor** (slick, engravings)

- ***Entering The Chamber***

The buzzing sound of ecstatic flies reverberates as the shape of the chamber intensifies the sound. Those who listen too intently fall into a hypnotic state and embrace the droning. To the entranced, their brains feel like they are being physically touched and they experience alien sensations and thoughts. The encounter is soothing and their worries and cares fade away, leaving them in a state of wondrous contemplation.

The smell that emanates from this place is a strange confluence of the vile and sublime, the decaying and the wholesome. It is a welcoming smell that envelopes one in its revolting and nurturing embrace.

The only noticeable light that comes into this chamber is from the sun shining into the pit hole above. The floor of the chamber appears to be tiled mosaic but upon close inspection that there are no tiles, simply designs carved in the floor.

- ***Viewing The Pool***

The pool is a disgusting sight as it is the recipient of hundreds of years' worth of the city's vile waste. It is a festering mass of offal and rotting garbage, writhing with maggots and surrounded by a massive cloud of flies.

The depth of the pool is not discernible. An underground stream feeds this pool, ensuring that the uppermost contents of the pool maintain a soupy consistency. The denser material congeals about eight feet below the surface.

The pool's waters are warm, warmer than they should be at this depth. During the cooler seasons, the waters produce a humid mist that embraces the bodies and lungs of the visitants with its foul embrace.

- ***The Denizens Around the Pool***

The denizens of this level come to the pool to drink and feed. They kneel at the edge and partake until they have their fill. Some use earthenware vessels to ladle the vile soup into their mouths, while others plunge their faces in the mire and consume their meals like mindless animals. At any given time, there are 1d4-1 Alhadrin and 1d3-1 Blessed of Bhuzeel-Nev around the vile pool.

- ***She Who Abides Herein***

The pool is a vessel that holds Vellez-Nev until the day that she emerges from its filth to proclaim her apocalypse upon the world. In the deepest portion of the pool, Vellez-Nev slumbers and feeds on the waste that she immersed herself. For the next 2,769 years she gathers her strength to emerge from her foul dwelling, take flight and mate with Bhuzeel-Nev. The polluted water of the pit is further imbued with the secretions and excretions of the unholy Vellez-Nev.

- ***The Reaction of the Blessed.***

When intruders enter the sacred chamber, a teeming mass (6d6 per round) of the Blessed crawl out of the pit's mire to guard their goddess and the fallen king. The guardians allow those that bear no ill-will, to approach King As-Tigor. The Blessed bear no tolerance for those who intend mischief upon their wards. They will swarm those that they judge to be suspect and pull them into the filthy mire, drowning them in the ichor-laden waste.

- ***The Effect of the Waters.***

The sustained immersion in these polluted waters is not fatal, because the ichor sustains the life of those plunged into its corrupt waters. While suspended in that fluid environment, those pulled into the waters change over time into a form and function that is better suited to attend to Vellez-Nev's needs and desires. Along with their bodies, the magical waters also transform their minds and their wills into loyal servants to their new goddess. Once fully transformed, they join the ranks of others who attend to Vellez-Nev, until the day she emerges.

15 THE ALCOVE OF THE KING AS-TIGOR

Alabaster throne (white stone, plain and unadorned). **Sitting figure** (pale, moaning, naked). **Attendants** (bloated, naked, sub-human).

- ***The King***

Herein sits King As-Tigor, granted eternal life for his dutiful fulfillment of the dictates of Vellez-Nev. Nine days after the priests cast his body into the pit, the Keepers pulled the king's body from the pool. The immersion in the unholy waters brought the king back from the gates of death, but he now exists in a quasi-living state as a living corpse. King As-Tigor's body does not function properly, and he remains in an invalid state. He sprawls limply upon an alabaster throne while the Haris Almalik serve his needs. His bloated arms and legs twitch and shuffle, but they no longer function. Like a misshapen melon rotting in a hot afternoon sun, his abdomen distends and undulates from the teeming maggoty masses that infest it. While his face is puffy and his countenance fallen, the fallen king can speak, but not without wiggling maggots falling from his mouth.

Because King As-Tigor is lucid, and he is aware of this horrific nature of his circumstance, he wishes for the annihilation of death, but knows that is not his fate. While Vellez-Nev provides him with glimpses of his future, torturing him with visions of his eventual fate.

- ***The King's Reaction***

If the characters approach King As-Tigor, he acknowledges their presence by making an immediate inquiry of them in a voice of one who longs for conversation. Bereft of evil intent, this tortured soul asks with earnestness about the world that lies just outside of this cave's oppressive confines. While he has an interest in the political landscape of the region, that is not the conversation that he seeks. Quivering with desperation, the pitiful king pleads with the visitors to recount their experiences of journeying among the land of the living. The pale king finds it soothing to his spirit to know the mundane details of people's lives. In a vicarious moment, he finds temporary relief from his present hell. The king weeps if a speaker elaborates on the physical sensations such as the taste of a fig or the softness of fine linen.

- ***The Haris Almalik***

Five of the Haris Almalik attend to the king, caressing his skin and whispering soothing sounds into his ear. Each morning, they engorge themselves on the foul waters of the pit, until their abdomens expand like those of a bloated tick. Throughout the day, they sustain their king by taking turns vomiting their stomach's contents into his unwilling mouth. This vile food maintains the colony of maggots that sustain the soul and body of the weeping king. They will protect the king with their lives.

16 THE ABODE OF THE BLESSED

Cavern (dry and dusty floor, pigmented stains on walls)

- **Viewing the Pigmented stains**
The Blessed scrape their bodies against the walls during times of molting because the waters of the pit continually mutate their bodies, requiring them to shed their skin often. The stains are the blood, fluids and ichors that flow from their discarded skins. Along the floor are dried castings that have grown dry and brittle.
- **The Blessed of Bhuzeel-Nev**
When not submerged in the pit's mire or attending to their slumbering god, 2d6-2 of the Blessed of Bhuzeel-Nev inhabit this cave to sleep, rest and meditate on the needs of their patron. There are others who perform missions for their masters, traveling through the tunnels to be the hands and eyes of their deities. Other than the population of servants that dwell here, the cave is devoid of contents.
- **Entrance To 14**
While in the room, characters hear the buzzing of tens of thousands of flies. Additionally, they hear (1) a cry and loud splash of a person falling into the pit, (2-3) the splash of something thrown into the pit, (4-5) the moaning and weeping of King As-Tigor, (6) the sounds of something splashing in the pool.
- **To 16**
The sound of moaning, screeching and moist buzzing noises come from this room. Those listening long enough will also make out the sound of chains dragging on the hard stone floor. As one gets close to the entrance, the overwhelming stench of moldy rot overwhelms the nostrils.

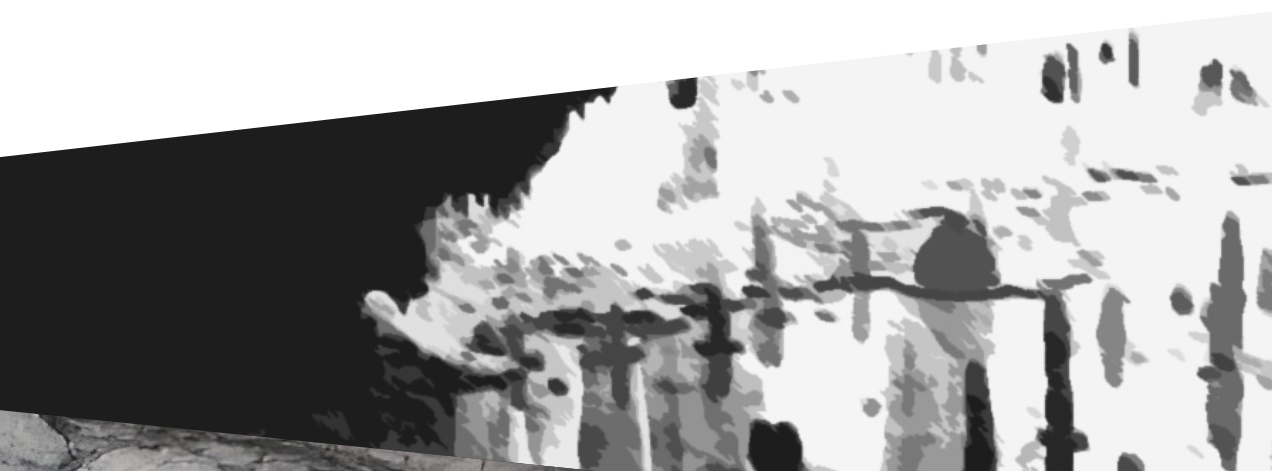
16B. THE CAVE OF GIBBERING

Cavern (clanking of chains, the cries of the dying, the stench of rot)

- **The purpose of the room**
The effects of the Chaos tinged waters will, occasionally, twist creatures beyond the limits of being able to function. Here, chained to the floor, are the discarded victims to the transmogrifications. Because the waters imbue vitality unto those bathed in its water, it takes years for creatures restrained here to die. Some curious specimens, though unworthy of being in the presence of Vellez-Nev and her servants, are curiosities that may serve a future purpose. Those creatures are kept alive, some even acting as guards.
- **The Denizens**
Three Abhorrent Guardians await chained to the floor (with a generously long chain) to act as sentries for those that enter from 17. They attack any intruders that get within the range of their chins. There are 1d6 chained Abhorrent that are kept alive for some future use.

There are 1d6 Abhorrent close to death. One pleads for someone to save it. Carcasses litter the floor and lie piled up along the wall. Their bodies are neither fit for consumption by its fellows nor are they worthy dwell within the holy pit.





17 THE POOL OF THE PROFANE

Cavern (Dripping water, acrid odor). **Pool** (pure and clear water, items below the surface)

- Inspecting the Pool**
 People cast items into the Pit that are unworthy of Vellez-Nev. The Blessed of Bhuzeel-Nev (and the keepers) pull those items out and discard here. The objects vary in nature, but they are all inorganic and include things left on the bodies cast into the Pit or just odd bits of garbage. The pool contains centuries' worth of baubles. Those inclined to sort through the garbage can find items of value. It takes days to sift through the material to find any valuable treasure. The pit contains 760 cp, 49 sp, 93 gp, 2 gems (100gp, 50 gp) , 4 pcs of jewelry (1,160 gp, 1,500 gp), chainmail +1 and a shield +1.
- To 16**
 The sound of moaning, screeching and moist buzzing emanates from this room. Those listening long enough will also make out the sound of chains strain the hard stone floor. As one gets close to the entrance, the overwhelming stench of moldy rot overwhelms the nostrils.

18 PASSAGES

This cavern leads to several passages used by the Bila-Judhurs and the Blessed of Bhuzeel-Nev to travel to and from the fane unnoticed by people. The number and locations of the destinations are up to the GM.

THE LOWER CAVERNS

THE CAVERNS

- **Lore**

Locals declare this to be the path to hell, a path of the dead, and the home to spirits who seek to pull the unwary living into their domain.

The locals know nothing of Del-bai-arth other than the rumors of a ghoul that haunts the lower caverns and who ventures out to feed upon the unwary. They blame this mystical being for missing people and any misfortune. To keep this creature contained, they craft wards and fetishes to adorn the cave opening.
- **Strange Visitors**

To the horror and bewilderment of the public, occasional mystics and seers come to the caverns to seek the insights that Del-Bai-art can impart. Those making such visits know the nature of Del-bai-arth and they come bearing the proper gifts to offer him. Monetary wealth holds no appeal to the dweller of the cave. He desires people with knowledge and worldly experiences to add to his collection of heads.
- **Trespassers**

Occasionally, people choose to ignore the warnings they venture forth into the caverns. Those audacious spelunkers meet different rewards for their journeys. Some claim to have delved into the depths, and return with harrowing stories to share with their friends and family. Those who return with such claims are liars because any that wander the greater cavern do not return. That is the abode of Del-bai-arth, who does not countenance those who trespass in his domain.
- **Rantah**

Notably, Rantah (see NPCs) is one of the few trespassers who returned to the surface after having explored deep into the cave. His reappearance took thirteen months, and he came back broken. No longer the jovial "child of spring" because the experiences in the caverns twisted his soul and burned his mind. His fate became a warning to children about why it is necessary to obey their elders and heed their warnings. Dabbling with that which is unholy leads to one being cursed by the gods.

19 THE ENTRANCE

- **The Path**
The path into the hill is a long, narrow and winding path before it opens up. Tricky footing and sudden drops make for a hazardous journey.
- **Entrance**
Access to the caverns is through a natural opening found on the side of the hill that faces away from the city of Bamikan. Signs meet travelers who follow the path to the entrance, communicating the physical and spiritual dangers that await those who ignore the warnings. Along the entrance are wards, charms and fetishes, adorning the opening hoping to keep the evil spirits that dwell deep within the bowels of the hill from leaving their deep abode.

20 THE CAVERNS OF DEL-BAI-ARTH

Sounds (dripping water, occasional odd cry). **Pools of water** (varying size and depth)

- After hundreds of feet, the cave opens, revealing a large chamber that goes on for hundreds of feet. Water drips from the ceiling and creates long stalactites and stalagmites.
- The cavern has multiple pools, some fed by the overflow of the placid pool, while others from the incessant dripping from the ceiling of the weeping cavern.
- There are some well-worn paths, but the footing is tricky if one attempts to leave those paths.
- The cavern is not quiet. In addition to the continuous dripping sounds of water are the occasional laughs, screams and sobbing from the heads that Del-bai-arth keeps preserved in the cavern's magical pools. Such sounds amplify and echo to create a frightful effect, but nothing is distinct enough that the listeners can discern the details of what is being said.

MAGIC POOLS

- ***The Pools Are Magic***

The secretions and excretions of Vellez-Nev infuse the waters of her pit, endowing them with trace pollution of Chaos. Over the centuries, this polluted water leached through the porous rock and mixed with the waters of the lower caverns. These trace amounts of Vellez-Nev's essences imbue the pools of water in the lower caverns with magical energies.

Del-bai-arth has a mystical connection with these waters because they are of the same nature as the birthing pools that transformed him. He can manipulate the arcane energies that infuse those pools and make use of their transformative powers.

- ***Pools For Parts Storage***

Several pools Del-bai-arth uses to store and preserve the body parts that remain after removing the heads of his decapitated victims. He uses the skins, organs and bone for the transformations he imposes upon the creatures of the cave. The human body parts provide the raw materials needed for his more imaginative transformations. The pools have bodies in different states of disassembly. Regardless of the time the bodies spend in the pool, or their state of dissection, they remain as fresh as the day he immersed them in the preservative waters.

- ***Pools for People Storage***

Some pools contain whole bodies of yet living people; souls kept for various reasons. Some lie trapped in a pool until Del-bai-arth determines what to do with them. Others the twisted mage keeps in storage until the time that the depositor wants the body back. He keeps a small number to harass and torture and they remain in a sleeping state until desires to remind them anew of their plight of eternal entrapment and their utter helplessness.

21 THE CAVERN OF THE PLACID POOL

Pool of water (clear, potable, cold). **Shore** (littered with personal items, raft on one side). **Cavern** (echoes, dripping sound)

- ***Examining the shore***

Washed upon the shore are small amounts of debris and litter. Inspecting the debris reveals fragments of cloth, bits of metal (buckles, knobs from the soles of sandals) and bits of bone. There is nothing "fresh"

If Del-bai-art is in the cavern (5-in-6 chance) then the raft is on the shore opposite that is on the opposite side of the entrance. Otherwise, the raft is present on the shore. it is present. The raft (with paddle) suffices to transport a party of 4 people and their goods.

There is a path along the lake if one investigates. Navigating the path is difficult and requires a Dexterity Check to navigate to the opposite shore successfully. If a character fails the attempt, they must roll a second Dexterity check to avoid falling in. If they fall into the water, follow the rules for characters swimming in the pool found below.

- ***Dweller in the Water***

Those taking a raft across do so without peril. Those, however, seeking to swim in the waters have a 2-in-6 chance of gaining the notice of the dweller. Roll once for each person attempting to swim. The creature spends much of its time sleeping at the bottom of the cold pool. It awakens with a ravenous hunger and tries to pull creatures down to the bottom of the pool into its beaked maw.

Throwing objects in the waters is not enough to awaken the dweller from its slumber. It knows the sound of live prey.

[TWISTED DENIZENS:]

The caves are home to creatures natural to the environment. They are also home to the monstrosities twisted by the hand of Del-bai-arth. While these are creations of Chaos magic, the mage desired for each creature fit into proper ecologic niches within the cave environments.

1. Cave Harvestman - They are the size of a large dog. At the end of their forelegs are normal-sized human hands. These creatures delight in sneaking up on trespassers to strangle them with their hands.
2. Cave Beetles- They are the size of a person's foot. Human-like fingers replace what was once their legs, except these fingers have an extra knuckle to facilitate locomotion.
3. Cave Snails These are the size of a grapefruit. Their mucus-producing skin has (what appears to be) the texture and color of the human tongue. They make odd, wet noises as they move along the cave surfaces.
4. Pupfish These foot-long fish have human-like legs and arms that replace their ventral and anal fins. These limbs give them locomotion on land. They cannot walk upright, and must crawl awkwardly along the cave floor.
5. Occulant This looks like a normal fist-sized snail except that its shell is replaced with a large fish eyeball.
6. Blind Salamander These foot-long creatures whose skin appears to be human skin. If they stay too long in the water or in a damp area, the skins become wrinkled and swollen.
7. Ogana A strange creature that appears to be a human stomach trailed by 4 feet on intestine. It has the locomotion and moth parts of a slug and crawls along the walls and floor, scraping up lichens, bacteria and remains of creatures. If it feels threatened, its anus unleashes a torrent of foul- fluid at the threat.
8. Crawler This creature has the thorax of a normal-sized human hand and the body and abdomen of a crayfish. They scuttle along the floor, looking for small prey.
9. Hanging Toes These strange creatures look like human toes affixed to stalactites and stalagmites with no evidence of how they got there. More confounding is how they continue to exist, because there is no apparent means for it to derive nourishment.
10. Skarfs These are flat creatures that range inside from one to three feet. They crawl along the floors, walls, and ceilings at a slow pace. They look like human skin, complete with patches of hair and normal skin blemishes. If one takes the time to study a Skarf they will deduce what part of the body it made the scarf from. They scrape the surface for microbes to feed upon.
11. Cralkin appearing at a glance to be piles of whole finger nails, these flat, semi-transparent parasites easily sink into the skin of adventurers that take a spill.
12. Guroid these fist sized crabs inhabit the discarded skulls of prey. They can form small hairlike patches, which are in fact barbed pseudopods that allow the Guroid to take its time eating those curious enough to touch.
13. Idranem 8 dimly glowing yellow-green eyes peer from the knuckle sockets of an arachnid horror made of 2 human hands, fingers stretched to their limit to allow it to wrap around a full-grown man's torso.

SPELLS



LEVEL 1

BEALOTH'S MESSENGER**Duration:** 1 turn**Range:** 120'

The material component for this spell is a tiny icon of Bealoth carved into a small soft stone. Sometimes these icons are painted in gaudy colors but, most frequently, they are plain. For the incantation, the caster speaks in the language that is filled with moist sounds with the interspersion of low-pitched buzzing noises. Upon completion, one of Bealoth's messengers arrives.

The messenger appears to be a green fly, the size of a child's fist and with deep-red wings. But what makes this large insect creature unsettling is its human face; the features of a gaunt elderly person combined with the soft eyes and mouth of an infant. With each heartbeat, its face twitches to the rhythm. It speaks in the sweet voice of a young girl and its breath fills the air with the scent of smoldering moss.

The caster gives the courier the message to convey. The courier then flies to the intended recipient, lands in their ear and repeats the words given it was told to convey. After delivering the information, the fly asks the recipient if they wish to send a response to the caster. If the recipient desires to do so, they dictate their response to the courier and, once the message is conveyed, the fly returns to the caster relaying the response. Once the courier fulfills its obligation, it departs from the scene.

