



CLARSHH'S SEPULCHRE

BY WILLIE WALSH

An arcane scroll and an ancient cult

Artwork by Bob Klasnich

This module was used as part of a short campaign by the author, who introduced some new players to the AD&D® game at his home in Dublin, Ireland. Willie has other scenarios in the works and hopes they'll see print in future issues of DUNGEON® Adventures.

This AD&D module is for a party of five or six 1st-level adventurers of good alignment (at least 5 total levels). A small supply of +1 magical weapons will be on loan to them for the adventure, as well as some NPC allies.

The scenario involves both a treasure hunt and a dungeon adventure. It takes place in a wilderness ruin, adaptable to any campaign setting with a minimum of adjustment.

Adventure Background

The arcane are a race of giant humanoid merchants found wherever there is trade in magical items. Sreen, one of this race, has had a busy month doing the circuit of the large and populous towns of the land of Koros. He sold a magical sword to a young warrior more interested in swagger than actual work; traded three rare potions and half the warrior's payment for a staff a thief had acquired from a famous, though absent-minded, wizard; used the remaining gold to recharge the staff; made inquiries concerning a certain adventuring party; on meeting the party exchanged the staff for six nonmagical scrolls, four potions, and an assortment of foreign coins his friends had found during a raid on a gnolls' lair.

As usual, Sreen offered neither receipts nor guarantees. His customers had his reputation alone as a guide to the standard of their purchases. It was said that one could buy anything at any time from Sreen, but that it was probably better not to inquire too closely as to their origins. It was not his business if an item went wrong or if an irate "former owner" turned up unexpectedly. The benefits of Sreen's merchandise outweighed the risks involved in buying it and his customers were, by and large, satisfied.

In any case, Sreen was pleased by his recent dealings, the more so when he examined one of the six nonmagical scrolls (labelled "Dissertation on Mining Techniques") and found it disguised a message written in his own tongue. This message, invisible to other races,

claimed to reveal where one might find the tomb of a long-dead priest—and the *cube of force* buried with him.

Screen knew that a fellow arcane had been slain in the area some years before. (Arcane have a form of racial telepathy such that an injury done to one is immediately known to all other arcane.) It was possible that this other had learned the tomb's location and felt it imprudent to brave whatever guardians it might have. Or perhaps this arcane traveler was attacked in the wilderness while searching for adventurers to explore the tomb, and his instructions were hidden for years before turning up again.

Screen did not know the full circumstances behind the scroll's directions, but he was convinced it was authentic. It had turned up at a good time—Screen had funds aplenty to hire adventurers to complete the hunt—and, more importantly, he had a customer willing to pay dearly for a *cube of force*.

For the Dungeon Master

Almost 30 years ago a sect of Nergal, the Babylonian god of the netherworld, was led by a charismatic priest named Clarshh. Nergal's worshipers sacrificed humans and treasures (the proceeds from evil actions) to the god, which made the cultists unpopular, to say the least, with their neighbors.

The cult had already been driven out of one country when it moved to Koros. To prevent the cult from stagnating, Clarshh immediately set up shrines and secret meeting places in all the towns. The resulting bribery, blackmail, and occasional assassination alarmed the authorities. They had heard of the cult's activities elsewhere and were unwilling to allow it a toe-hold in their country. With the aid of carefully cultivated informers, they identified and targeted the leader, Clarshh, for removal and trial. He and other cult leaders were swooped up in a raid and tried for their crimes. The leaders were executed, and this blow led to the quick collapse of the cult. But before Clarshh's body could be publicly displayed as a warning to others, it was spirited away and never heard of again.

That was 30 years ago. Just 18 years later (12 years ago, as we join the story), an aging beggar offered to sell information to an arcane merchant named Telbot. The beggar was once a cultist, and he had

drifted from job to menial job since the cult's dissolution. Though he had now fallen on hard times, he claimed to have been present when Clarshh's body (and a large treasure) were interred in a tomb hidden in the hills.

When Telbot was satisfied the man was truthful, he wrote down all the beggar could remember from those times. Telbot transferred the information to *arcane runes*, hidden in the missing document text. The ex-cultist was saved from starvation and Telbot learned where to find a magical item to increase his treasure.

Deciding to set out for a larger town with the encoded scroll to hire adventurers, Telbot planned the sale of his new treasure in advance. While underway, his entourage was attacked by a large and well-armed bandit gang, including a rogue wizard with a *hold monster* spell and the good luck to overcome the arcane's natural magical resistance. Slain without ever finding the tomb, Telbot and his scroll passed out of history. In time, the scroll came into the hoard of a groll tribe, and lately to some adventuring friends of Sreen. Unaware that the concealed key to a great treasure was hidden within, the scroll was added to the pile of goods that the group bartered for a magical staff. Because he can read *arcane runes* on sight, Sreen now knows where the long-lost sepulchre of Clarshh can be found.

Players' Introduction

Sreen's business circuit is wide and his contacts many, so the arcane can reach the adventurers quite easily. He hopes to hire them to travel with him to the priest's sepulchre, and plans to offer a large reward to recover Clarshh's *cube of force* (though he does not initially tell them the exact goal of the hunt).

The arcane prefers novice adventurers to a more experienced party. The latter might demand a larger reward and may cheat Sreen of his due when the treasure is recovered.

If the PCs are in the wilderness in search of adventure, Sreen is following in his giant covered wagon. If they are in town, the arcane has hired a stable or warehouse to conduct his interview. Because he fears that the sight of a blue-skinned giant might elicit a hostile response, Sreen sends Tooroot, his talking owl, to make the first contact.

Read or paraphrase the following boxed description to introduce players

to the adventure.

It has been a long day and the party is glad to be preparing to bed down. Everyone is settled when there is a small sound like polite coughing.

"Ahem?" says a voice. "Excuuuse me, please. Couuuld I have a woooord?"

Looking up, you see a pair of round, pale eyes. Gradually a shape appears out of the darkness and you realize the visitor is a large owl. Surprisingly, the owl is speaking!

Tooroot can *detect good* at will, and prefers to converse with good-aligned PCs. He asks the PCs if they will consider employment involving the loan of some magical weapons, combat with monsters, a flat fee, and a percentage of monetary profits recovered. If they express an interest, Tooroot says he will take them to his friend who can give them the full details, otherwise he must be on his way.

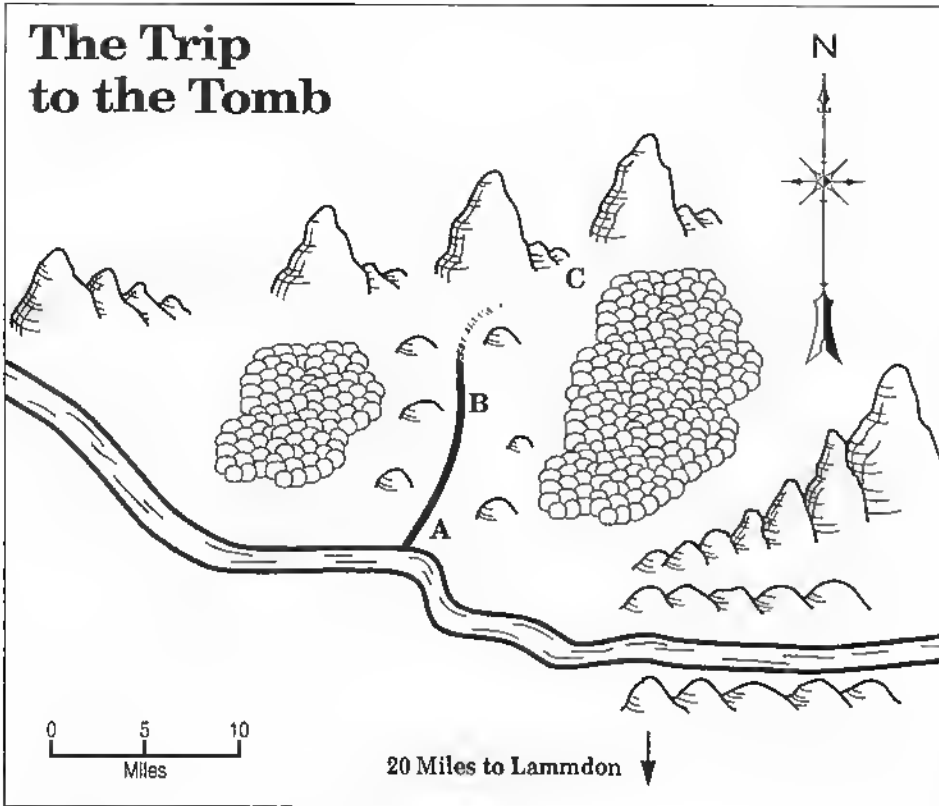
In conversation, Tooroot is demonstrative—he'll ruffle his feathers or spread his wings to emphasize a point. He lengthens any narrow vowels, especially ones with a "u" or "oo" sound, but speaks fluent common otherwise. The owl won't elaborate on Sreen's offer, nor allow himself be tricked (Wisdom 21) into blurt-ing out any information.

