

GA 1

# TOMB OF



# THE ALCHEMIST

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

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## Introduction

GA1: Tomb of the Alchemist (TotA) is a ready-to-play scenario presented for use with the ***Old-School Essentials (OSE) system***, but is compatible with other fantasy role-playing games built on the same core mechanics.

The adventure focuses on the exploration of the tomb of Hashur the Poisoner, a master alchemist and sorcerer priest of Sargon, who has slept in torpor for over a millennium. The crypts and surrounding canyon are stalked by terrible plague zombies and ghouls infused with unholy poisons. Adventurers daring into the crypt of Hashur would be advised to bring countermeasures to poison and the undead.

## Background

Undisturbed for eons, the tomb has recently been opened when an earthquake ripped apart a rock formation in the Montem Downs.

After awakening to find the ancient kingdom sacked and its once great cities ruined, Hashur's rage knows no bounds. When the adventurers calling themselves "The Bold Blades" went to investigate, they were wholly unprepared to face an ancient mummy infused with immense power by magical potions.

Mad with grief and a desire for vengeance, Hashur slew the Bold Blades, and now slaves away in his laboratory, brewing a terrible plague of undeath which he plans to unleash onto the servants of Law.

If left unchecked, a tide of death and decay will sweep across the borderlands...



## RUMORS

d6

Rumor

- 1 Ancient Sargon poetry about Hashur says that his concoctions are so terrible, that even the dead pity the poisoned. (True)
- 2 The Bold Blades were in town just a week ago. They bought a lot of medicine. (True)
- 3 Ghouls are stalking the hills, carrying people away into the mountains! (True)
- 4 The Bold Blades bought medicine and now we have more sick people than ever before! I bet the damned rogues poisoned us and now plan to resell us our own stock of remedies! (False)
- 5 Recently an earthquake has shaken the nearby hills. Since then many people have become sick for unknown reasons. (True)
- 6 The Bold Blades were in town asking around about missing people abducted by demons. They left two weeks ago, heading for the southern mountains. (True)



## Reading this Module

The area descriptions are structured by content type for ease of reference.

### Meaning of Symbols



Special door (locked, trapped, etc.)



Living things



Traps or hazards



Loot and valuables



Point of interest



Knowledge or lore



Noises to hear

The monster statistics are denoted with ascending AC (AAC) and **attack bonuses**. If you prefer to use descending AC and **Thac0**, use the following conversion table.

### Conversion

AC = 19 - AAC

Thac0 = 19 - Attack Bonus

**Saving throws** are denoted as class and level, F3 meaning that the monster has the saving throws of a level 3 fighter.

## Dungeon Construction

**Illumination:** Locations inside the tomb are dark. The canyon is almost always in shadow due to steep walls.

**Outside area:** Comprised mostly of red and dry sandy rock. Debris and pieces of worked stone litter the canyon floor.

**Tomb floor:** The floor is made of bright granite, with a light sheen of purple.

**Tomb walls:** The walls were built from ocher brickwork. They are cracked and slanted, badly abused by the recent earthquake.

**Doors:** These are made from durable slabs of granite and bear the likenesses of Sargon nobility (imagine a mixture of Slavic and Oriental imagery). They require a **roll to open doors** to open silently. On a failure, roll for wandering monsters.

**Secret doors:** These are not locked except if mentioned otherwise. They usually are wall panels that slide upwards.

**Ceiling:** The ceiling is generally about 10' high, except in areas noted otherwise.

## Important Features

### Mutations

**Non-skeletal undead** encountered here can exhibit signs of **mutation**. For each enemy, roll a **d20** to see how many mutations it has.

**15+: One, 18+: Two, 20+: Three.**

### Sinkhole of evil

The altar in **area 5** turns the area into a sinkhole of evil. Clerics turn as if **2 levels** lower in the tomb, and as if **4 levels** lower in **area 5**.

### Opening sarcophagi

This requires a **roll to open doors**. On a success, the undead within is surprised. On a failure, there is a **2 in 6 chance** the monster is surprised.

### Death masks

The intelligent undead (**Hashur, Shamash, Bura, and Palkha**) wear death masks disabling their **mummy paralysis** or **fear aura**. They remove the masks as soon as hostilities begin.

## Wandering Monsters

There is a **1 in 6 chance** for a random encounter each turn.

Encounters in the tomb are assumed to come from outside and enter through **area 4 or area 7**.

# WANDERING MONSTERS

## WANDERING MONSTERS

2d4

Encounter

- 2 **Pale Slayer** (1): MV 60', AC 18, HD 5\*\*, #AT 4 (4 swords: +4, 1d8), SV F5, ML 10, AL C, XP 500; **Special**: fear aura; (see page 15, *New Monsters*)
- 3 **Undead Bold Blades** (1d4): MV 30', AC 10+1d6. HD 2\*\*, #AT 1 (slam: +1, 1d6 + plague), SV F1, ML -, AL C, XP 38;
- 4 **Zombies** (2d6): MV 30', AC 11, HD 2\*, #AT 1 (slam: +1, 1d8), SV F1, ML -, AL C, XP 29;
- 5 **Armored Skeletons** (3d4): MV 120', AC 12+1d4, HD 1\*, #AT 1 (weapon: +0, 1d6), SV F1, ML -, AL C, XP 13;
- 6 **Armored Ghouls** (1d4): MV 90', AC 13+1d4, HD 2\*, #AT 3 (2 claws & 1 bite: +1, 1d3 + paralysis), SV F2, ML 8, AL C, XP 29;
- 7 **Gelatinous Hematoma** (1): MV 60', AC 14, HD 4\*, #AT 1d6 (pierce: +3, 1d4 + drain 1 per round), SV F2, ML -, AL N, XP 135; **Special**: Gelatinous armor, draining arteries; (see page 16, *New Monsters*)
- 8 Roll 1d6. On 1-5 an ankheg is encountered. On a 6 they encounter **Hashur** (see area 2). **Ankheg** (1): MV 90' or burrow 60', AC 18, HD 5\*\*, #AT 1 (bite: +4, 3d6 + 1d4 + grab) or (spit acid, 4d8 in 30' line save for half), SV F5, ML 6, AL N, XP 500;

## RANDOM MUTATIONS\*

d12

Mutation

- 1 **Distorted Torso Muscles**: +1 to hit and damage.
- 2 **Crystal Skin**: Movement -50%, AC +3, takes 50% damage from non blunt attacks.
- 3 **Acidic Bile**: Can project bile 20' for 2d6 damage 3 times per day. Creatures 5' from target **save v. breath** or take 1d4 damage.
- 4 **Bubbling Skin**: If the creature is hit, there is a 50% chance of bursting a pustule. Characters up to 5' away must **save v. breath** or take 1d6 damage from splashes of stinking acid.
- 5 **Hooked Limbs**: Creatures hit by mutant must **save v. paralysis** or are hooked (dealt automatic damage each round, can't leave melee). The hook-limbed creature and its target can choose to **roll to open doors** in lieu of attacking, unhooking on a success.
- 6 **Insectoid**: Creature can walk on walls and ceilings. +1 AC due to chitinous plates.
- 7 **Distorted Leg Muscles**: +30' to movement. Charges deal plus 1d6 damage.
- 8 **Chameleon Skin**: +20% to Hide in Shadows (If not proficient, can now hide at 35%). Can hide in shadows even in plain sight. Surprises with a 4 in 6 chance.
- 9 **Gelatinous Tissue**: Take 50% damage from penetrating & blunt attacks. Can move out of melee at will and can squeeze below closed doors and through small openings.
- 10 **Fast Metabolism**: Can attack 3 times per round for 3 consecutive rounds once per day.
- 11 **Poisonous Glands (Necrotizing)**: Creature hit by mutant must **save v. poison** or take an additional d6 of damage.
- 12 **Poisonous Glands (Psychedelic)**: Creatures hit by mutant must **save v. poison** or act as if hit by a confusion spell for 1d4 rounds.

