

# ROSEATE GROWTH



A low-level OSR adventure



by Jordan Boschman



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# ROSEATE GROWTH

A low-level OSR adventure

Written by  
Jordan Boschman  
([@JayEmBosch](#))

with

Map by  
[Dyson Logos](#), with some modifications

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A labor dispute at a valuable mine reveals the horrors that preceded it. The fossils of a little-understood ancient plant, glowing the color of a dragon's fruit, are crushed to a fine powder and diluted into a rare, luxurious, and intoxicating spice with unknown consequences. A monastery of a small but influential religious order harbors a dark secret. A hapless group of adventurers will face the potentially far-reaching implications of these intersecting arcs and decide what will remain hidden and the shape of the conflict to come.

**ROSEATE GROWTH** is a fantasy roleplaying adventure for three-to-five lower-level players, written in a system-neutral style. It should last roughly two or three sessions with some ripple effects that could be tied into your broader campaign or ignored.

**Content Warning:** addictive drugs, an anti-labor massacre, mild body horror.

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# THEN

Many forgotten ages ago, where there are now mountain crags and mostly bare rolling foothills, this land was largely flat and brimming with lush vegetation. It was known by many names in mortal tongues, but the gods simply called it *Mīnweddian*, a place of great potential and responsibility. Many divine hands cultivated and curated the increasingly diverse forms of life in their garden, and while mortals revered it for its obvious power and connection to supreme entities, few dared tread into this verdant playground.

As states, kingdoms, and empires rose, their need for resources was voracious, and the ensuing increasingly commonplace extractions were decried as short-sighted, greedy, and blasphemous, rising to levels some called genocidal as intersecting domains and spheres of influence lead to friction and tragic, repetitive wars. With the ebbs and flows of growth and conflict, and the subsequent material needs, the *Mīnweddian* shrunk, stagnated, and withered as the gods worked to bless and smite various shifting factions throughout the turmoil.

Eventually, the chaos and din became too great, and the gods abandoned their hopes for this greenest of spaces entirely, forging the warpath themselves as they joined their most favored champions in battle, and great magics, blessings, and curses upended the land itself. Great floods burying it in mud and sediment and tectonic forces lifting mountains from it with crushing force. What once was has become lost in the fog of eons as peoples with new, unheard languages and unseen cultures eventually came to know the land's present character.



# NOW

The old gods are dead, as are the old kingdoms. The stone of the mountains is now pockmarked with holes and caverns bearing valuable ores and minerals, though none fetch as high a price as roseate powder, a unique spice closer to an intoxicant than a flavoring. Industrial barons, in coordination with the regional authorities, brought in migrant workers with specialized knowledge from bordering kingdoms to work the mines, forcing them to live in work camps and return before curfew to keep them from making deeper connections in local towns.

Wages were scant, security was tight, and the food was awful. At the Crastogen Mine, having endured increasingly poor conditions from job to job and seeing just how much the watchful eyes of the mine guards light up when they glimpse the glowing fossilized leaves the workers pull from the earth, they managed to withhold their labor until they could negotiate a better contract.

After the disappearance of two dozen miners, and the escape of several more, the operation was in shambles. Desperate to prevent an interruption in the flow of the petrified leaves from which roseate powder is sourced, the authorities scrambled to pressure laborers and subsistence farmers from Crastogen and other nearby villages into the dangerous work. But with their lack of experience and contracts, the rumblings of a strike over the cruel conditions, high pressure, and abundant hazards rippled through this new batch, unused to this type of work, even more quickly.

More questions arose about who worked these cramped caverns before them, why the abrupt need for replacements, and where the previous miners could be found. Consensus is growing that, if they can find the answers to some of these questions, they could better assess the danger they might be in...

# HOOKS

There are several interested parties in this adventure that could inform them of some strange goings on or opportunities for profit, or simply beg them for assistance out of the goodness of their hearts.

## Bit of a Supply Jam

Industrial barons are seeing their profits drop as the supply of roseate powder begins to plummet. Desperate for answers, and choosing to ignore the attempts of the miners to organize, they find their local enforcers continue to fail to handle the situation. Hiring the PCs to put a final end to this disruption, these backers want them to uncover its real causes and finally resolve any disputes that could further endanger their supply of the spice, leading them to investigate the disappearance of some of the miners and their alleged leader.

## Mining Orders

The guards of the Crastogen Mine are stretched thin between watching the miners that are working, “recruiting” locals to fill vacancies, breaking up organizing meetings, and chasing deserters. Desperate for longer-term solutions, many of the guards have pooled their earnings to hire the PCs to track down the guards who are trying to pursue a leader among the miners and help them put an end to this organizing nonsense.

## Those Back Home

The relatives and friends of the Crastogen miners, staying behind in their villages, have become concerned when correspondence from them suddenly ceased. Suspiciously, the most recent letters they’ve received spoke of horrible working conditions and low pay pressuring the miners to do something drastic. They have pooled what meager funds they have, mostly sent from the miners back to their families, in hopes that the PCs will uncover what’s happening at the mine and help them secure better labor conditions, or at least bring them home safely, which leads them to dig into what happened to the initial bulk of miners.



## Unknowning Scabs

After most of the miners working nearby ceased coming into the town (whether Crastogen or another nearby town) to relax and restock their food supplies, local authorities and mine guards started hiring farmers and laborers with no mining experience to begin working at the mine. Suspicious of these developments, and not hearing from them since, concerned family and friends have pooled their funds to hire the PCs to investigate what caused the lack of miners in the first place. What became of those who had been working the mine until now?

## Where Is It?!

A rich member of the elite is not able to find more roseate powder, the intoxicating new spice to which they have recently become addicted. Supply shortages be damned, they want what they want, and now! They'll hire the PCs to pursue where the stuff comes from to secure a new source for them. When the mine itself turns out to be in a security lockdown, they instead decide to track down where the labor organizer, and the pursuing guards, went, thinking that there may be a secondary source somewhere nearby.

## Whispered Wisdom

A small but fairly well-respected religious sect, the *Swebbanguma*, have been struggling to contact one of their research monasteries. It is located near a mine that has recently been thrown into unrest due to a labor dispute, but it would be surprising if such events impacted their work. The PCs have been hired and dispatched to investigate what's caused the monks to stop their regular missives to others of their faith.





# IN A CAVERN SOMEWHERE NEAR THE CRASTOGEN MINE

The strict lockdown at the Crastogen mine quickly shuts down any sort of investigation there, as the secure perimeter and narrow entrance make an unnoticed entry near impossible. But more than anything, the current miners want to know what happened to the previous ones, terrified of what they have gotten themselves into and what fate may await them if they try to continue the struggle.

Finding few answers at the local village and the mine, the PCs leave in the direction of another distant town. About halfway there, however, a brief pinkish glittering draws their attention to a slow-moving stream that emerges from a small cave. What prods their curiosity is that the water is tinged with blood, and what sounds like an authoritative shout softly echoes from within.

## A1: Cave Stream

Following the water upstream into the cave, **the darkness is immediate**. The only light source visible within is a faint orange flicker far into the south of the cavern (one torch near the door in A7). A **pick** is caught on some rocks in the water, next to a **smashed lantern**.

A small, old wooden bridge links the two banks, and a path forks from each bank. To the left (east), **a small trail of blood** leads toward A2.

The river extends deep into the cave. Beyond the cavern branch to the southwest and the carved-out stone room to the east, the cave ceiling quickly becomes too short for most adventurers to proceed upstream without risking drowning or being swept back down river.