Tooroot is part of Sreen's small entourage but doesn't follow him for pay. Instead he believes the merchant's strict attitude to profit could be swayed to the cause of good. (He wants to convert Sreen's alignment of Lawful Neutral to Lawful Good). The conversion is slow in coming, though Tooroot doesn't miss an opportunity to "advise" Sreen who to befriend, employ, or trade with. For his part, Sreen avails himself of the owl's powers of speech and detection to size up clients, though he makes his own decisions. The two are friends, but each secretly despairs of converting the other to his way of looking at life.

If PCs accept Tooroot's invitation he leads them to a side track, or side street as appropriate, where Sreen waits away from prying eyes.

Tooroot (talking owl): INT exceptional; AL LG; AC 3; MV 1, fly 36 (C); HD 2 + 2; hp 14; THACO 19; #AT 3; Dmg 1-4/1-4/1-2; SA swoop (if swooping from 50' or more, gains +2 to attack roll, doesn't get a beak attack, but doubles damage from claw hits); SD never surprised,

The Trip to the Tomb



Wisdom 21, *detect good* at will, immune to *cause fear*, *charm person*, *command*, *fear*, *forget*, *friends*, *hold person*, *hypnotism*, *ray of enfeeblement*, and *scare*; MR 20%; SZ S (6' wingspan); ML 15; XP 975; MM/27 (Bird).

The bird leads you for quite a while, finally landing and pointing with one wing to a shadowy corner.

Looking there, you are startled to see a giant humanoid figure. It steps forward into the moonlight and you see it is unlike any other giant you've heard of. He is 12' tall, bald, and wearing expensive, well-tailored clothing.

"I am Sreen," he says in a cultured, deep voice. "If you step this way we can conduct our interview in more comfortable surroundings."

You hear the click of a bolt being withdrawn, and a rectangle of light shines from an open doorway. Four large, spotted cats, each with a jewel-encrusted collar, eye you from the threshold, but move aside as Sreen enters.

In the light you see that in addition to his great size, the giant's skin color is also striking—instead of the

flesh tones of most humanoids, this huge man's skin is a rich blue.

"Come," he says. "I have business I would discuss with you."

The arcane are tall, lanky, blue giants with elongated faces and thin fingers; each finger has one more joint than is common in most humanoid life. They dress in robes, although they also wear heavier armor (as will Sreen, when he joins the party later), a combination of chain links with patches of plate (AC 3).

Like most arcane, Sreen has surrounded himself with an entourage of guards; the cats and Tboroot are Sreen's constant companions. If they aren't enough to dissuade bandits, he uses a gigantic hand axe in combat. He won't take kindly to being threatened, blackmailed, or insulted.

Up to three times per day Sreen can become *invisible* or walk through a *dimension door* to avoid trouble. He can use any magical item, even items normally restricted to a particular character class.

The door before the PCs leads to Sreen's wagon, a barn, or a warehouse

rented for the occasion. If the PCs enter, the cats—four cheetahs—growl but remain at bay unless provoked or ordered to attack by Tboroot or Sreen.

Sreen tells the adventurers that he is hiring guards and dungeoneers. He plans to travel within the week to a place lately rediscovered—a dungeon and tomb said to be rich in treasure, but also guarded by several monsters. He himself (he says) cannot enter the dungeon by reason of his great size, and must hire others to do so.

In return for their services, Sreen offers a flat fee of 1,000 gp per person (or 7,000 gp, to be divided as they see fit, if more than six PCs participate). They will also share 20% of the monetary treasure recovered.

To assist them against the monsters they meet, the arcane will lend each adventurer, including spellcasters, a +1 magical weapon appropriate to his class and proficiency. At the end of the adventure, they will return these weapons and their contract will be considered ended.

Sreen tells the PCs he has found a scroll made by another of his race. The arcane's stock and trade is magical items, and the scroll hints that a *cube of force*—an item for which Sreen has a ready customer—is hidden somewhere in the tomb. He will not reveal the location or provide any other details until they reach the tomb. This way he hopes to avoid attracting claim-jumpers who might race to find the place before them.

Sreen is very experienced in the wiles of humanity and believes everything said to him must be considered from all angles. Often he reviews a conversation with Tboroot later, in case it had some hidden meaning the owl may have picked up on. He has many contacts among local officials, tradesmen, merchants, and wealthy folk. If he imagines any slight or insult, he will use these contacts to make life difficult for the adventurers.

Sreen the Arcane: INT genius; AL LN; AC 5 (3); MV 12; HD 10; hp 47; THAC0 11; # AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; SD *invisibility*, *dimension door*; MR 40%; SZ L (12' tall); ML 15; XP 3,000; MM/8; giant hand axe (damage as battle axe).

Cheetahs (4): INT animal; AL N; AC 5; MV 15, sprint 45; HD 3; hp 23, 18, 15, 13; THAC0 17; #AT 3; Dmg 1-2/1-2/1-8; SA rear claws 1-2 each; SD surprised on a 1; SZ M (4'4 1/2' long); ML 10; XP 175 each; MM/36 (Cats, Great).

The Trip to the Tomb

The tomb is located 50 miles north of a town called Lamndon, near the third mountain in a very distinctive chain. Sreen travels by wagon—an eight-wheeled, 12-horse monstrosity that reduces the entourage's Movement Rate to 12. Regardless of mounts used (unless, of course, they're even slower), the entourage travels 24 miles per day. One night in the wilderness will be necessary.

The following encounters refer to the wilderness map.

A. Wilderness Trail. Having forded the quick-flowing river, the PCs come to a blurred trail that seems to follow the northern tributary toward the hills. Sreen says this was once a paved thoroughfare to a long-abandoned mountain town. Now it is a cart track.

The road marks the territorial edge of a pack of blink dogs who roam the forest and hill country east of the river. The party meets them within an hour of setting out on their journey.

The cats become alert and wary as soon as they see the blink dogs. Torroot can detect the dogs' good alignment and warn the PCs that the dogs are not necessarily hostile.

The blink dogs patrol the area looking for prey and evil creatures to kill or drive off. Once they determine the PCs aren't burning the forest or ruining the wilderness, they may approach in the hope of receiving a handout or simply to be friendly (50% chance). PCs able to communicate with animals or who have an affinity for them (for instance, rangers) may find out that the dogs don't visit the ruined town that Sreen is traveling to. The dogs explain that it is haunted by evil creatures that are unaffected by their attacks.

If the dogs feel seriously threatened, or don't feel like approaching directly (50% chance), they blink away *en masse* and do not return.

Blink dogs (12): INT average; AL LG; AC 5; MV 12; HD 4; hp 30, 23, 20 (×3), 19, 18 (×4), 17, 16; THACO 17; AT 1; Dmg 1-6; SA from rear 75% of the time; SD teleportation; SZ M (4' long); ML 11; XP 270 each; MM/57 (Dog).

B. Marker Stone. The trail passes by a marker at this point—a 4' tall stone standing upright by the road and carved with the blurred image of a man carrying a shield. It has no other symbols or

Clarshh who escaped in death lies under the third mountain peak, north of Lamndon, in his hand a magical force cube and about him treasure. The way is sealed. To find the key locate five objects in the ruin:

One: A symbol of the god. Four paces left of center beneath The Hand.

Two: An iron key in Cooper's place.

Three: What it opens, up Hendrake's chimney.

Four: Use only what's within when the Gem behind the Butcher's Block is brought near.

Five: Spread the contents in the gatehouse the god chooses. The gate will reappear for a time.

Beware: in the sepulchre a monster magic must defeat. If water was not fouled it would serve well.

Handout

runes. The vegetation around the marker is noticeably sparse, as if reluctant to grow near it.

