



Chapter 3. The Amber Areas

The Amber Areas comprise areas 36 through 60. This section of the Nightmare Tunnels is designed for four characters with an average party level (APL) of 7. Characters who successfully navigate all or most of the areas should earn enough experience to reach 8th level.

What Creatures Are Found Here?

For the most part, this section of the dungeon is relatively quiet. Even the creatures who claim it as their domain rarely leave their own niches. Below is a list of the most important creatures found here.

The Master

An ancient blue dragon disguised as a blue-clad dandy, The Master prefers to grow its outstanding gem hoard by trading what it knows about the dungeon. So long as the characters play their cards right—and come carrying large, valuable gems—The Master may prove to be a valuable resource for the characters. The Master is located in area 49.

Emperor Squeak

A giant rat of unusual size, Emperor Squeak is the unchallenged leader of the rat swarms that live in this section of the dungeon. He sits upon a throne made of purple skulls (area 59) which makes him impervious to nearly all attacks. A skilled extortionist, all who pay him tribute in the form of cheese or the severed rat tails of his enemies may pass through his zone without consequence.

Gobox and the Gnolls

If there was one faction in this section that believed itself to be the lords of the domain, it'd be the hyper intelligent gnoll Gobox, and his eight cackling minions. The gnolls live in area 56, but can be found traveling through other areas of the dungeon, particularly area 41, where an ancient curse turns curious adventurers into pigs.

Gobox carries a deck of many things with him. He's been looking for a group of adventurers brave enough to test the deck in a game of Wizard Roulette.

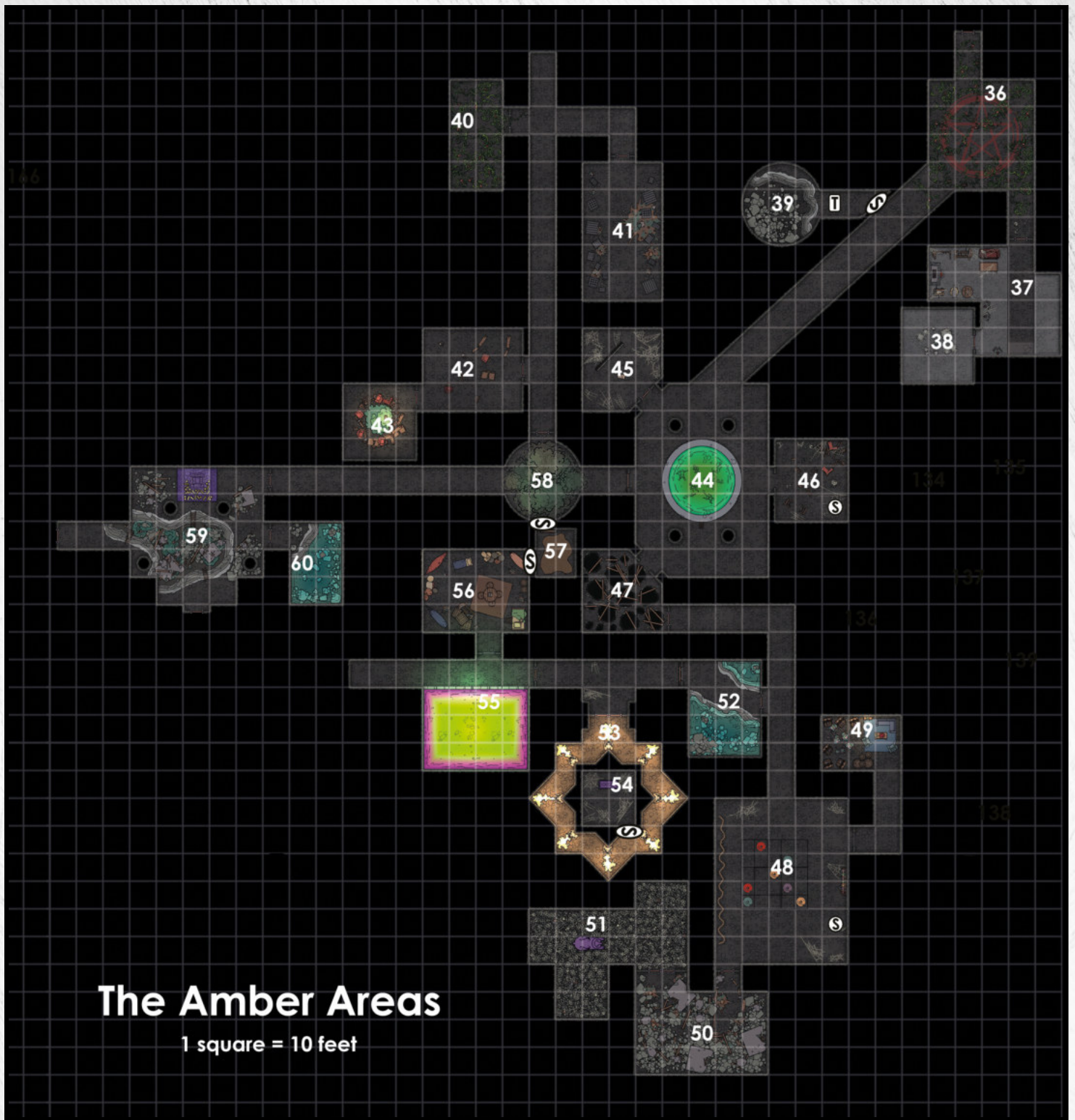
The Aboleth

While most dungeon denizens would consider the presence of an aboleth a grave danger, the gnoll Gobox sees it as a defense system. The nameless, ancient creature lives in a glass tank filled with hypnotic water (area 55). Since the aboleth cannot escape the tank on its own, it's waiting for a creature to walk by the glass so it can hypnotize it and command it to free it. Gobox and gnolls know better than to chat or even look at the aberration, lest they become its thralls.

Skullface

A skeletal sorcerer that calls itself Skullface rests within a tomb carved from purple stone in a hidden chamber surrounded by deadly traps (area 54). If Skullface's five artifacts are brought to him, he reanimates. Skullface believes that he is Uncle Skeleton's greatest foe (Uncle Skeleton provides no comment on this matter) and will stop at nothing to destroy him—so long as that means he doesn't actually have to do the deed himself.





The Amber Areas

1 square = 10 feet

Keyed Locations

The following locations are keyed to the map of the Amber Areas on this page.

36 - Garden

The door that connects this area to section 1, area 6 is locked.

Thick vines and creepers consume most of the ceilings, floors, and walls of this chamber. Buried below this strange garden hides a magic symbol drawn in blood.

Small buzzing insects flutter about, while some of the vines writhe with simple sentience.

Awakened Vines

The vines that pervade this room are *awakened* creatures, but mostly harmless. They're more curious than anything. If the characters are friendly toward the vines, they can rapidly produce fruit on their vine for the characters to take and consume.