### Exits:

- East: A2
- West: A3

## A2: Welcome Hall

The natural cavern transitions into carved and paved gray stone splattered in a few spots with **more blood**. There are the remnants of a recent campsite: a snuffed-out fire, bits of food, some abandoned cooking implements, and a few spots the size of bedrolls cleared of dust. Searching the remnants of the fire reveals **the half-burned ledger of a miner named Candowe**, noting their daily hauls of petrified leaves from the Crastogen Mine and the pitiful compensation they were paid.

Four pillars are carved with a **peculiar set of glyphs** that learned characters may recognize as the script of the *Swebbanguma*, a small but quiet and respected religious sect devoted to collecting the lore, stories, and memories of spiritual orders of days past. The inscriptions welcome any and all who seek diverse knowledge and study.

A **smear**ed blood trail and foul **smell** lead to the two large stone doors ahead, which have been **wedged shut** from opening outward with a couple of metal bars. Removing them is not difficult.

#### Exits:

- East: A4
- West A1

### A3: Procession Space

This area is largely empty, as it leads toward the main entrance to the *Swebbanguma*'s monastery in A7. A ledge to the east sits barely above the river flowing through the cavern.

Along the western side, however, a **wooden wall is covered in molds, mosses, and mushrooms**, but there are clearly some kind of reliefs or textures beneath it all.

**If the PCs' eyes have had time to adjust to the darkness, or if they have low-light vision**, then a soft pinkish glow can be seen emerging from a gap under the mural, if all nearby light sources have been extinguished. Otherwise, **upon close inspection**, a faint draft can be felt coming from underneath it.

**Scraping the wall clean** is not difficult but causes a 2-in-6 chance for each living creature within 5 feet of it to become infected with unknown spores that will make them severely ill and hungering for seeds 2 days later.

Once cleaned, the wall is obviously a **mural**, carved in wood, **depicting a huge forest or garden of diverse plants with several large, bright stars** placed throughout. The art is in a very old and rarely used style that is foreign to the area, yet the wood is in immaculate condition and impossible to date, despite it being coated in moisture and spore-fueled growth for so long.

**Breaking through the wall** requires axes or similarly heavy bladed implements and 60 minutes, minus 10 per person helping with such tools. With fire equivalent to 2 or more torches, **the wet wood can be set alight**, taking 10 minutes to ignite and another 20 to burn down, filling this and adjacent rooms with smoke for 1 hour. Other creative means for destroying or removing the 2-foot-thick wooden wall could be possible.

**Behind the mural wall** are 2 narrow corridors that move steeply upward, each no wider than 2 feet and with a dense mass of glowing pink vines between them, leading west into B7.

#### Exits:

- North: A1
- South: A7
- West: B7 (secret)

## A4: Worship Hall

Through the light from the torches lining the walls and the braziers hanging from the tall ceiling, the somber air of what feels like a hall of worship is tainted by the stench of rot and a gruesome sight: the beaten, stabbed, and hacked-up **bodies of over a dozen miners piled in the center**. Individuals are nearly impossible to identify through the violence inflicted on them, but the bloodstained picks and layers of dust on their clothes and skin leave little doubt as to who they are.

**Three statues** of (from west to east) a giant tree, a moderate sapling, and a small seed rest on pedestals recessed into the northern wall. Between each pair of statues is an overly tall and relatively full bookshelf with different volumes on religious history, horticulture, and ethics in various languages. No particularly rare volumes can be found, but the books provide a good foundation of knowledge for any not in the know. A few random tomes and scrolls with text copied from the books are also scattered around the room.

The wooden **door to the south** leads to a small flight of stairs, which is **choked with another 6 dead miners**, pressed against the door at the top of the stairs leading to A5. They will have to be cleared from the stairs with 10 minutes of work before the door is accessible, but it is chained shut from the other side.

Spending 10 minutes to fish through **the central pile of corpses yields** the following: 3 torches, 1d10 candles, 1d4 flasks of lamp oil, a shovel, 3 picks, and 2 knives. Another 10 minutes going through **the bodies in the stairs results** in 60 cp, a pick, and a lantern.

### Exits:

- South: A5
- West: A2

## A5: Prep Space

This area is largely empty, save for a makeshift bench of a wooden board placed across a couple of stones. Against the wall behind it are a few crates of **blank parchment scrolls** and a small box of **inkwells and quills**.

The thick wood **door to the north is blocked with two chains** staked into the stone walls on either side of it. Breaking the chains will take the proper tools and a difficult strength test. Taking the door off its hinges or chopping it open will likewise require the right equipment and 10 minutes of work. If the bodies have not been cleared from the other side, an additional 10 minutes of work is necessary to maneuver a detached door out from behind the chains.

### Exits:

- North: A4
- Southeast: A6
- Southwest: A7

## A6: Seed Share

This supply room is moderately well stocked with boxes and barrels, all full of a wide variety of seeds, some identifiable, some not. No pattern can quite be discerned between the types of seeds present here.

**Searching for 10 minutes** reveals 1d4 jugs of ale, a bag of rare spice (1d4 gp), and Gellian, **a miner** from the Crastogen camp, hiding in a barrel behind other supplies. (He can also faintly be heard whimpering if a PC listens carefully amid silence.)

As soon as Gellian realizes he's safe for the time being, he's eager to tell anyone who will listen how the mine guards raided their camp a few nights ago and wordlessly marched the miners into this cave at blade-point. He made a break for the stream and swam against the current, a task only fit for a strong swimmer like him, fearing more guards were waiting outside the cave. As he shivered in the cramped darkness upstream, he heard the blood-chilling echoes of the slaughter of his fellow workers.

Having hidden in this barrel since, he has no more information and refuses to go further into the structure. He only mentions the bravery another miner named Candowe showed in organizing them to strike after years of misery. If pushed for more info about the strike or how to help, he gives the PCs Candowe's journal, which he found in the dirt of the Narrow Court (A7) while he was sneaking away from guards at the cave entrance. The journal has extensive details of the extreme working conditions, micromanagement, and continual theft by and threats from the mine guards.

If Gellian learns the way out might be clear, he'll make a run for it.

### Exits:

- North: A5

## A7: Narrow Court

A single torch on the southern wall gently illuminates the area, revealing inscriptions with various calls in the script of the *Swebbanguma* to cultivate responsible stewardship of what has been gifted. **The door**, once solid and sturdy oak, **lays split and shattered** into the entrance hallway.

### Exits:

- North: A3
- East: A5
- South: A8



## A8: Entrance

This entrance hall to the *Swebbanguma*'s sanctum is well lit. The eastern end of the entranceway has several wooden seats with random mundane reading material scattered about. A small altar in the center of the hall bears a statue depicting a cornucopia full of various produce and several bags of seeds.

The western half is bustling with **1d6 mine guards** and Gurten, a **mine guard captain**, arguing angrily with **2 monks**, Nessik and Derrica, milling about.

The **mine guards** won't speak to the PCs, and Gurten is terse, stating that they're **in pursuit of a thief** from the Crastogen mine that the monks are protecting. **They demand to be let in** to apprehend the criminal.

The *Swebbanguma* monks insist that they are spiritually obligated to **respect the right of sanctuary**, housing and protecting anyone seeking safety from a legitimate threat of violence.

The more pressing matter, however, is that **the monastery is currently overrun** by creatures the monks claim to not know the origin of. While going about their daily routine, they were attacked, barely escaping to this entrance way before they locked the door to the main living complex.

The western door to the **Personal Corridor (B1)** is locked with a padlock, and **Nessik has that key**. The northern door to the **Library (B6)** is also locked but with a mechanism sturdily built into the door. Another monk, Lonna, is currently locked in there, as per their regular procedure in case their research work in the Laboratory (B7) results in an emergency, but Belivar, the monk who should have the key, is unaccounted for. **Derrica has the key** to unlock the door in the Library (B6) that leads to **the Crossing (C1)**.