PCs handling the stone or checking it for secret compartments find nothing unusual. It is a sign for followers of Nergal—the man carrying the shield is an image of the god. The stone's apparent effect on the vegetation may frighten the adventurers, but it holds no dangers for them. They may even smash the marker if desired. The sparse vegetation is a coincidence—the stone cannot harm it.

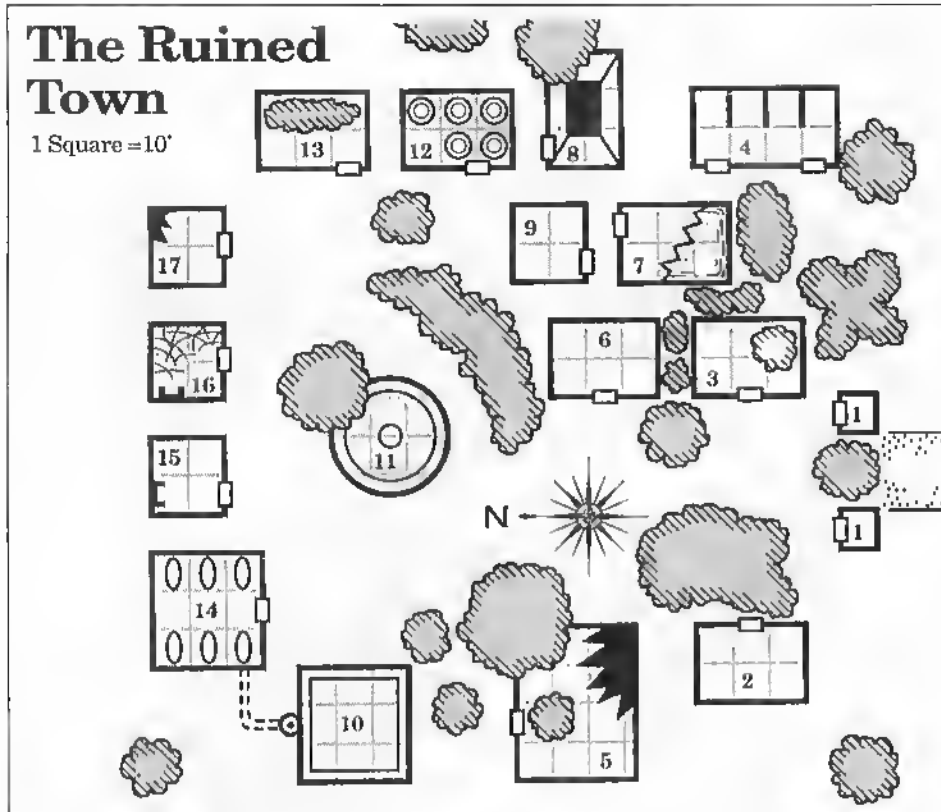
From this point the road swings away from the river, making almost straight

for the third peak in the mountain chain. The country gets even wilder closer to the mountains. It is also silent, which may unsettle the arcane's entourage.

C. The Old Town. The track briefly becomes a stretch of well-paved road before disappearing into a ruined town at the foot of the mountain. Most of the town has crumbled, its walls are humps and hummocks covered with grass and weeds. PCs will have to move about on foot, or fly, to explore the houses that remain; horses and ponies will be quickly

The Ruined Town

1 Square = 10'



lamed if ridden among the town's treacherous footing. The DM should prepare a bird's-eye view of the town as Tooroot is willing to fly over it and describe what he sees, for mapping purposes, to the PCs. He cannot note cellars or hidden monsters.

Screen himself remains surrounded by his cats, gripping his axe nervously, and steadfastly refusing to enter the ruined town. If necessary, he reminds the adventurers that he is paying them to deal with the dangers involved.

Trees and bushes have grown in and around the roofless buildings. These give concealment modifiers as soft cover, providing some protection against missiles but not against area spells like *fireball* or *lightning bolt*. A character firing missiles suffers -2 to attack targets among the undergrowth.

The broken walls of the surviving buildings provide 50% hard cover; missile fire suffers -4 to attack rolls against anyone sheltering here. (See the *DUNGEON MASTER® Guide*, pages 99-100, for details.)

The town was already abandoned in the time of Clarshh, but was once home to a few followers of the sect, so his body

was brought here. They had hoped to bring him back to life (or even unlife) at a later date when the sect had more resources. Meanwhile, they used the powers left to them (some high-level scrolls, magical items, and treasures) to hide and protect the tomb, leaving the means to open it hidden until the day when the sect would rise again. Since they never regained any power locally, Clarshh remained buried. Now, with Telbot's help and Screen's scroll, the PCs have a chance to find and plunder the dead priest's tomb.

Screen's Scroll

The scroll, when translated from *arcane runes*, reads as shown on the player handout. The entire document, including the note at the bottom, was meant to be explained in person to the adventurers Telbot never lived to hire. The scroll provides an enigmatic guide to what the PCs are searching for in the ruined town described below.

Ruined Town

1. Gate Posts. These twin stone huts with conical stone roofs were once sen-

try posts for the gates. The holes holding the hinges are all that remain.

The right gate post contains the entrance to Clarshh's tomb, albeit out of phase with the rest of the area. Searching or digging reveals nothing; the magical entrance must be summoned using the process described in the scroll.

2. Tailor's Shop. A shop selling fancy clothing once stood here. The roof has fallen into the single story building. PCs must push through the bushes hiding the entrance or climb over the wall to enter.

A single poisonous snake hides in the bushes. Flames within a few feet of the snake inflict a -6 morale modifier on the reptile.

Poisonous snake: INT animal; AL N; AC 6; MV 15; HD 2+1; hp 12; THACO 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1; SA poison (saving throw at -1 or incapacitated for 1-4 days, onset time 2-8 rounds); SZ S (5' long); ML 8; XP 175; MM/320-321.

3. Bakery. Once a bakery, this building has had its avens removed and is now only a shell. A tree grows 10' above the level of the naked walls. A wasps' nest hangs from one branch. Anyone climbing in the tree or firing an arrow or stone at the papery nest will anger the swarm. If angered, the wasps attack anyone within 20' of the nest.

Attacks with weapons have little effect against the swarm. Area effect spells that do damage greater than the swarm's hit points will disperse it.

Wasp swarm: INT animal; AL N; AC 8; MV 6; HD 4; hp 12; THACO 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4; SZ, swarm 10' cube; ML 6; XP 120; New Monster.

4. Stables. The ramshackle stables are a two-story structure, with a hayloft in the upper portion. Just the roof timbers remain, the wooden shingles long ago blown off.

The stable's only item of interest is a ladder with one rung missing. It weighs 100 lbs. and is 25' long.

5. Inn of Five Fingers. A faded sign of beaten tin swings outside the door, proclaiming this ruin the "Inn of Five Fingers." The roof has blown off, leaving the interior relatively clear of debris. The floor in the southeast corner has subsided into the cellar.

This is the "Hand" alluded to in the scroll. The item hidden here is a small

figurine of Nergal, buried in the floor of the cellar. It is a statuette of an armed man with a shield, similar to the figure on the stone marker at area B.

Adventurers lowered by rope, or making Climbing checks can safely reach the cavity below. Others upset the debris and fall 15' to the cellar floor for 1d6 + 1d3 damage.

Lying on the floor is a scattering of treasure: 3 pp, 75 gp, 13 sp, 15 cp, and a potion of *extra healing*.

If the PCs take four paces west of the center of the floor they find the right spot to dig for the first component. About 1' down is a small gold statuette worth 100 gp, wrapped in a cloth.

In addition to holding treasure and one of the missing components, the cellar is also home to eight stirges that sleep hanging from the rafters. If awakened, or if the PCs enter near nightfall, the monsters attack.

Stirges (8): INT animal; AL N; AC 8; MV 3, fly 18 (C); HD 1 + 1; hp 9, 7, 6 (×5), 4; THACO 17 (as 4 HD monster); #AT 1; Dmg 1-3; SA blood drain (1d4 per round until 12 hp are drained); SZ S (2' wing span); ML 8; XP 175 each; MM/332.

6. Campsite. This building has been used as a campsite at least three times in the past year, the last visit about a month ago. Firewood is stacked neatly in a corner and the ashes of an old fire can be seen to the southeast.