If the characters are aggressive toward the vines, they cower in fear. If forced to fight, a 10-foot-square of vines uses

the statistics of a **constrictor snake** except that they are plants instead of beasts and can't make bite attacks.

The Magic Circle

Any character who examines the magic circle and succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana or Nature) check recognizes the magic circle at the center of the room as a druidic circle of some sort. Druids and rangers make this check with advantage.

Roller Trap Hints

A pile of bones lies north of the southernmost door in this room. A character who examines the bones and succeeds on a DC 10 Wisdom (Medicine) check can tell that the bones were crushed by something large.

Characters who inspect the door and succeed on a DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) check spot a mechanism used to arm the roller trap in area 37. The trap can be disarmed with a successful DC 16 Dexterity check using proficiency in thieves' tools.

37 - Military

A 10-foot-wide, 15-foot-deep groove runs the length of this room north to south from the northernmost door to the south wall. The groove is level with area 36's floors.

Just before the groove touches the south wall, the floor curves up into a ramp.

Grooves

The groove's sides are polished and slick, requiring a creature without a climbing speed to succeed on a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check to climb up to the top.

Roller Trap

Opening the northern door triggers a trap which releases a 10-foot-long, 5-foot-diameter cylindrical roller that drops from the ceiling at the south end of the room. When the roller is released, every creature standing in the area rolls initiative, and the roller rolls initiative with a +5 bonus. On its turn, the roller moves in a straight line along the groove ending at the north door. The roller can move through other creatures' spaces, and creatures can move through its space, treating it as difficult terrain. Whenever the roller enters a creature's space or a creature enters its space while the roller is rolling, that creature must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 55 (10d10) bludgeoning damage and is knocked prone.

A creature within 5 feet of the roller can attempt to stop the rolling by using an action to make a DC 20 Strength check. On a successful check, the roller stops and is no longer a threat.

Once the roller reaches the north wall, its sides lock into place in the groove, blocking access to the northern door. Once locked into place, it won't move unless one of the following things happens first:

- The mechanism that holds the roller in place can be disabled. Doing so requires two characters—at each end of the roller—to each succeed on a DC 20 Dexterity check using proficiency in thieves' or tinker's tools (each player's choice). From there, one or more characters with combined Strength scores of 25 or greater can push the roller free from the door.

- The pins holding the roller in place can be broken with a successful DC 26 Strength check.
- After 30 days, the dungeon automatically resets the trap, returning the roller to its starting position.
- The roller can be destroyed. It has AC 18, 150 hp (damage threshold 10), and immunity to poison and psychic damage. Any creature that rolls a 1 on the attack roll to attack the roller with a nonmagical weapon damages the weapon. The weapon takes a cumulative -1 penalty to damage rolls. If its penalty drops to -5, the weapon is destroyed. A character with proficiency in smith's tools can use their tools to repair the weapon so long as they have a smelter, anvil, and grinding wheel present (fortunately these items are in the area). Repairing the weapon takes 1 hour per -1 penalty the weapon has suffered.

Ancient Armory

The west side of the room holds a collection of old weapon racks and dummies wearing plate. All of the arms and armor are rusting, rotting, or falling apart. The room also contains a cold but still functional smelter, anvil, and grinding wheel, as well as a full set of smith's tools.

A dry-rotted sofa affixed to a dust-covered table completes the room's decor. A lone skeleton holding a sand-filled goblet still sits on the sofa, a rictus grin frozen upon its bony face.

38 - Hoard

This huge room's only feature of note is a small pile of gems at the center of the room. Small piles of ash surround the gems.

Trapped Gems

Of course, the gems are trapped. Any creature that touches the gems must make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target takes 75 (10d6 + 40) force damage. The target is disintegrated if this damage leaves it with 0 hit points. A disintegrated creature and everything it is wearing and carrying, except magic items, are reduced to a pile of fine gray dust. The creature can be restored to life only by means of a *true resurrection* or a *wish* spell.

A creature that succeeds on its saving throw takes 1d4 levels of exhaustion.

The gems radiate an aura of transmutation magic. A close inspection of the gems (without touching them) and a successful DC 17 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that the gems are nothing more than realistic imitations, but have no true value. Gnomes, dwarves, and other underground-dwelling creatures make this check with advantage.

39 - Inconceivable

A locked secret door hides this circular chamber.

The west end of the room has sunken, creating a 10-foot-deep pit filled with debris. One of the rocks in the pit is scratched with the phrase "Inconceivable" in Common.

Concealed Pit

The natural pit isn't the only pit in this chamber. A 10-foot-square trapdoor dressed to look like the rest of the room hides a 50-foot-deep pit (marked on the map with an "X"). When 50 pounds or more of weight is placed onto the

trapdoor, it breaks at the center depositing the creature into the pit. The creature takes 17 (5d6) bludgeoning damage from the fall.

Spotting the pit requires a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Perception) check (the player's choice). Once detected, the pit can be jammed closed with a piton or similar wedge following a successful DC 15 Strength check.

Hidden Stash

If the character searches the rubble at the bottom of the natural pit and succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check, the character discovers a bottle of whiskey. Its label faded away ages ago. Despite its remarkable age, the whiskey is still quite palatable.

North Passage

The passage that connects to areas 40, 41, 42, and 58 connects to section 1, area 2.

40 - Corpulent

A locked portcullis blocks access to this chamber.

Vines similar to the ones found in area 36 grow wildly here. Most of the fruit these plants bear have been gnawed at, leaving very little food to collect.

Rat Swarms

Amid the vines, six **swarms of rats** scurry, eating the fruit. Many of the rats have grown fat and sluggish thanks to the endless supply of fruit provided by the friendly vines. The rats won't attack the characters unless they're attacked first, and even then, flee if they take damage.

Hidden Treasure

If the characters search through the vines, they discover more runes engraved on the floor. A successful DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that one of the runes marks the presence of a removable floor tile. Within this hidden compartment, someone has hidden a *decanter of endless water* with two brass goblets.

41 - Sausages

A sign painted in red marks the front of the door to this chamber. The sign reads, in Druidic, "This room is cursed. Enter at your own risk."

Broken steel cages clutter this entire area. It reeks of animal filth.

Pig Curse

The entire room emits an aura of transmutation. Any humanoid that touches any of the cages within the room becomes cursed. A cursed creature slowly starts to polymorph into a pig. The change isn't noticeable at first. However, whenever the cursed creature completes a long rest, its Charisma score is reduced by 1d4 as it starts to develop porcine features. If this reduction reduces the creature's Charisma score to 5 or less, it completely transforms into a pig (use the **boar** stat block) as per the

true polymorph spell. If the curse is removed before the creature transforms into a pig, its Charisma score reduction lasts until it completes a short or long rest. If the curse isn't removed before the transformation takes place, only a *wish* spell or similar magic will revert the creature to its true form.

Patti the Pig

A lone sow (use the **boar** stat block) wearing a black eye patch over its left eye hides among the broken cages. The pig was once a spy named Patti who became separated from her party. Her clothing and backpack (containing the contents of a burglar's pack) lie among the ruined cages. If the characters revert Patti to her true form, she pledges her life to them.