THE MECHANICS OF THE SPELL

This spell allows the caster to relay a message to a desired recipient. This spell doesn't require a direct line of sight from speaker to listener because the courier navigates around obstacles like a flying insect. There does, however, need to be a path which the courier can physically travel. They cannot go through solid walls, flames or other obstacles that would prevent passage of a physical flying creature.

BEALOTH'S SOOTHING TONGUE

Duration: 1 turn

Range: 120'

To prepare for the spell, the caster selects a piece of sticky honeycomb which they crush until it releases a drop of honey onto a living fly. Then they place that sweet, living morsel under their tongue and murmur a quick incantation using the language of flies.

While speaking the incantation, the caster's voice adopts a soft, moist, and lilting quality.

For the duration of the spell, the caster's teeth turn a pleasing shade of yellow and their skin becomes slick with a perspiration that reeks of lavender.

[Once deposited on the caster's tongue, the concoction does not taste like a sweet treat. Instead, it has the flavor of moldy mattress stuffing. Swallowing it produces an acidic burn, and leaves an aftertaste of cinnamon.]

This spell draws forth a small portion of power from Bealoth to place a charm upon an unsuspecting victim. A charmed person believes the caster is a dear acquaintance and will treat them with the same level of confidence that they would a lifelong friend. If pressed, the victim doesn't have any recollections to support their relationship, but they still possess a genuine feeling of trust and affection towards the caster.

THE MECHANICS OF THE SPELL

After casting the spell, the next person that the caster speaks to must make a successful Saving Throw or become Charmed. The magical deception lasts for 6 turns or until the caster (or the caster's companions) attempts to harm the target. Once the spell ends, the charmed creature knows that the caster placed an enchantment upon them and reacts accordingly.

This spell only affects creatures that are 4 HD or lower.

BY BHUZEEL—NEV'S FECES

Duration: 6 rounds

Range: 60'

This spell has only a verbal component, which is the caster pronouncing an abrupt blessing upon the bubbling and profane excrement of Bhuzeel-Nev. This is fortunate, as those who find themselves in need of casting this spell rarely have time to utter more than a few explicatives. The servitors arrive in an instant and instinctively grab those who are plummeting to keep them from injury or death.

[If the caster wants to ensure the timelines of the summoning, they cannot just mutter the vocal component; they must yell it out. There are stories of mages who, when seeking to gain the services of Servitors used a timid vocal infection when they spoke and the summoning went unheeded until it was too late. Upon inquiry, the Servitors will explain that they didn't realize the gravity of the situation (they intended no pun) and they were finishing up their meal or task. When casting, the summoner must weigh the situation at hand to determine the volume they will utter their incarnation.]

In response to the call, the Servitors of Bhuzeel-Nev appear anon. With haste, they grasp the falling creatures to save them from plummeting to their death. Once their freight is secure in their grasp they then descend to the ground with their living cargo. Once they have performed the requirements for their service, they await payment by the spell caster.

MECHANICS OF THE SPELL

The spell summons enough Servitors to slow the descent of up to five medium-sized creatures. The spell is a contract between the summoned creatures and the caster. Under the terms of the contract the Servitors uphold their contract which specifies that they are only obligated to aid the falling creatures for one minute. Once the minute is up, the servitors release their hold, even if they have not reached the ground with their cargo.





CASTILLE'S STING

Duration: 3 rounds

Range: 10'

The spell transforms a common maggot into a larva of the Bog Flies that infest the Infinite Swamps of Selip. It compresses the fly's life cycle into mere seconds rather than days.

The caster holds a common maggot between their finger and thumb, while chanting a mellifluous incantation. With the larva in a firm grasp, the caster has one round to touch it to the victim for the spell to take effect. The transference does not require the caster to touch the victim's bare flesh; it merely requires them to touch the intended victim.

Once released, the larva will, with great haste, borrow into the victim's flesh and consume its way to the victim's body cavity, seeking the nutrient-laden organs. As the bog fly larva burrows through the victim's flesh, it ravages those organs and other soft tissues.

In its last stage of development, the larva burrows out of the body, seeking to leave the host and enter its last stage of life. Erupting from the skin with a wet sound, its emergence fills the area with a lingering stench of rotting flesh and acidic sweat. If left undisturbed, it forms a chrysalis and undergoes a complete metamorphosis into an adult bog fly.

THE MECHANICS OF THE SPELL

The caster must roll a physical attack against the intended victim to touch them. The suggested method for determining the defender's AC is to ignore armor but allow other modifiers to Armor Class such as shields and Dexterity.

The consumption of flesh inflicts 1d6 points of damage to the victim at the end of each round. This continues for a total of three rounds and then the larva emerges, satiated from its feasting. The victim cannot cast any spells during this time because the intense agony they are experiencing prevents them from concentrating.

VEDDA'S IGNOBLE TRANSPORT

Duration: 1 turn

Range: 60 feet (20 meters)

This spell's components are made of two separate elements. The first is a piece of parchment stained with a dab of the caster's blood. The second is a rancid scrap of food or fresh excrement. With those two elements, the caster places the scrap on the document and then rolls it up into a ball and holds the construction together with a slender string.

[After casting the spell, the room fills with the overwhelming smell of warm meat.]

THE MECHANICS OF THE SPELL

This spell summons two Servant Flies that latch onto the summoner, a target object, or a willing subject. The Drudge then elevates the target up to 20 feet from ground, provided the total weight does not exceed 500 lbs. Also, they can only move their loads up or down. Movement in any other direction must come from other means, such as pushing off of the walls or climbing along ceilings.

This spell creates a legal contract between the caster and the appearing Drudge. The incantation portion of the spell is the caster reciting a legal contract in the language of flies and agreeing to compensate the Drudge for its service. Payment comes upon the completion of the service rendered and must be at least one pound of some putrid delicacy dripping with fluids.

If the caster does not pay the Drudge after it performs its service, the caster violates the contract. These creatures do not take such infractions lightly and will hold the caster accountable for their withholding of wages. The stingy caster receives an indelible mark which they cannot remove until they make amends for their infraction. While the caster bears that mark, the Drudges will refuse to provide any sort of service. To determine what the caster must do to remove the mark, consult the table on page 76.

Once paid, the Drudge flies off, back to their home plane of existence. Nobody knows how they make it back, but scholars believe these creatures know of hidden paths between planes.

VOGULNAGAA'S FEAST

Duration: 1 hour

Casting Time: 10 rounds

The ritual begins with the participants joining their hands around the feast to recite the primordial words from *The Blessings of Vogulnagaa*. The caster begins the incantation by chanting in a rhythmic pattern, using abrupt and guttural-sounding words. When the song reaches its 7th verse, all the participants then join in the recital of this primeval hymn.

As the song progresses, it changes from guttural utterings and morphs into a high-pitched vocalization. For the last two stanzas, the singer's tongues vibrate against the top of their mouths to produce a buzzing sound. This has a hypnotic effect, causing the participants and onlookers to sway in unison.

Once the song reaches its crescendo, the song's magic becomes manifest. The skulls of the participants swell, which causes their faces to split and peel, revealing a newly formed fly head. They shed the blood-soaked skin, which was their face and scalp, and it falls to the ground with a moist flop. The new head doesn't have a human mouth. Instead, it is now a labella and proboscis. A pungent, putrid stench fills the air, emanating from the shed flesh that is now sopped with yellowish enzymes and pinkish juices.

The transformation affects more than just the bodies of the singers, it also overwhelms their brains. While feeding, the transformed are unaware of the world around them and they are incapable of doing anything beyond engorging themselves upon the repast that is before them. The air fills with malicious buzzing and the noises of slurping. Like mindless maggots, they writhe among their meal, and each other, while vomiting stomach acids and gulping the created slurry. They feast until the only things that remain are the indigestible bits and a lingering stink of vomit and rot.

The participants transform back after they finish their putrid repast and their newly-bloated stomachs leave them with a sense of gratification. They only have a remote remembrance of what just transpired.

THE MECHANICS OF THE SPELL

Using this spell, the caster, and, up to 12 willing participants (up to X+ level of caster), consume and draw nutrition from the same kinds of things that flies eat. If there is enough food available, the feasters do not need further food or drink for one day per level of the caster.

This spell plays an important role in several of the sacred ceremonies of the worship of the Vellez-Nev. It also serves to provide the energy to perform secret ritualistic magic that would be too taxing on the mortal body to perform.

LEVEL 2

JEDDA'S SERVANT

Duration: 6 turns

Range: Touch

The physical component of this spell is a small metal bell (made of silver, copper, or brass) and a small piece of parchment with the caster's blood smeared on it. The verbal portion of the spell is the caster reciting the contract in the language of flies and agreeing to compensate the Drudge for its service. Payment comes at the end of the service rendered and must be at least one pound of some putrid delicacy.

[Upon completion of the incarnation, the caster rings the small bell which, under the effect of arcane energies, produces a sound like the screaming of a hundred mice caught in a trap.]

After the casting, a Drudge arrives to carry items for its summoner. On its own, the Drudge is not well-equipped for this task. For this reason, it arrives with a wide, but thin, plate made of a discolored coppery metal.

Because the Drudge has no hands, it cannot hold the platter. To address that issue, the disk is "held" by a woven belt made from the skins of some unknown animal. It curves and undulates, like a snake, as it encircles the Drudge's hairy abdomen to secure the beast with the burden. One end of the belt dangles down and attaches to the center of the disc. If one attempts to overload the Drudge, the disc will tip, and spill its contents.

THE MECHANICS OF THE SPELL

The Drudge carries a disc that is three feet in diameter which remains level until its total load exceeds 500 pounds. In that circumstance, the disc will suddenly tip causing the contents to fall. While carrying the load, the Drudge will carry the load up to six feet off the ground.

The spell is a contract with the Drudge and it agrees to carry goods and material for one hour (6 turns). At the end of the service, the contract stipulates payment of a sufficient quantity of "tasty" food. Payment comes at the end of the service rendered and must be at least one pound of some putrid delicacy.

If the caster does not pay the Drudge after it performs its service, the caster violates the contract. These creatures do not take such infractions lightly and hold the caster accountable for their withholding of wages. The stingy caster receives an indelible mark which remains until they make amends for their infraction. Until that mark is removed, the caster will receive no further service from a Drudge. To determine what the caster must do to remove the mark, consult the Drudge writeup in the bestiary section of this book.

THE SOOTHING SONG OF BEALOTH

Duration: 6 rounds

Range: 60'

The spell summons one of the servant flies that surround Bealoth with their soothing song. They are the size of a grapefruit and are of a purplish-black color with pulsing blue veins that run along their sleek body. The wings are silver and their lidded eyes make them appear to be asleep.

The material components of this spell is small ruby, or garnet, and a clean linen cloth that the caster spent three hours steeping in the words of adoration and affection. The verbal component is a simple chant that sounds like a slow and simple prayer because it is. The caster beseeches Bealoth to provide the use of one of his 333 unholy attendants. The Attendants swarm their master to deliver complex harmonics that produce a soothing effect on the vile fly god.

At the completion of the spell the gems and the cloth disappear into the possession of the foul fly lord who shall make use of them for a future nefarious purpose.

The summoned attendant will, for the duration of the spell, fly around the target with its wings providing the same soothing vibration that it uses to serenade its dark master. Those who fall under the sway of the fly's song fall into a semi-hallucinatory state, experiencing the sensation of soothing, warm sunlight shining upon their face and their nostrils fill with the smells of lemon oil and honey. They feel spiritually enveloped by an infinite space filled with peace and happiness.

THE MECHANICS OF THE SPELL

If the target fails its Saving Throw versus Spell, it becomes mesmerized by harmonic frequency. Those failing their Saving Throw may make a new Saving Throw each round until succeeding or the duration of the spell ends.

Once the target makes their Saving Throw and the attendant's song no longer has any effect it considers its task to be completed and it returns to its previous duty of mollifying its master.

NEVEU'S MIASMA

Duration: 6 rounds/caster level

Range: 100'

The material component for this spell is a handful of powder made from moss dried under a scorching summer sun. The incantation is unusual because the caster forms the letters with their teeth and sharpens the vowels into points by the grinding of their tongue.

Once the caster completes the spell, they open their mouths wide and, from their throat, a swarm of the blue, iridescent flies flow forth. The spell summons infernal creatures from the Infinite Swamp of Selip and they bear a distinct smell of hate and revenge. They spawned in the putrid waters of the abandoned Temple of Neveu and their bite carries a dreaded sleeping sickness known as Benzu Fever. Because of their small size, it is impossible to avoid being bitten by the flies as they work their way into the gaps in one's clothing.

Those that find themselves amid their swarm are in danger of contracting a form of Benzu Fever that will cause them to fall into an immediate state of unconsciousness. This arcane version of this disease is of shorter duration than the typical Benzu Fever. Its victims wake up believing that they were unconscious for days rather than for the few minutes that they were asleep.

While in the state of unconsciousness, the victims experience nightmares that are both vivid in their detail and terrifying in their nature. Upon awakening, the victim's clothes are wringing with sweat and their bodies shake uncontrollably from the vivid experience.

MECHANICS OF THE SPELL

This spell causes a magical slumber to come upon its victims. This affects up to 4 Hit Dice of creatures. The caster determines the first target, and if the target's Hit Dice is equal to or less than 4 Hit Dice, then the creature succumbs to Sleep. Next, subtract the target's Hit Dice from the 4 Hit Die. The remaining amount is the remaining number of Hit Dice remaining that the Sleep spell can affect. Follow this procedure with the next target, following the same process. Continue until either all 4 Hit Dice are used up or the remaining amount of Hit Dice cannot affect any more creatures.

To be affected by the spell, all targets must be within 20 feet of the initial target of the spell.

VOGULNAGAA'S BLESSED IMMUNITY

Duration: 1 Hour

Range: Touch

The physical components is a fly and a piece of soft clay drawn from the banks of a stream, or river.

The casting of the spell has an unusual effect on the caster. The casting of the spell causes their eyes to bulge out and the blood vessels in their eyes to burst. Their skin grows sticky and hot to the touch. The muscles in their forearms twitch and they pant with vigor as their heart races. Their breath turns humid and foul. Then, at the completion of the incantation, the caster, with their hands dripping with sweat, presses the body of the fly into the clay.

This spell transforms the organs, blood and internal tissue of the target into that of a Gulaam. Because of their internal physiology, Gulaams are immune to most poisons, venoms and toxins. This act of metamorphosis provides the target with that same level of immunity.

The changes are not just internal, and the subject's skin grows tight, like a stretched snake, and changes to a rubbery black texture with bulging veins of a dark purple. The transformed sweats effusively as their metabolism is now sped up.

THE MECHANICS OF THE SPELL

While the target remains transformed they are immune to poisons and venoms. While this spell conveys protection to new hazards it also neutralizes any toxins that the target has in its body at the time of the transformation. While the transformation protects the target from further harm, it does not remove any damage suffered from toxins that occurred before the spell was cast upon the recipient.

VOGULNAGAA'S PARTIAL TRANSFORMATION

Duration: 6 turns

Range: Touch

The component of this spell is a fly (living or dead) and a lump of wet clay. This spell transfers some of the fly's physical characteristics to a willing creature. The transformation allows the target of the spell to climb walls like a common housefly. It also provides the target with the leg strength to leap across greater distances than they were previously capable.

To cast the spell, the caster has the body of a fly in one hand and touches the target of the spell with the other. The casting creates a spectacle as the caster draws from the primordial magics using a resonating chant. The energies from the casting bathe the area in a deep, cold, blue light and charge the air with ozone. Not only does this spell create noticeable environmental effects, it also creates a dramatic effect on the caster. It makes their eyes bulge out, their skin to turn sticky, and their breath becomes humid and foul. At the completion of the incantation, the caster, with their hand dripping with sweat, presses the body of the fly into a lump of clay drawn from a body of stagnant water.

As the legs and arms transform, the skin of the target peels back like torn paper and their flesh releases a flood of greenish oil that pours out onto the ground. The target emanates a lingering smell of dried blood, mold, and mildew. The willing target's arms, legs, and torso swell as they change into the likeness of a corrupted fly.

The spell affects all the items that the target carries. During the transformation, their new body absorbs their clothing, armor, weapons, and various items that are on their person. They keep the benefit of any armor or AC bonuses, but nothing else. They absorb everything else into their body. Things, such as weapons and backpacks, remain unavailable until they revert to their original form. Also, while under the effects of the transformation, their hands are not capable of fine manipulation. While it is possible for the transformed person to wield a weapon, they are not capable of tasks such as picking locks.

MECHANICS OF THE SPELL

This impedes the target's walking and running making it impossible to move faster than 1/2 of their normal movement speed.

The transformed legs and arms have micro-hooks that enable the recipient to climb walls and ceilings, just like a fly would.

While transformed, the creature can jump three times its normal jumping distance.

UNGALOTHA'S UTTERANCES OF THE SUMMONED

Duration: 1 month

Range: 30 feet

The components of this spell are a small figurine carved from limestone and a small piece of parchment. To summon the Servant, the caster must first smudge the figurine with a drop of their own blood while reciting a brief incantation in the language sung by flies. Once the caster completes the verbal component of the spell, they crush the figurine.

[The casting fills the area with the smell of an old home that has not seen natural sunlight in many years.]

This spell is a contract with one of Bealoth's messengers. For the period of one month, the summoned creature agrees to remain at the exact place that the caster places them. They will vocalize a message, or sound, any time a situation meets the condition specified by the summoner. Some casters use messengers for mundane purposes, such as providing a warm greeting to guests. Other times, they serve as alarms to emit a loud shriek when creatures pass by without giving the proper password.

Once the contract ends, the messenger leaves its post and flies away back to its master, Bealoth.

THE MECHANICS OF THE SPELL

The servant does not possess extraordinary senses and can only perform its service on creatures and events detected by its natural senses. For example, if the servant is required to yell "Intruder" when someone passes by without a password, it will not yell an alarm if the creature is invisible.



LEVEL 3

BHUZEEL-NEV'S EFFLUENCE

Duration: 6 rounds

Range: 100'

The caster takes a moist, dark lump of swamp mud and pours a vial of noxious bog water over it while reciting an eldritch incantation that is barely audible. The caster's lips move, curling into a word that is too small to be seen. Their body jerks and spasms, and the surrounding air builds up with static electricity.

Through a force of will, the caster creates a small planar fissure and pulls that vile, miasmatic atmosphere into a location that the caster designates.

The spell pulls forth the atmosphere from the Carrion Fields that are in continual bloom in the Infinite Swamp of Selip. They emit a stench that few possess the constitution to withstand without vomiting.

A wave of rancid rot fills the air; a stench as foul as poison and as cloying as wet leaves. The stench clings to clothes and flesh and coats the victim's nostrils and lungs with a sickening, viscous fluid. Within its radius, the vile vapor hisses and crackles as it moves through the air and around the corner, like a living.



THE MECHANICS OF THE SPELL

The miasmatic cloud that is the color of rancid milk appears and fills a 20-foot-radius sphere. The center of the effect is at a point up to one hundred feet away from the caster and must be visible to them.

Unless a strong wind disperses it, the noxious gas remains for the spell's duration.

Creatures starting their turn inside the affected area must make a Saving Throw or become subject to continuous and uncontrollable retching, putting them at a -4 for any combat or attribute checks. Additionally, they move at half speed. Once they fail a Saving Throw, they cannot be free of their nausea until they leave the affected space and make a Saving Throw.

If the afflicted creature starts its round in a spot free of the noxious vapor, it makes a Saving Throw. A successful roll frees them from the effect of this spell. If they fail their saving throw, they continue to make Saving Throws, each round, until they succeed.



CHILD OF VELLEZ-NEV

Range: *Touch*

Duration: *1d6 days*

The material component is any small gemstone (with rubies and garnets being the most effective), a slice of brain from an intelligent creature and a bundle of specially-prepared incense. As the caster begins to intone the spell, his voice fetters off into a dry rasp - a whisper of a soul trapped between two worlds.

The caster then smears the brain matter on the forehead of the spell's target, tracing the sigil of Vellez-Nev. When this is completed, the air around the target fills with the smell of sickly rot and mildew.