A ranger or druid with the party can guess that rangers sometimes camp here. Searching among the firewood reveals three vials of holy water.

7. Toad's Lair. This building, once a butcher's shop, has a stone-lined cellar filled with water. (The owner also used the ice house at area 8.) The floorboards over the cellar have rotted, making a pool open to the sky. Along the walls of the shop is a continuous rail, hung with rusted hooks for displaying meat. A dull, rusty cleaver and a mass of well-gnawed bones at the edge of the pool also hint at the former occupants' trade.

Tooroot will not have seen that the pool is now the lair of a giant toad. It goes out to hunt but has learned that daylight hours when neither the stirges (area 5) nor shadows (area 16) are active are the safest times.

A gnomish or halfling adventurer who stumbles across the toad will be considered fair game. Larger creatures will be given a wider berth.

The cellar has a loose stone block behind which the cultists hid the gemstone referred to in the scroll. (The "Butcher's Block" is not the large wooden table PCs may search for. None of the shop's furniture remains.) If the gemstone is recovered it serves as one of the components needed to open the entrance to the tomb. However, it rests 10' under water, so PCs will have to dive to find it. Rules for holding one's breath can be found in the *Player's Handbook* (page 122).

A Wisdom ability check, at -2 penalty, is sufficient to discover the block in the murky water. It has shifted over the years and protrudes slightly from the surrounding wall. Someone with a Strength of 12 or more can pull it out, revealing the cavity and the magical gem. The toad will not appreciate trespassers taking a dip in its pool without permission.

Giant toad: INT animal; AL N; AC 6; MV 6, hop 6; HD 2 + 4; hp 9; THACO 17; #AT 1; Dmg 2-8; SA +3 penalty to opponents' surprise rolls, attack in midair or at end of leap; SZ M (5' long); ML 7; XP 120; MM/345.

8. Ice House. This building was built to store ice and perishables. A wooden landing and stairs once descended just inside the door to the floor, 20' below. Now there is just an open pit, partially littered with rubble. PCs may climb down using any safe method—falling damage is 1d6 per 10' fallen.

Among the debris are six giant rats who prefer to flee to their burrows rather than attack. If cornered or pressed they fight.

Giant rats (6): INT semi; AL N(E); AC 7; MV 12, swim 6; HD ½; hp 4, 3 (×2), 2 (×2), 1; THACO 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1-3; SA disease; SZ T (2' long); ML 5; XP 15 each; MM/300.

9. Clerk's Office. This building was a clerk or scribe's office where townsfolk could have letters read or written. The shelving has crumbled and cannot support any great weight. Ten dry inkwells are scattered about; they can hold water from the fountain (area 11). Scrabbling about the ruin scrounging for inkwells will disturb a giant centipede resting in the damp rubble.

Giant centipede: INT non; AL N; AC 9; MV 15; HD 2 hp; THACO 20; #AT 1; Dmg nil; SA poison (save at +4 bonus or be paralyzed for 2d6 hours); SZ T (1'

long); ML 5; XP 35; MM/42.

10. Cistern. A stone cistern rests on 20'-high stilts here. A ceramic pipe runs from it to the bath-house (area 14). The water in this cistern is freshened by rain on a regular basis and the party may be tempted to drink from it. Birds and bats come here often to drink but are sometimes the victims of the throat leeches living in the waters.

The party will come to no harm unless they or their mounts drink the water. Each drink of unfiltered water has a 10% cumulative chance of containing a leech.

The leech sucks blood at the rate of 1-3 hp damage per round for 10 rounds. Each round it is lodged in the victim's throat there is a 50% chance the victim chokes for 1d4 hp damage. Anyone choking for three successive rounds dies on the third round. Placing a thin, heated metal object such as a wire into the bloated leech will burst and kill it; the victim suffers no further damage.

Throat leeches (4): INT non; AL N; AC 10; MV 1; HD 1 hp; THACO 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1-3; SA choke; SZ T (1"); ML 6; XP 35 each; MM/219 (Leech).

11. Central Fountain. This was a square of sorts, in its middle a circular fountain at which horses drank. The fountain, in the shape of three rearing unicorns, no longer flows (green copper pipes are visible from each unicorn mouth) but the basin—15' in diameter—has retained its integrity. Weeds, rushes, and frogs inhabit the stagnant pool.

A clump of black dirt blocks the drain that creates the necessary siphon effect needed to run the fountain. If the dirt is cleared and each pipe is sucked on for a moment, the fountain's cycle restarts. If the potion of *sweet water* found near the skeletons (see area 13) is added to the basin (or the fountain is simply allowed to run for 12 hours) it turns to holy water, just as it once was. Many years ago, the fountain was dedicated to a good deity before being fouled and clogged by followers of Nergal. The holy water in this pool will be useful against the guardian of the crypt (See area 31, below).

12. Store Room. Once a storage area of some kind, this place now has only five upturned empty barrels in it. Rain has kept their timbers from shrinking and so they remain water-tight.

Beneath the barrel standing nearest the north wall is a single iron key that opens the coffer in area 16.

13. Skeletons. Three bushes grow from this building's earthen floor in a tight, natural hedge. Tangled among the shrubbery's limbs are two skeletons—explorers slain by stirges (from area 5). PCs may believe the plants were responsible, but they just grew through the dead bodies and are neither intelligent nor hostile.

The first skeleton's armor and weapons have rusted away, but a helmet attached to the skull is still intact. This is a *helm of comprehending languages and reading magic*. A wearer can understand 90% of strange tongues and writings, and 80% of magical writings (including *arcane runes*). The device is a normal helmet in all other respects.

The second skeleton's gear has likewise been destroyed by the passage of time, save for a gold belt buckle set with a single large ruby. The item is worth 600 gp. Broken up, the gold is worth 150 gp, while the ruby is worth about 300 gp.

Lying almost obscured by a drift of dead leaves is a potion of *sweet water* that fell from one of the victims' packs. This can be used to purify the fountain (area 11) to create holy water, as hinted on the bottom of Sereen's scroll.

14. Bath House. Six enamelled iron tubs are sunken into the tiled floor here. A tap on the wall drips water in a steady stream, eroding the tile work near the southwest corner. The tap leads to the cistern outside (area 10) and is harmless if left alone. If it is tinkered with, it falls off, releasing a high-pressure stream of cold water for the next 10 rounds.

The jet effectively forms a 20'-long cone with a 3" base diameter reaching a 10' diameter at its furthest extremity. PCs caught in the jet must make a successful saving throw vs. paralysis or be bowled over for 1-3 hp damage.

Trapped by the slippery enamel in the bottom of the tub nearest the northeast corner is a single spider, still scrambling up and sliding down the slick enameled tiles.

Hairy spider: INT low; AL NE; AC 8; MV 12, web 9 (spins no web itself); HD 1-1; hp 7; THACO 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1; SA poison (+2 saving throw bonus, +5 bonus to attacks once attached to vic-

tim; SZ T (6" diameter); ML 10; XP 120; MM/326.

15. Hovel. About 10 years ago, the roof of this single-room 20' × 20' hovel collapsed. Picking through the wreckage yields very little of use.

The only intact structures are the fireplace and chimney. Anyone who disturbs the chimney releases a cloud of common bats that fly out in a panic, but they do no other damage. Spellcasters in the midst of casting a spell may be interrupted by the many near misses.

Bats (30): INT animal; AL N; AC 8 (4 under ideal flying conditions); MV 1, fly 24 (B); HD 1-2 bp; THACO 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1; SA extinguish torches (1% chance per bat encountered per round), spellcasters must make a Wisdom roll to cast spells, -2 attack roll penalty; SZ T (1'); ML 3; XP 15 each; MM/15.

16. Second Hovel. This 20' × 20' hovel is roofless, and the interior is filled with long strands of cobwebs. The spider inhabitants are harmless and scurry away if the webs are broken or burned.

If the PCs explore the chimney in this hovel, trouble awaits them. Two shadows hide there during the day, emerging at night to stalk the ruined town and torment any living creatures. If they are disturbed or if the PCs camp near the town at night, the monsters attack. In all but the brightest light they are 90% undetectable, so even PCs looking up the chimney may not notice them.

Part of the blockage up this chimney is a small padlocked wooden coffer. Rogue PCs may pick the lock, but the key is hidden nearby, under one of the barrels in the Inn of Five Fingers (area 5, above).