Hungry Gnolls

Just as the characters are leaving this room, unless they've been encountered elsewhere, Gobox (see the sidebar) and his eight **gnolls** (see area 56) enter the room, hoping to discover more polymorphed adventurers. The gnolls know better than to touch the cages. During a battle, they try to shove uncursed heroes into the cages, hoping they catch the pig curse.

If it looks like the characters are too powerful for the gnolls to handle, Gobox instead makes the same offer described in area 56, offering to play a game of Wizard Roulette in exchange for details on a hidden treasure. If Gobox flees or two or more of his gnolls are killed, he flees.



Gobox

Gobox uses the **berserker** stat block, except with the following changes:

- Gobox has darkvision out to 60 ft.
- Gobox has an Intelligence score of 19.
- Gobox speaks Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Druidic, and Gnoll.
- **New Feature: Rampage.** When Gobox reduces a creature to 0 hit points with a melee attack on his turn, Gobox can take a bonus action to move up to half his speed and make a bite attack.
- **New Action: Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.
- **Special Equipment.** Gobox wears a *headband of intellect* and a *ring of cold resistance*, and he carries a complete *deck of many things* with him.

42 - Grid

The door to this room is *arcane locked*. A grid pattern with 10 rows and 10 columns is drawn over the door. 99 of the squares are marked with the letter “T” while one of the squares is marked with an “O”. A plaque over the door written in Common reads “O is for open.”

All of the T-squares are covered in contact poison. If a creature touches a T-square, they must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. On a failed saving throw, the target is poisoned for 1 minute. The target is paralyzed while it is poisoned. A successful DC 20 Intelligence check using proficiency in the poisoner’s kit can identify whether or not an individual square has poison on it.

Touching the “O” square removes the *arcane lock* and opens the door. Once the door is closed, the lock returns. However, the door can be opened from within this room without any issue.

There is only broken furniture to be found in this room.

43 - Prolonged

All of the furniture that was once in this room has been broken into multiple pieces. The pieces have been arranged neatly so they encircle a vase from which a small tree grows. The tree’s branches hold a crudely fashioned bird house. A small candle kept inside the house illuminates its interior.

Cosmo Glittergrove

A **sprite** named Cosmo Glittergrove lives in the birdhouse. Cosmo is somewhat portly for a fey creature. He never wears a shirt so he can show off his impressive collection of diminutive tattoos. He’s prone to humming, even in the middle of conversation, and tends to speak in a blustering tone.

Effectively immortal, Cosmo’s lived in this section of the dungeon for nearly a century. He even remembers the dungeon’s previous owner, a wizard named Bon-Bon the Overthinker, who died fighting a balor.

Cosmo has no interest in joining the party unless he’s paid to do so. He demands that he earns at least 25% of all treasure found in the dungeon. In exchange, he’s willing to share what he knows about the dungeon’s chambers.

If the characters ask Cosmo about a particular area of the dungeon, roll a d100 and add the room number to the die roll. If the total is less than 100, Cosmo knows one fact about the area (your discretion). And if the total is 100 or greater, Cosmo comes up with a fib about that area. If caught lying, he exclaims, “Well that’s the way it was one hundred years ago!”

44 - Pickled

The arched ceiling of this humongous chamber rises 40 feet above the floor, held aloft by four 5-foot-diameter stone pillars.

A colossal concrete pool dominates the center of the room, its lip a full 10 feet above the ground. Even before the characters catch a glimpse of its contents, the pool’s acid assaults the senses. A simple ladder of wood and rope offers access to the top of the pool’s lip.

Five well-preserved corpses lie at the bottom of the pool: two tieflings wearing plate armor, a ravenfolk person wearing

a blindfold, a snooty-looking blue-clad mage, and a cross-eyed horse. A glimmering greatsword lies within a hair’s reach of one of the dead tiefling’s hands.

Acid Pool

The acid in the pool is extremely caustic. Any creature that enters or starts its turn in the pool takes 21 (6d6) acid damage. A creature whose hit points are reduced to 0 by the acid dissolves into nothing.

Adventuring Party

The four adventurers and the horse at the bottom of the pool are actually still alive, preserved by the *sequester* spell (except they’re visible). If one of the adventurers is removed from the pool, the *sequester* spell ends. The party consists of two tiefling **priests**, one mute ravenfolk **monk** (use the statistics for an **ape** except its type is humanoid), an elven **mage**, and a **warhorse**. Confused, with no memory of how they got into the pool—or even the dungeon—the party willingly joins the characters on their quest to escape the dungeon.

The weapon that draws the eye is a *vorpal sword*.

Exits

The northeastern door (area 45) is *arcane locked*. It reeks of sulphur.

The eastern door (area 47) is made from iron and barred from the other side. It can’t be picked open, only forced open.

Both the southeastern and western doors (areas 48 and 46 respectively) are made from iron. They are both unlocked.

45 - Mirrored

The door to this room is *arcane locked*. It reeks of sulphur and brimstone.

When the characters first enter the area, they immediately catch a glimpse of a well-armed group of adventurers—themselves! A huge 10-foot-wide and 20-foot-tall mirror stands facing the door, perfectly reflecting anything that comes through it.

A skeleton wearing tattered wizard’s robes lies on the ground a few feet in front of the door. Its right hand rests upon an open book.

Dust and cobwebs cover everything.

Mirror of Life Trapping

The mirror exudes an aura of powerful conjuration magic. It functions similar to a *mirror of life trapping*. The mirror has AC 11, 50 hit points, and vulnerability to bludgeoning damage. It shatters and is destroyed when reduced to 0 hit points.

A creature can use an action to speak its command word (see below) and activate it. It remains activated until the same creature uses an action to speak the command word again.

Any creature other than the command word’s speaker that sees its reflection in the activated mirror while within 30 feet of it must succeed on a DC 15 Charisma saving throw or be trapped, along with anything it is wearing or carrying, in one of the mirror’s twelve extradimensional cells. This saving throw is made with advantage if the creature knows the mirror’s nature, and constructs succeed on the saving throw automatically.

An extradimensional cell is an infinite expanse filled with thick fog that reduces visibility to 10 feet. Creatures trapped in the mirror's cells don't age, and they don't need to eat, drink, or sleep. Normally, a creature could use magic that allows planar travel to escape such a device, but the dungeon's prohibitions on transportative magic prevents such an easy escape. Therefore, all the creatures within are confined to their respective cells until freed.

If the mirror traps a creature but its twelve extradimensional cells are already occupied, the mirror frees one trapped creature at random to accommodate the new prisoner. Roll a d12 and reference the table below to determine which creature escapes.

