

CRYPT OF TWO CHAPELS

They were forgotten but they never disappeared. Their names are unknown yet most books speak of them. Even today, some crazy folk venerate them.

Facts about The Lost



Not much is known about the forgotten gods, The Lost. But that does not impede obscure cults from growing and becoming stronger. Despite the absence of names or their faces, The Lost are more popular than some pagan deities. And the Land of Zircons is no exception. A double chapel lies hidden in the forest to the south of Zarveck County.

About a decade ago, there was a cult of The Lost. Their leader was from Rivermill. He gathered some followers and would traverse the woods to reach their hideout, a hidden chapel deep in the forest. The cult became a nuisance and the capital ordered the arrest of everyone involved with the forgotten gods. Countess Eleanor was appointed right after the cult was taken care of.

THE PRESENT

THE CURRENT RULER, Eleanor Zarv, decided to disavow the Forlorn Guild and increase taxation for adventurers bringing treasure. As a result, common brigands and thieves are more present than ever. This, in conjunction with the kobold threat, the elves' rampant attitude, and the increasing menace of an uprising, has created the perfect environment for the cult of The Lost to reappear. Their current goal is to regain strength.

THE CULT RETURNS

Theo Artens, a lonely farmer in his fifties, had a dream that changed his life. He experienced a spiritual manifestation of The Lost during the night and became a different person. He woke up as Owen Potter, the former cultist leader. The presence of magic is evident; Owen resisted his arrest and died fighting many years ago. Regardless, the personality and life of the man named Theo are long gone. The man claims his name is Owen, and his only goal is to strengthen the cult. With everything that is going on, he may succeed...

Level 4 Adventure

- ▶ **Danger.** Unsafe. Check for a **Random Event** every 4 **crawling rounds** and after loud noises (3-in-6 chance).
- ▶ **Light.** Some areas have large braziers; the rest are in pitch darkness. The gnolls are **dark-adapted**.

ADVENTURE HOOK

THE CHARACTERS FIND themselves in Rivermill. Use one of the following hooks to have the heroes get involved with Theo Artens and his recently reformed cult.

▶ **The Missing Priest (20 gp, 2 XP).** The local priest, Harold Gunn, suspected the return of the cult. He was present when the cult was arrested and dismantled in the past. He asked two acolytes to accompany him and hired a couple of mercenaries to escort them south. They left 5 days ago and should have returned by now. The authorities in Rivermill offer a hefty reward if the characters can find out what happened to them, and bring back to Rivermill possible survivors, if any still live.

▶ **Lost Relics (10 gp, 1 XP).** Tristan, a historian, tips the heroes about the existence of the chapel in the woods. He claims that when the cult was arrested in the past, no one thought about the treasure in the chapel, a large, black, leather-bound tome. He says it must still be in there. More so with the recent rumors about the cult's return. Tristan offers a reward in exchange for the book. "You will know when you see it." The scholar says.