As the casting of the spell culminates, a fluttering whisper of wings brushes across the skin of those nearby and the abominable Handmaiden of Vellez-Nev appears in a miasma of sickly-sweet vapor. This foul cloud is reminiscent of decay, fresh blood and old bones smoldering on coals. The Handmaiden is a hideous sight—a ghoulish creature clad in a frayed, stained dress that appears to have only barely escaped a fire. Her face is skeletal and her lips are cracked and blackened. The Handmaiden's eyes are bulging and over-large, as pale as a serpent's belly.

Once the Handmaiden has physically manifested, the caster must kneel and show reverence. If this is done in accordance with the blasphemous rites of Vellez-Nev, the Handmaiden emits a great bleating of undulating praise unto her deity and then alights upon the target of the spell like a fly to a gut-pile. In doing so, the Handmaiden deposits a wriggling, unholy maggot into the target's skull, which slithers in through its mouth, nose or eye-socket. After a moment, the target will rise and obey simple commands from the caster as if it were a zombie under the caster's complete control.

THE MECHANICS OF THE SPELL

The target of this spell must be a corpse and the deceased creature cannot be larger than medium size. The animated corpse is considered an undead creature and is subject to spells and effects that affect zombies.

After 1d6 days, the corpse that was the target of the Child of Vellez-nev collapses. Within moments, a bloated, pale-white corpse fly wriggles free from its skull. The fly is small and reeks of the opened grave and titters with a tiny, whispering cry reminiscent of a child's voice.

GULTHOGGA'S SLEEP

Duration: 6 turns

Range: Touch

The material component of this spell is a scorpion fly, either living or dead. The caster invokes the rite of Gulthogga, calling upon the foul god's skittering aspect using a voice that sounds like the droning of a thousand corpse flies. As the invocation builds towards its crescendo, it draws primal cosmic energy from the dread god that results in a revolting but short-lived transformation of the caster.

Gulthogga's sleep transforms the caster's arm, beneath the elbow, into the over-sized but sickly-looking abdomen of a scorpion fly. This transformation is hideous to behold and not without some measure of physical pain to the caster. The abdomen is chitinous, segmented and colored a deep crimson, terminating in a venomous black stinger that bristles with coarse hairs. The stinger twitches and shudders involuntarily, seemingly possessed of its own peculiar will.

Once the spell's effect has been discharged, the caster's arm transforms back to its normal state, though it is lightly coated in a tacky, foul-smelling enzyme that dissipates within a few hours.

THE MECHANICS OF THE SPELL

Once the spell has been cast and the stinger has manifested, the caster may use it to attack. If the caster makes a successful attack roll against a foe, the stinger injects a viscous, honey-colored venom into the target. This venom races through the target's veins, leaving behind a cold, numbing sensation, causing the victim to fall into an immediate, near-death state unless a successful Save vs Spell is made. This effect lasts for 6 turns and, during this time, the victim's body exhibits no signs of life.

If the target is willing (and the caster can be the target), the effect is automatic and there is no need to make a Saving Throw. If the target is neither willing or is hostile to the caster, then it requires a successful Save vs Spell to avoid the spell's effects.

QIZNOTH'S VISION OF DOOM

Duration: 6 rounds

Range: 30' from the caster

The casting of this spell requires a pendant fashioned into the motif of Bhuzeel-Ne and has been "consecrated" in a fetid pool of water, and a handful of living maggots. Before speaking the incantation, the caster must shove the mass of maggots into their mouth and then chew them into a paste without swallowing the foul mush. The caster recites the incantation while their mouth is full of nauseating mush. The words that issue forth are, of course, indecipherable.

This spell forces the target to behold the countenance of Bhuzeel-Nev. While the sight of the maggot-god is unsettling, this spell also causes the targets to experience the same sort of soul-devouring sensation as if they stood in the deity's presence. They fall into a state of horripilation as they behold the putrid rictus and gaping maw of the pale maggot-god. Bhuzeel-Nev opens its ichor-dripping fauces, and greets the victim in a gastric embrace.

While in the bowels of the maggot-god, the victim's brain cannot stop vomiting a torrent of personal memories. After what feels like days, the spewing of memories ceases and their body falls limp as the last remaining bit of their soul's essences drips out. The Fly God expulses the useless body out of one of its multitudinous anuses, leaving the gibbering body in a pool of excrement. To their horror, the victim realizes that they do not die, but that their consciousness remains with Bhuzeel-Nev. They are cursed to exist for an eternity to be an incorporeal nutrient for the devilish fly god to savor.

THE MECHANICS OF THE SPELL

All creatures in the spell's effect area must make Saving Throw versus Spell. If the target makes a successful Saving Throw, they suffer a -2 penalty to all attacks for the next 6 rounds. If they fail their Saving Throw they must run away from the caster and continue running for 6 rounds, at which point those that flee come to their senses.

THUNAR'S CADAVEROUS MEMORY WORM

Duration: 1 Turn

Range: Touch

The physical component of this spell is a sheet of parchment which has a remembrance written on it. As the caster speaks the incantation, their voice becomes low and raspy, like the leathery voice of an old man.

For the duration of the spell, observers hear the mixture of indistinct sounds: the murmur of someone reading to themselves, the rustle of pages, the whisper of soft gossiping voices.

This spell summons a memory maggot from the prized clutch of Bealoth. Its body is a piercing black that makes its yellow eyes prominent. It is fuzzy and covered with soft purple hairs that glisten with moisture.

Once the caster summons the maggot, they place it on the face of the cadaver that they wish to question. At once, the maggot burrows into the skull of the chosen deceased and glides through the target's brain like a swimmer on a placid lake. The maggot feasts on the memories and thoughts that the target had. While the worm consumes the remaining vestiges of its memories, the cadaver makes mewing sounds as if it is aware of the loss of its remaining dreams and recollections.

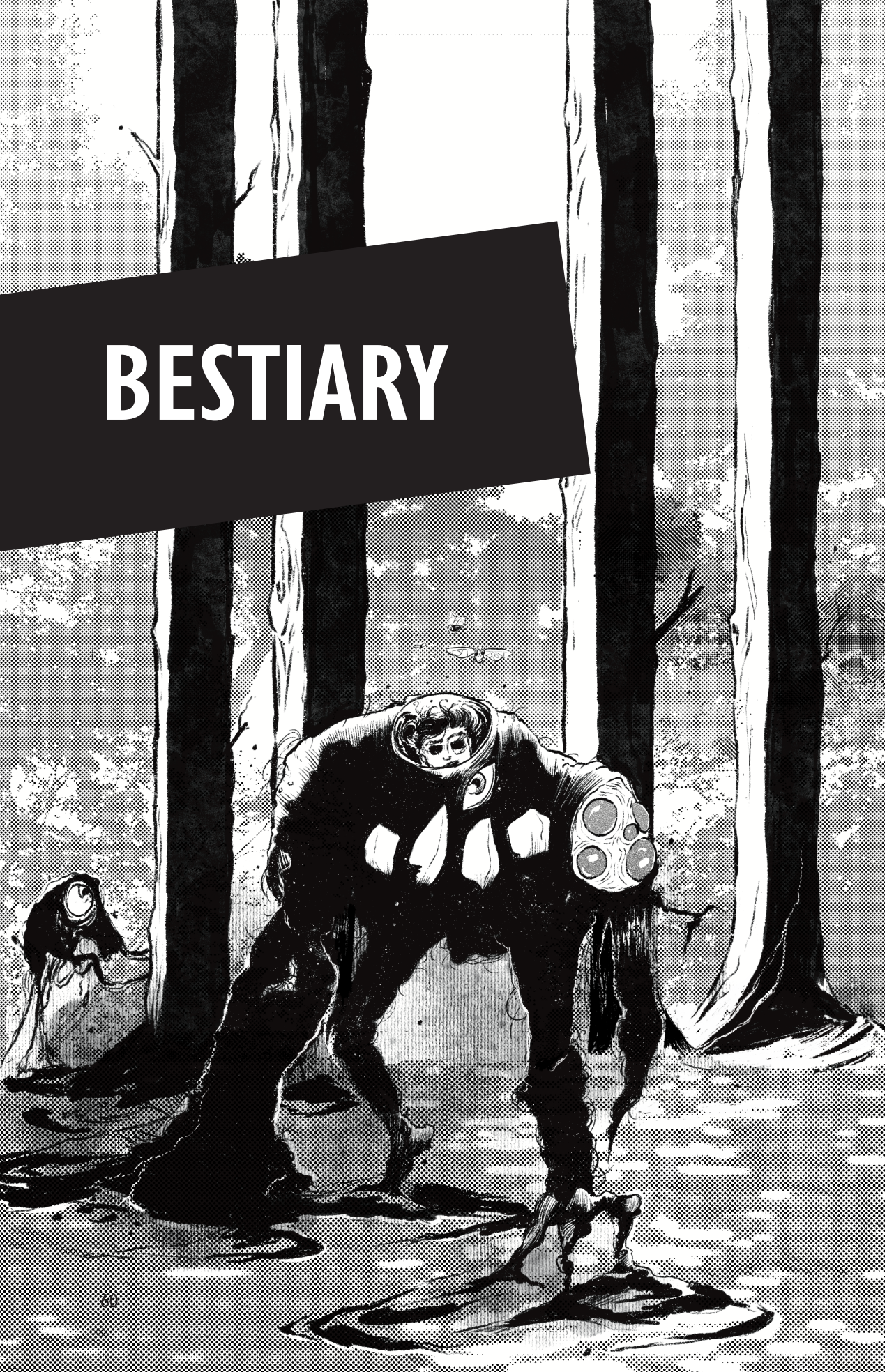
THE MECHANICS OF THE SPELL

Once it finishes its fetid feasting, the maggot exits the skull and will answer up to five questions that the target creature would know. The quality of those answers depends on the intelligence of the creature and its perception of circumstances.

For this spell to work, the brain must be somewhat fresh because memories fade as the brain rots. For a body that has been dead for a day, or less, the caster gets to ask up to five questions. The total number is reduced by one for each additional day. For example, a fresh corpse has enough intact memories to answer five questions. After three days, there are only enough remaining memories to answer two questions.

Once the maggot completes its task, it returns to the domain of its god and shares its memories with the archivists in Bealoth's dark tower.

BESTIARY



ABHORRENT GUARDIAN

Exposure to the befouled, Chaos-infused waters of Vellez-Nev's pit, or Bhuzeel-Nev's swamp, always corrupts. Those that bathe in those waters risk being transformed into fearsome monstrosities.

Armour Class	3 [16]
Hit Dice	6 (27hp)
Attacks	1 × bite (2d6)
THACO	14 [+5]
Movement	90' (30')
Saving Throws	D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (3)
Morale	12
Alignment	Chaos
XP	275
Number App.	1d6 (1d6)
Treasure Type	None

THE CORRUPTION OF CHAOS

Abhorrents are creatures bedaubed by the essence of Chaos, which twists their bodies in strange and appalling ways. The touch of corrupting magic usually leaves the victim in a form that is unrecognizable.

Most often, the mutations inflicted upon them provide no benefit and it often shortens their lifespan.

The effects of Chaos are not limited to the transformative powers it has upon the victim's bodies. Indeed, it twists and corrupts the very warp and woof of the creature's mind and soul.

WHAT ARE ABHORRENT GUARDIANS?

In Fane of the Fly God, the guardians are Abhorrents that are of enormous size, of foul temperament and capable of inflicting significant damage on the bodies. They guard the "back door" of the fane from intruders.

THE ALHADRIN

The devoted priests who inhabit Ossuary Hill.

Armour Class	6 [13]
Hit Dice	1 (4hp)
Attacks	1 × weapon (1d3 or by weapon)
THACO	19 [0]
Movement	120' (40')
Saving Throws	D13 W14 P13 B16 S15 (T1)
Morale	12
Alignment	Chaos
XP	10
Num. App.	0 (3d10)
Treasure Type	U (A)

BACK FROM THE GRAVE

If an Alhadrin is killed, they dramatically get back up with 1 hp. If they are killed a second time, they remain dead.

HOARD

Only have treasure type A when encountered in their wilderness lair

WHAT ARE THE ALHADRIN?

While technically part of the priesthood, they do not fall into the organizational structure outlined above. They are a sacred group that lives deep in Ossuary Hill, attending things that remain a mystery to the rest of the priesthood. Their heads are devoid of hair. It is unclear if this condition results from daily shaving and plucking or if it falls out because of their meager diet and underground living conditions.

Their faces are gaunt. Their eyes are large, yellow-y and have a moist sheen. On their foreheads, they bear the mark of Vellez-Nev

The only time the Alhadrins interact with the rest of the world is when they open the Green Door to receive the consecrated servant or chosen (see Religious Observances).

The Alhadrins, because of abiding underground for an extended period, have pasty looking skin, greasy hair and large, watery eyes. They often have patches of open sores that weep clear fluids. They do not speak, nor do they appear to have any desire to communicate to the others.

THE ALHADRIN ZOMBIE

Even in death, the Alhadrin cannot rest.

Armour Class	8 [11]
Hit Dice	2 (9hp)
Attacks	1 × weapon (1d3 or 1d4+2 with club)
THACO	18 [+1]
Movement	60' (20')
Saving Throws	D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (1)
Morale	12
Alignment	Chaos
XP	20
Num. App.	0 (3d10)
Treasure Type	None

GUARDIANS

If an Alhadrin is killed, they dramatically get back up with 1 hp. If they are killed a second time they remain dead.

UNDEAD

They remain motionless, and 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*)

DUST OF THE AGES

After killing an Alhadrin Zombie, all living creatures in a 10' radius must make a save vs breath weapon or suffer a -1 to all attacks and ability checks for 2 turns. The effects stack.



THE BILA-JUDHUR

Highly intelligent servants who infiltrate human society to manipulate the destiny of kingdoms, empires and the world.

Armour Class	5 [14]
Hit Dice	4 (18hp)
Attacks	1 × dagger (1d4), magic, weapons
THACO	16 [+3]
Movement	120' (40')
Saving Throws	D4 W5 P6 B5 S8
Morale	12
Alignment	Chaos/Neutral
XP	850
Num App.	1 (1)
Treasure Type	None

MENTAL POWER

ESP and telepathy at will.

SPELL IMMUNITY

Any spell cast on them has a 1-in-6 chance of failing.

SPELL CASTER

Treat them as a 6th level MU with the following spells prepared: charm person, sleep, esp, invisibility, dispel magic, lightning bolt.

CHARISMATIC

They gain a +4 reaction roll when trying to influence NPCs.

ENTOURAGE

1d4+1 fighters (roll 1d6 to determine each one's level) devoted to the Bila-Judhur

They maintain their human form, except for their head, which is fly-like in appearance and function. When around humans, they remain cowed or wear ornate helmet-like masks.

MASTERMINDS

The Bila-Judhurs serve a more complex and nuanced role than the other dipterian creations. They move among the world of people to carry out the desires and schemes of their masters. They are not mindless drones that serve the will of Bhuzeel-Nev and Vellez-Nev; they have autonomy over their lives.

Scholars believe that the independent spirit of the Bila-Judhar makes it possible for individuals to break free from their appointed service to the fly gods. Stories are told of Bila-judhu wandering the realms, observing and scheming their own twisted plots.

Bila-Judhurs exist to carry out the complex schemes of their masters. The extent and demands of their duties placed upon them require them to show high intelligence, wisdom, and charisma. Because they possess hidden knowledge and have access to secrets, rulers and sorcerers seek the counsel of Bila-Judhurs, willing to pay the cost to gain the knowledge that they desire.

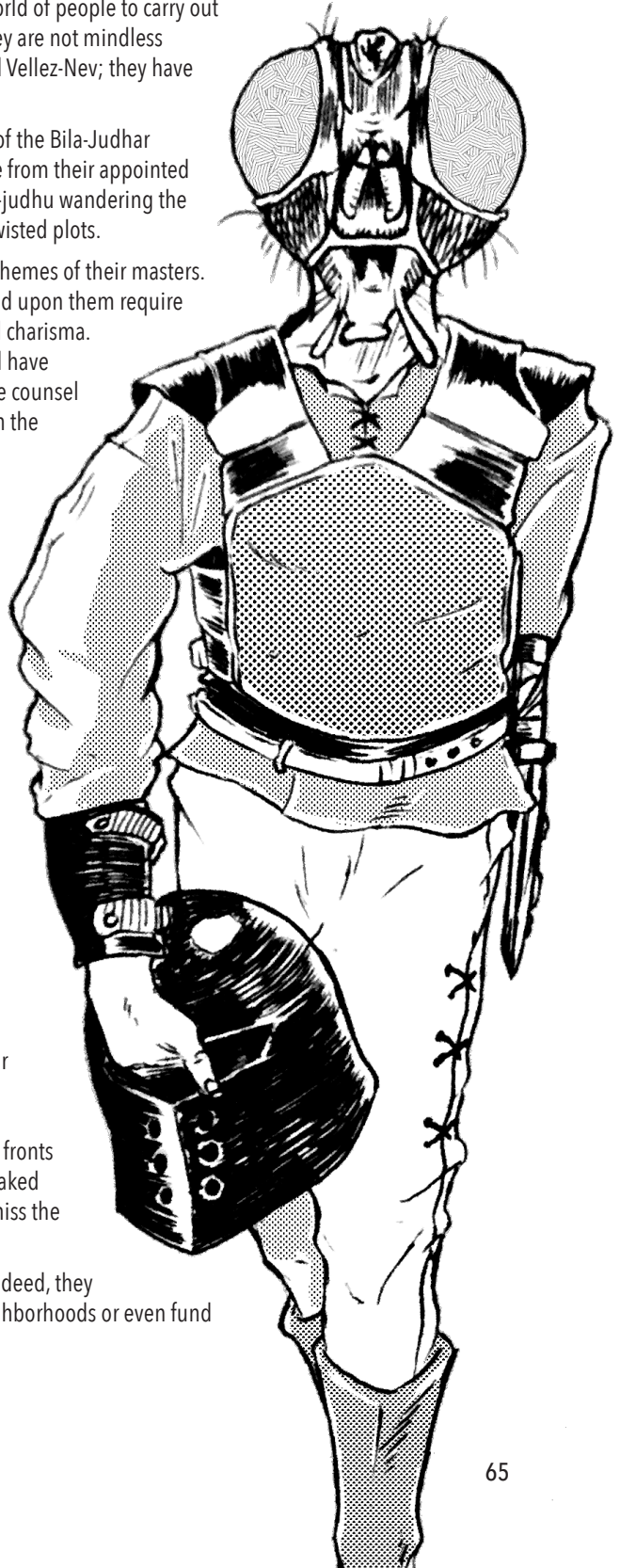
A THOUSAND-YEAR AGENDA

While the Bila-Judhur are servants of Chaos, their short-term plans may appear (or even be) benevolent and "good." Their goal, in this realm, is to usher in a future apocalypse whose culmination will not occur for a millennium. Their journey to the world's destruction moves at a glacier's pace. With patience and care, these servants of Chaos gently nudge key events in ways that go unnoticed by the mortals of this realm.

BENIGN AND BENEVOLENT APPEARANCE

Few outsiders know the true nature of the enclaves because each enclave disguises their intent. They appear as something other than a group of evil cultists seeking to destroy the world. They put effort into ensuring that their fronts are convincing. Even if word of their intent leaked into the greater population, most would dismiss the enclave's ability to carry out such a plot.

Remember, they are not evil for evil's sake. Indeed, they fund orphanages, instill order in lawless neighborhoods or even fund adventurers to rid the land of a present evil.



MORAL QUANDARIES

These monstrosities make ideal patrons to force characters into moral quandaries. For example, suppose a Bila-Judhur sends the adventurers on a mission to save hundreds of people. During the adventure, the characters learn the background and intent of the enclave. They also learn that saving hundreds of people further cements the reality of a forthcoming apocalypse; saving these people furthers the scheme of ending humanity in the far future. Does saving hundreds of people in the present justify contributing to the death of countless people in a future that the characters will never see?