\* Player characters gaining a mutation must **save v. poison** or go mad indefinitely, attacking everybody around them. Additionally, each mutation gives a cumulative -1 to **reaction rolls** due to outward signs of deformities and strangeness. On gaining their **fourth** mutation, a character automatically goes mad.



## Map Key

### 1 – Canyon

A red and dry canyon runs through the mountains. Obviously affected by a recent earthquake, it is littered with rocks and debris.

In the western cliffs, about 60' above the ground, an opening to a tiled corridor is visible. At the far end of the canyon the remains of a structure can be seen.

#### Buried undead

Any time a significant amount of **noise** is made while in the canyon, roll **1d6**. On a **4+**, roll on the *Wandering Monsters Table* to determine what claws its way out of the red sand.

### 1A – Canyon Ruins

Two pillars stand inside a small, ruined building. Between them, two corpses lie on the floor. They are bloated and emit a terrible stench of decay and death.

Above, an enclosed corridor protrudes from the rocky wall, about 40' above the ground. In the corridor's floor, there is a circular opening, about 7' in diameter.

#### 2 plague zombies

The zombies will animate when a living thing moves closer than 20'.

**Plague Zombie (2):** MV 30', AC 12, HD 2\*\*, #AT 1 (infected bite: +1, 1d6 + plague), SV F1, ML -, AL C, XP 38; **Special:** Plague (see page 15, *Plague Zombie* for effects); (76 XP)

#### Ankheg noises

With a successful **roll to hear noise**, the ankheg from area 1C is heard.

#### Runic circle / magical elevator

Hidden in the sand below the opening is a runic circle: A **magical elevator** by means of a floating granite disc.

» **Activating the lift:** The command word to activate the lift is etched in the eastern pillar in the Sargon tongue.

#### Precious stones in western pillar

The pillar is studded with **10 semi-precious stones** (50 gp each). They are hidden below layers of grime and sand. To find them, a successful **roll to detect secret doors** at +2 is required.

#### Shield +1 under buried skeleton

Buried in the collapsed corridors at the top of the elevator is a **skeleton** clad in decayed and rusted armor. If moved, a **shield** is revealed. It is dirty, but in good shape compared to the crumbling armor. The round shield is made from bronze and bears the emblem of a wolf flashing its teeth. The shield is inscribed with magical charms (it is a **shield +1**).

#### Frescoes on upper floor's walls

On the upper floor's walls, hidden below the grime, are faded frescoes depicting Hashur brewing potions while a group of abominations bows to him.

» **Interpreting the frescoes:** A spell caster succeeding on an **intelligence ability check** will know that Hashur is creating mutant undead by means of a mutagenic elixir.

» **Classifying the undead:** Characters that understood the frescoes can make an **intelligence ability check** to ascertain the nature of any mutations they see.



## 1B - Secret door

A dead end reveals a grotesque statue fashioned from bronze. It resembles a huge horned rat with a scorpion's tail. The statue is about 5' tall.



### Animated statue

The statue is enchanted and attacks characters trying to touch it without using the pass phrase ("The dead pity the poisoned").

**Animated Statue:** MV 0', AC 13, HD 2\*\*, hp 10, #AT 1 (stinger: +1, 1d4 + poison), SV F1, ML -, AL C, XP 38,

**Special:** Construct immunities, immune to damage from non-blunt mundane weapons, poison: save versus death at +2 or die in 1d4 turns;



### Locked secret door and secret lever

The secret door is locked from this side. The statue hides a **secret lever** which unlocks the panel in the western wall. On pulling the tail, the panel unlocks.

## 1C – Ankheg Nest

From the crevasse, characters can hear sounds of scratching and tearing. The floor is littered with bones and debris, partly dissolved.

A large insectoid with an elongated skull and razor-sharp limbs sits in the far corner, feeding on the remains of a slaughtered corpse.



### Ankheg lair

One **ankheg** is nesting here.

» **Territorial:** The insectoid will defend its nest to the death. It will not pursue beyond the narrow crevasse as it is protecting its eggs (see *loot*).

**Ankheg (1):** MV 90' or burrow 60', AC 18, HD 5\*\*, #AT 1 (bite: +4, 3d6 + 1d4 + grab) or (spit acid, 4d8 in 30' line save for half), SV F5, ML 6, AL N, XP 500;



### Corpse in the ankheg's nest

The **corpse** in the monster's nest was a member of the **Bold Blades** who managed to flee the tombs but then ran into the ankheg.

» **In the backpack are:** A **potion of cure poison** (pale red fluid, smells like apple juice), a **potion of invisibility** (invisible liquid, no smell), a set of **masterwork thief tools** (+10% to open locks), **4 black fletched arrows** (arrows +2), and **1000 gp** of ancient Sargon mint.



### Ankheg egg

Sitting in a niche protected with resinous material is the **ankheg's egg** (1000 gp).

Valuable only to mages or trainers of exotic animals.

1 Room Key

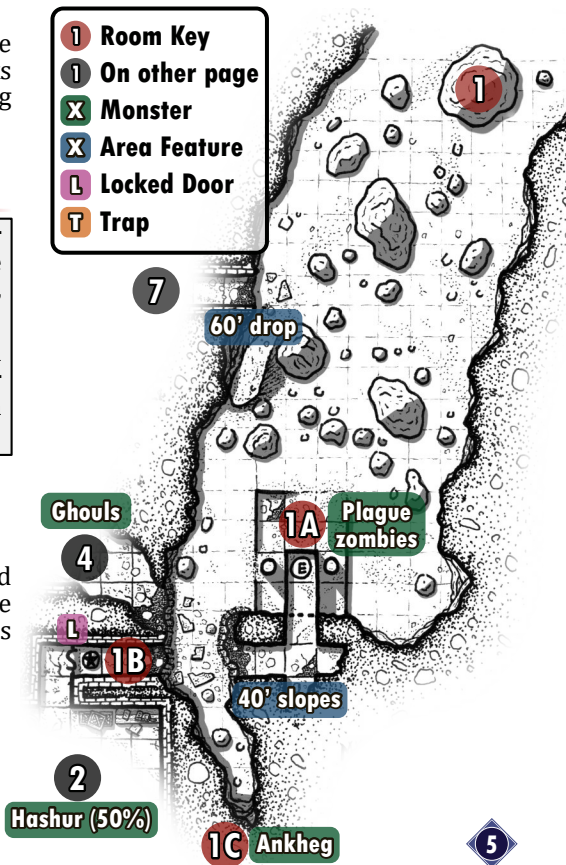
1 On other page

X Monster

X Area Feature

L Locked Door

T Trap



## 2 – Hashur’s Laboratory

The room reveals two wells that bubble faintly. In the southern area stands an old wooden table, the tools of an alchemist and a large codex arranged upon.

In the northeastern corner is a desk with a black book lying open on the tabletop and a stack of crates next to it. In the northwestern corner is an amphora and a large barrel.



### Hashur might be around (50%)

There is a **50% chance** Hashur is in the laboratory, working on the southern table. Otherwise, he will be in **area 3**, creating unholy water. If not present, he will return with a **1 in 6 chance each turn**.

» **Appearance:** The alchemist wears red and golden ceremonial robes, a golden **death mask** (see **page 2** for effects, see cover for real face), and is armed with a great curved sword, the **scorpion’s tail** (see **page 16**, *New Magical Items*).

» **Combat:** He will flee if outmatched, except when defending his wife **Bura**. If he anticipates harsh resistance, he will equip himself with the potions from his lair.

» **Effects of the altar:** The altar (see **area 5**) grants Hashur **+1 to AC and saves** while in **area 5**. Also, it heals him for **1 hp** each round while inside the tomb.