The Mirror's Prisoners

d12 Prisoner

- 1 A **pit fiend** named Galvatraxis.
- 2 A **balor** named Sokarr.
- 3 An **awakened giant weasel** named Felkor.
- 4 A **kobold** named Kupo.
- 5 An **androsphinx** named The Sixteenth.
- 6 A **hobgoblin veteran** (see page 18 for details) named Kazar the Reckless.
- 7 A **grick**.
- 8 A **black pudding**.
- 9 A female **drow** named Kafakar O'leair.
- 10 Another **black pudding**.
- 11 A **cockatrice**.
- 12 A **bugbear** named Gobber Stobber.

A freed creature appears in an unoccupied space within sight of the mirror but facing away from it. If the mirror is shattered, all creatures it contains are freed and appear in unoccupied spaces near it.

While within 5 feet of the mirror, a creature can use an action to speak the name of one creature trapped in it or call out a particular cell by number. The creature named or contained in the named cell appears as an image on the mirror's surface. The speaker and the creature can then communicate normally.

In a similar way, the speaker can use an action to speak a second command word and free one creature trapped in the mirror. The freed creature appears, along with its possessions, in the unoccupied space nearest to the mirror and facing away from it.

The Wizard's Book

The book by the wizard's corpse is titled "Shagra Domeer!" This also happens to be the mirror of life trapping's command word. A character who erroneously speaks the word aloud while examining the book might doom his or her companions.

A character who spends 30 minutes reading the book will understand its contents with a successful DC 10 Intelligence (Arcana) check.

The book is a handwritten account of the mirror, its function, and a history of its inhabitants. The twelve

inhabitants on the table above are only the mirror's most recent inhabitants—the ledger details hundreds of captives caught within the mirror's cells over the years. The pit fiend, balor, and androsphinx have been trapped in the mirror for centuries, while the weaker creatures have only been imprisoned for a few decades.

All of the humanoids trapped in the mirror have been driven insane by its imprisonment. When one of them escapes, refer to the indefinite madness table in the Fifth Edition manual for gamemasters to determine how it acts once freed. The giant weasel is surprisingly relaxed about its decade-long stay. All of the other creatures are too intelligent (or too stupid) to be affected by their imprisonment.

46 - Decrepit

The door that leads into this room is made of iron.

Broken furniture, dust, cobwebs, and bones.

Secret Trapdoor

A 5-foot-square section of the floor is actually a concealed trapdoor. Finding the trapdoor requires a successful DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check. The trapdoor reveals a 30-foot shaft lined with handholds and footholds carved directly into the stone. It leads to area 136.

47 - Decadent

The northernmost door of this room is made from iron.

Multiple holes mar this area's floors. Rotting wooden planks bridge a few of the gaps, providing access from the area's two doors.

Lousy Bridge Hazard

Each hole is between 10 and 15 deep and contains a single **gelatinous cube**. A creature that falls into the hole falls directly into the cube. Fortunately, the cubes can't escape their respective pits. Unfortunately, a character can't escape a gelatinous cube within its pit until the cube is destroyed.

Nearly all of the planks used to bridge the holes are so rotten they're useless. If 25 pounds of weight or more is placed onto the planks, the boards snap.

A character can forego the planks by walking along the narrow areas between the holes. Doing so requires a successful DC 13 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check. If the check fails, the character falls into the hole.

Treasure

Most of the gelatinous cubes in this room have goodies stored within their mass. When a cube is destroyed, roll a d20 and consult the table below to determine what was inside the cube.

d20 Cube Treasure

1-3 Nothing of value found within the cube.

4-8 3d6 gp

9-16 A mundane weapon or shield (GM's discretion).

17-19 An uncommon magic item (GM's discretion).

20 Roll twice on this table, ignoring results of 20.

48 - Toad

This large chamber's ceilings rise 30 feet above the floor.

A large, rotting crimson and blue tapestry hangs against the western wall. On the eastern wall, a shelf topped with eighteen crystal toads. Five of the frogs are green, four are purple, three are cyan, three are orange, and three are red.

The floor is carved with a 5 x 5 grid. Some of the grid squares have images of toads painted into their centers. Show the players Handout B from the Appendix so they can get a sense of the toads' order.

Toad Puzzle

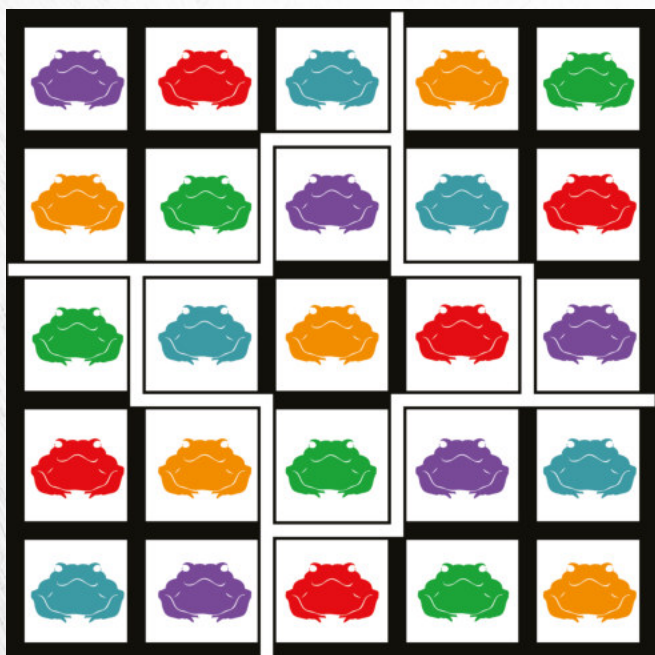
The 5 x 5 image with the toads is a number grid puzzle. To solve the puzzle, the players must arrange the crystal toads on the shelves in the appropriate order. Each vertical and horizontal line must contain one, and only one, red, one orange, one cyan, one purple, and one green toad—painted or crystal. Also, the grid contains five boxes outlined in white. These boxes, too, must have one and only one of each toad. The solution to the puzzle is included below.

If a character places the wrong toad in a space, the square upon which the wrong toad was placed explodes similar to the *glyph of warding* spell (DC 17). The damage the explosion deals depends on the wrong frog's color as shown on the table below.

Damage by Toad Color

Toad Color	Damage
Cyan	Cold
Green	Poison
Orange	Acid
Purple	Necrotic
Red	Fire

Toad Puzzle Solution



Once the puzzle is solved, the rotting tapestry at the west end of the room bursts into flames. After burning for a round, the fires extinguish themselves and reveal a brand new tapestry made of shimmering purple fabric. The tapestry depicts a skeleton wearing and wielding a variety of unusual items.

- A purple scepter crowned with a ram's skull
- A purple cowl
- A round shield made from purple steel
- Pauldrons made from purple steel
- A greatsword made from purple steel

The skeleton upon the tapestry speaks in a grating, nasally tone:

“So you’ve solved my puzzle! Excellent!

Everything comes to he who waits... and I have waited so very long for this moment!

Recover my five artifacts hidden here in this insipid dungeon. Bring them to my body—you will know it is my skeleton, for I sleep in a sarcophagus carved from purple stone. Once revived, I shall create a door through which you may escape. I shall then find my enemy, the one named Uncle Skeleton, and defeat him in mortal combat!