ENCLAVE LEADERS

These creatures work best as hidden figures that pull the political strings in the background of a campaign. The enclaves they lead are mysterious organizations whose agenda and actions put them in a collision course with the adventurers. They are not lone antagonists; they lead an enclave of devoted and competent servants working in secret to carry out their master's dark machinations.

BILA-JUDHUR LAIR

Roll 1d6 to determine the enclave's size. The group's size ranges from a small clan to a city-spanning organization. Some enclaves operate out in the open while hiding their intent. For instance, they may use a legitimate business as a front.

The size of the enclave equates to their level of influence. Enclaves are like a weed growing a garden; at first they appear inconsequential but, if left unchecked they slowly dominate the garden. With patience and deliberation, the leaders incrementally boost the enclave's political influence. The rise to power comes at a cost; it creates animosity with other factions. The enclave's ascent into power requires other factions to diminish in their influence, and they do not go down without a fight.

Roll	Enclave Size	Level of Influence
1	New Arrival	Opposition - They are new arrivals and one faction opposes them.
2	Small, secretive	Little - They gained a small foothold but they garner little notice. One faction is friendly towards them
3	Small, open	Some - They make a bold move and wrest control over one faction. This creates another faction to oppose them.
4	Medium, secretive	Strong - Further success! They control two of the factions and one faction opposes them.
5	Medium, open	Very Strong - Through strategic maneuvering they control three factions and two factions oppose them.
6	Large, open	Total - They control the city. They have clear control over four factions. The other factions fear open conflict. Four factions secretly oppose them.

FACTIONS AND GOALS

There are multiple political factions within a city. Some, such as the military, wield direct power. Others, such as the poor, do not have direct influence into running the city. But the power that resides in the masses should not be underestimated. If organized, the poor and downcast make influential allies who can hide assets, sow confusion and even rise in rebellion.

In the table below are short-term goals of the enclave. Use these plot hooks to bring the adventures into the same sphere as the enclave. Use the enclave to hire the adventurers for a mission, or put the characters in the way of the enclave, completing its objective. Or, perhaps, have the enclaves' actions working in the background of your current campaign.

Roll	Faction Category	Short Term Goals
1	Civil	Retrieve of a magic or holy object. 3-in-6 chance they are stealing the item back.
2	Military	Kidnapping of a particular person from an opposing faction
3	Clergy	Disrupting opposing factions
4	The underworld	Growing the number of converts
5	The wealthy	Destabilizing neighboring town/city
6	The merchants	Smuggle goods out of town
7	The poor	Smuggle goods into town
8	Marginalized foreigners.	Break into and steal an item from a opposing faction

ROLL 1d6 +Enclave size	Headquarters Location
2-3	Cave
4	Basement of Business Establishment
5	Section of homes in poor districts
6	Ship
7	Warehouse
8	Home of prominent citizen
9	Office
10	Building
11	Temple
12	Palace

THE BLESSED OF BHUZEEL-NEV

Lazy, humanoid hyenas of low intelligence that live by intimidation and theft. Legends say that gnolls were magically created by a wizard who crossbred gnomes and trolls.

Armour Class	5 [14]
Hit Dice	3 (16hp)
Attacks	1 × weapon (1d4 or by weapon + 1), Acid spit
Thac0	18 [+1]
Movement	90' (30')
Saving Throws	D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (2)
Morale	8
Alignment	Chaotic
XP	40
Num. App.	1d6 (3d6)
Treasure Type	None

MAGIC RESISTANT

Magic spells cast on them have a 2-in-6 chance of failing

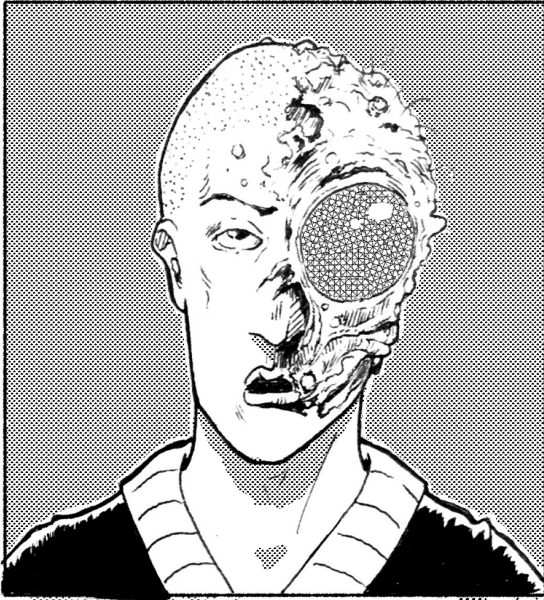
ACID SPIT

Target must save vs. Breath or be struck by the spittle and take 1d6 damage. Each round after being hit, the target must take 1 pt. of damage until they clean the acid off the affected area

A CURSED METAMORPHOSIS

The Blessed are humans that suffered horrific changes through the cosmic magics of malicious mages. It is the careful welding of Chaos energies that transformed people into fly monstrosities. The transformation is not instantaneous; it takes decades before it is complete. During this time, portions of their anatomy slowly change into those of a fly.

They make up most servants in the service of Bhuzeel-Nev and Vellez-Nev, serving as the proverbial hands, feet and eyes. They possess a keen intelligence and serve their masters with total devotion.



RANDOM CHANGES

Adventurers encountering the blessed often find each individual is in a different stage of transformation. The Chaos magics appear to affect each person randomly. Some transformations provide the person with special abilities but others don't. Use the list to provide gruesome and unsettling descriptions.

Roll	Effect
1	One or both eyes become extremely large and segmented and turn to a solid reddish-brown color. They only have a 1-in-6 chance of being surprised. They can see 30' in low light)
2	Long, thick, spine-like hairs project from their body. This provides no additional benefit)
3	One or both legs: Long, fly-like liege with hooks on their feet for grasping and climbing. (Move along surfaces, including vertical)
4	One (1-2), or both (3-6), of their arms are transformed into fly-like appendages. They retain the ability to grasp and manipulate simple items (This provides no additional benefit)
5	A large abdomen that is segmented apart from the torso. They gain +3 hit points.
6	The mouth transforms into the mouth parts of a fly. They gain no additional benefit.
7	Wings - fully functioning (2-in-6) or vestigial. If functioning, they can fly at 60' (20').
8	An extra set of arms. They gain one extra melee attack per round.
9	Roll two more times with a d8
10	Roll three more times with a d8

ROLL FOR TYPE

The blessed are dangerous opponents, possessing skills and abilities that often rival those of the adventurers. They are not goons, who are fit only for guarding tombs and temples. These are competent creatures sent on important and dangerous missions that require cunning and competence.

Roll 1d6 to determine additional abilities each blessed gains.

ROLL #	TYPE	BONUS
1-3	Fighter	+5 hp, +2 to hit with weapon
4-5	Thief	Thief skills at 6th Level
6	Magic User	Cast each of the following spells once per day as a 6th level caster: charm, magic missile, web

DIFFERING ABILITIES

The degree and type of transmogrification doesn't affect the social standing of the Blessed among each other, but it affects the duties that they perform. For those whose transformations are less obvious, their masters task them with performing missions in the outside world. Such spies hide their features through wearing loose clothing, keeping from crowded areas and dwelling with the outcast and diseased.

It is a mistake to underestimate a Blessed because of its animalistic appearance; they are not simplistic brutes. The transmogrification magics twisted their minds by wringing out their capacity for emotion and replacing it with alien thought structures. Freed from human emotions and passions, their brains become focused and efficient. For some, the transmogrification granted them the intelligence and will to manipulate eldritch energies. Others become more cunning and dexterous and serve their deities as spies and plotters. Yet others gain an affinity for combat, developing a military acumen and serving their masters through violence.

The Blessed are scattered throughout the land, performing the bidding of their masters. They are a constant and terrifying reminder that the evil magics of the mages are still very much alive. They will stop at nothing to fulfill the will of their masters.

These monstrosities have no fear and delight in performing cruel acts on sentient creatures. They show restraint when performing their missions, but relish the moments when their cruelty is unfettered by the protocols of their masters.

The Blessed live in a constant state of hunger. They need to feed on the blood of humans or other intelligent creatures to survive. They are patient hunters, often following their prey for miles before attacking. Once they have their victim in their grasp, they will not let go until they have drained them of all their nutrient-laden blood.

Their form does not remain static and, as with many creatures of Chaos, their bodies go through periodic changes. At the onset of a change, the blessed seek a safe and hidden location to molt. They prefer places that are remote because they are vulnerable during the metamorphosis. They prefer remote areas for this reason, but sometimes the onset of the transformation comes on suddenly and without warning. Once started, it takes 1d6 days for a metamorphosis to complete.

DEL-BAI-ARTH

A being who molds flesh as potter shaping soft clay.

Armour Class	3 [16]
Hit Dice	10 (45hp)
Attacks	Magic
THACO	11 [+8]
Movement	120' (40')
Saving Throws	D4 W5 P6 B5 S8 (15)
Morale	12
Alignment	Chaos
XP	1,600
Num. App.	1 (1)
Treasure Type	None

MAGIC RESISTANT

Magic spells cast on them have a 2-in-6 chance of failing

MAGIC VOICE OF BEOLOTH

Charm Person, Confusion, Hold person, Sleep
(each at 1x day)

POWER OVER LIFE

Disintegrate Flesh (*touch*), Dispel Magic, Raise Dead
Speak with animals (*at will*)

WHO IS DEL-BAI-ARTH?

Once a human child, the priests stole him from his family and submerged in the unholy waters of the birthing chambers. This unlucky child did not emerge in a form obedient to the fly gods. Instead Del-bai-arth emerged, transformed into a creature that was no longer human but was also free from the fly gods' dominance.

Del-bai-art does not limit his wanderings to the confines of this cavern and the "Down Below." He also makes visits to the lands "touched by the sun" wandering among humanity by hiding his presence with sorceries.

THE COLLECTION OF DEL-BAI-ARTH

Del-bai-art collects sentient heads and floats them in the various pools within the cavern to bob in the water like apples in a water trough. Unfortunately for these poor victims, their heads remain both alive and conscious and capable of speech.

He fashions each head by using an elaborate process infused with dark sorceries. It requires hours of chanting while painting the living body of a fresh victim with delicate runes. Upon completing the ceremony, he then removes the head from the body with a set of ebony knives fashioned for this purpose.



The enchantments and mystical waters do not keep the living heads viable forever. After a century, their memories quickly evaporate, and free that soul from its hellish imprisonment.

These pools bring Del-bai-arth great pleasure. He frequents them to engage in conversation about a variety of topics. Because his conversational interests are wide-ranging, he curates other heads from the land of the living based on their ability to broaden the array of subjects of which he can discuss. The heads comprise an eclectic group that contains (but is not limited to) adventurous children, skilled artisans, and renowned scholars.

BIOMANCER

With insatiable curiosity, Del-bai-arth manipulates the forms of the crayfish, bats, salamanders, and insects that inhabit the caves. He twists their body's form and function, leaving many with monstrous appearances and others he grows to unnatural sizes. Sometimes he takes delight by twisting them into pathetic looking creatures hampered by the changes he inflicted upon them.

THOSE WHO SEEK HIM

People seek out Del-Bai-Arth because of his mastery over bodily form. Some want him to restore their vitality and turn back the clock on their age. Others, suffering from disease and limb loss, desire to be made whole once again. Others want him to alter their bodies, or the bodies of those they bring, into a form or nature of their own choosing.



DRUDGE

3' long, carnivorous flies with yellow and black stripes. Look similar to killer bees, which they hunt. May attack humans.

Armour Class	6 [13]
Hit Dice	2 (9hp)
Attacks	N/A
THACO	18 [+1]
Movement	90' (30') / 180' (60') flying
Saving Throws	D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (1)
Morale	2
Alignment	Neutral
XP	5
Num. App.	1d6 (2d6)
Treasure Type	U

ORIGIN

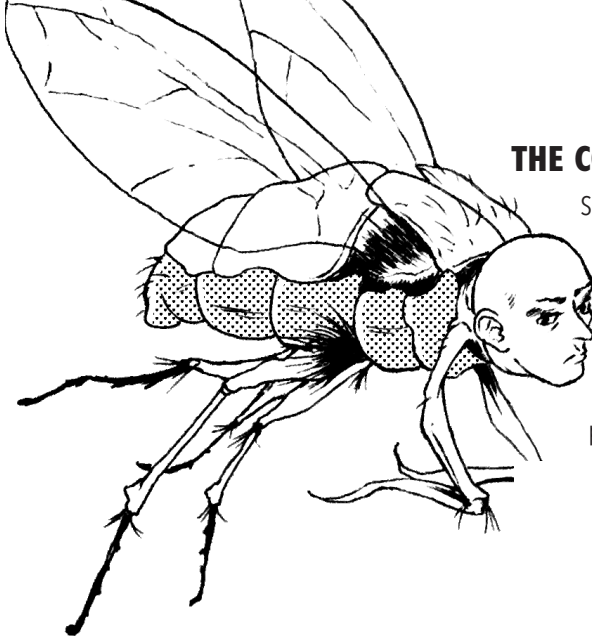
Scholars debate the origins of the Drudges. Some believe they are a group of humans cursed by some foul god to live in insect bodies. Others believe they emerged as the result of sorcerous experimentation. Some believe they are a group of people affected by a random eruption of a Chaos fissure.

APPEARANCE

They appear to be large flies and weigh about 75 pounds. Their human features make their appearance disconcerting.

ROLL	HUMAN FEATURES
1	The face
2	The hands
3	The skin
4	The eyes
5	The mouth
6	The legs

These large, dull-green flies are choice beasts of burden because of their docile nature and their ability to carry large loads. They are common in realms dominated by the fly gods working long hours under hard conditions. They perform their duties without question if they receive generous amounts of delicious food (to them at least).



THE CONTRACT

Spells that summon a drudge are a process by which the caster enters a legal contract (in the language of flies) with the appearing drudge. At the completion of the service, the caster promises to compensate the drudge for its service. Payment comes at the end of the service rendered and must be at least one pound of some putrid delicacy.

FAILURE TO FULFILL THE CONTRACT

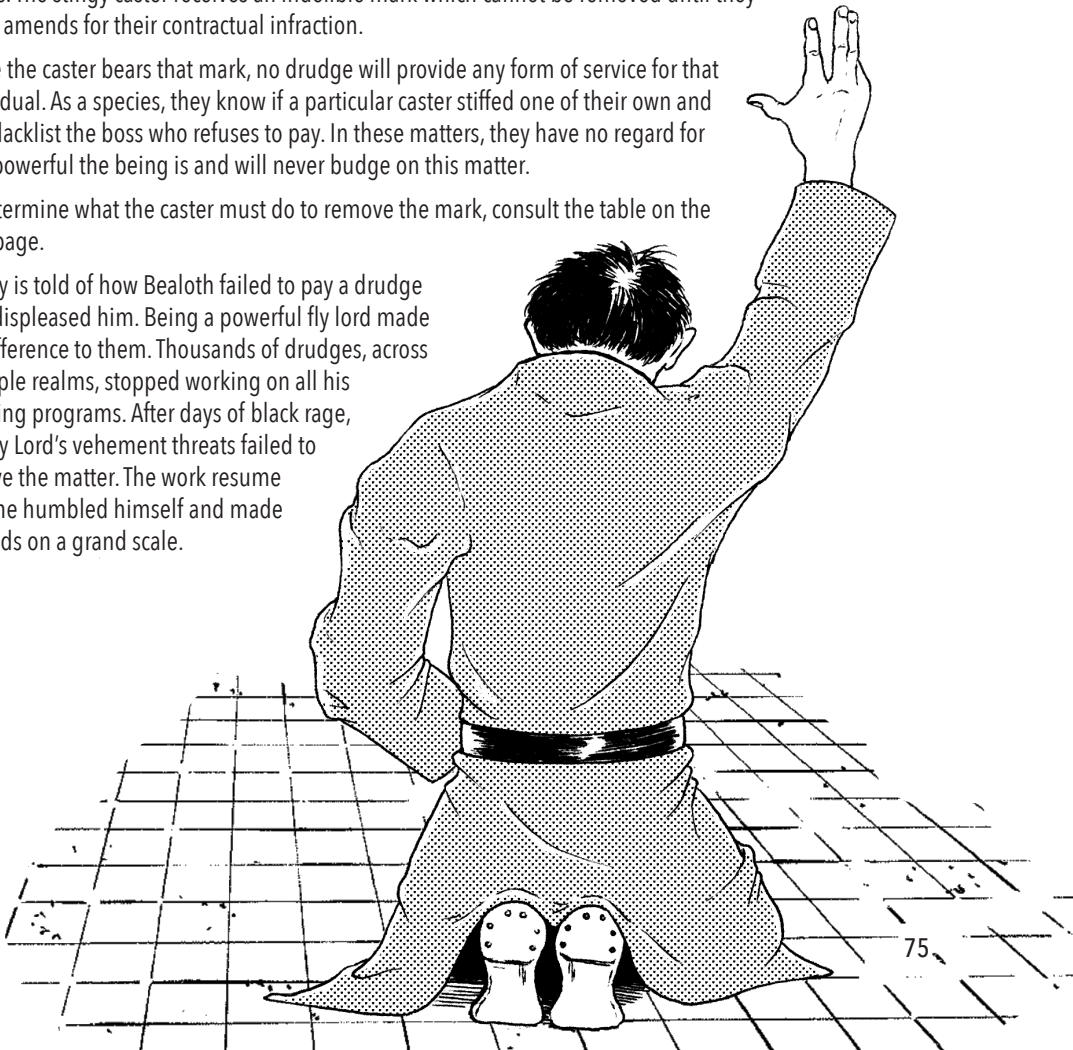
If the caster violates the contract if they do not pay the drudge after it completes its service.

These creatures consider this a serious affront and will hold the caster accountable for withholding their wages. The stingy caster receives an indelible mark which cannot be removed until they make amends for their contractual infraction.

While the caster bears that mark, no drudge will provide any form of service for that individual. As a species, they know if a particular caster stiffed one of their own and will blacklist the boss who refuses to pay. In these matters, they have no regard for how powerful the being is and will never budge on this matter.

To determine what the caster must do to remove the mark, consult the table on the next page.

A story is told of how Bealoth failed to pay a drudge who displeased him. Being a powerful fly lord made no difference to them. Thousands of drudges, across multiple realms, stopped working on all his building programs. After days of black rage, the Fly Lord's vehement threats failed to resolve the matter. The work resume after he humbled himself and made amends on a grand scale.





THE COST OF REMOVING A MARK

1) Public Apology

The caster must summon a Drudge (using any of the various spells, such as Feather Fall) and then assume a posture of obeisance before the offended drudge(s). This display must be in a public area and the caster's apology needs to be spoken with sufficient vigor that it is easily heard. Next, the caster must make a Charisma roll. If the caster fails, the drudge(s) does not accept the apology and leaves. Every time a public apology fails, the caster can make another attempt the following day. Each attempt requires a new Charisma roll. Once the roll is successful, the drudge accepts the apology and the caster is back in good standing with the drudges.

2) Assistance

The caster leaves with the drudge for 1d6 days. During that time, the caster will assist the drudge in its tasks. Once the caster completes the term of work, the offense is removed. Wise offenders will take rations along with them on this journey of penance if they intend to eat anything other than the "drudge's wages."

3) Offering

The caster must provide one cubic yard of delectable food for each of the offended drudge(s). While animal feces mixed with urine is ideal, they settle for substitutes such as animal entrails or rotten meat. If the caster attempts to pay them off with rotten vegetable material, the compost must be truly foul and must exceed 2 cubic yards of material.

4) Prostration

The summoner must go to the offended drudge and show humility by prostrating themselves and exclaiming their apologies. This follows the same procedure as #1, except the procedure is done at the location of the drudge. To gain access to that place, the caster can cast a spell that would normally summon a drudge and explain to the drudge that they are ready to make amends. The summoned drudge(s) then escorts the caster to the offended drudge.