**Hashur (mummy):** MV 90, AC 18, HD 5+1\*, hp 30, #AT1 (scorpion’s tail: +6, 1d10+4 + poison) or (spells, cleric 5), SV C5, ML 10, AL C, XP 640; **Special:** Frightening visage\*, mummy rot, damage resistance;

**Equipment:** **Scorpion’s tail** (on a hit the target must save v. poison or take 1d6 additional points of damage), **potion of swift striking** (can attack twice for 3 rounds);



### Eastern well: Mutagenic elixir

In this well is Hashur’s mutagenic elixir, a black liquid, reeking strongly of licorice.

» **Drinking the elixir:** Characters drinking mutagenic elixir must **roll** on the *Random Mutations* table (see **page 3**).



### Hashur’s equipment

Hashur wears a golden **death mask** (500 gp). Additionally, he wields **Scorpion’s Tail**, a **magical two handed sword** and a **potion of swift striking** (see **page 16**, *Monsters and Magical Items*).



### Items & book on the southern table

On the table are the implements of Hashur’s trade and his journal:

» Hashur’s **book of alchemy and poison** (1000 gp) lies open on the table (see *lore* for the contents).

» **2 doses of Hashur’s curse** (250 gp each), a terrible poison which immediately sickens any character drinking it.

» Hashur’s **alchemy set** (1000 gp) is set up on the table. Packing it up takes 2 Turns.



### Potions and flasks in the crates

In the topmost crate is a **potion of gaseous form** (bright green liquid with black inky strings floating inside, smells like moist earth), a **potion of fly** (sparkling water, smells like a fresh spring breeze), a **potion of ESP** (looks and smells like strong black coffee). The other crates are empty except for **12 empty flasks** fit to hold unholy water (5 gp each).



### Hashur’s desk

The black book on top of the desk is **Hashur’s journal** (see *lore*). The drawer of the secretary holds an **arcane spell scroll** (animate dead), written in Sargon.



### Western well: Base to Hashur’s curse

This well holds the base to Hashur’s curse, a deadly poison. Despite being highly toxic, it **looks like regular water**. Drinking the base drains **1d4 con** per hour for **1d6** hours. Death occurs at **2 con**. 1 point of **con** is recovered per full day of rest.

## AREAS: 3



### Barrel and amphora

The **barrel** and **amphora** contain only **normal water**.



### Hashur's book of alchemy

By studying Hashur's book, spellcasters learn to create **Hashur's curse** and **plague zombies**.

» **Creating Hashur's curse:** Brewing the poison requires 500 gp of poisonous plants, a dose of unholy water, and the heart of a humanoid that died of poison or sickness in the last 7 days.

» **Effects of Hashur's curse:** A character ingesting the poison must **save v. death** at -6 or die as their innards liquidize.

» **Creating plague zombies:** This requires killing a humanoid with Hashur's curse and then casting **animate dead** on the corpse.



### Hashur's journal: grief about Bura

In his journal, Hashur detailed his deep grief about the state of his beloved wife, Bura. She is stricken with a terrible delusion, a side effect of awakening without the appropriate rituals (awakening sickness). She believes herself to be alive, walking the halls of ancient Sargon.

## 3 – Unholy Shrine

A two-tiered well gives off a ghostly, pale light. In the center of the room is a large, 10' tall statue made from anthracite marble, showing a grotesque mass of flesh, pus, and slime. Somewhere in the sickening display there is a deformed human skull, giving the obscene statue an eerie humanoid resemblance...



### Hashur might be around (25%)

There is a **25% chance** Hashur (see **area 2**) is in the unholy shrine, praying to the statue of Prodigor (see **lore**) to create unholy water for his trademark poison, Hashur's curse. If not present, he will arrive with a **1 in 12 chance** each turn.

» **Stealth:** When encountered here, there is a **3 in 6 chance** he will be surprised if the party moved stealthily, due to being deep in concentration.



### Chthonic statue

The statue is a likeness of **Prodigor**, a chthonic god of monsters, mutation, and entropy.



### Praying to the chthonic statue

Praying here while drinking the mutagenic elixir (see **area 2, Eastern Well**) makes the character go mad only with a **1 in 20 chance** on a failed save. Additionally, if the character succeeds on the **save**, he can roll for 2 mutations and choose one of them.



### Unholy well

The well contains the supply of **unholy water** that Hashur has created so far. It reeks of decay and shimmers with a sickening light (see **loot**).



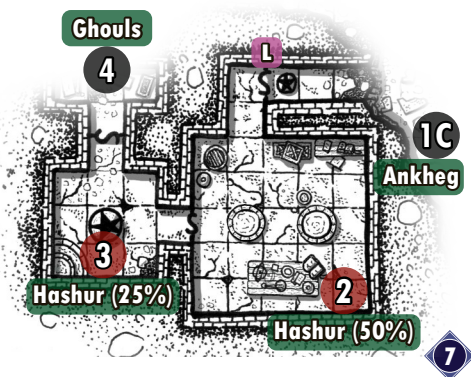
### 10 flasks of unholy water

Beside the well, there is a basket with **10 flasks of unholy water** (worth 20 gp each).



### Unholy water in the well

In the well is enough unholy water for **10 more flasks**. To store it, vials prepared with unholy rites and markings are required (see **area 2**).





## 4 – Royal's Crypt

Alcoves, containing a sarcophagus each, intersect these corridors. Some coffins have been opened.



### Lair of 13 ghouls (4 awake initially, 9 in coffins)

The crypt houses **13 ghouls** dressed in rotted noble robes and finery. So far, Hashur has awakened **4** of them to guard the central chamber of the crypts.

The remaining **9** ghouls are still in the closed sarcophagi. The ghouls are feral, semi-intelligent beasts and don't pursue far beyond **area 4**

- » **Torpor madness:** Hashur will carefully awaken an additional ghoul each week, as ghouls roused abruptly are insane attacking anything entering this area (preferring living targets if possible).
- » **Waking up ghouls:** If combat does not end within a surprise round, there is a **1 in 4 chance** each round that **1d3** ghouls awaken. They need one round to exit their coffins.

**Ghoul** (13): **MV** 90', **AC** 13, **HD** 2\*,  
#**AT** 3 (2 claws & 1 bite: +1, 1d3 + paralysis),  
**SV** F2, **ML** 8, **AL** C, **XP** 29; (377 XP);  
**Special:** Paralysis;

- » **Opening sarcophagi:** See **page 2**.



### Jewelry of first 4 awakened ghouls

The **4** initially awakened ghouls each wear a **silver necklace** (120gp each).



### Treasure in the 9 closed coffins

Inside the **9** coffins are effigies made from ivory, silver jewelry, and other funerary goods. In each coffin are **2d4 \* 100 sp** and **2d6 effigies, unholy symbols, or trinkets** (10 gp each.)

**Total Treasure:** 1560 gp (average).

## 5 – Royal Crypt

A large crypt reveals five sarcophagi. Two plain ones are on the western wall, another pair on the eastern wall. On the southern wall is an intricately engraved sarcophagus.

In addition, a total of six urns are in the room, two on all walls except the northern one.

In the center of the room, a four-armed warrior is standing in front of an altar dedicated to the vile gods of chaos. Its presence emanating a profound sense of dread.



### Palkha (in room's center)

The captain of the guard, **Palkha the Pale Slayer**, stands motionless in the middle of the room, facing north.

- » **Appearance:** See **page 10**. He wears a silver **death mask** (see **page 2** for effect).
- » **Combat:** When provoked, the pale slayer calls upon his zombie allies, which will exit their coffins and arm themselves in one round.
- » **Effects of the altar:** The altar (see **area 5**) grants Palkha a **+1 to AC and saves** while in **area 5**. Additionally, it heals him by **1 hp** each round while inside the tomb.
- » **Parleying:** Suffering from awakening sickness since his torpor was interrupted by the earthquake, he is **delusional** and might mistake the party for Sargon nobility. Make a reaction roll at **-3**.