“Make haste, adventurers!”

Iron Doors

Both doors exiting this area are made from iron. The eastern door (area 49) is locked.

49 - Wizedened

The door to this area is made from iron and locked. There is a wooden sign hanging from a hook on the door that reads, “Don’t knock unless you have gems.”

Knock Knock

If the characters knock, the door is inevitably opened by a female **grimlock** dressed in noble's livery. The grimlock only speaks Undercommon, and identifies itself as Nush. Nush demands that those who come to the door present the gems they hope to give to The Master for knowledge. Although she can't see the gems, she can sense a gem's value with a sniff. Any gems less than 250 gp aren't worth her master's time.

If the characters comply with Nush's rules, she leads them down the hall and explains the rules:

“Never lie to The Master.

Never insult The Master.

Never outshine The Master.

Never steal from The Master.”

As she finishes her tirade, she leads the characters into her master's chamber.

The east end of the room is dressed like a parlor with a decadent corner sofa, mahogany coffee table, and two armchairs. A **vrock** wearing spectacles sits uncomfortably in one of the armchairs while Nush takes the other. Upon the sofa lies a figure identified only as “The Master.” The Master appears to be a human man with blonde hair and a thin mustache. He wears a blue chapel à bec with a matching vest and trousers. He jests with his two unusual companions and hardly pays any notice to the characters.

The west end of the room’s floors are covered in shimmering, glittering diamonds—thousands of them! The gems range from mundane pieces of quartz and bloodstone to fist sized rubies and diamonds.

When he’s finally ready to negotiate, The Master places his hands behind his head and asks the characters point blank, “What do you wish to know?”

The Master

The Master is actually an **ancient blue dragon** that’s polymorphed itself into human form. The Master was one of the first creatures to enter the dungeon centuries ago. He knows almost everything there is to know about the dungeon. So long as the characters can pay his fee—one gem worth 250 gp or more—he will do his best to answer the question. Roll a d6. On a result of 1, The Master doesn’t know the answer to the character’s question (they don’t get a refund). Otherwise, the Master knows the answer. This includes the answers to puzzles, the location of secret doors, passages, and items, plus the weaknesses of the creatures that live throughout the dungeon. He’ll even share one or two of the ways to escape the dungeon. He calls that “The Big



Question” and demands gems worth 1,000 gp for that particular answer.

The Master and his two companions (the vrock claims that its name is Walter) are relatively peaceful. Although Nush isn’t nearly as old as the other two, she’s learned much from her time with them and recognizes just as they do that it’s easier to trade for valuables than it is to fight for them. No amount of convincing can make The Master, Nush, or Walter leave this chamber. Furthermore, no other creature in the dungeon dares mess with The Master. Even if they could defeat The Master in combat, The Master’s allies would hunt down the culprit and destroy them utterly. Even Uncle Skeleton respects The Master. In his own words, “The Master gives heroes hope. And without hope, my dungeon is much less effective.”

Treasure

The Master’s gem hoard defies explanation. Instead of detailing each and every gem found in the pile, assume the pile holds a value beyond the characters’ wildest dreams (add lots of zeroes). The entire collection weighs close to 250 lbs. That may not seem like much, but consider this: a single 1 carat diamond weighs 3/100ths of an ounce and sells for 175 gp.

The Master keeps an exact count of each gem in his pile and can tell with a glance when one or more of his gems are missing. If the characters make the grave mistake of stealing from The Master, The Master will quickly let its allies know about this heinous crime. From that point on, whether it’s the lowliest kobold or a powerful lich, the characters will find it very difficult to find new friends in the dungeon. They will be hunted until the end of their days and possibly beyond.

Also, there’s six kegs of dwarven ale.

50 - Sewer

The door to this chamber is made of iron.

At some point in this area’s history, the ceiling collapsed. Massive piles of rubble lie strewn about the room. At first glance, it seems there’s no way through the room. However, if a character succeeds on a DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check, they notice a maze of small tunnels through the rubble. A Small or smaller creature can move through the paths without trouble. However, a Medium creature must crawl through the rubble. Inevitably, these paths lead to the double doors at the northwestern corner of the room.

Giant Rats

Six **diseased giant rats** live among the rubble. The rats are extraordinarily territorial and attack anything that moves through their area.

Locked Doors

The double doors leading to area 51 are locked.

51 - Cat

The double doors to this area are locked.

The room’s floor is literally carpeted with thousands of humanoid skulls. Treat the entire area as difficult terrain.

A huge statue carved from purple stone stands at the center of the room. It depicts a snarling panther equipped

with a chitinous, green saddle. A purple leather scabbard hangs from the saddle, within which rests a magic greatsword made from purple steel. If the characters previously discovered the secret tapestry in area 48 by solving the toad puzzle, they immediately recognize the sword as one of the items the skeleton patron seeks.

Symbol Trap

The panther statue is trapped with a *symbol* of death (DC 17 Constitution saving throw).

Darkness

The sword's name is "Darkness", and it is one of the five evil artifacts sought by the Skullface (see areas 48 and 54 for details). The sword is a very rare item that functions as a *nine lives stealer*, except it can only be attuned by non-good creatures. A good creature that touches the sword takes 28 (8d6) necrotic damage upon touching the sword.

52 - Baffling

The westernmost door of this room is made of iron and barred from the other side. As such, its lock cannot be picked; the door must be broken open.

Most of this room's floors have collapsed, leaving only a 10-foot-wide stretch of walkway between its two doors. At either side of the walkway, the floor sinks 10 feet. Murky water, rubble, and refuse fills both sides.

At the center of the walkway, a message written in Druidic reads "Don't step here!"

Block Trap

The 10-foot-square space labeled "Don't step here!" hides a pressure panel. If 50 pounds or more of pressure is set upon the space, a granite block drops from the ceiling. Every creature in the space must make a DC 11 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed saving throw, the creature takes 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage.

53 - Dragon

The doors to this star-shaped chamber are made of iron and locked. The heat inside makes the doors and their respective handles extremely hot. If a character touches the door with their hand, they must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. Creatures with resistance or immunity to fire damage automatically succeed on the saving throw. On a failed saving throw, the character can't hold anything with the burned hand, and they can't hold anything with two hands until the character completes a short or long rest or receives magical healing.

The temperatures within this room are preposterously hot—nearly 400 degrees Fahrenheit. A creature inside the room must succeed on a Constitution saving throw at the end of every 10 minutes spent in the room or gain one level of exhaustion. The DC is 5 for the first 10 minute and increases by 1 for each additional hour. Creatures wearing medium or heavy armor, or who are clad in heavy clothing, have disadvantage on the saving throw. Creatures with resistance or immunity to fire damage automatically succeed on the saving throw.