**Developments:** The *Swebbanguma* monks can be swayed into believing that the PCs are here to help Candowe if they **use his journal and/or his burnt ledger** to inform them of his working conditions. Similarly, if the PCs **hand** one of **these items** over to the **mine guards**, it will help **convince them** that the PCs also don't want more details of what's happened here or at the mine to get out.

Nessik will **unlock the Personal Corridor (B1)** if they feel the PCs want to help Candowe, but he warns that Candowe was nowhere to be seen when they evacuated the area. The mine guards will stand watch at the door, waiting for Candowe to be brought out, wary of causing a larger uproar about religious freedom if they trespass in the *Swebbanguma* monastery.

If the PCs **confront the monks about the abandoned godhead** deeper within the caves, they will adamantly refuse that they have been agreeing to any of *Taalbhelgeh*'s requests or goals, sheepishly admitting that they do their best to placate the former god so that they can experiment on the materials its head produces, hoping to produce powerful fertilizers and more resilient crops.

Depending on how urgently the PCs raise the alarm about what the godhead is capable of, and how Candowe may or may not be connected to it, **the mine guards may force their way in** to investigate themselves.

#### Exits:

- North: A7, B6 (locked)
- West: B1 (locked)

### B1: Personal Corridor

Only two of the torches in this long hallway remain lit on the wall, both near the far western end, keeping the center and eastern portions in darkness, save for whatever light bleeds through the door from A8.

In the northern alcove a monk's body lies bloody and gnawed. Nothing of worth remains on their body. In the southern alcove, **2 leaf eaters** wait to pounce on unsuspecting victims.

#### Exits:

- East: A8
- West: B3
- North: B2

### B2: Dining Hall

This cramped space serves as not only a dining hall but also a kitchen and bulk food storage. A couple of torches remain lit, illuminating most of the space. Food and tableware are scattered about, with unfinished dishes, long cooled, sitting in the cooking pot, suspended over an extinguished fire.

Surveying **the kitchen gear** for 10 minutes reveals provisions equal to 2d4 days' worth of rations, a large cleaver, and a surprisingly thick broken metal ladle that can be used as a pry bar.

Once the PCs make noise, **pained moans** can be heard coming from the northwest corner, its source obscured by a few long, overturned dining tables. Investigating the sound reveals Belivar, **a monk**, wounded and gripping a wide gash on their side. In his pocket, he has the key to the Library (B6).

A simple attempt to treat Belivar's wound reveals **a foreign object inside**. A *roseate cocoon* can be removed before further treatment. If their wound is stitched up or cauterized, they can survive. Otherwise, they will eventually bleed out.

**Developments:** If the PCs do not remove the *roseate cocoon* from Belivar's wound after encountering him (whether or not they treat his injury), then he will transform into a **sprout walker** after 30 minutes and prowl between any open doors from B1 and B5, attacking anyone making noise. If the key was not removed from his pocket, it remains on the monster.

**Exits:**

- South: B1

### **B3: Latrineway**

The foul smell of waste permeates this mixed used hallway and toilet. The northern side has some sparse shelving with 1d6 blocks of soap, a few towels and robes, and a filthy bucket tied to the end of a 20' rope.

The latrine holes sit in the southwest corner, beneath the edge of the upper floor, and a few empty wash tubs are in the southeast corner. Some tiny green plants have sprouted in the grime of one of the tubs.

Down in the latrines themselves are **1d3 leaf eaters**, looking for undigested remnants of *roseate powder*, who emerge to attack anyone they hear passing by.

**Exits:**

- East: B1, B4

### **B4: Hallway**

The torches are missing from this hallway, leaving it almost pitch black. The chittering and occasional hoot of **3 night worms** in the center of the hall can be heard by attentive listeners.

**Exits:**

- East: B5
- West: B3

### **B5: Sleeping Quarters**

Most of the ten beds here are tipped over or shoved aside, and some blood is splattered on parts of the walls and floor. The bodies of two monks lie in the center of the room, nearly torn in half at the waist. If the PCs make much sound in the room or interact with either body in any way, they both rise again as **2 sprout walkers** and attack.

Taking 10 minutes to rummage through **the monks' scattered personal belongings** results in 5d10 cp, a torch, 1d4 wine skins, 1d6 blank books, and 1d4 lesser magic scrolls (e.g., *light*, *levitate*, *cure light wounds*, *hold person*, etc.).

The southeastern corner of the chamber is stocked with **half-finished robes and fabric**.

Searching them for 10 minutes reveals a journal with fragments of the *Swebbanguma*'s understanding of their duty to protect their "pledge," one of the only remnants from the *Mīnweddian* era. The writings have few specifics, but they convey that the monks have been hiding or protecting something very ancient for some time and trying to figure out what it means for them and the world.

There is **a streak of pinkish slime** on the ground, **coming from a segment of the northern wall**.

Some wooden boards lie broken and splintered nearby. The **secret door** here is otherwise visually indistinguishable from the wall, other than a small chip at a human's shoulder-height where it meets with the wall. While it can swing open into this room if pushed firmly from the other side, there are no handles or notches to pull here because it sits flush with the wall. A thick, sturdy piece of metal wedged into the narrow crack between wall stones, where the chip is visible can be used to pry it open. The monks are aware of this door but believe it can only be opened from the other side.

#### Exits:

- North: C2 (secret)
- West: B4

## B6: Library

Hearing the door finally open, Lonna, **a monk**, jumps to attention in the Laboratory (B7) and comes to meet the PCs, if she hasn't already been released, thankful for having a way out of these two rooms. She hasn't heard from Candowe since the attack, or really much of anything other than the arguments in the Entrance (A8).

Asked about the monks' research, she is eager to get back to any other remaining monks, but she mentions the importance of conservation, stewardship, and rewilding in their work, referring the PCs to the literature nearby.

The shelves of this library are surprisingly sparse. The books and scrolls that are present cover environmentalism, natural history, ancient mythology, and economic theory.

The door to the Crossing to the west is locked with a basic padlock. **The key is on Derrica**, one of the two monks **in the Entrance (A8)**.

#### Exits:

- North: B7
- South: A8
- West: C1 (locked)



## B7: Laboratory

If the PCs enter here from the secret passage in the Procession Space (A3), they meet Lonna as per the above description for the Library (B6). If they press her about the *roseate cocoons* and how they work or what's inside them, she describes how the innards can be used as a potent fertilizer and pesticide.

On a large central table are glasses with variously colored liquids, several potted plants overgrowing their containers, and small collections of various seeds. But right in the middle is **an inert *roseate cocoon*, split in half** down the middle and pinned open. Inside it is a mix of smaller pink eggs and darker wriggling, root-like growths.

Searching for 10 minutes surprisingly doesn't reveal much, except for 2 torches and the *seed of growth*. An additional moderate intelligence or wisdom check after the search will also discover that one of the larger flasks is full of a common acid (3 uses).

### Exits:

- East: A3 (secret)
- South: B6

## C1: Crossing

Halfway down the hallway, an **intestine-like pink growth has blocked passage**, extending its organic tendrils into a thick, criss-crossing web between the walls, floor, and ceiling. It pulsates but otherwise doesn't move. If part of it is crushed or cut, the destroyed portion withers, but another portion, larger than the previous, immediately grows to replace it.

Its slimy surface is coated in an adhesive that sticks to things touching it, like a spider's web, before secreting an acid that slowly melts through organic material but not metal. While fire will not ignite it, it is susceptible to being burned. Tendrils burnt with heat or melted with acid or magic do not regrow.