The following modifiers apply:

- » Speaking Sargon: +1
- » Wearing robes of Sargon priests: +1
- » Wearing an unholy symbol: +1

On a reaction roll of **9+**, the pale slayer will show them the secret door in the southern wall, believing they are allies of Hashur. On roll of **6-8**, he will ask them to leave to not disturb Bura but will not attack unless threatened. On anything less, Palkha attacks.

## AREAS: 5



### Elite zombies (in sarcophagi)

Hashur's honor guard lies in the sarcophagi on the eastern and western walls.

- » **Effects of the altar:** The altar grants the zombies **+1 to AC and saves** in area 5.
- » **Opening sarcophagi:** See page 2.



### Bura (In sarcophagus)

Bura is interred in the sarcophagus on the southern wall. Her bearing is frail and unresponsive due to awakening sickness.

- » **Appearance:** Bura wears Sargon jewelry (see *Bura's finery*) and well preserved royal robes. On her face is a golden death mask (see page 2 for effects).
- » **Parleying:** Suffering from awakening sickness since her torpor was interrupted by the earthquake, she is **completely delusional**, thinking she is still alive. She can be parleyed with at **-2**, with equal modifiers as for Palkha (see area 5).

On a reaction roll of **9+**, she will trust the group. On any other result, she will be catatonic. Hashur will do anything to protect Bura.

**Palkha:** MV 60', AC 18, HD 5\*\*, hp 30, #AT 4 (sword: +5, 1d8+1), SV F5, ML 10, AL C, XP 500; **Special:** Fear aura\* (See page 16, *Pale Slayer*);

**Elite Zombie (4):** MV 30', AC 17, HD 2\*, hp 12 each, #AT 1 (curved sword: +2, 1d8+1), SV F2, ML -, AL C, XP 29; (116 XP)

**Bura (mummy):** MV 90', AC 15, HD 5\*, hp 5, #AT 1 (slam: +4, 1d10), SV F3, ML 6, AL C, XP 450; **Special:** Frightening visage\*, mummy rot, damage resistance;

- » **Opening sarcophagi:** See page 2.



### Altar (in room's center)

The profane altar is covered with headache-inducing runes of chaos.

- » **Inhibited turning:** The altar turns the larger area into a sinkhole of evil. Clerics turn as if **2 levels** lower in the tomb, and as if **4 levels** lower in area 5.

- » **Dark protection:** The dark altar emits a spell in the royal crypt, giving undead a bonus of **+1 to AC and saves**.

- » **Dark healing:** The dark altar heals Hashur and Palkha for **1 hit point per round**.

- » **Destroying the altar:** To cleanse the sinkhole of evil, the altar must be smashed and its remains purified by casting **bless** or pouring a vial of **holy water** over them. This awards each character a bonus of **500 XP**.



### Elite zombie equipment

The zombies wear **4 ornate masterwork lamellar armors** between them, granting an AC of 16 (330 gp each).



### Palkha's equipment

Palkha wears a silver **death mask** (250 gp) and ceremonial **masterwork plate armor** granting an AC of 17 (610 gp).



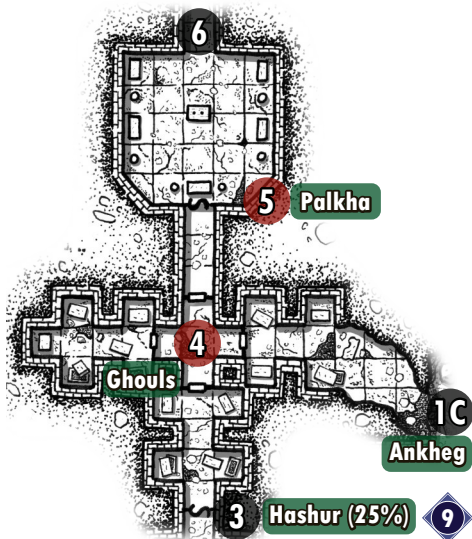
### Bura's finery

Bura wears a golden **death mask** (500 gp), **two silver bracers** (250 gp each), and **silken robes** which never decay (500 gp).



### Embalming oils in the six urns

The **six urns** contain valuable **embalming oils** (200 gp each).



## PALE SLAYER



## 6 - Crumbling Corridor

Speckles of dust trickle from the ceiling. This hall was hit badly by the recent earthquake and seems to be unstable. In a niche to the west is a door, and before it a crumpled body which is ripped into two parts at the stomach. Its legs and backpack lie at the bottom at the door, while the torso lies about 20' east.



### Bold Blade zombie mage

When fleeing the tomb, a mage of the Bold Blades took a wrong turn and ran into the warding glyph (see *trap*). After days of lying there (20' east of the door), he animated as a zombie. He will attack when something moves past him.

**Half a zombie mage** (1): MV 15', AC 10, HD 2\*, #AT 1 (nibble ankles: -1, 1d6), SV F2, ML -, AL C, XP 29;



### False door and warding glyph

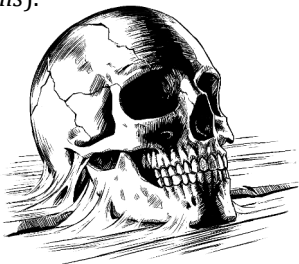
The **western door** is a mock up. Bones and gore litter the floor in front of it.

- » **Warding glyph:** In front of the door is an almost invisible warding glyph. Due to failing magic, it triggers with a **2 in 6 chance** when moving across. On triggering, the glyph explodes in a **5' radius**. Characters take **3d6 damage**, or half on a successful **save v. breath**.



### Backpack at door's bottom

Only two items in the backpack remain intact: A **potion of ogre power** (looks and smells like extremely dry red wine, see *new magical items*), and a **spell scroll** (command corpse, see **page 16 New Spells**).



## 7 – Main Entrance

Four dark granite pillars support this room. They bear engravings of a cleric (northwest), an alchemist (northeast), a sorcerer-king (southwest), and a priestess (southeast). The walls are etched with a faded scene showing the interior of a grand chthonic temple.



### Secret trap door (in room's center)

The center of the room hides a **trap door**. Characters might notice that the center of the room sounds hollow.

- » **Opening mechanism:** The lever to open the trap door is located on the **statue** showing Hashur (northeast), hidden in the left eye.



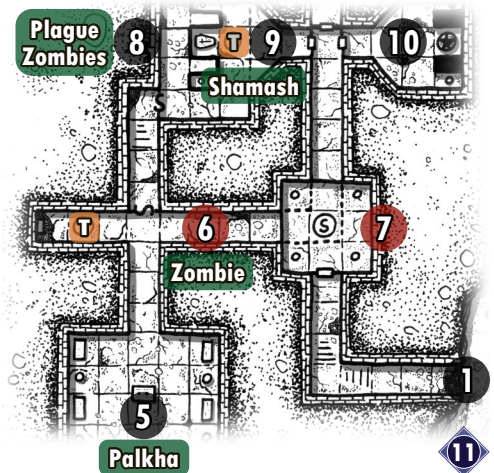
### Engraved column

The columns and wall etchings show a scene of Hashur being promoted to court alchemist by Sevat (the sorcerer king), one of the later witch-kings of Sargon. He is accompanied by his wife Bura (the priestess), and a cleric of Vagari, god of dark magic and forbidden lore.



### Moving about the room

When moving, characters can **roll to hear noise**. On a success, they will notice that the floor sounds hollow below the central tile.





## 8 – Death Pit

The stench of death, bile and refuse suffuses this pitch-black chamber. A huge pile of rotting and bloated bodies is piled up in the center.



### Battered and stuck secret door

The **secret door** on the southwestern wall is easy to find from the inside of the room. Scratch marks and worn stone around its base clearly mark it out. Characters can spot the door in dim light with a **roll to detect secret doors** at +2, made automatically. The door is stuck and requires a **roll to open doors** to be opened or closed.