5) Inconvenience

The terms of restoration is the same as #1 except that the next time a service is required, the drudge(s) act as if they are going to perform that duty but they stop their work at the most inopportune time and leave. The next time the offending caster summons a drudge, it performs its duty as normal.

6) Servitude

The caster must spend a day taking care of the needs and desires of the drudge. They will spend the time grooming, pampering and doting on the aggrieved creature. Once the disgruntled drudge feels sufficiently appreciated, the time of penance is ended and the Drudge removes the mark.

THE DWELLER IN THE WATER

Giant Hydra.

Armour Class	7 [12]
Hit Dice	6 (28hp)
Attacks	7 × tentacle (grasp), 1 × bite (1d6)
THACO	13 [+6]
Movement	0' (0)
Saving Throws	D10 W11 P12 B13 S14 (4)
Morale	9
Alignment	Neutral
XP	650
Num. App.	1 (1d2)
Treasure Type	B

PARALYSIS

A hit by a tentacle causes paralysis for 2d4 turns (save versus paralysis). During the creature's next round it will pull the victim into its mouth.

SEVERING TENTACLES

Requires a player to declare their intent and then successfully attack with a cutting weapon. The tentacle must receive a total of 6, or more, points of damage. The damage inflicted from separate attacks is cumulative.

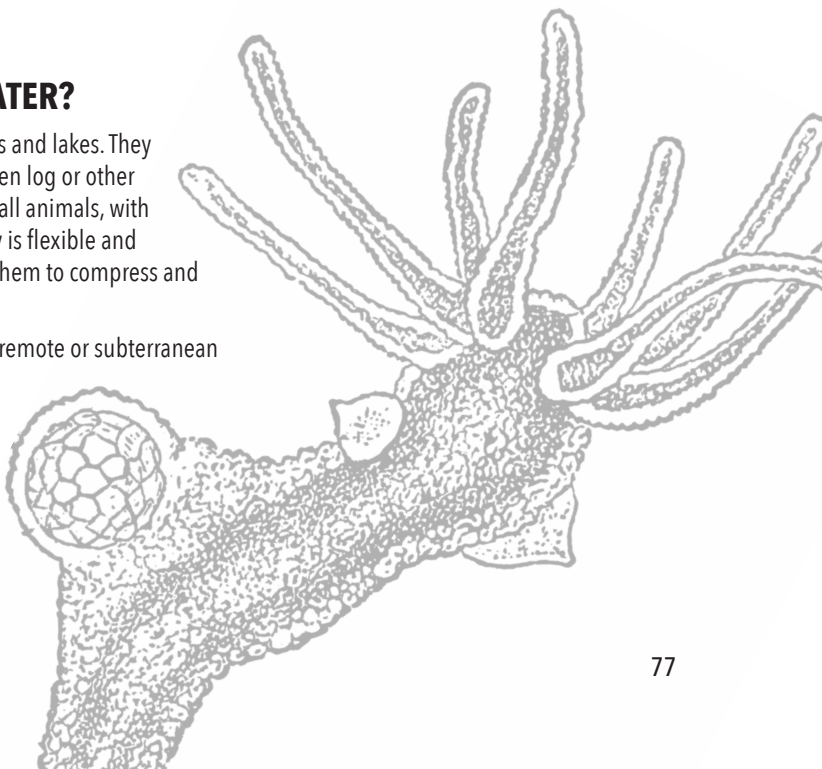
SWALLOW WHOLE

The hydra will completely swallow/engulf its prey within 1 turn. Rescuing a creature from being swallowed requires a successful Open Doors check.

WHAT ARE THE DWELLERS IN THE WATER?

These creatures inhabit the ponds and lakes. They attach themselves to a rock, sunken log or other solid base and catch fish, and small animals, with their paralytic tentacles. The body is flexible and their strong musculature allows them to compress and stretch these bodies rapidly.

Giant hydras are rare, existing in remote or subterranean environments.



GULAAM

An accursed race saved from extinction only to suffer the experimentations of an uncaring deity.

Armour Class	5 [14]
Hit Dice	2* (9hp)
Attacks	N/A [Att 2 x claw (1d4)]
THACO	18 [+1]
Movement	120' (40')
Saving Throws	D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (2)
Morale	9
Alignment	Chaotic
XP	10
Num. App.	1d8 (5d8)
Treasure Type	A

APPEARANCE

The gulaam look like humans with the physical characteristics of a deformed fly and bearing vestigial wings. By design, these creatures exhibit a low intelligence to keep them from becoming discontent with their lot in life. They do, however, have a dim ember of the ancestral glowing in their memory. If they see a human, it bring to remembrance that they are twisted creatures broken by the unjust hand of unknown malefic gods.

ORIGIN

These creatures are not native to any world or realm. They exist because Vogulnagaa births each one through her abominable magics. It took her centuries of experimentation to discover the correct combination of magics capable of fusing a humanoid with a fly. During the transformation, the humanoid's skin swells and hardens into a thin, dark carapace. Vestigial wings also emerge from their back, and their head becomes fly-like with bulbous human eyes.

THE GRANDUM IISTORUEM

Alas, Grand Vizier Frenla Doren came to this truth when she attempted to expedite an aggressive building program by employing a large population of gulaams. She did this, ignoring the explicit warnings of the Flesh Merchants of Eris, who made multiple attempts to communicate the danger inherent in concentrating so many gulaams into one place. As expected, the gulaams revolted and overwhelmed the sparse, and inadequate, security forces. They proceeded to kill, systematically, the multitude of people in the city. The gulaams remain, even after multiple military attempts to dislodge them.

INTELLIGENCE AND WILL

By Vogulnagaa's design, the gulaams possess a low intelligence and they lack any significant amount of self-will, so they will perform arduous and monotonous tasks without any form of complaint.

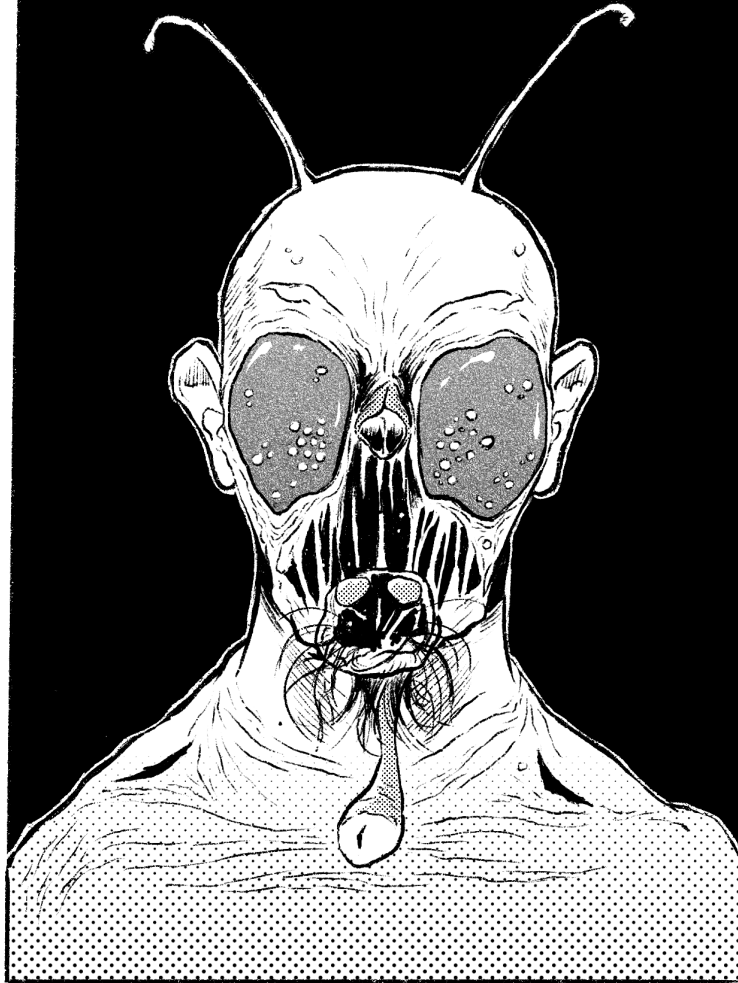
While they do not possess extraordinary intelligence and will, their mental facilities are greater than they appear. They feign a mental stupor to ensure that their masters continue to underestimate them. Their bestial appearance and their dull-looking eyes encourage people to believe that the Gulaams are nearly mindless, but that belief is not true. In small groups, they are docile creatures, but once their numbers reach a critical mass, their individual intelligence increases and they become combative against their masters.

A SUPERIOR SPECIMEN

Occasionally, a gulaam arises that demonstrates extraordinary resoluteness and superior mental qualities whom the Gulaams take great care to keep hidden for fear that their masters will take notice and, with great promptness, cull them from the population.

The masters of Eris keep careful watch for superior individuals for two reasons. The first is that they do not want these intelligent, and willful, Gulaams to gain a foothold and lead a rebellion. While such an outcome is unlikely, the overseers know it is a possibility. The second is that these creatures, if subjected to the Three Rites of Chaos Magic, undergo a metamorphosis to become a Musaeidin of Vogulnagaa.

The Gulaams have low fertility rates, but it is high enough to support a steady increase to their population. To keep their numbers from growing, the markets on Eris sell those they deem as "superfluous" as slaves to traveling merchants. The demand for gulaams at the city's flesh markets is quite high.



THE HARIS ALMALIK

Humans, transformed by the Chaos-infused waters of the Vellez-Nev's dwelling to serve the physical needs of the the accursed King As-Tigor.

Armour Class	9 [10]
Hit Dice	½ (2hp)
Attacks	1 × claw (1d3)
THACO	20 [-1]
Movement	120' (40')
Saving Throws	D14 W15 P16 B17 S18 (NH)
Morale	12
Alignment	Any
XP	5
Num. App.	0 (2d20)
Treasure Type	U

VILE SPEW

20' line. One time per day. Automatically hits. Target must save versus poison or suffer -2 penalty to attack rolls and ability checks.

WHAT ARE THE HARIS ALMALIK?

While they keep their human shape, their heads are misshapen. The transformative energies enlarged their eye sockets, and made their eyes segmented.

Their mouths underwent a startling transformation with their jaws shedding their teeth and a fleshy feeding appendage replacing their mouth and lips.

The transformation hunched their backs and caused their human skin to molt, revealing a thick rubbery membrane with a sickening dark pallor. The digits on their hands elongated and their toes molded together, leaving strange projections coming out of their feet. Their stomachs distended while the rest of their bodies took on an emaciated look.

The Keepers are unique to the Fane of Vellez-Nev because they are creations made to serve the needs of King As-Tigor and to perform various duties. Regardless of their appearance, they are docile and they are not capable of violence and will recoil, or run, from any threats.

There are five Keepers that dwell in the fane who never sleep. When not feeding the king, they rub his flesh with a foul-smelling balm to keep his skin supple.

Other than taking care of their own basic needs, they spend their lives dedicated to caring for the physical needs of King Abdul. They sustain the king by drawing up the putrid sustenance from the pool, filling their bellies. They approach the king, pry open his mouth, and then regurgitate the contents of their stomachs into the mouth of King Abdul. The nauseous spew feeds the maggots that teem inside the monarch.

THE PANSOPHITES

The hallmark of their civilization was learning to leave the bounds of their world to travel the cosmos. Their invention of inter-cosmic travel was not a fluke discovery. Indeed, it occurred because they determined that it was their destiny to soar the cosmos. For this cause, they sacrificed significant amounts of their resources to make this possible. Even under the tutelage of their guardian, it took the devoted research of seventeen generations of their greatest minds to achieve this degree of success.

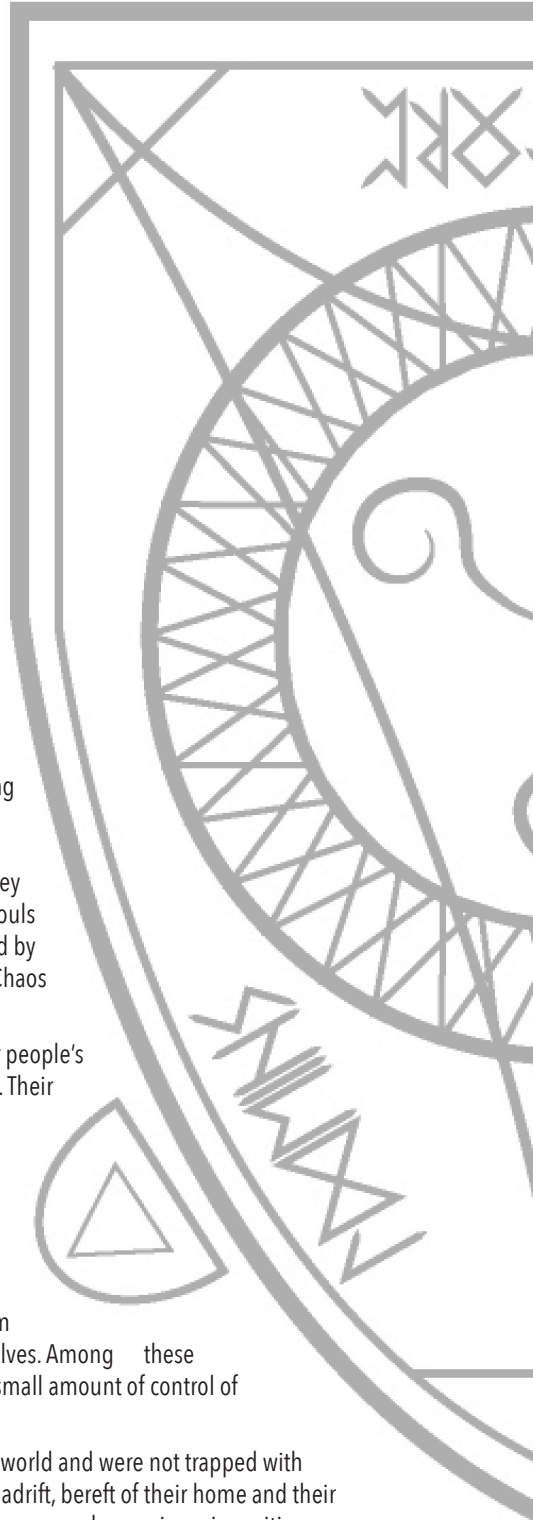
While their mastery of arcane mechanics enabled them to travel the vast cosmos, it was their insatiable curiosity that compelled them to send a multitude of scientific expeditions into the universe. They took great care during these expeditions to preserve their specimens and to make detailed notes of their observations. With the return of each expedition, they placed their findings into their cyclopean museums for their eager science mages to study and experiment upon.

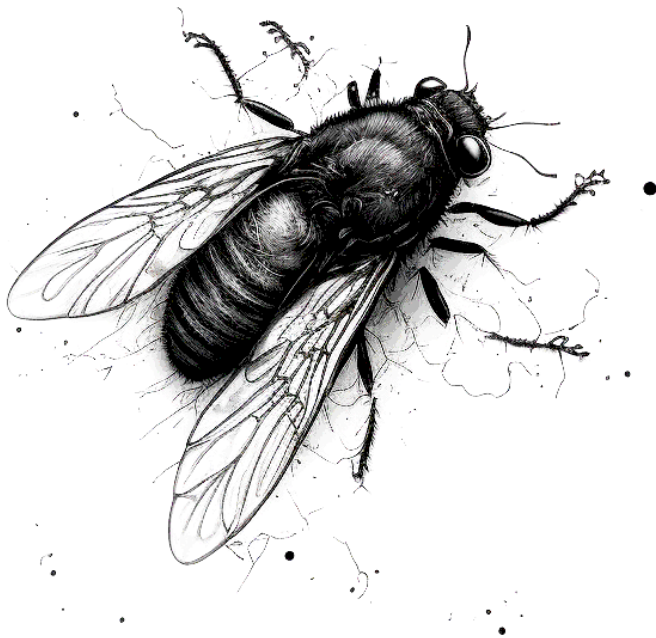
Without the life-sustaining light of the violet sun, most living things died off. Most of the Pansophites died within a few days, but those that survived did so at great expense. Knowing that their time was short in finding a solution to survival, they opened the vaults buried deep in archives. They brought out the fragments of Chaos that remained in vaults for aeons. Channeling arcane energies through those fragments, they changed their forms to survive in this new environment. They hoped for an eminent rescue. They did not know the full extent of the curse they were under. In their hubris, they believed that their minds and souls would remain whole while their bodies were twisted and molded by Chaos. However, they underestimated the corrupting nature of Chaos and it made their bodies, mind and souls unrecognizable.

Most of the surviving Pansophites forgot their heritage and their people's quest for discovery. Forsaking the focus on survival and pleasure. Their language degraded and they can no longer discuss concepts or engage in nuanced conversation. They only communicate about their basic needs, fears, and desires.

But not all the subterranean Pansophites devolved because a remnant still keeps their intellect and memories awaiting a day of deliverance from this cursed life. The prophets spoke of a "promised day" when the gods shall descend and liberate them from their entombment and they restore them to their former selves. Among these people are a few that kept their arcane powers, and they have a small amount of control of Chaos fragments.

During the time of their god's infliction, some were traveling off-world and were not trapped with the rest of the brethren. These astrals sailor became existentially adrift, bereft of their home and their identity. Their people still roam the realms, sometimes making temporary homes in various cities.





DEITIES



SHE AWAKENS

She Who Once Was sits upon a mountain of ice
and stone and wind,
in a veil of shadow and ash that covers the land,
she does not move or breathe or take on substance

She is still, and she is silent

She who once was, is not

She is a void

She is the darkness in between the stars

She is the silence between the notes

She is the space between the atoms

She is nothing, she is nowhere, she is no one

She who once was, does not exist

She has been forgotten

Her name has been erased from her own history

Her deeds have been buried in time and earth and space

The mountains where she dared to stand have been swept away

The seas where she dared to swim have been turned to blood

The rivers where she dared to bathe have been poisoned

she who once was, lies in ruins, just like her world.

And yet... She awakens.

She comes into being again and again in the hearts and minds of

her children and their children,

and she will not be forgotten again.



BHUZEEL-NEV

APPEARANCE

Bhuzeel-Nev appears as a cyclopean maggot whose mucus-covered body expulses sticky clouds of green-brown mist. This effusance befouls the air for miles with the stench of sulfur, decaying flowers and raw sewage. Protruding from its wrinkled, bloated body are small, dark, trunk-like legs. At the end of each leg is a large sucking mouth, which it uses to draw up nourishment. Because it gorges on its meal with such apparent blind voraciousness, witnesses mistake the godling for a mere mindless behemoth.

HISTORY

Aeons ago, a shard of Chaos birthed Bhuzeel-Nev from the body of a dying god-king, it sprang forth into existence free from the constraints of reality. It uses this freedom to create physical manifestations of itself to seed across the cosmos and throughout time. Each of these manifestations operates in a manner independent of the others, but they all share a common nature, memory, and drive. This means that, even though the godling exists in multiple bodies, it does so in a way that does not fragment its existence as a being. Each manifestation of Bhuzeel-Nev comes as a physical body, as this is its only means of interacting with the cosmos. Even though each manifestation possesses the power of a godling, they are mortal and they can experience death. But the death of individual aspects of Bhuzeel-Nev does not harm it or diminish its power. The manifestations are the means for it to interact with the cosmos. It discards them with the same disregard one abandons a bowl that no longer suits its owner's purpose or desire.



MOTIVATION

From the moment Bhuzeel Nev came to exist, it continues to starve for nourishment. This is an all-consuming hunger that continues to build and never dissipates despite its feedings. The prime motivation for Bhuzeel-Nev is to find enough quantities of decay and filth to feed this insatiable appetite. The stench of rot and death calls out across worlds, realms and dimensions and it never stops searching all existence for suitable meals.

If the godling consumes enough sustenance, the vile god's body forms buds. These buds grow until they reach the size of a toddler and then they drop off into the mire. If left undisturbed, in seven days they develop into small versions of itself. Scholars call these fallen buds the "fruit of Bhuzeel-Nev" and they are biological reproductions of itself. If the "children" survive into maturity, they become manifestations of this maggoty god.