Inside the coffer is a vial of silvery powder, a special *dust of appearance* needed to find the entrance to Clarshh's sepulchre. If unstoppered it acts as *dust of appearance*, but won't, if scattered, reveal the opening to the out-of-phase tomb entrance, just the trap door cover. It shows the way only when the gem from area 7 is brought close to the dust. (See "The Catacombs" below for full clarification).

Any treasure the undead took from victims has been cast into the cellar at area 5, above.

Shadows (2): INT low; AL CE; AC 7; MV 12; HD 3+3; hp 16, 15; THACO 17; #AT 1; Dmg 2-5 + special; SA strength

drain; SD +1 or better weapon to hit; MR immune to *sleep, charm, hold*, and cold-based attacks; SZ M (6' tall); ML special; XP 420 each; MM/312.

17. The Troll. This 20' × 20' building was once the shelter of a passing illusionist (a specialist wizard) who stayed a night here. To protect himself against intruders he cast a *programmed illusion* of a vicious troll that would appear out of a hole in the floor if any living humanoid entered. The illusion was never triggered and its special duration means it is still in force—PCs may yet set it off.

Anyone actively disbelieving the presence of a troll gains a saving throw vs. spells; success indicates he sees through the trick. (See the spell description, *PH*, page 180.) Otherwise, run the combat normally, recording the illusory damage to the PCs and the troll as it progresses.

The troll appears to have all the attacks and powers of a real monster. One notable difference is that it doesn't leave the hovel to pursue PCs, and it disappears as soon as it is "slain" or when 24 hours elapse, whichever happens first. There is nothing else of interest in the empty hovel.

If a PC takes enough damage to "die," he collapses in a faint. Let the player make a system shock roll for the PC. If the PC survives, he regains consciousness 1d3 turns later with his illusory damage healed. Smart PCs will quickly realize that it was all an illusion.

If the PC fails the roll, he believes the damage is real and his mind makes his body cease functioning. In short, he dies.

Using fire against the troll always appears to work (flames and heat cover the troll), but it may also set the building ablaze. Roll an item saving throw against fire (5 or better for nonmagical fire, 7 or better for magical fire). If the roll fails, the building will burn fiercely within one turn, then smolder for hours.

Anyone who "kills" the troll should be awarded the monster's full XP value. After all, the risk is just as great as fighting a real troll.

Troll: INT low; AL CE; AC 4; MV 12; HD 6+6; hp 28; THACO 13; #AT 3; Dmg 1d4 + 4/1d4 + 4/5d4; SA severed limbs attack (unadjusted 20 with edged weapon will sever a limb); SD regeneration; SZ L (9'); ML 14; XP 1,400; MM/349.

The Catacombs

If the PCs recover the statuette from area 5 and carry it within 20' of the sentry posts (area 1), it grows notably warmer and hums audibly, nearest the eastern 10' × 10' structure. The hidden entrance is inside this building.

The iron key (from area 12) opens the coffer (from area 16), revealing a vial of silvery powder. (The coffer may be opened with thieves' tools if the key was not discovered). The *dust of appearance* in the vial is sufficient for four applications, and Screen will toll PCs it must be sprinkled or thrown in the air to work.

If the *dust* is sprinkled inside the eastern sentry box, a faint outline of a floor trap door appears, only to fade and disappear after a few minutes. No amount of probing or digging reveals an entrance.

If the magical gem from the flooded cellar (area 7) is held close to the *dust*, if it is on the floor when the dust is sprinkled, or if it is carried by a person sprinkling *dust*, the trap door appears in its proper phase. The door can be lifted by anyone with a Strength of 10 or more. Beneath is a 20'-deep shaft into the catacombs beneath the town.

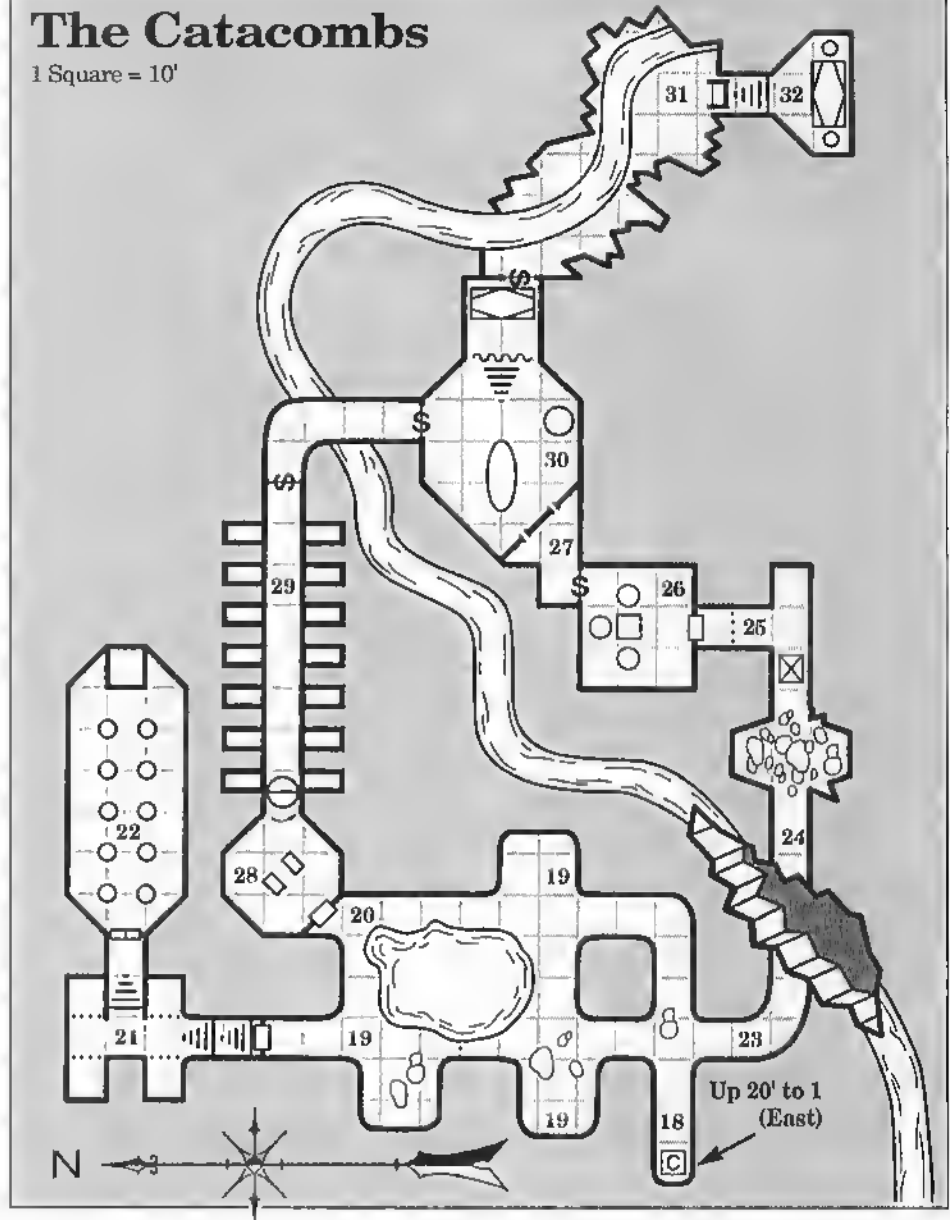
The trap door remains in phase for 24 hours before the gem and the *dust* are once more needed to bring it into being. If PCs didn't make this connection, Thoroot will quote the section of the scroll warning that the entrance appears "for a time." A smart party will monitor its time in the tomb and conserve the *dust of appearance* to get back out. A foolish party may be trapped inside until it meets Braxus (see area 31).

The catacombs are a series of interconnected caves discovered when the town's foundations were first dug. In those days the caves were explored, deemed too wet for storage or shelter, and then sealed up again. The caves were later used by cultists of Nergal as a secret meeting place and burial chamber. The cultists remembered the caves when they needed a cheap but secure resting place after Clarshh's execution. As a result, his sepulchre is located in these catacombs, as the PCs will discover.

18. Tunnel. The shaft from the surface is man-made and ends at an arched tunnel leading into the natural caves. Small round stones and a few larger rocks lie on the floor throughout the complex, but they don't impede move-

The Catacombs

1 Square = 10'



ment or combat. Ceilings are 12' high and doors are described individually.