### Exits:

- North: C3
- East: B6

## C2: Run-Off

This seeming dead-end is largely empty, save for a slick layer of pinkish slime along the floor from the cavern all the way to the end of the southern hall. The wall at the end of that hall, however, is **a secret door** to the Sleeping Quarters (B5) that can be opened one-way (swinging into B5) with a sturdy push.

At the top of the lower set of stairs, **the western wall is a slightly different color** than the surrounding stones. Closely comparing it to the other walls can reveal the visual difference or that it sounds less dense when it is struck. It is actually a type of cement made to look similar to the stone walls around it, and with heavy weapons or tools, a moderate strength check and 20 minutes of work can noisily break it open.

**Behind the wall** is a small, featureless room with a human skeleton bearing splintered fingertips. Among the remains are the following: 1d4 potions of control plants, 1d4 moderate magic scrolls (e.g., *dispel magic*, *plant growth*, *cure disease*, *animal growth*, etc.), *a ring of delusion*, and *an aged and stained scroll* (see “Items”), partially smeared in a mix of blood and something pink.

**Exits:**

- North: C5
- South: B5 (secret)

### C3: Quiet Crag

This nondescript area is where the caverns that the monastery was built to attach to begin. It is dimly lit with a single torch on the northern wall, between the fork in the path leading to the northwest or the northeast. In the northeastern path, the walls shrink to a narrow passage that ends in a steep cliff wall ten feet high.

**Exits:**

- Northeast: C5
- South: C1
- Northwest: C4

### C4: Antechamber

As the path elevates up a stone ramp to the north, the western wall is dominated by two relief sculptures in alcoves. The southern one depicts sheets of rain watering a seed, and the northern other is of a complex root system branching below surface soil. A very old tapestry hangs on the eastern wall, depicting a thick, massive forest garden, still a lush green despite how it has faded over the years.

On the ground between the alcoves is a cluster of **greenish-blue mushrooms**. Anyone with survival skills or training can succeed at a low difficulty knowledge test to identify these as cleanser’s fungi that can neutralize most common poisons and venoms when eaten. There’s enough here for three such doses. The monks are aware of these mushrooms but have never had need to treat poison before.

**Exits:**

- Southeast: C3
- North: C5

### C5: Passage

This dusty cave is almost pitch black, but some shuffling and wriggling can be heard echoing throughout. The area is patrolled by **2 sprout walkers**, unaware of what they’re looking for but aggressive to any they encounter.

A pick lies abandoned in the dirt. Pink slime stains two parts of its handle, and a powdered pink dust is coated on the tip of the pick.

**Exits:**

- North: C6 (×2)
- South: C2, C3 (cliff), C4

## C6: Wishbone

A couple torches illuminate this seemingly unremarkable passageway, but what quickly draws attention is the loud banging and slurping sounds heard from the closed inner chamber near the western door. The door to this small chamber is not barred, but its hinges only allow it to swing inward. However, whatever is inside knows only to push, thud, smash.

Inside is **an organ**, confused and angry, with what little sentience remains within it. What was once Candowe is unable to remember such an identity, wanting only to help spread some fragment of itself to others by using its countless spines and tendrils to haul anyone it can find to the abandoned godhead, hoping to feed them more *roseate* cocoons, or kill them for resisting.

If the PCs make excessive noise or attempt to push open the door at all, the organ will become aware of them and break down the door in 1d4 minutes in pursuit of them.

Otherwise, it will continue to thrash about, slamming into things, for the time being. If a sprout walker is in this area, they will be drawn to the door and open it themselves, letting the organ out to attack the PCs.

The inner chamber in which the organ was contained is a supply closet once used to store equipment for expanding and maintaining the cave. Inside, the torn shreds of a miner's clothes can be found alongside a towel stained in blood and some glowing pink dust. One corner of the towel has "Candowe" sloppily stitched into it.

**Developments:** If the inner chamber in the western corridor remains unopened as the PCs continue deeper north, then when they return to the Impromptu Workshop (C7), the Organ will be in the center of the fork here in C6, having smashed the inner chamber door to pieces and looking to stop any who may make the godhead's existence public.

**Exits:**

- North: C7
- South: C5
- West: C5

## C7: Impromptu Workshop

On a small plateau in the eastern corner sits a table, and on it. Lit by a few candles, rests a pile of literature. These must be the books missing from the Library (B6). They are mostly a mix of agricultural encyclopedias and historical research into various mythologies. Spending 10 minutes to search them reveals **a few fairly rare volumes** worth 2d6 gp.

A dim, multi-color glow coming from just a bit further in the cave to the northwest easily catches the PCs' eyes.

### Exits:

- South: C7
- West: C8

## C8: Sanctuary

In the center of the cramped cavern is a broken column, used as a pedestal, carved from something only identifiable as a bit of the cosmos. It casts rainbows of light, cutting through the thin black mist that surrounds it. Atop it, at a slight side angle, rests the severed head of what was once the god *Taalbhelgeh*.

They seem to care little about what may have happened to Candowe, and they harbor resentment against mortals for thoughtlessly destroying *Mīnweddian* and using its incredible potential and beauty as simple fuel, buildings, and weapons. However, they are always looking for others to help them spread the seeds of their new garden, to regrow what once was, even if it's only a pale imitation.

If the PCs seem at all amenable to this mission, it will ask each of them their name, one at a time. If the person tells them their real name, the head's eyes roll back into its head, and out of its mouth drops a *roseate cocoon*. It will do this once per living creature.

The head will tell them that, due to their diminished powers, this gift requires a living host to sprout, and the rewards to be reaped by the world will outlast the PCs.

### Exits:

- East: C7



# WANDERING ENCOUNTERS

While the PCs are in Section B and Section C of the map, check to see if a wandering encounter stumbles upon them, or vice versa, **once every 30 minutes** or whenever they are **making an excessive amount of noise**. To do so, roll **1d10**. There's a **2-in-10 chance** of such an encounter happening in **Section B** and a **3-in-10** chance of such an encounter happening in **Section C**. Then roll **1d6** or make a selection on the table below to **choose an encounter**.

1	<b>Omen of Leaf Eaters.</b> Chewed bits of flesh with traces of glowing pink dust; high-pitched growling in the distance.
2	<b>Omen of Night Worms.</b> A discarded and empty night worm stinger, with no creature attached; the distant scuttling of dozens of little feet.
3	<b>Omen of Sprout Walkers.</b> Long pink tendrils lie in the dust, occasionally twitching.
4	<b>2 <u>Leaf Eaters</u>.</b> Roaming the area, looking for anything roseate to eat or, lacking that, anything filling.
5	<b>2 <u>Night Worms</u>.</b> Slowly crawling along the wall, waiting for easy prey.
6	<b>1 <u>Sprout Walker</u>.</b> Standing motionless in the middle of the area.



# MONSTERS & NPCs

## Abandoned Godhead

Broken but not defeated, the large head of *Taalbhelgeh* beckons to any brave enough to come near it. Its empty eyes, a sickly blue, stare out from behind a flat, pale golden face, a soft, geometric aura rolling through the space around it. Immobile but far from powerless, it focuses its waning magic on enticing anyone it can to spread a new *M̄nweddian* across the land.

**Wants:** Converts; helpers; wild, new, divine growth to overtake the land.

**Stats:** HD 6d8\* + 3 (30 hp); AC 5/15; Attacks [gaze (see below) and bite (1d10)] or pulse (see below) or roseate gas (see below); Move 0' (0'); Morale —.