### 9 plague zombies & undead Bold Blades leader

In this pit Hashur collects the plague zombies he has created until he has a horde large enough to multiply itself. So far, it is populated by **10 plague zombies**. One of the plague zombies was the **leader of the Bold Blades**. He still wears his magical chain mail and his backpack (see *loot*).

**Plague Zombie (9):** MV 30', AC 12, HD 2\*\*, #AT 1 (bite: +1, 1d6 + plague), SV F1, ML -, AL C, XP 38; **Special:** Plague (see page 15, *Plague Zombie* for effects); (380 XP)

**Undead Bold Blades Leader (1):** MV 30', AC 17, HD 2\*\*, hp 16, #AT 1 (bite: +2, 1d8 + plague), SV F2, ML -, AL C, XP 38; **Equipment:** chain mail +1;

» **Growing the horde:** Each week, Hashur adds **3d6** new plague zombies to the pit. When he has at least **30** plague zombies, he unleashes them at the closest village.



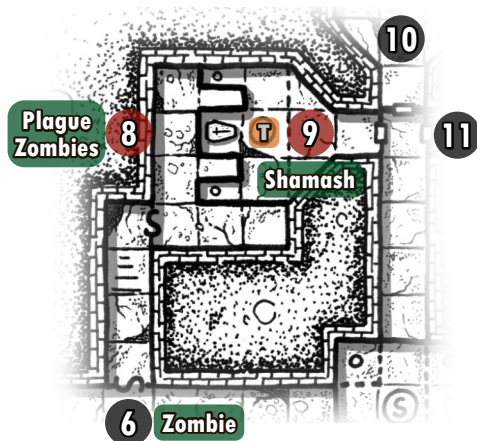
### Equipment of undead adventurer

The undead leader of the Bold Blades wears a **chain mail +1** inscribed with prayers of protection. In his pack are a **potion of climbing** (looks and tastes like bitter, dark beer), and a **scroll (ward against magic)** written in the Sargon tongue.



### Trap door in the ceiling

In the ceiling (10' up,) in the northeastern area, a **mechanism** to hinge down one of the ceiling tiles is visible. It can be opened with a successful **roll to open doors**.



## 9 – Cleric's Crypt

This chamber contains an ornately engraved sarcophagus on the far side of the wall and two urns. It is covered in intricate engravings.



### Shamash (in the sarcophagus)

In the sarcophagus lies a servant of Hashur, an undead Sargon cleric named Shamash.

- » **Awakening Shamash:** For each **turn** investigating the room, there is a **2 in 6 chance** Shamash will awaken.
- » **Opening sarcophagi:** See **page 2**.
- » **Appearance:** Shamash is wearing a black plate armor with red lacquered plates and golden trim. He is wielding a black mace with a head made from bronze resembling the eight-pointed star of chaos. On his face is a bronze **death mask** (for effects see **page 2**).
- » **Parleying:** Suffering from awakening sickness since his torpor was interrupted by the earthquake, he is **delusional** and might mistake the party for Sargon priesthood. Make a reaction roll at -3.

The following modifiers apply:

- » Speaking Sargon: +1
- » Wearing robes of Sargon priests: +1
- » Wearing an unholy symbol: +1

On a **reaction roll** of **9+**, Shamash will believe they are allies of his master, seeking to help him. He will tell them of Hashur's grief (see **area 2**, *Hashur's Journal*). On a roll of **6-8**, he will ask them to leave him alone, wanting to return to torpor. On a roll of **5 or lower**, he pretends to be helpful but tries to secretly warn Hashur.

**Shamash (mummy) (1):** MV 90', AC 16, HD 4\*\*, hp 25, #AT 1 (mace +1: +3, 1d8+2) or (spellcasting, cleric 4), SV C4, ML 8, AL C, XP 190; **Equipment:** mace +1; **Special:** Frightening visage\*, mummy rot, damage resistance;



### Trap door in the room's center

The room's center tile has a trap door leading to the death pit (**area 8**). If stepping onto it, there is a **2 in 6 chance** that it opens, requiring a **save v. paralysis**. On a failure, the victim drops into the death pit **10'** below (see **area 8**).



### Incense and spices in the 2 urns

The 2 urns contain valuable **dried incense and spices** (100 gp each).



### Shamash's equipment

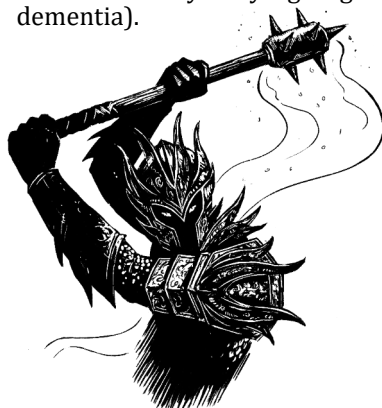
Shamash wears a silver **death mask**, (250 gp) wields a **mace +1** (bronze grip with flanged head in the shape of the eight pointed star of chaos), and wears **jewelry** made from silver (200 gp).



### Engravings on the walls

Engraved on the southern and northern walls are prayers to the dark gods and bits of profane lore, written in Sargon.

- » **Studying the engravings:** After studying the lore for a total of 3 turns, a spellcaster succeeding on an **intelligence ability check** will know the following:
  - » The nature of any mutations they see.
  - » How to avert the madness inflicted by mutagenic elixir (see **area 3**, *chthonic statue*).
  - » The nature of the **awakening sickness** (Undead roused from torpor abruptly are afflicted by varying degrees of dementia).



## 10 – Lieutenant's Crypt

The whole room is covered in a mosaic showing the defeat of the forces of law. The fresco on the northern wall depicts a towering black fortress with a massive gate surrounded by a mountainous landscape.

In the northwestern and northeastern corners of the room are two urns, opened but empty.



### Secret door in the fresco

The **fresco** of the black fortress on the northern wall holds a secret door. It leads to the (now empty) sarcophagus of **Palkha**, friend to Hashur and lieutenant of the hosts of Sargon.



### 2 artfully adorned urns

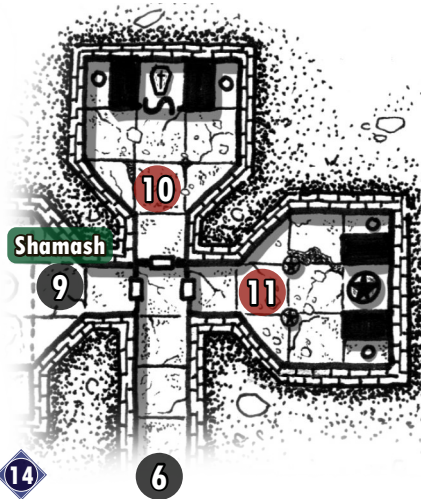
The **2 urns** are empty, but worth 250 gp each.



### Map to Sargon fortress

The room shows a stylized map of a large mountain range. Characters can make an **intelligence ability check** to learn the location corresponding to the fort in the fresco: The fortress of Naram-sin.

*(This location is to be detailed in a later adventure.)*



## 11 – Prayer Room

Two granite statues of about 5' in height stand in the center of the room, while a large 10' tall statue dominates the niche in the back.

The northern small statue shows a robed figure with a black halo around its head. A single green eye shimmers in its skull, which is wrapped in a shadowed hood.

The southern small statue depicts a grotesque worm riddled with mold and fungi.

The large statue in the back is made from black marble and depicts a man of noble bearing, showing the dressings of a wise sage or sorcerer.

In the northeastern and southeastern alcoves are two pillars with hooks attached. Robes of red and golden fabric hang on them, worn but well cared for.



### Robes of Sargon priesthood

The **6 red and golden robes** (500 gp each) are the attire of the Sargon priesthood. They give positive modifiers if parleying with Bura, Palkha (see **area 5**), and Shamash (see **area 9**).