Detect magic spells can provide an early warning for wary adventurers. A faint aura of necromantic magic pervades all areas in the complex, increasing as the party approaches the undead within.

19. Sealed Caves. Each of these large alcoves exists beneath a ruined building on the surface. When the houses were built the cellar excavations burst through to the caves below. Iron bars were then laid like rafters in each cave's ceiling to

prevent subsidence. The underside of the bars is clearly visible from inside the alcoves, and they follow the dimensions of the surface structures rather closely. The ironmongery prevents digging from either direction.

20. Pool & Water Hazard. A 1'-deep pool circles the central rock pillar here, fed by rainwater seeping down from the flooded cellar of the butcher's shop (area 7). The pool is the cramped home of an immature crystal ooze that subsists on the occasional rat or frog, or anything that can eke out a short life in the dark

water. The ooze hasn't grown very fast because prey is so scarce. It cannot go north of this section because of the tightly fitting stone doors, or south, since the chasm bridge was destroyed (see area 4F below). Its statistics are reduced accordingly.

The ooze's pool still contains the scoured coins of a long-dead cultist: 10 gp, 6 sp, and 12 cp.

Immature crystal ooze: INT animal; AL N; AC 8; MV 1, swim 3; HD 2; hp 7; THACO 19; #AT 1; Dmg 2-8 (2d4); SA poison (reduced potency: save at +2 or be paralyzed); dissolve wood, cloth, and flesh; SD wooden weapons must save vs. acid or dissolve and break; immune to acid, cold, heat, or fire attacks; weapons inflict only 1 hp damage (plus magical bonus) per hit; SZ S (3'); ML 10; XP 420; MM/278 (Ooze/Slime/Jelly, modified).

21. Cell Block. The door to this section is made of stone, tightly fitted to its frame. Inside, steps lead down to a small block of prison cells. Each cell contains a bundle of rags and straw. The northernmost cell has a colony of green slime living on its ceiling. The slime drops onto anyone entering the cell.

A stairway leads down to the east from the cells to the shrine (area 22).

Green slime: INT non; AL N; AC 9; MV 0; HD 2; hp 10; THACO 19; #AT 0; Dmg Nil; SA turn victim to green slime; SD immune to weapons and most spells; SZ S (4' diameter); ML 10; XP 65; MM/278 (Ooze/Slime/Jelly).

22. Evil Shrine. A pair of decrepit wooden doors bar entrance to this cave. They can be opened effortlessly, revealing a shrine to Nergal. PCs of good alignment feel uncomfortable in the evil aura of the shrine.

Black columns lead to an altar of basalt, cut with grooves to gather the blood of sacrificed victims.

Hanging on the left side of the altar is an oddly triangular knife with a mithril silver blade (worth 600 gp). Despite its superior workmanship, the sacrificial knife is a distinctive artifact of the cult, sure to attract attention if sold intact. To the right of the altar hangs a gold bowl (worth 600 gp). It too will attract cultists, their enemies, or the authorities if it surfaces on the open market. (Melted down, it is worth 400 gp).

Clerics of good alignment who take the trouble to neutralize the shrine by sprinkling it with holy water should be award-

ed 500 XP by the DM. Nergal's shrine can also be destroyed by smashing the block with a sledgehammer or by burning and rapidly cooling the stone using a bonfire and buckets of water.

23. Chasm. A 60'-deep chasm bisects the corridor here, the sound of running water coming from the depths below. Once an elaborate bridge of stalagmites (held together with *stone to mud* and *mud to stone* spells) spanned the gap, but it was broken and cast into the chasm a few years ago.

The shortest distance across the chasm PCs can discover is a 22'-wide leap. Only a PC with a *jump* spell can attempt such a feat. A grappling hook can catch the far side only if the first throw is successful, indicated by a roll of 99-00 on d%. Otherwise there are no protrusions to anchor on.

If PCs have neither magical means or climbing skills to get across the chasm, they may still be able to construct a makeshift bridge using timber salvaged from the stables, or harvested from trees on the surface. The ladder (area 4) may also help, though its weight may make the task of bringing it here difficult.

The stream that flows through the chasm comes from a pocket of elemental water that emerges under the foundations of the town. The cold, pure stream flows rapidly underground, emerging briefly at Braxus' throne (area 31, below) before heading off to join more ordinary streams on the mountainside.

PCs who fall into the chasm must make a Dexterity check to reduce damage by diving smoothly into the 10'-deep water. Success indicates 1d6 hp damage; failure indicates an awkward fall that inflicts 6d6 hp damage. Unless roped to a solid anchor, the victims are swept downstream 120' per round, taking an extra 1d4 hp damage from bumps and cuts. Three rounds later, they are deposited in front of Braxus' throne.

Don't tell players what becomes of companions swept away. The DM can communicate with them by passing notes. Refer to rules for "Holding Your Breath" on page 122 of the *PH* as necessary for armored PCs.

24. Rockfall. The treasure hunters are faced with the inconvenience of having to crawl over a rockfall. Tree roots dangle down over the pile of rubble, evidently the cause of the collapse.

Only one PC may safely crawl over

the obstacle at a time, taking one melee round to reach the other side. PCs in a hurry (running away from a monster, for example) are 50% likely to become entangled in dangling roots. A PC snagged on the roots must spend a round extricating himself, while blocking the tunnel to friends. Crossing in haste also has a 50% chance to start a small avalanche, doing 1d3 hp damage and obliging the PC to spend one round getting back on level ground.

For each man hour spent picking stones out of the rockfall (possibly dumping them in the chasm at area 23) the chance of entanglement or slipping is reduced by 10%. (A single person working one hour is one "man hour." Two people toiling for an hour equals two man hours, and so on.)

25. Pitfall, Portcullis, and Magic Mouth. Anyone actively searching for traps has normal chances to find the covered pit in the floor of the tunnel (1-3 on 1d6 for a dwarf, 1-7 on 1d10 for a gnome, and the usual find traps percentage for a rogue). PCs hugging either corridor wall can bypass the pit safely.

Any PC walking on the trap must make a saving throw vs. paralysis or fall into the 10'-deep pit for 1d6 damage. Adding to his problems, the victim is attacked by the two animated skeletons lurking in the pit. Only one skeleton may attack at a time due to the confining pit walls.

The northern arm of this junction is barred by a portcullis that seems to be made of stone. In fact, water containing dissolved minerals has run down the bars for many years, encasing them in a thin sheet of stone. PCs will discover this as soon as any pressure is applied to a bar—the stone flakes off easily, revealing the rusted iron beneath. A PC's bend bars/lift gates percentage has a +10% bonus due to the deterioration of the portcullis.

As soon as a human, demihuman, or other humanoid touches the portcullis a *magic mouth* appears on a nearby wall and booms out:

"Beware and go no further lest ye be blasted! Turn back now or ye die!"

The *mouth's* threat is hollow. The spell operates only once, and does not repeat itself if the bars are handled again. It was intended to scare away casual visitors, but apart from its message, nothing else happens.

Skeletons (2): INT non; AL N; AC 7;

MV 12; HD 1; hp 6, 4; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; SD half damage from edged or piercing weapons; MR immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, and *fear* spells; SZ M (6' tall); ML special; XP 65 each; MM/315.

26. Zombie Guards. The door to this cave is stuck and takes some trouble to open (roll open doors at -5 penalty). The cave beyond stinks of rotting flesh. Three robed and hooded figures sit at a table opposite the door.

The three figures keep their hoods up. They are zombies, though they were once guards employed to shoot intruders who found their way into the embalming chamber (area 30). The zombies shamble slowly toward intruders to drive them off, but they no longer use the weapons provided for them in the guard room (area 27, below).

A vial of holy water does 2-8 hp damage to a zombie. The zombies may be turned by a cleric of any level.

Zombies (3): INT non; AL N; AC 8; MV 6; HD 2; hp 10, 9, 3; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8; SD immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, *death magic*, *poisons*, and *cold-based spells*; SZ M (6'); ML special; XP 65 each; MM/373.

27. Guard Room. This was once a guard room. Two loopholes look into the dark embalming chamber (area 30) but no door divides the rooms. The loop holes measure 6" wide by 18" high. The guards who kept a vigil here have been transformed into zombies by the magical nature of the catacombs and no longer may play an effective offensive part against intruders (see areas 30 and 26).