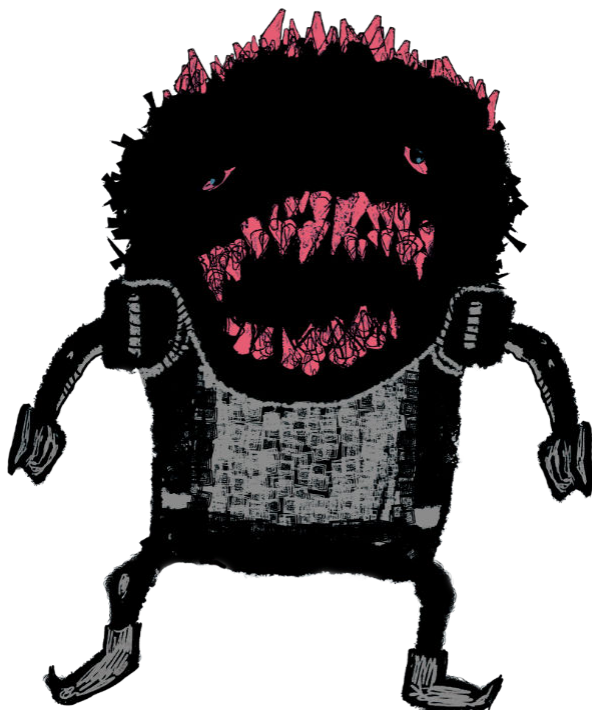
**Gaze.** One target in line of sight that can see the abandoned godhead must Save vs. Spell with a -2 penalty or use two-thirds of their movement as soon as they can to get closer to the abandoned godhead, toward its front and within its bite range if possible.

**Pulse.** Everyone within 20' must Save to Dodge or take 1d8 damage.

**Roseate gas.** Everyone in a 20' cone from the abandoned godhead's mouth must Save vs. Breath Attack or be overwhelmed by a need to plant seeds or saplings. Affected creatures will go to the closest source of seeds they are aware of, gather as much as they can, and begin planting them in the closest soil they suspect may be fertile. They may attempt another Save vs. Breath Attack once every 10 seconds or 1 round, the effect ceasing on a success.

**Treasure:** *Piece of a godhead*, 1d4 *roseate cocoons*, and a vial of *roseate bile*.





## Leaf Eater

Endless rows of pink, stone-like teeth and tiny slits of what were once eyes seem to float in front of a shifting mass of black. Their atrophied limbs, awkwardly bent beneath some poor lost soul's clothes, do little to slow its ravenous, gnashing approach.

**Wants:** To eat *roseate powder* and flesh; to plant *roseate cocoons* in living beings.

**Stats:** HD 2d8\* (9 hp); AC 8/12; Attacks claw (1d4) or gnaw (see below); Move 90' (30'); Morale 9.

**Gnaw.** This normal attack deals 1d3 damage, and the leaf eater latches onto the target, allowing them to use future attacks to cause an automatic 1d3 damage. They can be dislodged from their target by inflicting 3+ damage from a single attack or spell.

**Treasure:** 1d10 sp.



## Mine Guard

Some are paid by local authorities, and others by the distant owners of whatever conglomerate the miners in their charge extract resources for. Loyal to the coin that bought their armor, blade, and supper, they prefer to finish the job they were given than question the motives of whoever hired them.

**Wants:** To get miners to work; to punish or kill those that won't.

**Stats:** HD 1d8 + 1 (5 hp); AC 6/14; Attacks weapon (by weapon); Move 120' (40'); Morale 8.

**Treasure:** 3d4 sp.

- **Captain**

**Stats:** HD 2d8 + 1 (9 hp); Morale 9.

*Rally.* Mine Guards in a Captain's presence have + 1 to their Morale.

## Miner

Hard-laboring and often covered in the dust of what they break to make others rich, these undervalued souls have reached the point of trying anything to get a fair shake. Some succumb to addiction through the alluring glow of the fossilized roseate leaves they dig up, but most just want honest pay for an honest day.

**Wants:** To escape to safety; secure work with proper compensation.

**Stats:** HD 1d8 (4 hp); AC 9/11; Attacks pick (1d6); Move 120' (40'); Morale 7.

**Treasure:** 1d8 sp.

## Monk

Wrapped in plain clothing and dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and wisdom, they nevertheless allocate time for regular training for the defense of their efforts. While they prioritize their way of life, they will also work to preserve life itself whenever possible.

**Wants:** Safety; communion; silence.

**Stats:** HD 1d8 + 2 (6 hp); AC 7/13; Attacks unarmed strike (1d6) or trip (see below); Move 120' (40'); Morale 8.

*Trip.* This normal attack deals 1d4 damage on a successful hit, and the target must Save to Dodge or be knocked prone.

**Treasure:** 3d20 cp.

## Night Worm

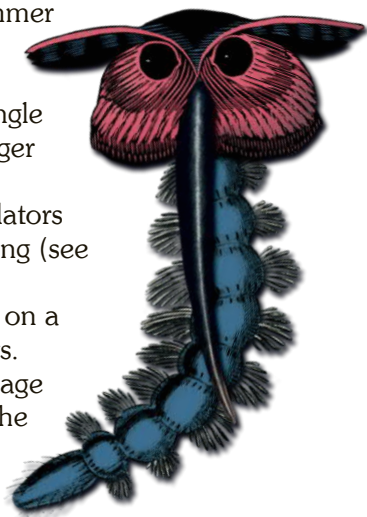
Large, round eyes, like black glass, that shimmer in torchlight watch you from behind a foot-long stinger that could be mistaken for a beak. A wide, pinkish head swivels to any angle atop a thick, centipede-like body, barely longer than the stinger, as it skitters across the wall.

**Wants:** To hunt; to feed; to scare away predators

**Stats:** HD 2d8\* (9 hp); AC 9/11; Attacks sting (see below); Move 90' (30'); Morale —.

**Sting.** This normal attack deals 1d3 damage on a successful hit, and the target must Save vs. Poison or suffer another 1d3 poison damage every 10 minutes. Drinking one dose of the same venom cures the effect.

**Treasure:** 2-in-6 chance of recovering a *night worm stinger*.



## Organ

Rising over eight feet tall, countless azure spines protrude about its body, intertwined with long, twitching pink cilia floating around it. Over a dozen bluish eyes, like rotten, bulbous fruits, poke out from coral-textured sphincters around its ovular head. Its fungal trunk glides quickly across the ground with the aid of both its limb-like spines and a generous secretion of ooze.