### Statues

The **two small statues** are depictions of Vagari, the god of forbidden lore and madness, and Prodigor, the god of monsters, oozes, and entropy. They are the deities that Hashur the Alchemist (depicted by the **large statue**) chose to dedicate his work and tomb to.



## New Monsters

### Pale Slayer

% In Lair: 35%  
**Dungeon Enc:** Guard (1d2) / Squad (2d2)  
**Wilderness Enc:** Guard (1d2) / Squad (2d2)  
**Alignment:** Chaotic  
**Movement:** 120' (40')  
**Armor Class:** 18  
**Hit Dice:** 5\*\*  
**Attacks:** 4 (weapons)  
**Damage:** 1d8/1d8/1d8/1d8  
**Save:** F5  
**Morale:** 10  
**Treasure Type:** None  
**XP:** 500

Pale slayers are undead Sargon sword masters, brought back as four-armed undead abominations. They are intelligent, and seek to fulfill their ancient oaths of duty and to test their mettle in combat against worthy opponents. They often are kept as guardians, sleeping away the centuries in torpor until they are awakened.

Pale slayers carry an **aura of dread** that can chill the soul of even the bravest. Any character seeing the creature's terrifying visage must make a **save v. paralysis** or be **paralyzed** with dread for **1d6 rounds** or until attacked.

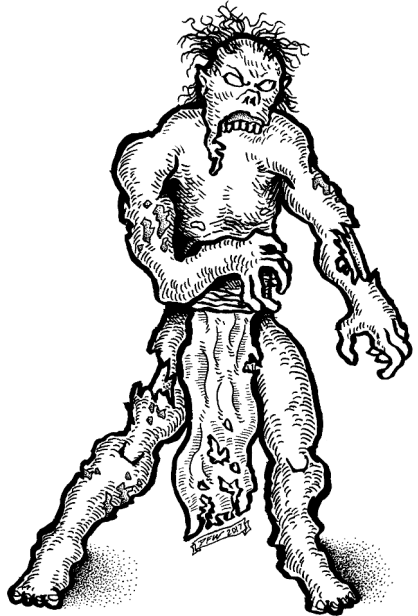


### Plague Zombie

% In Lair: 35%  
**Dungeon Enc:** Throng (2d4) / Abattoir (4d6)  
**Wilderness Enc:** Horde (4d6) / Abattoir (4d6)  
**Alignment:** Chaotic  
**Movement:** 60' (20')  
**Armor Class:** 12  
**Hit Dice:** 2\*\*  
**Attacks:** 1 (bite)  
**Damage:** 1d6 + plague  
**Save:** F1  
**Morale:** N/A  
**Treasure Type:** None  
**XP:** 38

Plague zombies are disgusting and bloated undead corpses that are infused with a terrible magical plague.

A character having less than **50% hp** after being hit by a plague zombie must make a **save v. death** or is infected with a **wasting disease**, losing **1d4** constitution each day, with death occurring at **2 con**. A character that dies while being diseased will rise as a plague zombie in **1d20 turns**.





## Gelatinous Hematoma

% In Lair: None  
 Dungeon Enc: Solitary (1)  
 Wilderness Enc: None  
 Alignment: Chaotic  
 Movement: 60' (20')  
 Armor Class: 14  
 Hit Dice: 4\*\*  
 Attacks: 1d6 (stabbing aortas)  
 Damage: 1d4 + drain (1/round) each  
 Save: F2  
 Morale: N/A  
 Treasure Type: None  
 XP: 190

Gelatinous hematoma are monstrous abominations spawned from the deepest pits of evil. They are necromantically animated hearts floating in a thick and viscous layer of blood. They propel themselves forward with sickening jerking motions by their elongated and spike-tipped arteries. When first encountered, the gelatinous hematoma is protected by a thick layer of gelatinous blood granting it **1d10 temporary hit points**.

When attacking, a gelatinous hematoma strikes out with its aortas. On a successful hit, the aorta pierces the target's flesh and immediately deals one point of damage, and **one additional point of damage** at the start of each round by draining the blood of its victim (a target can be affected by multiple drain effects). The monster will recover one temporary **hit point** per hit point drained, up to a maximum of **20 temporary hit points**. If the Hematoma is hit for **6 points of damage** in a single blow, one aorta is severed.



## New Magical Items

### Scorpion's Tail

The Scorpion's tail is a sleek **two-handed** curved **sword +2**. The grip is fashioned after a scorpion's tail and made from reflective black metal with a pommel fashioned after a stinger. The 6-foot-long blade is made from pale, partly translucent purple hepatization, with black veins visible underneath. On a hit, the target must **save v. poison** or take an additional **1d6 of damage**.

### Potion of Ogre Power

Grants a strength value of **18**. The effect lasts for **1d6+6** turns.

### Potion of Swift Striking

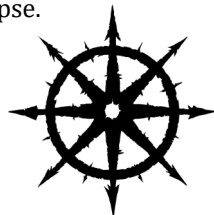
Grants the ability to attack twice per round for a total of **3 rounds**.

## New Spells

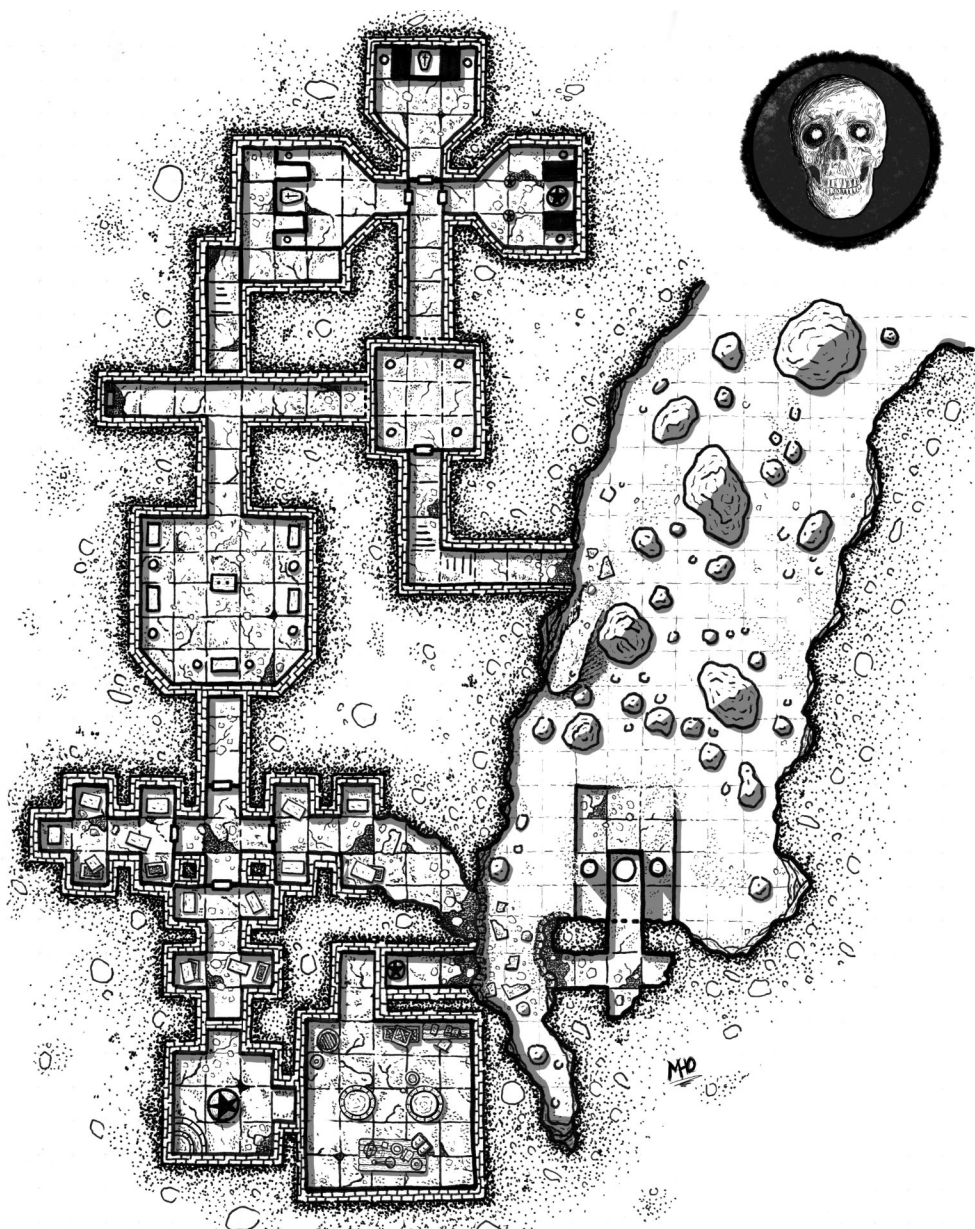
### Command Corpse (Arcane 1)