The guards' crossbows and scattered quarrels lie on the floor. The four light crossbows are warped and their strings are rotten, but the 40 quarrels are in remarkably good shape and are all usable.

28. Antechamber to Cultists' Tombs. The stony door to this room is reinforced with bands of iron, and, though a lock is evident, it easily opens outward. Inside is an octagonal chamber. On the floor are two crushed, distorted skeletons. To the east is a shallow alcove with a life-size statue of Nergal on a semicircular plinth.

This is the antechamber to the tombs of cultists (not Clarshh) hidden behind the statue. The floor is trapped with two small pressure pads, near the center of the chamber. If figures are being used,



the DM should simply watch where players place them on the floorplan. Each PC stopping on the center or walking over it has a 10% cumulative chance of stepping on a pressure pad.

If figures aren't being used, each PC entering must make a Dexterity ability check. The first person to fail triggers the trap. The exercise can be repeated if the trap is avoided and PCs continue to walk about while it is armed.

Unless the door is spiked open, triggering the trap swings the entrance shut, locking it tight. On the same round a mechanical clanking echoes from above as the ceiling begins to descend. On the second round the ceiling is 6' above the floor. On the third it is 3' above the floor; on the fourth, 1'; and on the fifth round, it stops 1" from the floor. On the sixth round, it ascends again. The door unlocks when the ceiling returns to its proper height.

There are a number of ways to escape. One halfling or gnome can fit in the convex space north and south of the statue (up to two such small PCs may fit here). A PC spiking the door open will cause the trap to clank impotently—the ceiling cannot descend. One may also

pull the black shield on the statue, causing the ceiling to ascend, the door to unlock, and the pressure pads to be neutralized. It also swings the plinth 90° counter-clockwise, opening a passage to area 30, below.

Anyone caught by the trap is slain, barring any magical means of escape. The two skeletons are those of minor cultists who "assisted" their superiors in the testing of the trap's proper working order. They have no valuables.

29. Cultists' Tombs. The favored of the local cult of Nergal were interred in these tombs after death. Clarshh is not among them—his tomb is more exclusive.

Each corpse was deposited in a niche at human chest height. Each 5' x 5' niche is 10' deep and sealed with a stone slab. A name appears on each slab, identifying the occupant. No dates are recorded on the 14 tombs lining the corridor. Adventurers opening the niches along the corridor find the remains of a cultist and (in most cases) some valuables. Working along the north wall, west to east, they find the following:

The first tomb has the name "Eldus"

written on it. Inside is an ancient skeleton. Among its rib-bones lies a thin gold necklace, worth 30 gp.

Niche two bears the name, "Kurg." The skeleton clutches a *footman's mace* +1.

The third slab is carved with the word, "Coblat." The corpse wears a finger ring worth 30 gp.

The fourth niche belongs to "Sep-turn." She was wearing a *robe of blending* when interred, which has withstood the passage of time.

Tomb five belongs to "Whartesh." Some broken pots in the niche once held coins. Piled among the fragments are 100 gp and 50 cp.

"Cortan" lies in niche number six. Only a few bony fragments bearing the marks of rats' teeth remain. Four gems (20 gp each) are buried with him.

"Mitros" resting place is in number seven. The skeleton has a dry and brittle leather purse with 50 gp.

Working along the south wall from west to east the PCs find:

"Kabesh" lies in the first niche in the south wall. A *dagger* +1 is in a scabbard by the skeleton.

The second tomb on this wall is marked "Quilick." Nothing of value seems to be here, but 2 pp are hidden inside the hollow skull.

Tomb three has "Enpure" carved on the sealing slab. A small box clutched in Enpure's bony fingers contains two potions of *healing*.

The fourth tomb is marked "Selltine." Only ashes remain inside, and Selltine was buried without any valuables.

Niche five was the repository of "Bernick's" remains. He has no valuables, but the slab shows signs of having been tampered with. (PCs may think the duo in area 28 were grave robbers, but the culprit lies in the last niche on this wall.)

The sixth niche has been tampered with—the slab lies broken in pieces on the floor. If reassembled the name "Yaldros" can be deciphered. The bones inside the tomb have been violently scattered and any treasures removed. The culprit is in niche seven.

The seventh and final niche has had the name "Mattsher" scratched out. The slab is intact but no longer sealed. Inside is Mattsher, a ghast that can't escape from the tomb area by itself. If his niche is opened, he will attack to defend his treasures.

Mattsher wears a silken coat worth 300 gp. Stashed in the back of his tomb

home are a gold cup (150 gp) and a bag of 15 gems, worth 90 gp (×5), 75 gp (×6), 20 gp (×4).

Ghast: INT very; AL CE; AC 4; MV 15; HD 4; hp 18; THAC0 17; #AT 3; Dmg 1-4/1-4/1-8; SA paralyzation by touch (including elves); SD carrion stench (save vs. poison or attack at -2 penalty), immune to *sleep* and *charm* spells; SZ M (6'); ML 14; XP 650; MM/131 (Ghoul).

30. Embalming Chamber: A faint chemical smell still hangs in the air of this dust-shrouded chamber. A bath ringed with a crystalline scum lies in the middle of the floor. A circle, typical of those used during magical incantations, is etched into the stone nearby. To the east is a table littered with scraps of cloth, threads, and surgical tools. Steps rise to a black curtain screening off an alcove to the east.

This chamber is where Clarshh's body was embalmed prior to burial. The internal organs were first removed, the cavities sewn up, then the body placed in a chemical bath that preserved it from further decay. Linen strips were wrapped about the corpse and sealed with resin. The body was then vouchsafed with prayers to Nergal and carried in procession to its final resting place.

In the southwest two loopholes look into the guard room (area 27). If PCs make enough noise, alerting the zombie guards at area 26 to their presence, they will notice movement behind the loop holes two rounds later. Putrid arms reach out through the slits, grappling any adventurers who come near. The event is frightening, but the zombies are easy to avoid because they no longer use the weapons they owned in life.

The alcove to the east contains a stone sarcophagus, its lid sealed with wires and leaden glyphs. This is a decoy to fool robbers who may believe they've discovered the main tomb. (A secret door in the wall east of the sarcophagus leads to the section of the catacombs where the body is actually secreted.)

PCs breaking any of the seals on the false sarcophagus do so with no apparent nasty results. The decayed wooden coffin inside crumbles to the touch; the bones within have a few scraps of clothing on them. Those examining the clothing should roll an Intelligence check to realize none of the scraps match the ones found on the table. The only treasure is a bag containing 150 gp lying in

a corner of the coffin.

31. The Guardian of the Tomb. A secret door opens to an underground stream which runs through a natural cave. Stalactites hang from the ceiling, and stalagmites clutter the floor, but not enough to hinder movement (or provide cover).

Following the stream the adventurers reach a stone throne at the foot of some steps. The steps lead up and out of sight at the crypt (area 32). The throne obstructs passage from the cave to the crypt.

Seated on the throne is a skeletal figure, clad in a brown robe. Its bare skull and bony hands are clearly visible. From 30' away, twin red fires can be discerned in the figure's eye sockets. This is Braxus, the guardian alluded to in Sereen's scroll. The monster is a crypt thing set here to prevent anyone less than a 14th-level priest of Nergal from entering the sepulchre (area 32). Braxus was manufactured using a skeleton and a scroll with a *create crypt thing* spell after Clarshh was interred.

The monster does not move until an intruder enters the cavern, whether that intruder is walking, climbing, flying, in *gaseous form*, or even *polymorphed* into another creature. Braxus is particularly intrigued if PCs enter via the stream (or are washed down it) and will fish out anyone who needs help simply to look at them out of curiosity.

It has been decades since Braxus was placed here. The crypt thing has human intelligence which, while not exactly giving him a craving for company, does allow him to communicate with visitors before deciding what to do with them.

Braxus is to keep intruders out of the sepulchre (area 32), but he need not attack immediately if no one goes there. PCs may even leave unscathed as long as they don't attempt to enter the sepulchre.

If questioned, Braxus can speak, though initially with a croaking, whispering voice (from disuse). Further speech reveals the monster has a deep, pleasant voice.

The crypt thing has no memories before the day of his creation. It knows it was created using a scroll, and that the persons so doing were worried the magic might not work. They were anxious when the skeleton first moved, but seemed relieved when it obeyed their commands.