Dragon Heads

At each "point" of the room's star, a stone red dragon head juts from the wall. Their mouths emit continual flames. Any creature that steps or starts its turn within 5 feet of a flame jet takes 5 (1d10) fire damage. The flames ignite flammable items not being worn or carried. A character can attempt to slide past one of the dragons by making a DC 15 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check. On a successful check, the character doesn't take any damage from the flames.

A character who investigates any one of the stone heads and succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check discovers the mechanism creating the endless flames. That character can then disable each head with a successful DC 10 Dexterity check using thieves' tools.

Trapped Secret Door

There is a secret door hidden in the north wall of the southern part of this area. It leads to area 54. But the door is trapped. When a living creature passes through the door, a magically-sharpened steel guillotine drops from the door's frame. The target passing through the door must make a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed saving throw, the target takes 27 (6d8) slashing damage. If the target fails its saving throw by 5 or more, it cuts off one of the creature's heads. The creature dies if it can't survive without the lost head. A creature is immune to this effect if it is immune to slashing damage, doesn't have or need a head, has legendary actions, or the GM decides that the creature is too big for its head to be cut off with this weapon.

54 - Dude

The secret door leading into this chamber is trapped (see above).

A sarcophagus made of purple stone lies at the north end of this room. The sarcophagus' surfaces have been carved to make it look almost like it was made from human bones.

The lid is heavy, but one or more characters with combined Strength scores of 20 can slide it out of the way. Within the sarcophagus lies the remains of a yellow skeleton.

Skullface

The sarcophagus holds the remains of one of Uncle Skeleton's foes, a tyrant named Skullface. If the characters bring Skullface's five artifacts—the Malediction Staff, the Greatsword Darkness, the Pauldrons of Punishment, Skullface's Shield of Ceaseless Spite, and the Lavender Cowl—and set them within the coffin, the skeleton animates and rises.

Skullface uses the statistics of a **mummy lord** except with the following changes:

- Skullface's Rejuvenation feature functions the same as a mummy lord's, except it's keyed to the Malediction Staff instead of his heart.
- Skullface gains the benefits of his magical artifacts, all of which he may attune to without the typical attunement limitations.
- When Skullface makes attacks with Darkness, the sword functions the same way as the mummy lord's rotting fist attack, except it deals slashing damage instead of bludgeoning damage.

Skull is a petty and temperamental undead sorcerer. Even if he promised the characters freedom for reviving him (see area 48), he quickly reneges on his offer, citing he needs “minions to help him destroy Uncle Skeleton.” If the characters continue to bother him, he tells them plainly, “Nevermind what I said, just do what I said!”

From that point forward, Skullface treats the heroes as his loyal minions, commanding them to perform various tasks, ranging from the mundane—“bring me that rock!”—to the extreme—“kill that dragon and steal all of its gems!”

Whenever the characters fail to perform one of his tasks, Skullface does not attack or admonish the heroes. Instead, he raises his fists in frustration and yells, “Curses!” He then forgets the failure ever happened.

Although Skullface claims he wishes to defeat his “arch-nemesis” Uncle Skeleton, he’s reluctant to travel any further than the throne room in area 59. If the characters leave him be, Skullface eventually amasses an army of humanoid underlings, specifically those with sub-10 Intelligence scores (gnolls, orcs, kobolds, etc.). Inevitably, he loses interest in the characters.

55 - Lurid

The south end of this passageway is blocked off by a colossal 1/4-inch-thick pane of glass. Beyond the glass, vividly colored liquid swirls and churns, creating a hypnotic effect.

Hypnotic Water

When a creature views the water within the glass for the first time, it must make a DC 16 saving throw or become charmed by the aboleth inside the tank for 1 minute. While charmed in this way, the target is incapacitated, its speed is reduced to 0, and the target has disadvantage on saving throws against the aboleth’s Enslave action.

The charmed condition ends for the target if it takes any damage or if someone else uses an action to shake the creature out of its stupor.

Gobox trained the gnolls in area 56 to avert their eyes while passing by the aboleth’s tank. The few gnolls who managed to get tricked by the aboleth were quickly knocked on the head before they broke the aboleth’s glass.

The Aboleth

Hidden inside the tank’s brightly-colored liquid is an ancient evil, an **aboleth**. Nameless and alien, the aboleth hopes to enslave any powerful creature that passes by its tank. If successful, it commands its slaves to break it free from its tank by any means possible. From there, it continues to employ the enslaved creatures, sending them on seemingly random tasks dedicated to some far-reaching goal impossible for non-aboleths to understand.

The tank’s glass isn’t actually glass, but a permanent *wall of force*. Only a *disintegration* spell can destroy the tank. If the tank is destroyed, its hypnotic water floods the area. Any creature standing in this area must make a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. Furthermore, the colorful liquid is toxic to ingest. Any creature knocked prone by the water must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or accidentally consume some of the water; it becomes poisoned by the liquid for 1 hour. While poisoned by the liquid, the target has disadvantage on saving throws made against the aboleth’s Enslave action.



When the aboleth is freed, it flops away, searching for the nearest body of water within which it can hide and plot (likely area 52).

Locked Door

The northern door is barred from the other side; therefore, it can only be broken open. The words “Go away!” have been painted over the door in what seems to be dried blood. A horrible smell wafts from under the door.

West Passage

A secret door hidden at the western end of this passage connects this area to area 81 in the Cobalt Corridors.

56 - Vorpall

The door to this room is barred from this side. Unless the characters encountered them elsewhere, there is a 50% chance that the gnolls that live here are inside the room. Otherwise, they’re out exploring the dungeon.

Gobox’s Gnoll clan claims this room as their headquarters. Dirty hammocks, camp beds, and even a broken bunk bed offer places for the gnolls to sleep. Sacks, backpacks, and rickety weapon racks crowd the surfaces of the room, displaying the gnolls’ ill-gotten gains. Four stools surround a round table at the east side of the room.

Gobox and the Gnolls

If Gobox is present and the characters enter the room, he commands the other gnolls to stand down. Thanks to his *headband of intellect*, Gobox is a cunning and clever gnoll. He realizes that any party capable of surpassing the dangers is probably too much of a challenge for him and his crew.

When faced with the party, he offers a proposal: the gnolls will surrender all the treasure they have stored in the room so long as they leave behind the gnolls’ food and water supply. Alternatively, if one or more of the characters is willing to participate in Wizard Roulette, he will reveal the location of a hidden treasure ten times greater than the treasures kept in the room.

Nothing short of magical means will convince Gobox to reveal the location of his hidden treasure. None of his gnoll companions know of its location.

If the party chooses to fight the gnolls, they oblige. During the fray, Gobox attempts to escape. In his mind, he's too smart to die. Gobox knows all of the hidden tricks, traps, and hazards in this section of the dungeon and will use them to his advantage as he flees. If Gobox survives a combat encounter with the characters, he swears vengeance against the characters and serves as a plague to the party for as long as they remain within the Nightmare Tunnels.

Gobox is neutral evil and uses the stat block as described on page 25. He's joined by eight normal **gnolls**.