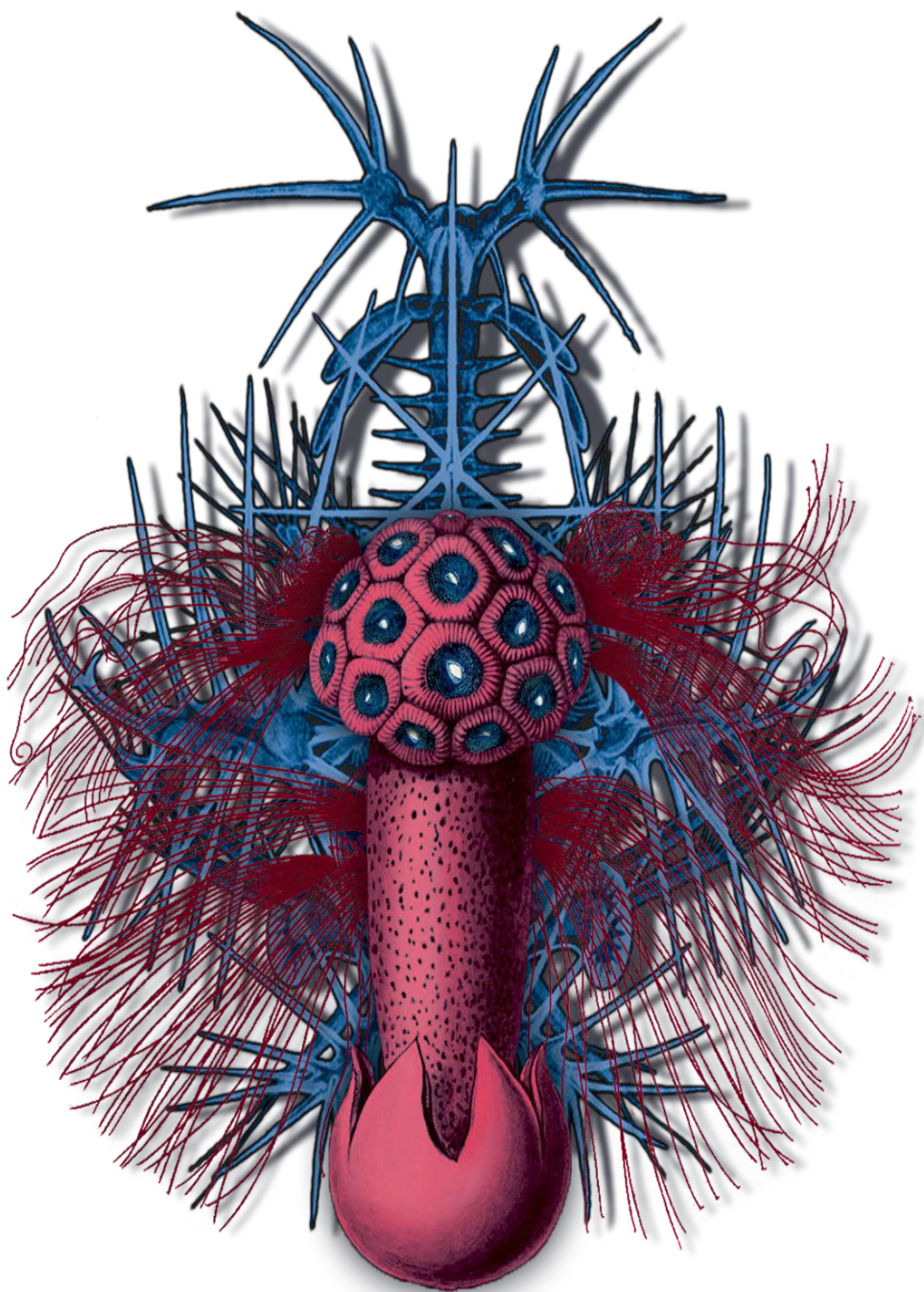
**Wants:** To haul others to the abandoned godhead; to feed others *roseate cocoons*; to use its rage to smash, hurt, and kill anyone who resists.

**Stats:** HD 4d8\* (18 hp); AC 9/11; Attacks pierce (1d8) or [weak gaze (see below) and enveloping grasp (see below)]; Move 90' (30'); Morale —.

**Enveloping Grasp.** This normal attack doesn't deal damage but instead prevents the target from using their movement and allows the organ's pierce attacks to automatically hit them. This effect ends for one target when the organ receives 3+ damage from a slashing weapon or spell in a single attack. The organ can only have three targets grasped at a time.

**Weak gaze.** One target in line of sight that can see the organ must Save vs. Spell or use two-thirds of their movement as soon as they can to get closer to the organ.

**Treasure:** 1d4 vials' worth of *roseate bile*, 1d3 + 1 *distant eyes*, and 1d20 × 10 cp.



## Sprout Walker

A wall of pink, hair-like tendrils rise and sway from the middle of what was once a person, now split in half at the waist, their lifeless torso limply dangling to the side. The legs still step with purpose as the tendrils grow from the branching intestines of the walking corpse, sweeping for and gripping at anything else that can feed its growth. The upper body is not entirely vestigial: The head, it scans the room with a hunter's gaze before locking eyes with you.

**Wants:** To collect organic material to fuel its growth and transformation.

**Stats:** HD 3d8\* (13 hp); AC 8/12; Attacks tear (1d6) or grasp (see below); Move 75' (25'); Morale —.

*Grasp.* This normal attack doesn't deal damage but instead prevents the target from using their movement and allows the sprout walker's tear attacks to automatically hit them. This effect ends when the sprout walker receives 2+ damage from a slashing weapon or spell in a single attack. The sprout walker can only have one target grasped at a time.

**Treasure:** 2d20 cp.



# ITEMS

## **An Aged and Stained Scroll (100 gp, 2d4 × 10 gp with a translation)**

This somewhat slimed and bloodied scroll uses an even older form of the *Swebbanguma* script, requiring someone knowledgeable in ancient languages (or a standard linguist with solid reference material) 1d6 days of work to translate. Studying the scroll again, paired with a translation, for 1d4 days can allow the reader to approximate a region wherein another piece of *Taalbhelgeh*'s body could potentially be found.

The scroll's content is a compilation of many ancient sources telling the tale of the fall of an old god of nature the author calls *Taalbhelgeh*, who spent centuries grieving the loss of a once resplendent garden they referred to as their pledge or duty, a necessity for the continued flourishing of the lands around it. It was torn up, cut, and burned, and its valuable life was extracted for the growth of others.

Finding no way to save it, they used the next several centuries to wreak vengeance on the greedy and wasteful, before an entire kingdom rose against them in war. After years of battle, *Taalbhelgeh* was finally felled. Though their divine body was quartered and decapitated, it failed to die. The still-living pieces of this blessed being were believed to be powerful artifacts, stolen back and forth between various kingdoms, scholars, and cults over countless ages, though their final resting places are said to be lost to time.

## **Distant Eye (2 gp, 10 gp for a pair)**

A blue eye the size of a human's fist with a vacant white pupil. Looking into the pupil of a distant eye and concentrating allows the user to see what any other distant eye that they have touched in the past 7 days can currently see. A distant eye's vision is functionally the same as that of a normal human.

## **Night Worm Stinger (2 gp per use remaining)**

A piece of a night worm with a pointed, tusk-like shape. It has 1d4 + 1 uses. Stabbing the stinger into a living creature deals 1d3 damage and will require them to Save vs. Poison or suffer 1d3 poison damage every 10 minutes. Counterintuitively, however, drinking one dose of the same venom cures the effect.



### **Piece of a Godhead (1d3 × 90 gp)**

An obsidian-like shard that sparkles and dazzles with the light of the distant stars glimpsed within. If someone with the piece of a godhead dies while it is in their personal possession, it will crumble into black ash, and they will be resurrected with 1d4 hit points.

### **Roseate Bile (2d6 gp per vial/use)**

A glowing, bright pink liquid. Without any special knowledge, each vial can be distilled, dried, and crushed with 1d4 hours of work and basic alchemical or medical tools, producing 3 uses of *roseate powder*.

### **Roseate Cocoon (5 gp)**

A transformative gift from a god. Anyone who consumes it will transform into an organ in 1d3 days unless the parasite within is somehow extracted from their body or killed. If it is instead inserted into a living creature's wound, they will quickly become infested with enough pink tendrils to split their body nearly in two, transforming them into a type of sprout walker within 1d6 hours, unless it is removed from them before that.



### **Roseate Powder (1d4 gp per use)**

An intoxicating spice that tastes of soil. Ingesting or inhaling a dose leads to bodily euphoria, carelessness, and some disassociation for 1d6 hours as well as mild hallucinations for 1d3 hours. It is mildly addictive, at first. Consuming larger amounts leads to greater addiction, and anyone taking more than five doses' worth within a month risks a 3-in-6 chance of being transformed into a leaf eater after 1d10 days, with an insatiable hunger for the powder, tracking it to any nearby source by scent.

### **Seed of Growth (1d3 × 10 gp)**

A single, walnut-sized seed encased in a whitish silver metal, strung onto an amulet. When worn by someone sowing seeds or otherwise tending a garden, farm, or forest, the plants produce twice the yield or grow twice as fast or large.