Though communicative and actually



quite pleasant to speak with, Braxus is single-minded in his purpose as guardian of the crypt and cannot be persuaded to abandon his duty. He has a magical link with the crypt—if the PCs manage to bypass him and set foot inside the sepulchre itself, Braxus knows immediately and goes there to attack with a *mass teleportation* spell. He can also use this attack if threatened, charged, or fired on by an opponent.

If adventurers somehow enter the crypt, loot it, and escape before Braxus can get there (an unlikely but possible event) the monster's duty ends and it falls lifeless to the ground.

Anyone attacked by Braxus' magic is allowed a saving throw vs. spell. Inanimate objects in the target's possession are *teleported* automatically. Objects thrown or hurled at the monster are allowed a saving throw on the PC's own saving throw table, or those also vanish. Victims of the attack all appear instantly on the surface. The DM can determine the effects of *teleported* grenadelike missiles and similar attacks.

The spell can be cast only once on any group of adventurers. If the PCs split up into smaller groups, one entering the

cave and another staying out, the second group may still be *teleported* if they later enter and meet Braxus.

Those who make their saving throws, or who return to the cave, are physically attacked by the crypt thing. Braxus uses a clawing attack that does 1d8 hp damage.

Only magical weapons can hit the monster. The crypt thing cannot be turned, but holy water does 2d4 hp damage per vial. The PCs may find the water in the fountain (area 11) useful in this respect.

If destroyed, Braxus collapses into fragments, sighing in relief as he goes.

Braxus (crypt thing): INT very; AL N; AC 3; MV 12; HD 6; hp 39; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8; SA *teleport* (once per party of adventurers); SD +1 or better weapons needed to hit, immune to *charm*, *hold*, *sleep*, and turning; SZ M (6' tall); ML 18; XP 975; MM/51.

32. Clarshh's Sepulchre. This is the real tomb of the priest, Clarshh. Steps rise to a simple cave in which a plain sarcophagus rests. It is sealed with wires and glyphs similar to those in the embalming chamber (area 30). At the

foot of the sarcophagus (to the west) is an urn containing 1,200 gp. At the head of the sarcophagus (to the east) is an urn with 2,000 sp.

Thieves who make a find traps roll while checking the sarcophagus notice a magical *glyph of warding*. It can be safely erased with a successful remove traps roll at half the thief's normal percentage. Otherwise a *dispel magic* vs. 14th-level of magic is needed.

The trap can be deliberately triggered safely from a distance of 11' or more. Simply breaking the other seals first, then using a lever from the safe distance, will set off the *glyph* harmlessly.

If triggered, the *glyph* blinds everyone in a 10' radius of the sarcophagus, unless they make a successful saving throw vs. spell. Followers of Nergal are immune to this effect.

Inside the sarcophagus is a wooden coffin in a good state of repair. Ceramic jars between the coffin and the sarcophagus hold Clarshh's vital organs, removed at the embalming stage. They have been pickled in a briny chemical. Clarshh is mummified inside the coffin.

Continued on page 3

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PCs may be wary of the mummy, but it isn't undead and does not burn.

The corpse is heavily bound with bandages, which must be cut to obtain the remaining treasure. Beneath the wraps covering the chest is a breast plate of solid gold, inlaid with precious stones in complex patterns. It is valued at 1,000 gp. Among the bandages along the torso are 15 gemstones worth 500 gp ($\times 3$), 300 gp ($\times 7$), and 100 gp ($\times 5$).

Wrapped tightly in the right hand is a small cube $\frac{3}{4}$ " on a side. This is the *cube of force* sought by Sreen. If PCs try it out for themselves, details of the device can be found on page 165 of the *DMG*.

If the adventurers strip the corpse of its coverings they reveal multiple arrow wounds inflicted by Clarshh's executioners.

Concluding the Adventure

If the PCs reach the sepulchre quickly, without first exploring the rest of the complex, they should be allowed to visit these areas if they now desire. The "take" will increase a bit as they gather the treasures secreted there.

However, if they decide to cut their losses and move out directly (or if they have explored all areas of the tomb), they can return to the entrance. It will have disappeared if more than 24 hours have elapsed since they entered. The gem and the *dust of appearance* will be needed to reach the trap door once more. If the *dust* is used up, the PCs may either be *teleported* out by Braxus or, if the DM is especially kind, they may use the *cube of force* to float down the stream to further underground adventures.

Sreen invites all the adventurers into his wagon while the loot is being counted. The arcane sticks to the agreement: he keeps 80% of all monetary treasure recovered and the *cube of force*. The party can haggle with him over gems, jewellery, or other noncash artifacts recovered, as he didn't specify these in the contract. Sreen exchanges any item for 50% of its cash value in gold if PCs want to sell.

Sreen will examine and identify any magical weapons recovered, but they are the property of the finder. He offers to buy the weapon for gold equal to five times its XP value. If this offer is refused, he doesn't press the issue.

Sreen expects the adventurers to escort him back to civilization and re-

turn the borrowed magical weapons before he will pay them their flat fee. If they refuse, he will hire additional adventurers to recover the weapons from the PCs.

The DM can add a 500 to 1,000 XP story award to those responsible for recovering the *cube of force*. Those who fail to deliver it gain no story experience points.

Further Adventures

If the DM has a difficult adventure in mind following this one, he may have Sreen offer the magical weapons for sale to the PCs at five times their XP value in gold. (Experience point values for magical weapons can be found in the *DMG*.) Otherwise Sreen already has customers for these weapons, so they aren't available to party members.

New adventures may arise as a direct consequence of visiting Clarshh's sepulchre. Selling the religious items found in the catacombs may alert paladins, good-aligned priesthoods, and other parties to the fact that PCs have visited there.

Enemies of the cult may mistake the PCs for ex-members, or the offspring of cultists, now selling off their possessions. They may attack the adventurers, believing them to be raising funds for the followers of Nergal.

If the cultists hear of the artifacts' reappearance, they may seek revenge on the PCs for defiling Clarshh's tomb. This scenario provides the making of a set of arch-enemies. Alternatively, the mercenary cultists may plunder other tombs of their past members to fund new cult activities, and they may call on the PCs (possibly in disguise) to assist them.

Sreen might also reappear. He is well-traveled, and has many contacts, perhaps even some on other worlds or planes. If the party wants certain riddles explained or needs an authoritative history of a legendary item, Sreen will be a source of good information—for a suitable financial consideration.

On the other hand, the arcane may have taken offense or been insulted by the adventurers while they explored Clarshh's tomb. If so, they may fall afoul of the arcane at a later, but very inconvenient, date. Sreen's retribution will take a subtler form than physical attack or kidnapping. The DM can make up some suitable redress for the affront to Sreen's dignity.

Spells of the Arcane

Arcane Runes (Alteration)
4th-level Wizard Spell

Range: Touch
Components: V,S,M
Duration: Permanent
Casting Time: Special
Area of Effect: Parchment or Book
Saving Throw: None

When this is used a wizard can inscribe a message or longer text, hiding it invisibly within a scroll, book, or tome. A user may write a warning within a large mundane or magical text, send a letter with secret information hidden between the lines, or even write an entire book within another volume.

Arcane runes are similar to the 1st-level wizard spell, *wizard mark*, but do not show up when a *detect magic* spell is used. They can be seen with *true seeing* or by anyone casting *read arcane runes*. The race of arcane can read and write *arcane runes* instinctively; they are the only people who can do so without specific training.

The material components of this spell are a pinch of dried and powdered lemon and a stylus. No ink is necessary. The caster must mouth the words softly as the verbal component. In longer texts, a single *arcane runes* spell can be used, the casting time ending when the caster closes the book or scroll he is working on.

Read Arcane Runes (Divination)
4th-level Wizard Spell

Range: 0
Components: V, S, M
Duration: 2 rounds/level
Casting Time: 1 round
Area of Effect: Special
Saving Throw: None

Using a *read arcane runes* spell, a wizard can decipher the secret writing hidden in a mundane or magical text by means of an *arcane runes* spell. Deciphering does not necessarily impart understanding. If the user is not an arcane he must use this spell even to peruse texts already deciphered, unlike a *read magic* spell. Texts to be referred to often are usually transcribed from *arcane runes* into common or some other easily read language.

The spell's material components are a small candle and a hand lens. The candle is lit and held behind the sheet of paper or parchment so that its light shines through. The wizard looks through the lens and reads the runes aloud.