Wizard Roulette

Gobox explains the rules to Wizard Roulette as follows. He claims he has a special magical deck of cards he stole from a clustering mage somewhere in the dungeon. After doing a little research, Gobox discovered that the cards are actually a *deck of many things*. He's been curious to test the deck, but has been waiting for the right moment to do so.

He's devised a simple game with the cards. Each participant sits at the table and each participant takes turns drawing from the deck until no more cards remain. No participant can leave the table until all of the cards have been drawn. Gobox realizes that this might spell his own doom and is willing to take the chance.

If the characters agree to play the game, Gobox—ever the sportsman—draws first. From there, the participating players take turns in any order they like. As they play, Gobox's gnolls shout and cheer (although none of them really understand what's happening).

Once all of the deck's cards have been drawn, Gobox—if he's still alive—reveals the location of his hidden treasure. He tells the party that there is a sword of great power hidden at the bottom of a vat of acid where the preserved remains of four adventurers and their horses lie (see area 44 for details). He claims the sword has the power to instantly remove the head of any monster it hits, producing a pleasing “SNICKER-SNACK!” sound as it does.

Treasure

In addition to Gobox's *headband of intellect* and the *deck of many things*, he wears a *ring of cold resistance* that offers him a modicum of protection against the mold in area 57.

The gnolls' impressive treasure hoard contains 15,000 gp, 1,900 pp, and four art objects worth 750 gp each (a silver chalice set with moonstones, a carved harp with ivory inlay, a gold dragon comb set with red garnets, and an obsidian statuette with gold fittings).

There is also 60 days worth of rations stored in the room, most of which is relatively edible. However, it's best that the characters don't ask what type of animal comprises the cured meats (see area 41 to learn why).

Secret Door

There is a secret door hidden in the northeast corner of the room that connects this area to area 57. Gobox will use this door to flee through if things start looking bad.

57 - Chills

This room is hidden by a pair of secret doors that connect it to areas 56 and 58, the latter of which is barred from this side.

Brown Mold

The entire room is covered in brown mold, dropping the temperature of the room to an appalling 0 degrees Fahrenheit. When a creature moves into the area for the first time on a turn or starts its turn here, it must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw, taking 22 (4d10) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

The mold is immune to fire, and any source of fire brought within 5 feet of a patch causes it to instantly expand outward in the direction of the fire, covering a 10-foot-square area (with the source of the fire at the center of that area). A patch of brown mold exposed to an effect that deals cold damage is instantly destroyed.

Treasure

A *necklace of fireballs* with three beads hangs from a frosty hook on the northern wall. If the gnoll Gobox flees through this area, he grabs the beads while he's running and tosses them behind him in order to a) catch the characters in the explosion and b) spread the brown mold in his wake. Gobox's *ring of cold resistance* offers him protection against the mold's chilly effects.

58 - Choking

The iron door that connects this area to area 44 is barred from this side, and can only be forced open from the other side.

Toxic Gas

A permanent 30-foot-sphere of magical, toxic gas lingers at the center of this rounded four-way intersection. Its area is heavily obscured. When a creature enters the gas's area for the first time on a turn or starts its turn there, that creature must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. If a creature fails its saving throw, it is poisoned. A poisoned creature falls unconscious until it exits the cloud and can breathe fresh air again or it takes damage. A creature aware of the gas can hold its breath, allowing it to automatically pass its saving throw. A strong wind temporarily disperses the gas for 1 minute. The gas then returns to the area. Only *dispel magic* cast against a 7th-level spell permanently removes the toxic cloud.

Secret Door

There is a secret door hidden in the south end of the rotunda. It is barred from the other side, and can only be forced open from this side.



59 - Cheese

This huge audience chamber possesses 30-foot-high ceilings held aloft by four 5-foot-thick stone columns. A throne made from purple-dyed skulls stands at the north end of the room, upon which its emperor (see below) sits. Pale golden and green wedges and wheels surround the throne; it's all cheese, offerings to the emperor.

Time has not been kind to this room. Its ceiling is crumbling in various locations and some of the floor has collapsed into sinkholes of various depths.

Emperor Squeak

Upon the purple throne sits a rather large **giant rat**. The rat's fur is dark brown except for a lone patch of white fur shaped like a king's crown atop its head. Although Emperor Squeak is no different from any other giant rat from a games mechanics standpoint, it seems to be able to command the hundreds of rats that swarm this ancient throne room. There are twenty **swarms of rats** in the area.

A character who can speak with animals can communicate freely with Emperor Squeak. To pass through this chamber unimpeded, Squeak demands that the characters pay tribute in the form of cheese or the successful performance of an errand.

If the characters choose to perform an errand, Squeak commands them to rid this section of the dungeon of the

giant rats that pervade area 50. He demands the characters bring back their severed tails as proof.

If the characters choose to ignore Squeak or they plan to fight them, Squeak commands his rat army to attack while he sits upon his throne and eats cheese. Squeak doesn't care if his rat minions die—rats are rather prolific. He'll have a new army in no time.

Rodlek's Throne of Bone

The throne of bone exudes powerful abjuration magic. Any Large or smaller creature who sits on it is immune to all damage except damage from a critical hit. This throne even protects the creature from area effects, such as the explosion of a *fireball*. If the warded creature makes an attack, casts a spell that affects an enemy creature, or deals damage to another creature, it no longer gains the benefits of the throne.

Passages to Other Sections

The western door leads to section 4, area 61. The southern passage leads to the Cobalt Corridors and other later sections of the dungeon.

60 - Fury

The floors of this room have dropped 20 feet down into a water-filled sinkhole.

Sinkhole

The floors here are still relatively unsafe. If 20 pounds of weight or more comes within 5 feet of the sinkhole's edge, the floor crumbles away. A creature standing near the edge must make a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or fall into the pool below.

Because the walls here are so brittle, climbing out is extremely difficult, even for creatures with climbing speeds and the ability to spider climb. A creature must make a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check to climb up the walls back to the ledge. The easiest way to retrieve a character who's fallen into the pool is to throw it a rope and drag it out of the water.