ACTIONS

While the godling seeks easy meals, it does not trust Fate to provide. To guarantee a steady source of rot to feed, it scours the realms for opportunities to sow the seeds of devastation. Worlds suffering from continent-wide plagues draw the worm god like a moth to flame, but such rich meals are never frequent enough to ensure a continuous source of meals.

Bhuzeel-Nev has the power to wreak destruction on a worldwide scale, but it knows that such raw displays of power have unforeseen consequences. Over the aeons it learned to sniff out worlds on the brink of a massive war, as such conflicts lead to the death of multitudes from violence, disease or starvation. There is no shortage of sentient creatures in the cosmos who engage in killing multitudes for the most arbitrary reasons. History is replete with examples. To have enough food to nourish itself, Bhuzeel-Nev needs a mass death event to number in the millions and to ensure a bountiful harvest, it must guide a doomed species along that path.

The safest and surest route is through manipulating key people. Over the millennia, the godling has become adept at peering into the affairs of people, and searching for the right people to groom and manipulate. Those who seek power are the easiest to manipulate and there is no shortage of them.



THE INFINITE SWAMP OF SELIP

A notable manifestation of Bhuzeel-Nev lives in the Infinite Swamp of Selip. There it feeds on the never-ending cycle of decay while vile ichors stream from the sphincterous pores that cover its body. Because the godling never ceases its feeding, its bowels remain engorged and it releases a continuous discharge of bodily wastes. The Chaos-tinged feces that spews from its body mixes with the stagnant waters of the swamp to create a slurry that corrupts the ecology of the region.

WORSHIP

People believe that Bhuzeel-Nev is the source of plagues and diseases and they perform various forms of piety hoping that the godling hears their appeal. People utter chants and whisper prayers to ward against sickness and disease for themselves and their loved ones.

Reverence for this godling takes many forms. It is common for people to carry fly shaped talismans as objects of devotion for them to whisper their supplications. Another way people show their devotion is by leaving offerings of fetish pottery and discarded food in tiny shrines dedicated to the fly god. Fly motifs adorn these shrines, and one finds them scattered throughout towns and cities.

People pray to this godling, hoping that their piety will persuade the fly god to protect and heal them from disease. It is a common practice that anytime one comes across a diseased person, or someone becomes sick, that they make an immediate appeal to Bhuzeel-Nev.

The people give reverence to the Fly God, but this deity has no priests, and it does not have any form of organized religion. Furthermore, people have a misplaced faith in the fly god's benevolence because their supplications fall upon deaf ears. Bhuzeel-Nev does not care for people, and sees them only as a vehicle to feed its own appetites.



THE STORY OF VENKA'S FOLLY

AVARICE TAKE ROOT

Seven generations ago, in the land of Tchet-Hnah, King Nebido's had avaricious desires to conquering a peaceful neighboring city state and wanted to ensure a successful and swift campaign. For too long, Nebido's lusted after that city's ancient olive groves, its large harbor and its hills laden with tin. The king steeped his heart in the bitter poison of covetousness, but he retained enough wisdom to know that waging a direct war was a foolhardy notion because, in terms of military might, neither city had an advantage over the other.

For years, he plotted, trying to convince other kingdoms to join him in attacking his neighbor. Regardless of the promises of great spoils and his enduring alliance, the neighboring kingdoms refused to support King Nebido in his military endeavor. They had little interest in creating a political upheaval in the region and they had even less interest in doing something that provided a clear advantage to King Nebido.

As a last resort, he ladened a small caravan with a variety of resplendent and valuable gifts and made the long journey to the ice-capped Elhn Mountains. Specifically he journeyed to the black basalt spire wherein dwelt the dark wizard, Venkas, to secure her the arcane services. It was the sojourn of a desperate man, but his only hope was to gain a powerful ally.

A HORRIFIC COST

Upon his arrival, Venka received the king and his entourage, and listened to the sovereign's plea for help. After contemplating his request, she informed the king that she lacked the powerful magic needed to wreak destruction upon an entire kingdom. She did inform him that such magics existed but that they needed to seek a boon from an Other, a being who dwells in realms resplendent. Venka informed King Nebido that the precious metals and jewels that he brought weren't sufficient to gain the notice of the being they sought; they needed offerings procured by deeds most abominable. Desperate for his prize, he promised to pay any cost to make his vision a reality.

Venka knew that it was possible to summon the Bhuzeel-Nev and believed that she could convince the Fly Lord to aid King Nebido in his scheme. After centuries of study, Venka believed she now possessed the power to bind an aspect of that maggoty godling, but she lacked the raw material required. To gain the maggot god's attention required the death of thousands of people. Without a vast number of rotting corpses, any summoning would go unheeded. But now, with a desperate king who had the means to meet this requirement, Venka seized the opportunity.

A BETRAYAL MOST CRUEL

Venka knew that the murdering tens of thousands of his own people was a cost that the king could not pay because his subjects would revolt. To Venka, the choice was obvious, and she directed King Nebido to direct his soldiers to slaughter all the inhabitants of his vassal city, Nicoroba. The king knew that losing this large city would impact on the financial health of his kingdom, but the promise of even great riches made this choice easy. Swayed by avarice, King Nebido deemed that destroying this city was a fair price to pay to gain his prize. Without hesitation, he ordered his soldiers to carry out the massacre of every man, woman, child, and beast. Once the soldiers finished their murderous task, they carted every corpse into The Great Swamp. In a morbid procession that lasted for weeks, the soldiers deposited the bodies into thirteen enormous, ghastly mounds.

A SACRIFICE BROUGHT FORTH

After seven days under the fierce tropical swelter, the bodies became ripe enough to make the summoning. Under a burning noonday, Venka opened the Tome of Draven-Tah and began the foul ritual beside that gruesome mound. For six hours Venka chanted, oblivious to the oppressive heat, putrid smells, and biting insects. At the start of the seventh hour, Bhuzeel-Nev answered Venka's prayer by sending an aspect of itself to that mound of flesh that rotted under a festering sun.

Venka pleaded with Bhuzeel-Nev to accept the vile sacrifice that she prepared, beseeching the maggoty god to grant a boon unto her. She solicited the fly god to send a deadly plague to the neighboring kingdom. The mage reasoned that by granting that favor, the plague would be of benefit to Bhuzeel-Nev. With that boon came the promise of additional, and more substantial, putrid feedings. Venka promised that once the plague ran its course, King Nebido's soldiers would secure the neighboring kingdom and stack the bodies of the dead and dying into mounds for the godling's pleasure. She promised sacrificial mounds of such height that travelers would mistake them for mountains.

THE MAGGOT GOD SUMMONED

At first, the plan seemed to work. Bhuzeel-Nev eagerly partook of the offered sacrifice and, as requested, sent forth a swarm of diseased flies of such number that they blotted out the sun. However, the plague-carrying flies did not limit themselves to the neighboring country, and they spread their deadly diseases for hundreds of miles. No kingdom was safe from this plague, not even the kingdom of King Nebido. The plague ended once the disease ravaged over half the population. Bhuzeel-Nev demanded that the survivors drag the bodies of the dead and make their own mounds in the swamp for the ravenous god to feed upon. After consuming his fill, the godling left the realm, and the plague ceased.

Bhuzeel-Nev did not punish Venka for her audacity. The godling saw value in Venka's spirit, but not her body, and transformed her into a form to better serve its needs. Venka, baptized in the unholy waters of the Infinite Swamp of Selip, is now a herald and messenger for the greedy godling.





VELLEZ-NEV

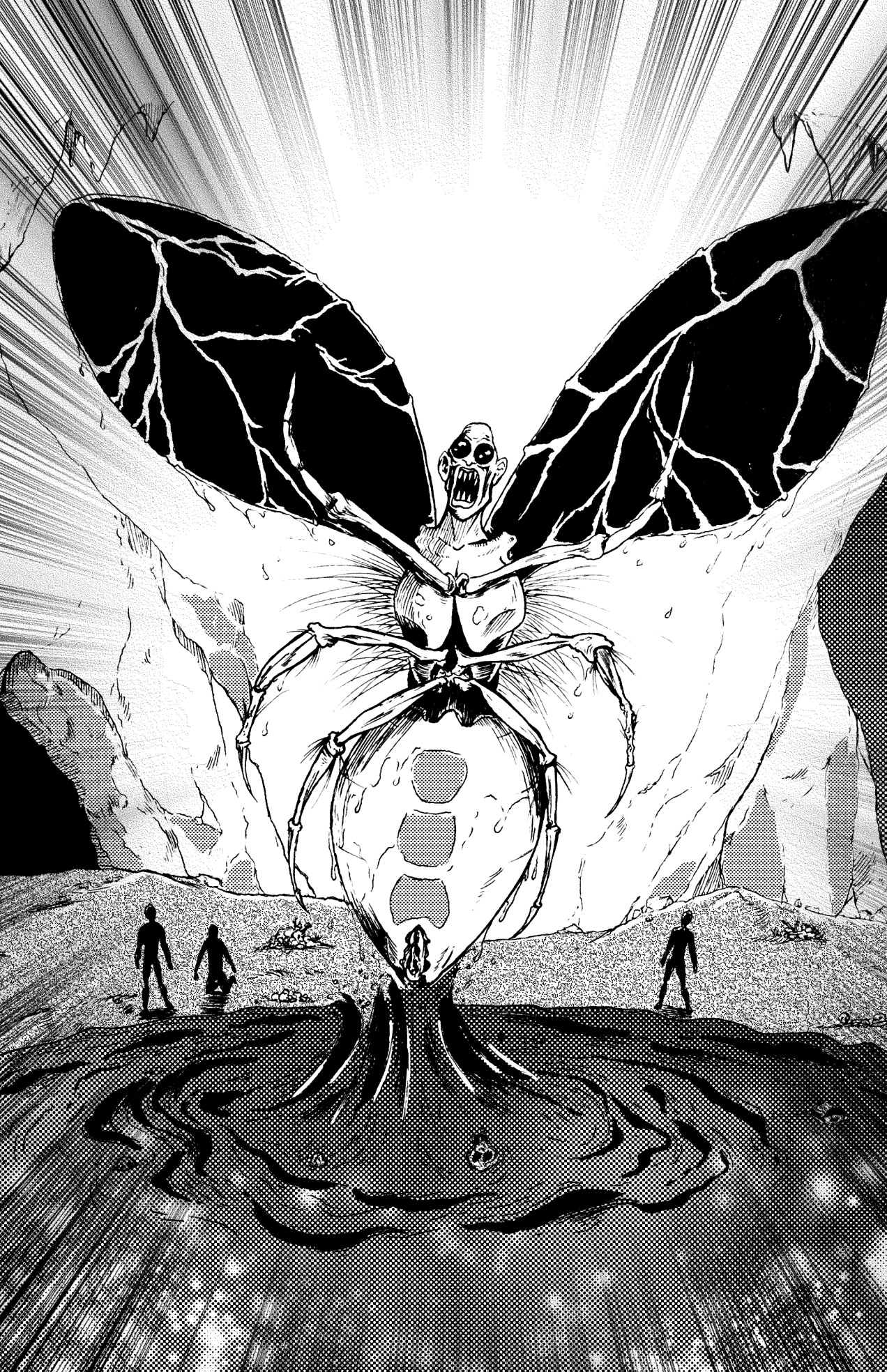
APPEARANCE

She has the form of a monstrous green fly whose speckled green body spans fifty feet and glitters with a chromatic sheen. Her wings are dark as ebony, with thick red veins that pulse with each heartbeat and emanate a drumming sound. Thick, dark hairs cover her body and they move as if subject to a ghostly, unfelt wind.

She has the face of a maddened hag with green, segmented eyes that are set too close together. Her mouth is filled with needle-like teeth that drip with saliva. Her voice is high-pitched and screechy. Her speech is tainted with a buzzing sound. Her scent is that of the corpse flower.

HISTORY

Vellez-Nev began her existence in a form and nature that differed from her current state. Indeed, she was a minor godling dwelling on the remote and insignificant plane of Llars. She, and her family, dwelt upon the planet of Devanon, where they ruled the simple people of that planet for aeons. Her life changed when the malevolent entity, Denua Menka, forced itself on the plane of Llars seeking the fair godling.



When Denua Menka approached her, it wore a form that veiled its vile nature from her. When she saw the disguised villain, Vellez-Nev thought it was a courier that came to her presence to relay important information. She expected the intruder to perform the normal perfunctory act of obeisance once it approached. Instead of giving the expected reverence that was due her, Denua Menka struck, and wounded, the godling with a fragment of chaos. In a panic, Vellez-Nev fled her world, seeking to elude her pursuer before the last of her vital energies dripped from the savage wound. As the last remnants of her life's essence ebbed away, she became weak and confused and made a desperate bid to hide by fleeing into the Infinite Swamp of Selip. There she fell from the sky and plummeted into the putrid waters of Bhuzeel-Nev.

Here, the fair godling found succor as the maggot god took notice of her plight and bathed her wounds in its transformative waters. Seeing the near depletion of her god-energies, Bhuzeel-Nev opened its side and fed her on its own ichor. The transformation of the Vellez-Nev was the greatest to emerge from the water of that vile swamp. The act of infusing its ichor into the goddess created an eternal link between the two. A bond which, when consummated every aeon, causes an apocalyptic destruction of the world. For eternity, they continue to sow an unending cycle of suffering and death.

[Scholars debate the reason that Denua Menka sought her out to perform that evil deed. Their consensus is that it desired to wound the godling so it could consume her essence or to take mental possession of her. Because the intruder found its prey with such ease, many suspect betrayal from someone in Vellez-Nev's household or someone close to her.]

MOTIVATION

Vellez-Nev is the goddess of a thousand apocalypses, and she never stops seeking ripe worlds to demand the worship and adulation that she believes is her due. After all, did not destiny itself put her in this position of divine might and majesty? She has a dim view of other sentient creatures and she believes they exist only to exalt her greatness and empower her destiny. It is her belief that the cosmos depends on her to cleanse it when an excessive number of people disrupts its balance and harmony. She believes herself to be part of the natural order, a crucial agent in continuing the cycle of cosmic renewal and is incapable of freeing herself from that destiny, even if she so chose.

ACTIONS

In the lower levels of the Fane of the Fly God, Vellez-Nev slumbers in the deep fetid pool, waiting for the appointed day of her awakening. Then she will emerge from those waters to take flight and speak the Seventeen-Syllables that are the prelude to Death's Coronation. This song summons an adult aspect of Bhuzeel-Nev into her presence. She will take flight and they will consummate their unholy union in the air. After mating, Vellez-Nev will bite off the head of Bhuzeel-Nev with ecstatic glee and cast the maggot god's body to the ground. Vellez-Nev shall descend upon that godling's fresh corpse and inject her eggs into the convulsing body. Within hours, a cobweb of mildew-like fibers will arise from the ground and enshroud the corpse as it pulses from the writhing life pulsing within it.

At the appointed time, a multitude of maggot children burst forth. Their bodies steaming as they come forth from the hot and moist corpse-womb. Within an hour, their wings emerge and their bodies harden and change, becoming the Handmaidens of Vellez-Nev. They take flight to pursue their destiny to befoul the world with their insidious disease. For 13 days, the Handmaidens will travel the world spreading Pox Fever to all living things. The infected suffer from this incurable plight as oozing boils cover their bodies and the infection eats away at their skin, and their internal organs. Within three days of being infected, the victim dies.

Death's Coronation occurs on the twenty-first day after the consummation. Vellez-Nev rises into the air and she calls out, repeating the Seventeen Syllables and those who died from the deadly disease shall arise. These creatures have no memories or thoughts other than seeking their goddess and fulfilling her will. Vellez-Nev is now the absolute ruler of the planet and she revels in the unbroken praise she receives. The death caused by the plague, and the worship she receives, sustains her for a few thousand years. When her energies begin to wane, she travels to another world where a temple awaits her. There she slumbers for millennia to gather the strength to complete the work over again.

THE CLERICS OF VELLEZ-NEV

Even while her body slumbers in the nourishing pits of her temple, the consciousness of Vellez-Nev reaches out into the cosmos to find future worlds for her to feed. Her plans depend on people to prepare a place for her to reside and that requires recruiting people willing to carry out those plans and preparations. It is her trusted servants that she gives those tasks and she imbues them power and her divine purpose.

Her living worshipers are followers of a death cult. The common people join her cult for a promise of protection from disease, a longer life and a promise of a better afterlife. While that may be true from a technical standpoint, the outcome is not what people expect.

Her clerics are steeped in necromancy. Through their dark arts that Vellez-Nev, they can extend their lives through their dark magic. Such an extension of life is not without a cost and her clerics sacrifice their humanity, and the future of the world, for a taste of power and a promise of an extended life.



VOGULNAGAA

SUMMARY

Vogulnagaa is a godling that possesses an unquenchable thirst for knowledge that burns as hot as the sun. This singular passion drives her across the cosmos searching for answers to unlock the enigmas of primordial magic. After aeons of searching, she has uncovered only rudimentary answers to her questions.

Vogulnagaa is a godling who sees the Cosmos as a thing for her to experiment upon to satisfy her curiosities. She is active in the affairs of the Cosmos and intrudes into the biological makeup of species of people across many worlds in various dimensions. She possesses a passionless intelligence That lacks emotion. She never concerns herself with the plights of the species that she subject to her manipulations.



APPEARANCE

Her true form is that of a fifteen-foot anthropomorphic fly. Each of her limbs end in odd shaped “hands and feet” and she possessed the ability to transform them to serve her purposes. Her segmented eyes burn with a fiery and malevolent intelligence and her wings have an odd-geometric quality about them. Her body is a dull violet color, and it has streaks of orange and green which appear to shift in both shape and color.

Vogulnagaa’s appearance is not static. At will she grows limbs and alters their structures to carry out her work. Those changes are beyond superficial as she possesses the ability to change the internal structures of her body to survive and traverse even the most hostile environments. The vacuum of space, the acidic atmospheres of insidious planets, and the burning heat of infernal suns do not deter her.

HISTORY

Vogulnagaa did not emerge into the cosmos as a deity. Rather, she arose from dying species on a forgotten planet encircling a dying star. The other members of her species lacked the ability to reason, but she came into existence with a vast intellect. Cosmologists debate if she is the result of time and chance or her birth was orchestrated by a cosmic being.

She possesses a ravenous mind that hungers to unravel the primal mysteries of the universe. That famishment makes her blind and apathetic to any ethical boundaries in her journey to gain further knowledge. She never had any ethical moorings, even for those of her species, whom she relentlessly dissected and experimented upon to understand how they worked. Her brutal inquiries bore fruit, and it unlocked the fundamental mysteries of life.

After centuries of research, she concluded that science and magic were not two separate disciplines that stood in opposition to each other. Instead, she developed unifying theorems that proved the opposite; that these two disciplines are extensions of each other. Over the millennia, she started unlocking the fundamentals of the cosmic building blocks that underpin both the universe and reality itself. Each breakthrough came at a cost. Indeed, she sacrificed her species, and her world, on the altar of magical sciences. Armed with the fruit of her dark research, her program advances as she seeks subjects in other realms for her experiments.

MOTIVATION

The day will arrive when she achieves the complete comprehension of primordial magic. With this knowledge comes the power to change the cosmos and to rewrite reality. She will then force all of existence into an untiring series of time recursions to answer every question that has plagued her. Once she uncovers the answer to her last question, she will then extinguish all of existence by placing it into an irrevocable state of heat death.

ACTIONS

It was by happenstance that Vogulnagaa stumbled upon the planet Eris in her sojournings; a tiny planet in a remote solar system of little consequence. Vogulnagaa expected to find the planet devoid of sentient life, but she discovered a dying race of green humans living out their last days awaiting their inevitable extinction, finding solace spending their last days in the cyclopean halls and edifices of their city. Their forefathers built this city in an inactive volcano and named it Zym. It was their crowning achievement and it would be a fitting tomb for their race.