# REPERCUSSIONS

Based on who the PCs ally with, if anyone, and the state of things when they leave, there are several possible repercussions that the referee or GM can choose to have ripple out into the surrounding areas and organizations in your campaign. Or they can choose to let what happens within this place remain bound within its halls and twisting caves.

## The Mining Dispute

- The PCs can **side with the mine guards** by...
  - ...**giving them all of the documentation** they find about the miners' working conditions. If they do, the mine owners feel confident enough that no damning information has been passed on to outsiders to further brutally suppress the burgeoning strike and union, and as a result, roseate powder production rates rise higher than they were before.

Not only do the elite get their supply of the drug back, but it begins to trickle down to the bourgeoisie as well as prices drop, threatening the shopkeepers, landowners, and mercenaries in the region with roseate addiction and the risk of becoming a leaf eater. The local villages also lose their best workers to the mine, threatening their food stability and supplies, making the villagers turn to more drastic means if and when necessary.

- ...**giving the mine guards access** to the monastery and the caverns beyond. If they do...
  - ...and **if any mine guards survive** afterward, they spread rumors to the local authorities that the *Swebbanguma* are undertaking inhumane or unholy experiments and transforming captives into hideous monstrosities. Tensions quickly rise between the authorities and the religious sect, with efforts to forcibly search the grounds of the region's few monasteries. The public gets riled up and split between those insulted by the disrespect for religious liberties and those terrified of the lurid tales of tortuous suffering.

These heightened tensions create a powder keg threatening to ignite with just a few provocations. The labor dispute is quickly forgotten except by the miners' family and friends and those pressured into working the mines. Those that survive continue to labor and suffer in silence, lest they too disappear.

- **...but no mine guards survive** afterward, those in charge of the mine presume that some of the fleeing organizers were able to kill the guards and are now in hiding, leading them to double down on their suppression of the miners. Any surviving monks will want to cover up the incursion but will stand firm in the fact that the mine guards used their grounds to slaughter miners. They may not be very active in calling for justice, however, to prevent further scrutiny of their work. Regardless, the lack of closure brings a bit more interest in the issues surrounding the Crastogen mine, but if anything comes of it will be up to the PCs' efforts to force a resolution.

- The PCs can **side with the miners** by...

- **...giving the monks all of the documentation** they find about the miners' working conditions. If they do, the *Swebbanguma* begin a broader investigation into the exploitative labor practices in the surrounding region and begin to take up the workers' fight for better conditions and compensation, safeguarding and supporting the miners in whatever labor actions they need to take to win concessions.

The price of roseate powder grows, but the miners become better paid and better treated. As a result, fewer of the elite become addicted, but the economies of Crastogen and some other regional villages begin to flourish, increasing the varieties of wares available and the quality of hirelings and quests to be found there. However, the labor organizing efforts distract the monks from the traditional task, decreasing the availability of spell scrolls and magic items in the region as the knowledge economy suffers for some time.

- ...**giving the miners' friends and family all of the documentation** they find about the miners' working conditions. In this case, they are able to build momentum in the local villages to pressure the mine owners to meet the miners' demands with a comparable outcome to the above; however, the lack of the *Swebbanguma's* involvement leaves availability of spell scrolls and magic items unaffected.

- ...**attacking the mine guards...**

- ...**and succeeding to kill them all.** Those in charge of the mine presume that some of the fleeing organizers were able to kill the guards and are now in hiding, leading them to double down on their suppression of the miners. While recognizing the guilt of the guards, any surviving monks will be taken aback by the PCs' violence against the guards and cease helping them while encouraging the rest of the *Swebbanguma* to not associate with them.

Regardless, the lack of closure brings a bit more interest in the issues surrounding the Crastogen mine, but if anything comes of it will be up to the PCs' efforts to force a resolution.

- ...**and failing to kill them all.** Any surviving mine guards that escape report that the miners have recruited the services of mercenaries to fight back, leading to a larger diversion of funds from local authorities to fill the ranks of the guards. Pressures and violence increase as the guards brutally suppress the remaining and new miners, leading to greater general unrest in the region.

These tensions can be heightened or exploited to lead to small uprisings or be used to gradually kindle a broader civil war or revolution in the region, with the villagers and laborers fighting among themselves or together against the authorities or mine owners.

- If the PCs **split their loyalty** by secretly giving both the mine guards and the monks at least one piece of documentation of the miners' working conditions each, the *Swebbanguma* feel compelled to aid the miners in some fashion, while the mine owners believe no serious information has leaked to the public.

As the monks leak the information to the local villages, gradually forming the anger and political will to eventually take a united stand, the mine owners likewise try to expand the mining activities and quietly reinforce their guards. With both the general townspeople looking for their moment to extract justice and the mine owners prepared for violence on a greater scale, the tense situation can be set off with just a couple well-planned actions.

## The Godhead

- If the PCs **accept *Taalbhelgeh's* mission** to grow a new *Mīnweddian* and insert roseate cocoons into living creatures or scatter the inside of the cocoons on any remotely fertile land, new types of animals and plants will begin to appear and mutate throughout the region due to its influence. Some roseate bile can also be harvested from these new growths, encouraging a larger and less tightly controlled market for roseate powder.

If the spread of these life forms is left unchecked for a few years, without a systematic effort to try to wipe them out, the region will become overrun with new, alien life and become a new biome. Will it continue to spread?

- If the PCs **try to destroy the abandoned godhead ...**
  - ...**and succeed**, *Taalbhelgeh's* power over the roseate powder, and the fossilized bits of *Mīnweddian* from which most of it comes, fades, causing it to lose its effect as an intoxicant. The roseate market crumbles entirely, and the miners are out of a job. While they may struggle to find new work, they feel a weight off their shoulders as they are able to step out from under the oppressive thumb of the mine owners.