Credits

The following creators made this adventure possible:

Design and Writing. DMDave

Cartography. Tim Hartin, DMDave

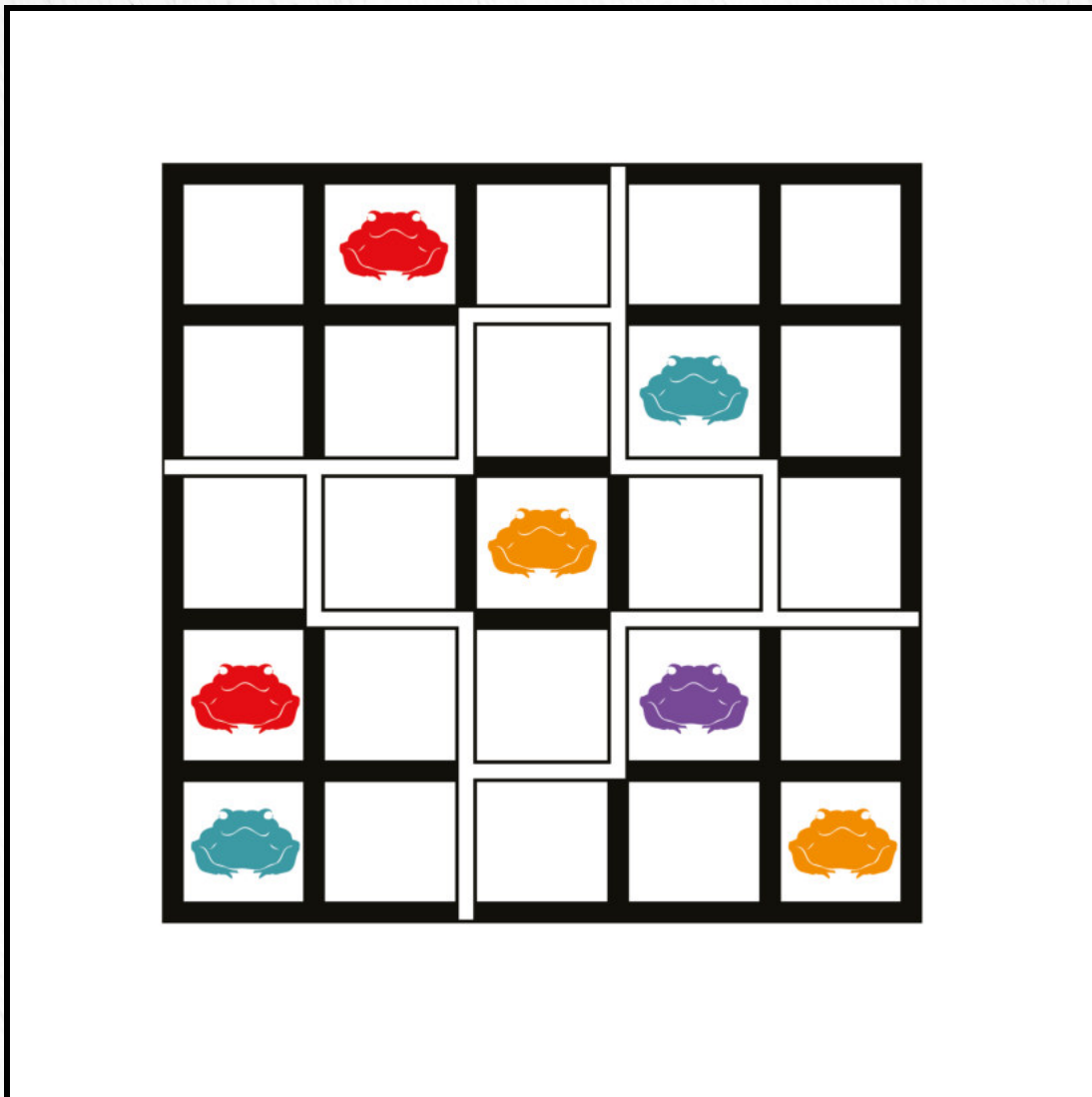
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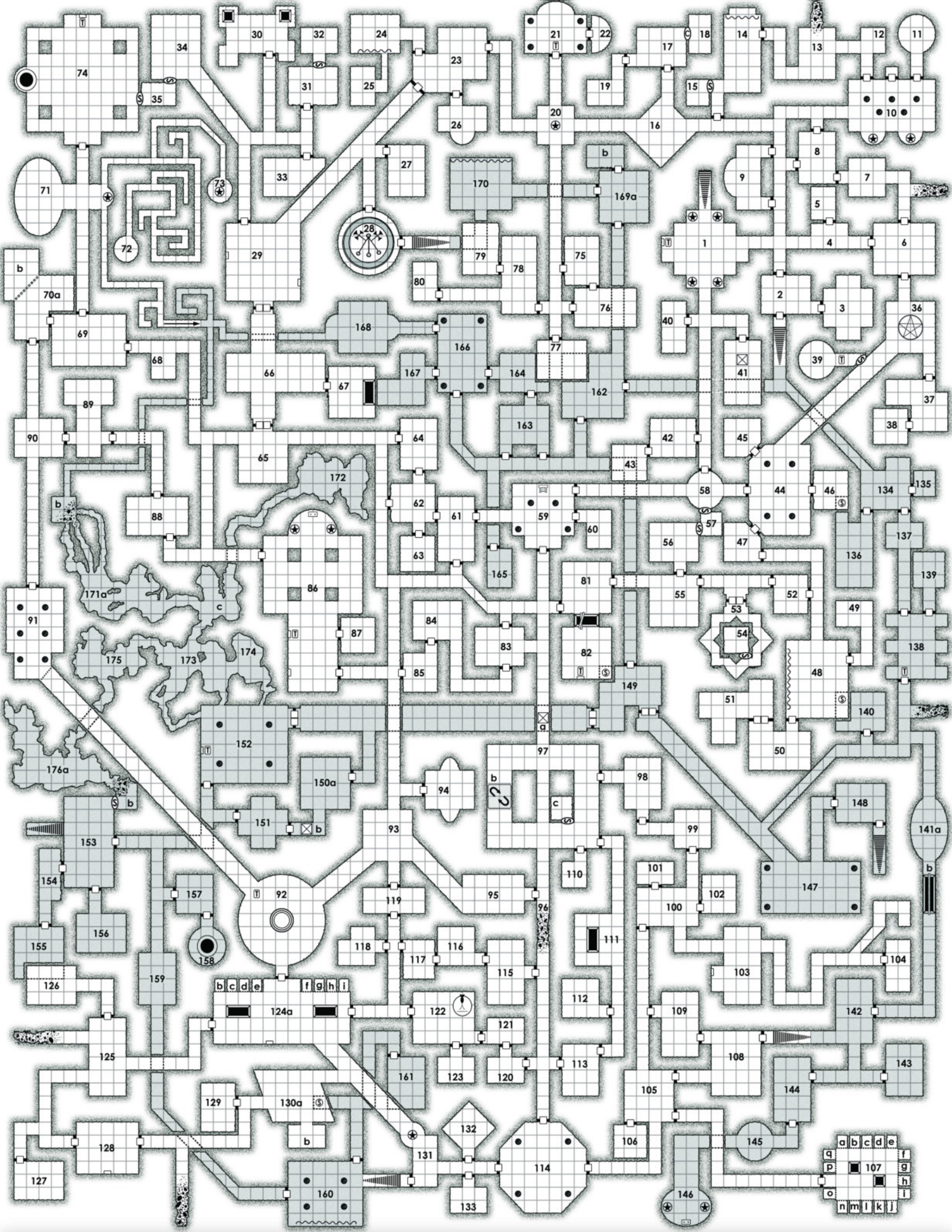
Appendix: Handout

Handout B: Toad Puzzle



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