GETTING THERE

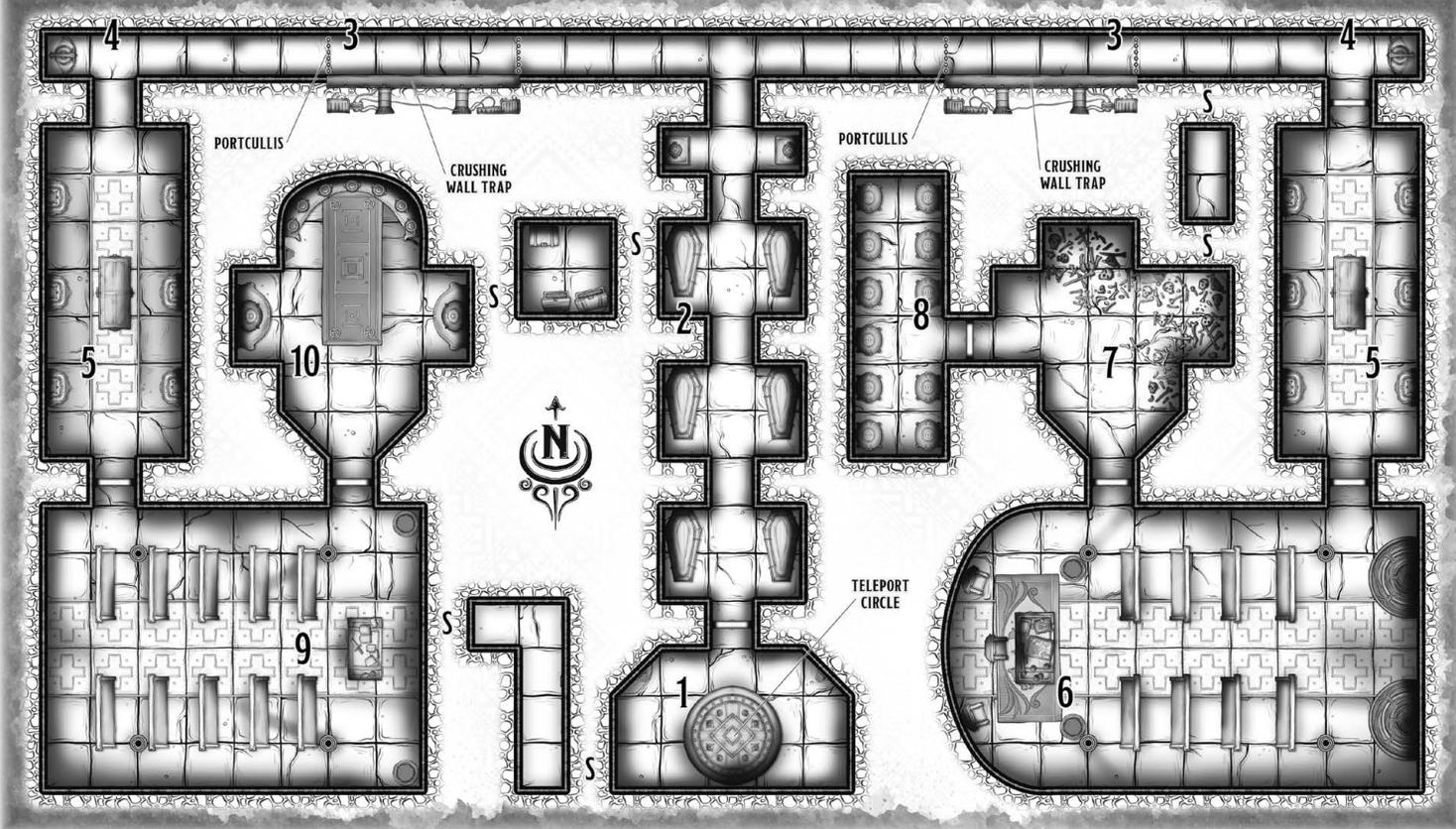
USING THE ROADS, it usually takes a day or less to reach most places in Zarveck County. But the characters take two days to traverse the forest upstream. Here, the highly forested area conceals a lonely stone mausoleum. Inside, the heroes find a teleportation circle. They are taken to area 1 of the dungeon when they stand on it.

1. TELEPORTATION CIRCLE

The paintings on the walls depict cloaked figures praying to huge faceless giants. The believers are portrayed as mindless, selfless followers who obey the faceless giants and heed their speech as if it were sacred.

2. THE GUARDIANS' SARCOPHAGI

A **ghoul** rests within each sarcophagus. The dead emerge one by one when the lids of their enclosures are tampered with. However, if the heroes interact with the red, clay urns resting at the end of the corridor, the six ghouls come out at once. Each of the intricately engraved urns is worth 5 gp (3 XP); they contain gray ashes.



RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

d6 Details

- 1 The characters encounter two of Theo's followers (**bandits**). The men hesitate for a second but then attack.
- 2 The characters stumble upon a lonely **ghoul**. The monster smells their flesh and fights them until slain.
- 3 A group of one **priest** and two **soldiers** arrive at the dungeon. They may join the characters (**Reaction** check).
- 4 An unnatural current of air travels the entire dungeon. All braziers are put down. All areas become dark.
- 5 An injured man stands before the characters. John (**peasant**) managed to escape from their captors. If helped, he may be convinced to stay and aid the heroes (**Reaction**).
- 6 A sword-wielding **skeleton** charges toward the party.

3. CRUSHING WALL TRAPS

The characters can notice two sections of the corridor's surface are made of pure steel. If they pay attention to the ground, they notice the pressure-sensitive plates and the marks where the portcullis bars land (DC 13 WIS check). If two or more characters stand on the plates, the trap activates: the bars fall and block both ends, and the steel wall crushes everything inside. It takes three rounds for the steel wall to reach the opposite end.