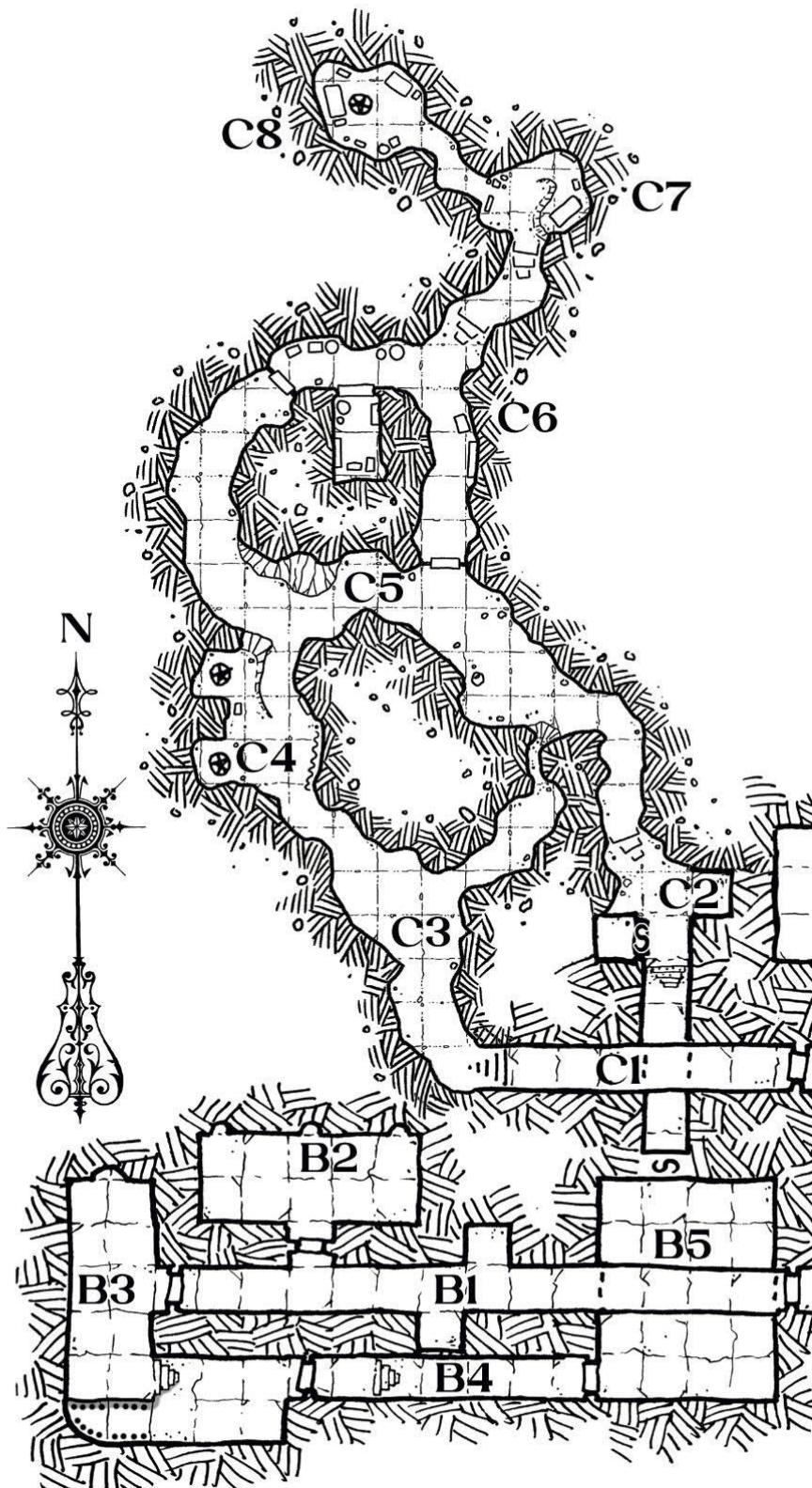
The region may struggle economically for a while, and elites may be increasingly irritable and brash as they struggle with being cut off from their drug of choice. The local *Swebbanguma*, while angry and disappointed, move on to other research as the glory of the *Mīnweddian* that was, now, is no more.

- ...**and fail**, both *Taalbhelgeh* and the monks of this *Swebbanguma* monastery will become enraged, convinced that most people are simply too ignorant and violent to properly consider new ways of being with nature, and that they must be forcibly shown a new path. This leads them to withdraw into hiding and organize themselves into a secretive cult, gradually influencing the region and spreading to other *Swebbanguma* groups.

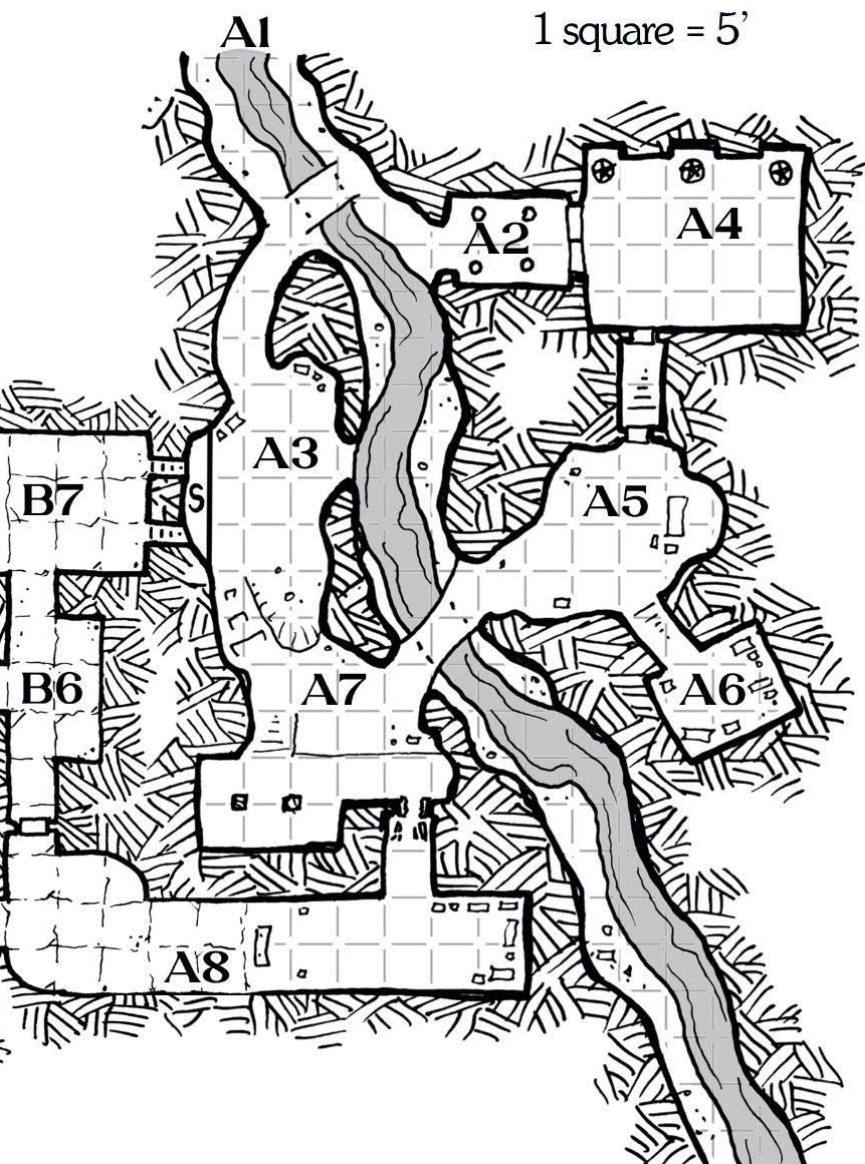
The availability of spell scrolls and magic items in the region decreases as new outbreaks of roseate-influenced creatures begin to appear in seemingly random areas, threatening various towns and organizations.

- If the PCs **ignore *Taalbhelgeh's* pleas and enticements** and leave the abandoned godhead as they found it, the monastery continues its research, finally succeeding in extracting the core, non-volatile elements of the roseate cocoons that ensure successful crop yields without risk of roseate infection. However, the supply being so limited, and the monks' morals being what they are, they choose to donate what they can produce to the areas in which it is most difficult to grow crops, turning deserts into farms and swamplands into productive orchards.

The economies of such areas near this region begin to quickly grow, and the religious pursuit of knowledge that the *Swebbanguma* practice begins to be taken up more and more by others, increasing the availability of spell scrolls and magic items in the region. But the influence of the godhead remains, gradually manipulating the monks and the efforts of those that follow them into cultivating the land from which a new *Mīnweddian* will be born and fostering the stewardship that will allow it to ascend to divine greatness.



# IN A CAVERN SOMEWHERE NEAR THE CRASTOGEN MINE







A labor dispute at a valuable mine reveals the horrors that preceded it. The fossils of a little-understood ancient plant, glowing the color of a dragon's fruit, are crushed to a fine powder and diluted into a rare, luxurious, and intoxicating spice with unknown consequences. A monastery of a small but influential religious order harbors a dark secret. A hapless group of adventurers will face the potentially far-reaching implications of these intersecting arcs and decide what will remain hidden and the shape of the conflict to come.

**ROSEATE GROWTH** is a fantasy roleplaying adventure for 3-5 players, written in a system-neutral, style. It should last roughly two or three sessions with some ripple effects that could be tied into your broader campaign or ignored. It contains:

- 6 adventure hooks
- 30+ adventure repercussions
- Dungeon map with 23 rooms
- 5 unique monsters
- 6+ unique items

**ATYPICALFAUX**