Range: Touch  
 Duration: 6 + caster level Turns

This spell turns the bones or body of one dead creature into a zombie or a skeleton. Animated **skeletons** have **hit dice** equal to the number the monster had in life; for skeletons of humans or demi-humans, this means one **hit die**, regardless of the character level of the deceased. **Zombies** have one more **hit die** than the monster had in life. An animated skeleton can be created only from a mostly intact skeleton; a zombie can be created only from a mostly intact corpse.



# PLAYER MAP



## TREASURE SUMMARY

TREASURE SUMMARY	
Area	Loot
1A	10 semi-precious stones (500 gp), shield +1;
1C	Gold pieces (1000 gp), ankheg egg (1000 gp), potion (cure poison), potion (invisibility), masterwork thief tools, 4 arrows +2; Total gp: 2000;
2	Hashur's death mask (500 gp) 12 flasks of unholy water (240 gp), 2 doses of Hashur's curse (500 gp), book of alchemy (1000 gp), alchemy set (1000 gp) Hashur's journal, potion (gaseous form), potion (fly), potion (ESP), divine scroll (animate dead); Total gp: 3240;
3	10 flasks of unholy water (50 gp);
4	Assorted Jewelry, trinkets, and unholy symbols (1560 gp);
5	Palkha's death mask (250 gp), Bura's death mask (500 gp), silver bracers (500 gp), silken robes (500 gp), ceremonial armor (1930 gp), embalming oils (1200 gp) Total gp: 4880;
6	Potion (ogre power), scroll (command corpse);
8	Chain mail +1, potion (climbing), scroll (ward vs. magic);
9	Silver death mask (250 gp), jewelry (200 gp), urns with spices (200 gp), mace +1; Total gp: 650;
10	2 artfully engraved urns (500 gp);
11	Cultist robes (3000 gp);
Hashur	Scorpion's Tail (+2 sword), potion (swift striking);
<b>Total</b>	<b>16380 gp</b>



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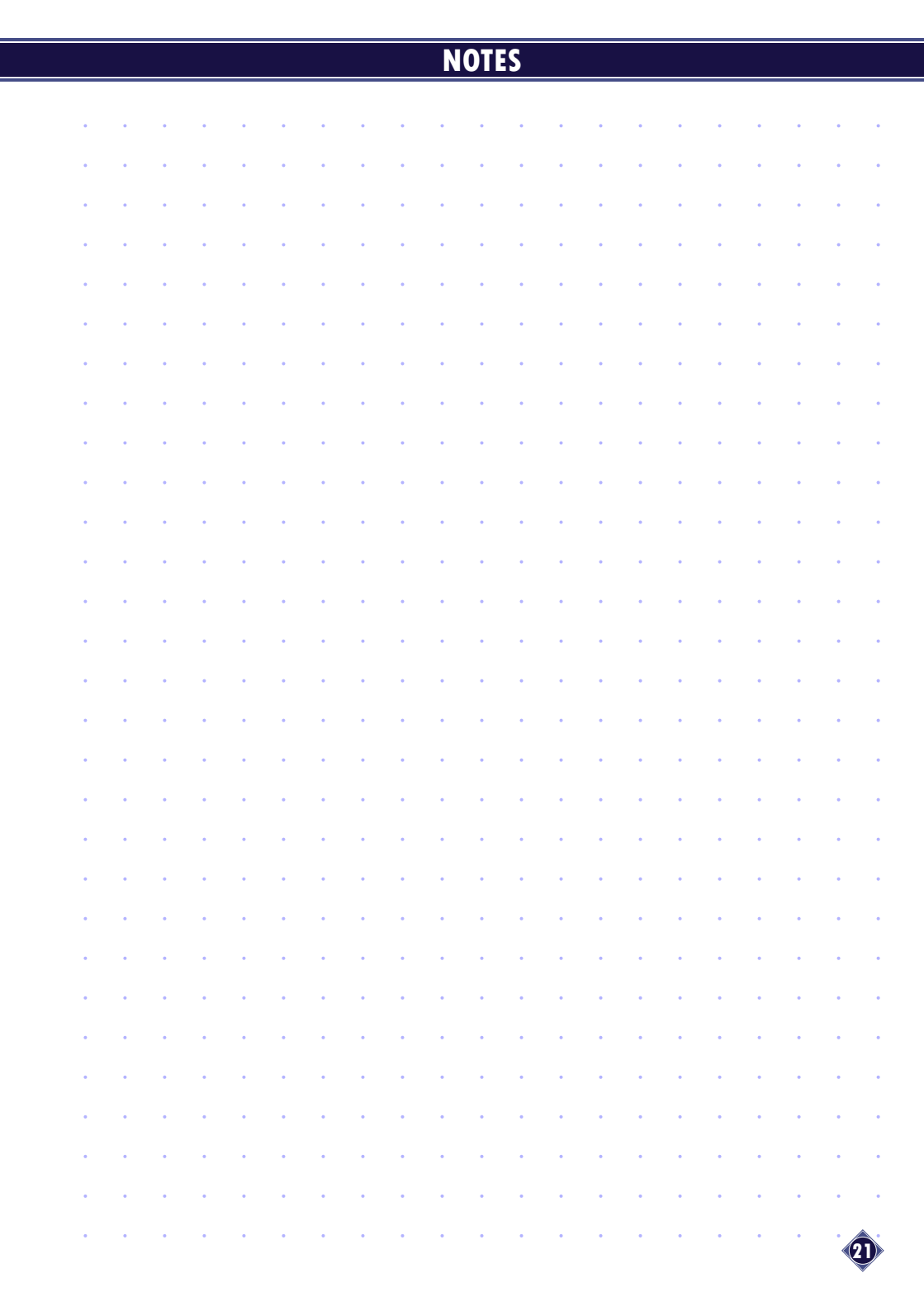
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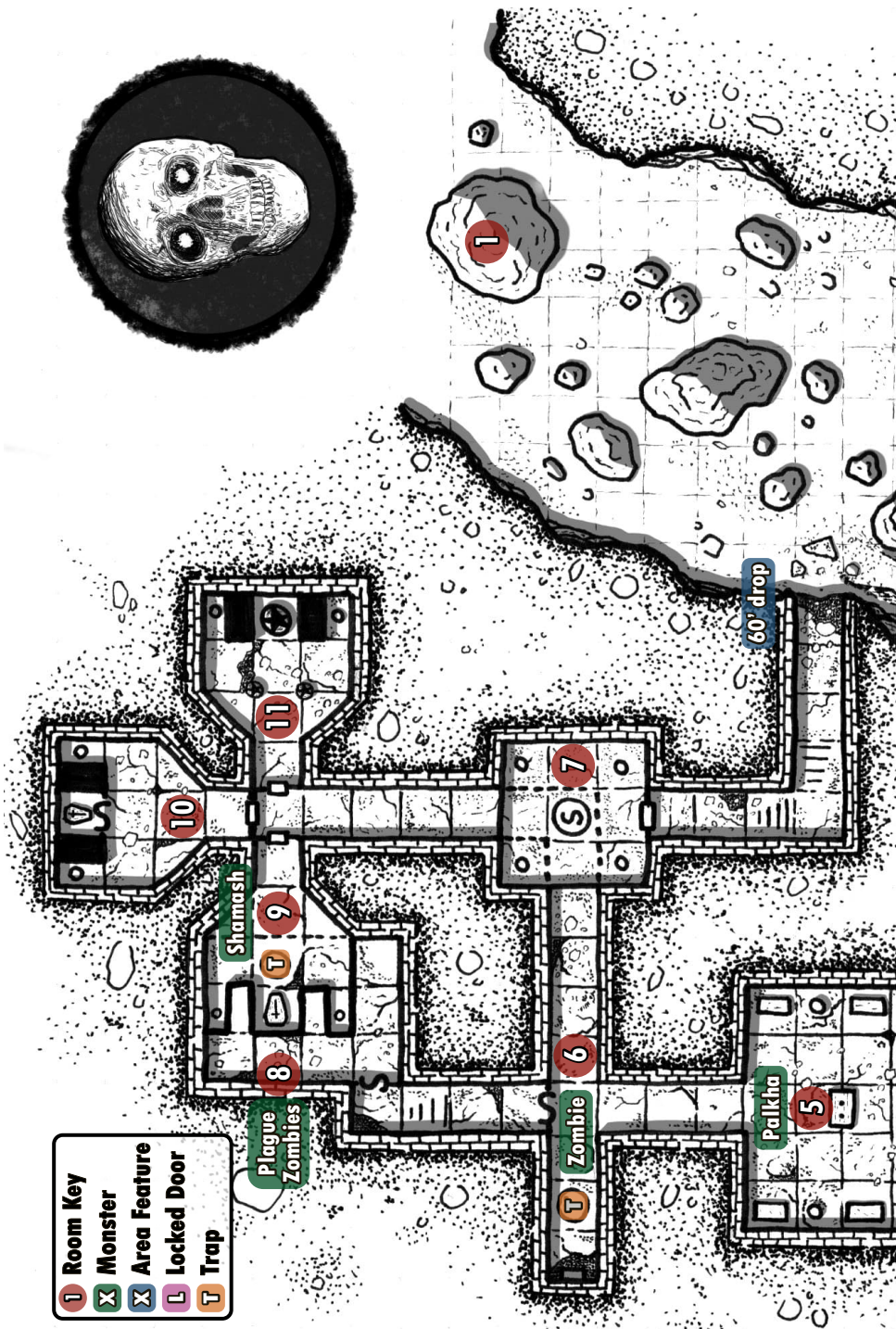