The characters may attempt to cross these sections without touching the floor (DC 12 STR/DEX check). Failing by 5 or more means they fall and trigger the trap. The trap's mechanism is behind a panel on the wall (DC 14 WIS). It can be disarmed with tools (DC 15 DEX check).

4. AUTOMATED CROSSBOW TRAP

Alcoves at the end of the corridor feature an automated mounted crossbow in each side of the dungeon (see map). Characters trigger the trap if they fail to notice and step on the stone tile 20 feet from the weapons (DC 13 WIS). Targets take 1d8 damage (DC 12 DEX for half).

► **Secret Path.** If the characters pay attention to their surroundings (DC 12 WIS check), they may find the hidden corridor next to the pressure-sensitive tile that triggers the crossbow on the west hallway (see map).

5. THE SARCOPHAGI OF THE LOST

Six standing sarcophagi flank a larger central one. Wall paintings show the faceless gods indiscriminately casting chaos and destruction upon the world.

Both areas 5 are identical. Six **skeletons** come out of the standing sarcophagi and an **Avatar of The Lost** from the central one. They impede the passage of intruders.

6. EAST CHAPEL

A **cultist** is Theo's second in command. Three **bandits**, one **thug**, and eight **peasants** listen to his words. Only half of the peasants stay to defend their cult. The others attempt to flee to area 9 to warn their leader, 'Owen'.

► **Tristan's Book.** A large, leather-bound tome rests on the altar. It is written in Diabolic. It is a cursed necromancy treatise with obscure lore about The Lost.

7. CHAMBER OF BONES

The faces of scared, traumatized folk accompany the horrible grimaces of the dozen skulls on the ground.

The missing **priest**, Harold Gunn, one of his **acolytes**, and four **peasants** are here. They are in no condition to help or fight; they are hurt, hungry, and exhausted.

► **Prisoners.** If the characters have the resources to heal the priest and his acolyte, they join the group and help however they can. The peasants were kidnapped days ago. They wish to flee and return home.

8. ASHES OF EVIL

This chamber contains eleven funerary urns. They are bathed in a gold coating. They contain the ashes of people from a bygone era. Their souls forever trapped in these urns provide the arcane energy required to maintain the dungeon traps and magic working properly.

► **Treasure (6 XP).** If the characters open the urns or search the place, they disturb the dead; two **shadows** coalesce from the darkness and attack. The urns contain a small sapphire (30 gp), a chipped greataxe, a bag of ten silver spikes (2 gp each), and a golden bowl (15 gp).

9. WEST CHAPEL

The spirit of Owen Potter lives in Theo's body. He is here along with two **cultists**, two **thugs**, and three **peasants**. The cult's leader (**peasant**) cannot be reasoned with.

► **Secret Path.** A loose brick on the wall reveals a hidden corridor behind the altar. It connects this chapel with area 1 (DC 12 WIS check). The heroes may surprise Owen and his followers if they take this concealed corridor when they arrive at the dungeon.

10. SHRINE OF THE LOST

This setting of two jade jars flanking a wall with seven bronze urns is a typical arrangement to pray to The Lost (DC 14 INT). The characters summon the anger of a **wraith** if they touch anything in this chamber. The spirit must be dealt with to access the vault (see below).

► **Treasure (10 XP).** The heroes find 28 gp, 285 sp, and 3,298 cp in the stone chests. There is a bag of rare spices (15 gp), a pearl (40 gp), and a *+1 longsword*.

DEVELOPMENT

THE CHARACTERS DEFEAT the cult of The Lost. They return to Rivermill victorious. The town holds a feast in their honor if Harold Gunn is among the survivors.

► **Theo.** The heroes may heal the farmer's mind with a *protection from evil* spell. They can help him prove his innocence before the authorities. If this occurs, the farmer tells them they have made a good friend in Rivermill. The reformed Theo gifts them a horse named Bubbles.



Avatar of The Lost

An undead representation of a forgotten god. A ghoul whose face only features a pair of glowing red eyes.

AC: 12

HP: 21 LV 5

ATK: 1 claw +3 (1d6 + paralyze) or 1 spell
+4 MV: Near (Walk)

S:+2 D:+2 C:+1 I:+2 W:+0 Ch:+0

Paralyze. DC 12 CON or paralyzed for 1d4 rounds.

Nix (INT). DC 13. End one spell affecting one target within near.

Necrotic Blast (INT). DC 12. Far, one target. 2d6 damage.