While Vogulnagaa salvaged them from extinction, she didn't do so out of mercy or concern for the people or their legacy because she lacks the capacity to have compassion for others. She saved them because she found their bodies easy to shape and manipulate with her creation magics. Of all the beings that she experimented on, the bodies of the green people proved to be the most malleable. Like a potter, she twisted, pulled, and distorted their flesh in the shapes both pleasing and useful to her.

Upon her arrival, she wasted no time in directing the Erisites to destroy the monuments of the forefathers to rebuild the city to her specifications. The construction program was ambitious in its scope and its aggressive timeline. She conscripted the whole city into the effort and the first edifice the people constructed was the colossal laboratory. Without this edifice she could not conduct the proper experimentations upon the entire population. Once built, Vogulnagaa wasted no time to start experiments on the workers. Like a feverish potter, she tore, twisted and sculpted the people's minds, bodies and spirits into an infinite number of forms and sizes. For generations, she experimented on the population without cessation.

Her tortures provided results, and she recorded mountains of records filled with data. That data led to breakthroughs in eldritch sciences that proved invaluable. Once she squeezed all the knowledge from her subjects' suffering, she turned her sights onto other worlds, seeking new subjects. While this form of research no longer takes the forefront of her activities, she still collects experimental subjects from many worlds.

WORSHIP

Vogulnagaa has no worshipers. Wise and powerful beings seek her out hoping for answers to their questions about the mysteries of ancient primal magic.



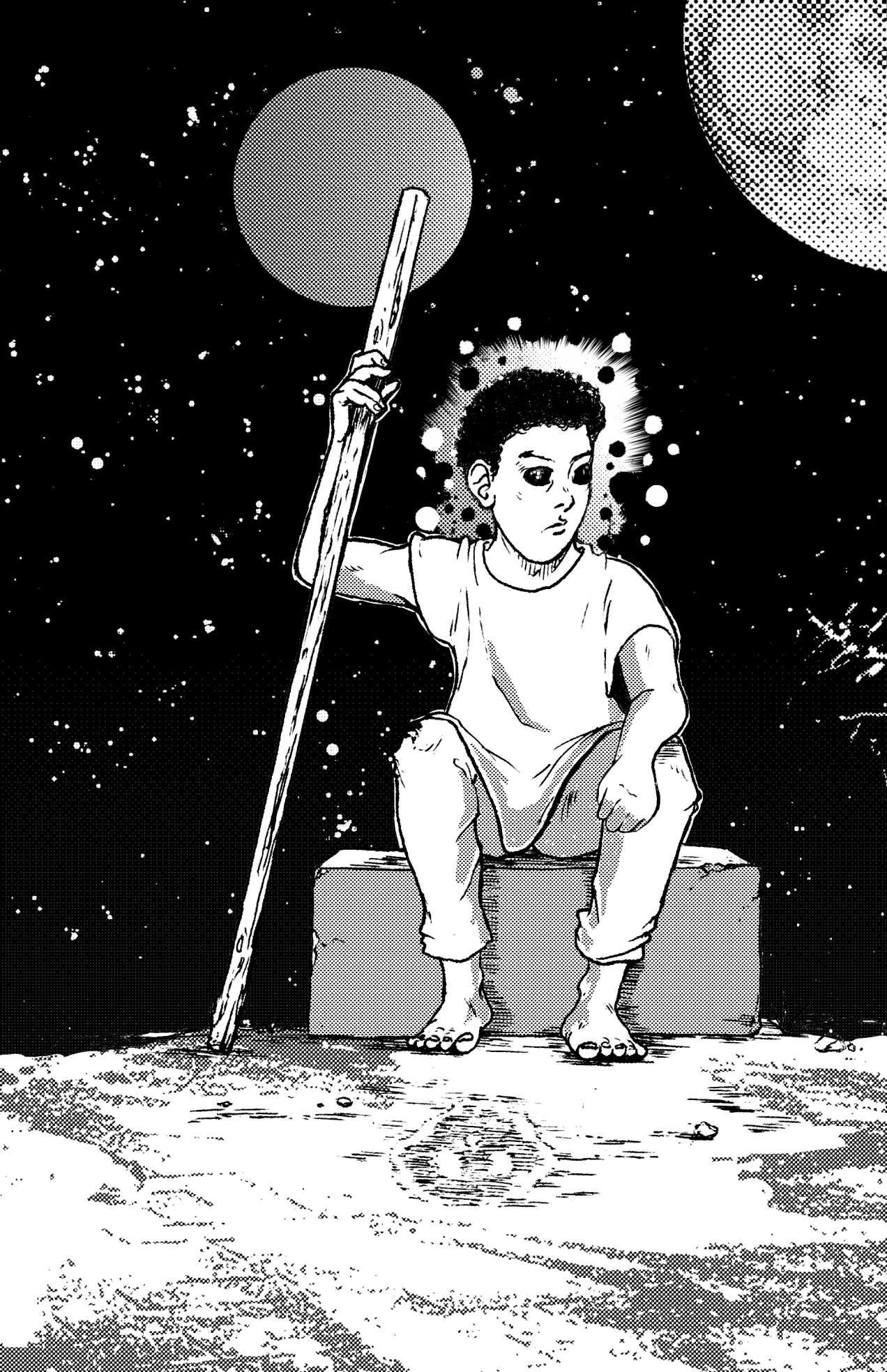
BEALOTH

SUMMARY

Shaping the future into a desired outcome is something that few, outside Bealoth, can accomplish time after time. He has an intellect capable of establishing multiple elaborate plans detailed enough to bring down kingdoms and topple empires.

APPEARANCE

Bealoth takes many forms, but the three most common representations are that of a prepubescent boy, a bloated fly with a skull pattern on its abdomen, and an emaciated male with a shaved head. Tradition holds that the fly god doesn't have a physical body and changes its form to suit its fancy. Others conjecture that these three forms represent the three different aspects of the god: allure, ruin and suffering.



HISTORY

Scholars debate the origins of the deity of deceit. Some believe that Bealoth sprang into existence, along with the fourth cosmos, from an explosion created when an Essence of Chaos collided with a Prime Archon of Law. Others speculate Bealoth is a manifestation of the collective guile, the beliefs, the experiences of all of creation. Yet others believe that the Infinite Swamps Selip birthed the godling in the transformational and polluted waters that surrounds Bhuzeel-Nev.

MOTIVATION

The machinations of Bealoth remain hidden to both scholars and mages. Many try to discern his plans, but none can fathom his ways. He plays a long game with objectives that he takes great pains to keep hidden and confounding. He is a perplexing creature who keeps onlookers guessing when he refuses to perform a simple act that would overturn an empire, but he will establish complex plans, at substantial cost, to destroy an insignificant family for no obvious gain. Onlookers lack the insight to see the grand game the fly god is playing. Nations and people are nothing more than pieces on a game board that Bealoth moves and removes for his on good pleasure.

Kings and emperors plot to grow their power and expand their domains by raising mighty armies to conquer other lands. Bealoth does not desire to amass territories or vanquish rulers through the display of might. Instead, he desires to grind civilizations into the dust through the subtle manipulation of people. He relishes spending centuries setting up a line of dominoes for that future day that he will give the small nudge and watch them all fall, one by one.

While he has no armies at his disposal, that does not make him a lesser foe. His deviousness shows that through lies, innuendo, and the proper application of truth, he is more destructive than his fellow beings' use of arms.

Bealoth is loath to entangle himself, or his agents, in the business of others if the outcome does not concern him. He entertains requests for knowledge, or service, if the supplicant can further his own plans. He often demands that the supplicant perform some action as payment. The demands he makes are not simple things. The malevolent lord relishes demanding a task that the supplicant finds repugnant; something foul, personal, and with unforeseen consequences.

ACTIONS

When executing his schemes, Bealoth never involves himself directly. Instead, he prefers to remain obscured in the shadows and use his agents to carry out the visible parts of the strategy. Bealoth is not omniscient, he cannot foresee the future. He excels at making accurate predictions, provided he understands the factors in play. He doesn't know when some small bit of information will become crucial to the success of his plans. Gaps in information is what he fears, so he directs his agents to cast a wide net when they gather information. Therefore, his agents go to such lengths to provide detailed intelligence on people and events that seem unrelated to their mission.

The large base of knowledge gives him the ability to calculate the near future with a reasonable certainty. Because of the complexities that are at play, no plan goes without a hitch. Because of the detailed and vast intelligence at his disposal, he adjusts his plan as events unfold.

Words are the primary weapons that he employs to sowing the seeds of destruction, but sometimes words are not enough to tip the scales. For those occasions, the godling will direct his agents to employ violence. When employing the more “direct” form of violence, the agents used more nuanced methods of skulduggery; such as the point of the dagger or food tainted with poison.

A GOD OF KNOWLEDGE

Of all the Fly Lords, Bealoth is the most accessible and willing to barter. People seek the godling because they require information that they cannot gain otherwise. Sometimes they seek to resolve a nagging concern, such as the questions regarding true parentage of a noble child or the status and location of a dear friend. Others seek him so that they might understand the secrets of the cosmos. They desire to peek into the mechanisms of the universe or learn the details of far off realms. The most common reason people seek the counsel of this maleficent deity is to gain information to leverage against their bitter enemies. Some supplicants contact the Lord of Lies hoping that he will intervene in their current situation. Perhaps the supplicant needs a charm placed on an enemy or intelligence on a remote army.

PAYMENT FOR SERVICES RENDERED

The payment that Bealoth demands for providing answers and services varies from request to request. Money and riches are of no importance to the Lord of Lies. Because he deals in the currency of knowledge, he often requires information from the supplicant before providing any answers. Sometimes the supplicant does not know the answer and does not have direct access to the requested information, which forces them to figure out a way to get it. The ease of acquiring the information varies from easy to impossible and doesn't always seem commensurate with the intelligence they are requesting. Bealoth only wants knowledge that either furthers its plans or fills in critical gaps. It only shares information with humans deemed worthwhile and it never makes a trade which would place its grand schemes at risk.

INDIRECT INVOLVEMENT

Those that seek his counsel don't deal directly with the Lord of Lies. Instead, they meet with his chancellors, advisors and agents. Supplicants must negotiate with his designated servants. These chancellors do not share a uniform level of patience or willingness to deal with supplicants.

Bealoth is loath to entangle himself, or his agents, in the affairs that do not concern him but he entertains such requests if the supplicant can perform a duty that will further the plans of the fly lord. The chancellors pride themselves on choosing the perfect task and perform meticulous research to make sure the requested deed is foul, personal, and with unforeseen consequences.



ZZELLED-KVEZZ

HISTORY

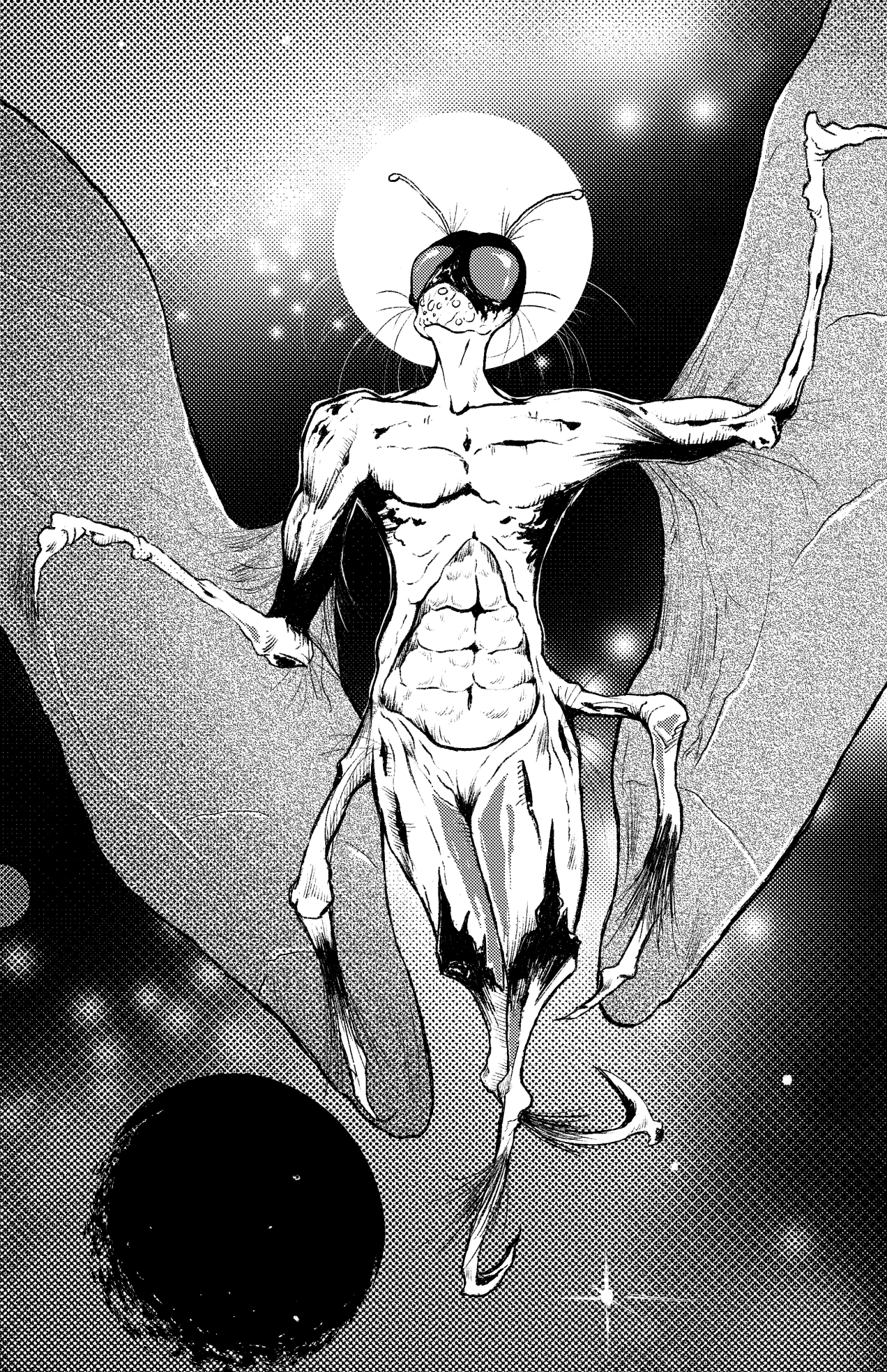
Zzelled-Kvezz was one of the three Primal Alphas that sprung into existence with the creation of the Fourth Cosmos. Unlike his brethren, he remained neutral in the war between Law and Chaos.

Seven thousand years ago, Zzelled-Kvezz felt the anguish and heard the cries of the people dwelling on the planet Thezzra. Their suffering sprang from the hordes of Chaos that overran their world and entrapped them in an unending hell. The fly god felt pity upon the people and he visited the world and intervened, using his mighty magics, to force back the Chaos and reestablish the natural order.

At first, he remained on this world to protect it from any future incursions of Chaos. But, over time, he gained parental feelings towards these people. With that change, Zzelled-Kvezz's interest shifted from seeing himself as being only a protector of the realm to taking on the role of mentor and shepherd. Over centuries, he provided the guidance for them to become an advanced society adept at science and magic. It was through his direct involvement that these people made rapid advancements to their civilization. They accomplished in three centuries what would have taken aeons without the fly god's involvement.

For reasons lost to time, the malevolent wizard Zhg plotted the demise of the planet Thezzra. Some scholars speculate that a pre-primal elder of Chaos whispered into Zhg's ear, filling her mind with corrupting thoughts. Others believe that Zhg's reason was more mundane; she only sought to see if such an act of devastation was even possible.

Primal Alphas are entities that wield the cosmic power of the gods. Until that fateful deed committed by Zhg, no one thought it was possible for a mortal being to wound a Primal Alpha. The fly god felt pity upon the people and he intervened, using his mighty magics, to force back the Chaos and reestablish the natural order.



LOCATIONS



As they pressed on through the freezing cold, they gradually became aware of a strange purple glow in the distance. At first, they dismissed it as nothing more than a trick of the light, but as they drew closer, they realized that it was coming from some kind of enormous creature.

Stunned, the explorers watched as the creature made its way through the icy landscape, its massive wings flapping slowly as it moved. It seemed almost otherworldly, like something from a dream, and the explorers couldn't help but be both awed and terrified by its presence.



THE INFINITE SWAMP OF SELIP

The fabled Infinite Swamps of Selip exists in a small dimensional fragment created during the Age of Cataclysms that scholars also refer to as the Time of the God Sunderings. This fragmented dimension contains a solar system that has four planets encircling a bright violet star. The planet Selip maintains a slow orbit around the sun and it takes 457 Earth years to complete a single revolution around a perfectly (non-elliptical) circular orbit, which ensures that the planet maintains a single, constant season.

Like most planets, Selip has a day and night cycle because it spins along its axis. The cycles of day in night are almost equivalent with each lasting for two-and-a-half earth days. The sky lacks a moon, and is devoid of any stars, but the "outer space" emanates a constant gray light that provides the equivalent illumination that people on Earth get from a full moon on a cloudy night.

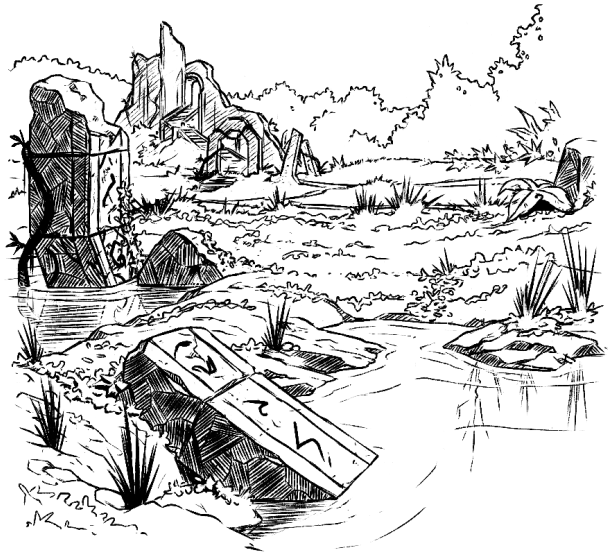
The land is flat, with certain regions marked by rocky hills that erupt from the marshy ground. The planet has no oceans, but the waters vary in depth, with some areas reaching hundreds of feet.

ECOSYSTEM

Unlike the wetlands of earth, there is little beauty, or goodness to be found in the landscape. The swamp smells like a putrefying carcass left out in the summer's sun. The insufferable heat and humidity is constant and inescapable.

Fog and mists cloys the atmosphere with a sickly sweet odor of foul corruption.

Lizards, fish, snakes, snails, rodents, birds and fish live in abundance on Selip with many twisted into grotesque shapes and growing into monstrous sizes.



INHABITANTS

While the original sentient species, the Kravic, no longer abide here, there are tribes of the other sentients that do. These are the peoples that the Kravic brought here to serve as slaves and also to serve as sacrifices for their malevolent deity. While they are no longer subject to their tyrannical masters, they remain trapped in a hostile world that is not their own. They cling to survival, hoping for a day when the gods will show mercy and provide them a means to travel back to their home realms.

SURVIVAL ON A DECAYING WORLD

Small tribes survive by fishing and hunting in the swamps. The soil does not contain the nutrients required to grow crops, but its bounteous wetlands contain dense populations of fleshy creatures that makes the land capable of supporting large populations. Finding food is easy, but hunting in these lands is dangerous because there are creatures that find the flesh of humanoids delectable.

RADIATION

There is no cessation to the cosmic radiation that bombards this planet. Over the centuries, these transformative rays altered the minds and the bodies of the beings trapped here. Tribes of people took on the physical characteristics of crustaceans, reptiles and even fish. These changes not only affect their bodies but it also alters their minds and corrupts their souls. Generations spent in this pocket dimension are making the people more animalistic in their thinking and more brutal in their behavior. While they maintain the core of their original nature, time will erase the last bits of their original essence.