## NOTES





- Room Key**  
**Monster**  
**Area Feature**  
**Locked Door**  
**Trap**



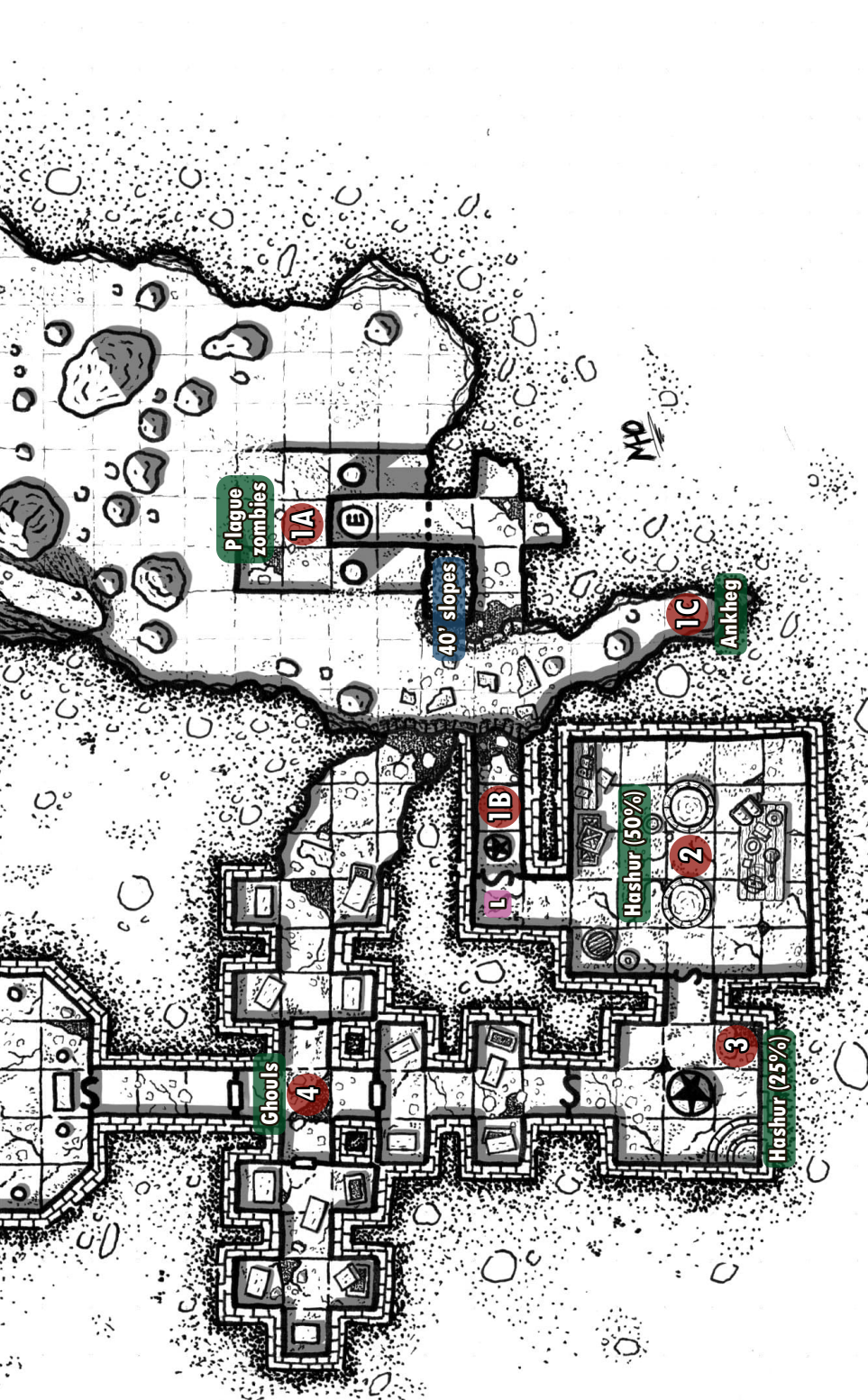
Plague  
Zombies

Shamash

Zombie

Palkha

60' drop







*Undisturbed for eons, the tomb of Hashur, master alchemist of Sargon, has recently been opened when an earthquake ripped apart a rock formation in the Montem Downs.*

After awakening to find the ancient kingdom sacked and its once great cities ruined, Hashur's rage knows no bounds. When the adventurers calling themselves "The Bold Blades" went to investigate, they were wholly unprepared to face an ancient mummy infused with immense power by magical potions.

Mad with grief and a desire for vengeance, Hashur slew the Bold Blades, and now slaves away in his laboratory, brewing a terrible plague of undeath which he plans to unleash onto the servants of Law.

If left unchecked, a tide of death and decay will sweep across the borderlands...

**GA1: Tomb of the Alchemist (TotA)** is a challenging adventure scenario suitable for **character levels 2-4**. The adventure is presented for use with the **Old School Essentials (OSE)** system, but compatible with other fantasy role-playing games built on the same core mechanics. Do you dare to delve... **THE TOMB OF THE ALCHEMIST?**

(The adventure should contain 1 or 2 evenings of play.)

(Requires **Old School Essentials**)

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GA1

# TOMB OF



# THE ALCHEMIST

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Written by **MICHAEL HOHENSTEIN**