HISTORY

THE KRAVIC

This is the home of the Kravic, a sentient species that appears to be the amalgamation of humans, insects, and reptiles. Uplifted from the mire of their dismal swamp by the godling Theth-Nev-Shamat, they grew in knowledge and might through his tutelage. Theth-Nev-Shamat was not a benevolent deity seeking a species to aid; he inserted himself into their history to make them a means to slake his insatiable thirst for blood. He saw the potential in these creatures to become implements of war, driving a swath of death and destruction guided by his hand.

GATEWAYS OF CONQUEST

The fate of the multiverse changed the day that the Kravic learned how to open mystical passageways to other dimensions. That access allowed them access to abundant lands to conquer. With eldritch energies at their command, and a growing army, they expanded their domain at a rapid pace, slaughtering their way to primacy. Countless realms fell under their sharp swords and potent magics until their domain expanded beyond that of any previous species. Their reign lasted for aeons, bringing untold suffering to the worlds that they pillaged.

TAILORED FOR CONQUEST

It took three things to make their inter-planar conquests possible.

The first was the arcane might of their mages. Their uplifted brains and physiology made them ideal at harnessing the cosmic magic in ways other beings were not. After aeons of perfecting their craft, their abilities approached the level of godlings. At the height of their power, no mortal power could match their mystical might.

They used that knowledge to build arcane technologies of immense power. The inventions took the form of strange machines and ominous monoliths. One cannot overstate their importance for winning wars and holding on to a vast empire.

Second, while the Kravic were formidable mages, they were not capable of conquering the vastness without something to augment their power. For this purpose, they designed machines that would harness more cosmic energy than they could on their own. Once they possessed this technology, they quickly put it to use by warping reality to their advantage. These advances in arcane technology gave them the means to inflict prodigious amounts of destruction upon their enemies and to transport armies across vast realms.

The third factor was augmenting their armies through the tyrannical conscription of conquered peoples and forcing them to give up their young to become slave armies. Those raised from childhood in the service of the Kravic empire were called the Chilbatii and were infamous for their cruelty and their unwavering fealty to the Kravic empire. For their loyalty, the Kravic paid them well from the spoils of the conquered.

THE DEATH OF AN INFINITE EMPIRE

The Kravic empire had the appearance of being eternal, but on the eve of the second cycle of Madrivna, their empire mysteriously toppled. Within a span of a few hours, millions of the Kravic died without a noticeable cause. Those who didn't instant die during that time became first violent and then suicidal. This led to a cycle of murder and suicide, which continued until only a seventy-seven remained.

With the Kravic species gone, their empire fell in short order. While the Chilbatti made excellent soldiers, they lacked the sophistication required to maintain an empire. They even lacked the ability to manage a single kingdom.

Sensing the disorder caused by the mass death of their hated overlords, each of the individual realms fought against their oppressors, eventually winning their independence from the oppressors.

Aeons have passed since the fall of the Kravic Empire, but many of the ancient edifices remain, serving as memorials and warnings.

INHABITANTS

BOG-SHAMANS

A handful of the Chilbatti, possessing some affinity for the eldritch arts, fled from the cities when their Kravic masters fell. Huddling in secret limestone caves, they sought safety in the infinite swamp of Selip. Knowing that the corrupting nature of the sun's cosmic radiation and the dangerous nature of the infinite swamp, they knew that they had to adapt quickly or they would be lost. Forsaking the traditional magical arts, instead they attuned themselves to the world they now found themselves. To their surprise, their efforts bore fruit. They discovered that the world was a being with a consciousness and a will. In exchange for being caretakers and companions of sorts, the world imbued them with some of its essence. The Chilbratti bodies underwent transformation, but they kept their memories and their will. They remain a neutral force in this world. Their magics are great, but they only wield their eldritch powers only under the most extreme of situations.

They may prove helpful to those who enter the infinite swamp or they may remain unmoved by the group's plight, regardless of its severity.

BHUZEEL-NEV

A notable manifestation of Bhuzeel-Nev lives in the Infinite Swamp of Selip. There it feeds on the never-ending cycle of decay while vile ichors stream from the sphincterous nozzles that cover its body. Because the godling never stops feeding, its bowels remain engorged and never stop discharging feces. The Chaos-tinged rivers of waste the spew from its body mixes with the stagnant waters of the swamp to create a slurry that corrupts the ecology of the region.

BIRTHS MOST CORRUPT

Exposure to that slurry has varying effects on the creatures that encounter it. The most common consequence to those who make contact with the slurry is the rapid degeneration of the flesh. Within minutes, large chunks of the creature's bodily tissue detach and fall to the ground. Once free from the body, the uncoupled slabs of flesh become autonomous organisms that scurry off into the swamp. These pulpy, boneless creatures develop organs and body structures that allow them to survive on their own.

Disassembling creatures into small, fleshy blobs isn't the only effect these waters have upon an unfortunate traveler. Indeed, these foul waters transmogrify beasts into fearsome creatures. Scholars continue to document monsters birthed from this land, some of such might that they could easily defeat a squad of well-trained soldiers. Stories and myths continue to surround this place. People never tire of hearing the epics of brave heroes facing the monsters found in the horrid swamps of Selip. Sometimes the bards relay edifying stories exalting the virtues of courage and honor as they recount legends of famous soldiers facing their fears to overcome Chaos. Other times, the bards convey cautionary moral tales to warn the listener of the dangers of hubris and how pride can lead to ruin.

A SUPERIOR MALEVOLENCE

Each century, this mutagenic slurry births a creature that exceeds the malevolence and the strength of the other monstrosities that roam the swamps of this world. Chaos imbues these creatures with substantial power and malicious intelligence to carry out its will. Scholars call these creatures the Archons of Chaos because they are the closest thing that Chaos has to a physical embodiment. The creatures that undergo this transformation transcend their mortal existence, and the dark forces imbue them with cosmic energies. Armed with vast mystical might, these Archons are not bound to this planet and they have the means to traverse the cosmos and sow the seeds of Chaos in other realms.

Bhuzeel-Nev is not a god of entropy, it does not seek to destroy the universe. Rather, it sees the entire cosmos as a private garden existing only to satiate its gnawing appetite and peculiar tastes.

THE SEPTAGON

THE ALTAR STONE

A plateau-shaped hill of a purplish-black color that juts suddenly from the marsh formed from the soft volcanic stone unique to the Infinite Swamp and crafted into the shape of a crude Septagon. Upon examination, observers notice that the edges of this Septagon are worn smooth, showing that this geological feature is quite ancient. It is the only notable rocky feature for hundreds of leagues, and the stone hill bears no resemblance to rock formations found elsewhere in Selip.

Those who choose to make the quick climb to the top of the plateau notice a large circle that is carved into the top of the stone. Along this circle are seven massive rectangular stone blocks standing upright and composed of a harder stone than the hill upon which they rest.

The architects arranged the massive blocks into semi-symmetrical patterns with a grouping of three blocks, a grouping of two blocks, and the two remaining blocks that stand alone. Each block has precise geomorphic symbols carved into them. Attempting to read the symbols causes the person's eyes to itch and their brain quiver.

A large sacrificial altar stands prominent in the center. Around the altar, for tens of feet, a black slime coats the ground and gives the surface a lustrous sheen. Should someone attempt to remove any of the slime, they will notice the geometric patterns on the floor. Whoever built this site inlaid the stone with an unidentifiable metal to make those patterns.

Aeons have passed since the blood of the last sacrifice drenched the floor, but this place still pulses with evil magic.

THE PURPOSE

The Septagon is the site where the Kravic began their worship of their evil god, Theth-Nev-Shamat. For aeons, they spilled rivers of blood to slake the thirst of the insatiable deity. Even when they progressed to other worlds and realms and spilled oceans of blood to their god, this site remained sacred. Here they continued their unending cycle of blood sacrifice for their malevolent deity. Once every 13 rotations, the Kravic celebrated their deity by committing mass sacrifices to him upon the altar. Then, after the murdering of thousands, the god would appear to give his approbation to his children.

The sacrificial altar hasn't received a sacrifice for thousands of years but if someone is present during the night cycle of the 13 rotation, they will see the follow phantasmal form:

THE OBSERVER

A diminutive human figure, that of a child, lies on the altar, bathed in a ghoulish light. It stands up on the altar with a veil covering its face, spreads its arms out wide, and grows in height until it reaches the height of six feet. Then, with a slow flourish, the figure removes the veil and reveals its horrific countenance. The gray skin of this creature's face sags from its skull, exposing the surrounding bodily structures of its unblinking and watery black eyes.

Seeing those people standing before it, the figure pulls the sagging flesh of its mouth back to make a grimace. It is a face of pain. It doesn't talk. It doesn't scream. It just stares and then fades away.



ERIS

Eris is a diminutive ice planet in a distant orbit circling around a purple sun. A sun whose intense light shines harshly upon that distant world, bathing it with strange energies.

How the sentient race of Eristites came into existence is unknown. While three of their libraries remain intact, there is nothing in their archives that provides a definitive origin for the species. Some believe the planet birthed them spontaneously as a shard of Chaos struck its surface. Others believe that an ancient cosmic being, referred to as the Sower, established Eristites in addition to other sentient species through the universe. Others believe that the Eristes were one capable of interplanetary travel, but due to some ancient misfortune, found themselves marooned on this planet.

ECOSYSTEM

Surprisingly, for an ice planet, it teems with life. The molten core of this world is active and numerous volcanoes and vents pock the surface. The energies released create oases along the bitter cold surface of this planet. The temperatures in areas around the steam vents are sufficient to create pockets of jungles and forests. Additionally, there are massive lakes of heated water that dot the planets. These support a variety of marine life.

The purplish radiation from the distant sun creates massive plants and animals of bizarre and colorful appearance. The flora and fauna are wondrous to behold but they are also dangerous to experience. Few sojourns from oasis to oasis because such journeys are dangerous affairs due to severe cold, high winds, and treacherous weather. Most prefer to remain in the balmy steam-bathed lands.

ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS

A race of Erisites built a Zym in the crater of a dead volcano, naming it after the science-prophet who led them there. The people of Zym, in time, became master architects and renown artisans, demonstrating the value of attaining civic and scientific excellence. As a testament to Zym's vision, the population prospered and the size and influence of the city expanded.

But their opulence couldn't save them. For inexplicable reasons, their fertility rates plummeted. Despite their attempts to understand the cause, a solution remained elusive to their scientists and their priests. After decades of fruitless research, they accepted that they were a doomed and cursed race and they accepted their fate with stoicism.

But extinction was not to be their lot because Vogulnagaa found them before they reached their final day. Under her care, their numbers increased because Vogulnagaa used her primal magic to manipulate their genetic essences to make them a more hale species. While her intervention made them a physically thriving people, it is debatable if her intervention was a good thing and many Erisites believe that extinction was preferable to being her living experiments.

ERIS TODAY

The dying city now bustles with people and activity. The original Erisites, though twisted mockeries of their former selves, made a rebound and now populate much of the city.

But the Erisites are not the only people dwelling in this city. Over centuries, Vogulnagaa harvested people from hundreds of worlds, bringing them her to experiment upon. She released those who survived her procedures into the city. Over time, the numbers of aliens in the city grew and they now make up the major portion of the population.

THE DECAYING CORPSE OF ANDVELDUUL-VOHEIN

Seventeen thousand millennia ago, the vile god, Ishtan-Gorthep, forged a sword from the essence of Chaos. The godling created this blade for foul intent; to drive the pulsing blade deep into the benevolent god-king, Andvelduul-Vohein. The blade's length extended a distance of 7 furlongs; it took a cyclopean blade to murder a god.

The slaughterer wasted no time to out this reprehensible act and pierced the god-king with the malevolent blade. Though grievous, the wound proved to not be immediately lethal and injury put the god into a coma-like state. To this day, the wound continues to burn with a purplish unholy fire where the Chaos blade contacts the dying god's flesh.

Scholars debate how much vitality remains with the god-king, with most doubting he will last another century. The Chaos fire continues to burn until the flames consume every portion of the god-king's spirit.

No being dares to approach the Chaos blade, fearing what might happen to them if they contact the essence of Chaos. People fear removing the blade and saving the benevolent god from his death sentence because scholars fear the mental effects upon a god who spent aeons living in unimaginable suffering. It is not unreasonable to conclude that the crucible of suffering may have turned the once malevolent god into something malicious. Scholars agree it is safer to let the sleeping god die.

THE SHATTERING OF THE CHAOS BLADE

When the betrayer drove that dark blade deep into Andvelduul-Vohein, the god-king's body convulsed with such violence that it broke the blade into fragments. Those shards of Chaos scattered across time, space and dimensions. Where those fragments landed, they insinuated themselves and corrupted reality. Some large fragments can distort time, warping space and changing the governing laws of physics. Like an evil seed that takes root, those fragments of Chaos grow like vile trees whose rotten fruit drop to the ground and defiling the land.

BHUZEEL-NEV

From the bubbling wound of the dying god, Bhuzeel-Nev was born, generated spontaneously from the mixture of god-vitality and Chaos.

From an enlarged pustule, this godling emerged after a millennium of feeding on the defiling puss of the dying god. In a grand metamorphosis, the maggot godling emerged from its host as a creature that is not bound by the limits of space. While different aspects of Bhuzeel-Nev exist throughout the cosmos, the original creation still abides here, feeding on the corrupting foam that flows from the god-king's wound.

DESTINATION VACATION

Should beings choose to travel to the body of Ishtan-Gortheop, and assuming they have the means to do so, they find it floating in the Nisminean Plane which glows with pale purple light. They can walk along the body which, other than the bubbling wound, remains preserved and intact.

Bhuzeel-Nev is not the only creature to generate from the undying corpse. Other beings have as well. They all have their own agendas and vary in levels of power, but even the least of these beings exceed the power of the greatest mortals.

INDUSTRY

The body of a dying god that lists in the void of astral space creates a unique opportunity for those wanting to make a financial profit. Indeed, a grisly industry arose as people harvested tissue, blood and fluids from the god-king's corpse. While workers find it impossible to chisel away at the bones, workers use enchanted blades designed for the gruesome task of harvesting the dying god's soft tissues. There is some value in the skin's harvesting, the ultimate treasure lies in the organs and especially the vital fluids that now slowly course through its body.

Harvesting those internal resources comes with both difficulty and risk. Cutting the skin and muscle is no small task, often takes an army of workers with blades feverishly sawing and hacking to make an opening. Then, "divers" must dive deep into the god-king's body cavity, navigating through the densely packed cavern to find their desired resource. Because the wound tries to heal itself, the harvesters must act with haste or risk becoming entombed in the corpse. No matter how diligently workers attempt to keep the wound open, it never remains open for long.

The body is dying, and for some of the outer limbs, necrosis is setting in. The smell of rotting god-flesh draws scavengers from the vast regions who feast on the decaying matter. Giant flying hagfish, crab-like creatures and clouds of insects swarm the regions of decay to feast on the nourishment the decaying flesh provides. In between the living flesh and the dying flesh is a region that grows an abundance of giant fungi and prismatic fronds.

THE TOWER

AN EDIFICE MOST BIZARRE

Bealoth dwells within a titanic basalt tower that shifts from plane to plane. The dark edifice appears to be carved from a single piece of dark porous stone and those standing next to it feel occasional puffs of air emanating from the stone, as if the entire structure is breathing.

To the normal observer, the tower exhibits a profusion of openings that seem superfluous in quantity, imprudent in their placement and varied workmanship. Some of these openings are windows decorated with geometric flourishes that are pleasing in their symmetry. Their design and their placement show the work of a grand architect directing the hands of master artisans.

But there are other apertures riddling the tower like pox scars—as if the tower suffered from a disfiguring disease. These rough-hewn openings give the impression that these were not part of the original construction and that someone added them later in a fit of haste.

However haphazard these holes appear, they are busy passageways worn smooth by the constant stream of fly messengers traveling to and from this tower. The interior of this structure is swarming with incoming messengers seeking to relay the details of their missions to an army of clerks ready to record those details.

A LIBRARY MOST COMPLETE

The edifice is a library of cyclopean depths filled with books and scrolls. Its confines contain an impossible number of cavernous rooms with shelving reaching to the tops of their high ceilings. These rooms are a flurry of activity as the clerks scurry about with their books and styluses to record the information gathered by the messengers. Then, with great meticulousness, they organize that information for efficient retrieval at a later time.

But when information is no longer useful, they will not discard it. Instead, they stuff unimportant books and scrolls in nooks along hallways, under stairwells, and in random unused crannies.

INFORMATION MOST PUZZLING

Outsiders that manage to gain access to those books find them difficult to decipher, because Bealoth's scribes wrote in a unique and alien script. Those who can read the cryptic language believe the books are worthless because they contain meticulous accounts of matters that seem random and trivial. Their value becomes manifest in the hands of those with eyes to see, and a genius to comprehend. This archive contains the patterns and connections for manipulating the destiny of men and gods.

The tower holds other things besides the intelligence gathered by the Fly Lord's spies. Indeed, the lower vaults house artifacts both curious and powerful. If one could wander these vaults, one finds many odd and wondrous things; many that do not seem to be the kinds of things that a being like Bealoth would hold dear. Among the contents of the vault are: the wedding garment of Neue-i, the sail from Jurnurd's ship (the one that sailed across seventeen realms), and pressed flowers from the grave of Fendnur-Gravna.



Chanting slowly, utopia rips a huge fly. It is the size of a coach and looks like a human baby with bulging eyes, all naked muscle and hairless skin, all buzzing sounds and sharp fangs. It clutches the air with maw-like wings made of 60 ra

a new life for
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then to dayli
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the creature bent over and placed its mandibles on the neck of one of the lesser maggots, its powerful pincer bursting it open with a snap, and then devouring it.

Next it attacked the rest of the lesser maggots, feasting upon them, for they would have been the next to feast upon their king.

The next day the lesser maggots had been slain. When they did not return, the priests knew something had gone wrong. King Abuhl was hungry.

The priests searched the garden to find the abomination that had slain their servants, and they could not believe what they found. There, it stood, basking in the bright daylight: a white, slug-like creature. It had no eyes, but it seemed to sense the priests. It coiled and struck over and over again, tearing its body into pieces, but when it was cut, it grew a new piece in its place. The priests watched in horror

It is believed that some wicked necromancers have used this spell to bind the fly that emerges from the target of a Child of Vellez-Nev spell after it falls to rot and force it to become their familiar. Who knows what horrible powers and secrets such an unholy concordance would grant onto the binder?

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I saw six of the lesser maggots, their pallid bodies bloated with food, writhing on the ground in orgiastic bliss clutching a small figure in their grasp. A huddled, disfigured thing. This was the purpose of the lesser maggots, to attend to the needs of a god. But this god was weak, pale

appeared in the deepest, corner of the chamber. Small, but made its way to the surface, light. It pushed through the elongating and forming four holed it to the ground. It titinous shell and its wings tly beating up a mild wind.

a is a minor godling who to exist to carry out out violence death. Other beings invoke ga to lead contingents of it droning hordes into battle by their foes. A clever and ve being, Gulthogga will of- ay the summoner if they do e measures to keep this from ng.

summoned to the prime materi- ne, Gulthogga seeks to wreak carnage as it can before de- g. Its mere presence is known il holy water, make people in- e and attract massive swarms of s. Its summoning is preceded e malodorous scent of dung and zing cacophony.

summoned to the prime materi- ne, Gulthogga seeks to wreak carnage as it can before de- ing. Its mere presence is known oil holy water, make people in- ile and attract massive swarms of ects. Its summoning is preceded the malodorous scent of dung and uzzing cacophony.

I remembered where I was. I could see myself in those remembered what had happened the fire, dying, changing. I opened my eyes. I could see was freely now. I could see my legs. I could see myself over and indistinct. The T This was the first time I flew ly out of my body. I could hunger in every writhing my being. Each motion I made slow, contorted, inhuman. I see myself slowly rising. The Mouth was opening, and I see the King feeding. Freedom took me- I grabbed the room's hands and shoved

King As-Tiger said, Let the fleas covers my bones rot away and fade me. I am tired of it. I want instead ers to clothe me and wings to carry. And let my body grow smaller and er until I can cover my whole body with my wings. So let it be - B Hal-Labbot

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