



Forest of Limbo, the Inter-Dimensional Garden of the Oracle

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Map: Ed Nicholson

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This module can be adapted to any campaign setting. It is designed for standard party of 4 to 6 characters ranging from 5th to 7th-level.

Adventure Summary. The PCs discover a gate to a demi-plane forest. This gate is the home of an oracle of the god of fertility and wine that can answer any question asked of her. Searching through this forest maze they encounter classic monsters such as Minotaurs, Cyclops, and Satyrs. There are also obstacles and traps testing the worthiness of the PCs to approach the Oracle. Once they find the Oracle they discover a dangerous Black Knight is already there. He contests their approach to the oracle. If the PCs defeat him they may attempt to ask questions of the oracle –if they can also hold the strong ceremonial wine. The answers to the questions asked by the PCs need to be determined by the DM to fit his campaign.

Background

The Forest of Limbo is a demi-plane created by Bacchus for his oracle to live in. The demi-plane is inter-dimensional, with many gates into the gardens and forests of many worlds and places. Many creatures seek out this place searching for the Oracle. Others are simply passing thorough, using the planes as a means of travel from one place to another. Some have made their homes here. Most creatures come here seeking answers from the Oracle, whom is said to give truthful answers to any question. One can gain entrance to the Forest by use of magical gates. However, to use the gate they must have the key.

This adventure starts with the PCs obtaining the Dolphin Key, which opens the Dolphin Gate located in the central garden of a Temple of Bacchus (or temple of any other god of wine, fertility, and celebration). The DM can place this temple in any area or city in his campaign. Opening the gate grants access to the Forest of Limbo.

Hooks

This adventure assumes the PCs seek an answer to a dilemma or other information. The DM will have to determine the nature and answers to these question based on his ongoing campaign. Alternately, if there are no important questions the Oracle could grant a wish, miracle,

or other power to the PCs. Several hooks are presented below to aid the DM:

1. The PCs discover the Dolphin Key as treasure during a prior adventure and research its purpose to unlock the doors of a gate to The Forest of Limbo, a demi-plane which holds an Oracle capable of truthfully answering any question (or alternately, granting any wish).
2. A thief sells the PCs the Dolphin key and tells them of its purpose to unlock the doors to The Forest of Limbo, a demi-plane in limbo, which holds an Oracle capable of answering any question.
3. A cleric of Bacchus gives the PCs the Dolphin Key, telling them that he has had a vision that they must use the key on the Dolphin gate to seek the Oracle with-in The Forest of Limbo to answer their questions.
4. The PCs join a celebration ceremony at the temple of Bacchus. A Drunken cleric drops the Dolphin Key at the PCs feet. A temple boy tells the PCs that if used in the Dolphin gate, it will lead to The Forest of Limbo -a place were an Oracle can answer there greatest questions.

Rumors

For PCs seeking information about the Forest of Limbo, the following rumors can be rolled randomly or determined by a gather information check.

1. The answer to any question can be found through the Dolphin Gate (DC5).
2. Do not anger the Oracle, or fight in her presence (DC8).
3. One must be able to hold their drink in order to get the answers they need (DC 10).
4. Finding the Oracle is not easy. There are many obstacles to test the worthiness of those who approach (DC12).
5. Many quest for answers from the Oracle and wander the Forest of Limbo. A dark knight was recently seen there. (DC13)
6. The demi-plane has many strange properties. (The DM should reveal one of the properties of the plane by rolling on the properties list below) (DC15).

Properties of the Garden of Limbo

The garden exists in the plane of Limbo and has many strange properties. These can be discovered by the PCs by actually experiencing them or by gather information skill:

1. Many of the forest areas have magically grown into a twisted, un-passable wall of roots, branches, and vines. These form not only walls but also complete roofs in most areas. Only tiny sized creatures can pass through these walls. Any attack or serious damage to the trees of the forest causes the branches to change in to large **Poisonous Snakes** and attack the offender (See wandering monster encounter tables for game statistics).
2. Many of the vines throughout the forest are grape vines full of large clusters of **Dark Purple Grapes** and **Red Grapes**. Eating them will produce the following strange magical effects.



Purple Grape: DC 15 Will check or laugh uncontrollably for 1d6 rounds. No other actions can be taken.

Red Grape: DC 15 Will check or dance uncontrollably for 1d6 rounds. No other actions can be taken.

The grapes lose the magical effects 1 hour after being picked.

3. Flowing thought the forest is a **River of Wine** brought forth by Bacchus.

River of Wine: Drinking this will bring about intoxication if a Fortitude save DC14 is failed. It is also magical and will bestow the **drunken rage** exceptional ability to any who become intoxicated for the next three encounters.

Intoxication: Fortitude save for the first drink (DC14). The second drink is at a -1 penalty, the third -2, the fourth -4, etc. For each hour of time between drink apply a +1 bonus back in for the effects of time. A character that fails a save takes 1d2 points of temporary ability damage to both Wisdom and Dexterity. A character that reaches 0 Wisdom passes out unconscious. A character that reaches 0 Dexterity is incapable of standing but remains barely conscious.

Drunken Rage (Ex): This is similar to the barbarian rage ability (+4 to Str, +4 to Con, +2 on Will saves, -2 to AC for up to 6 rounds) in every way except that this rage will stack with the barbarian **rage** ability and can be used for the next three encounters.

4. **Small gates** from the Forest of Limbo into deep dark forests of various worlds open and close frequently and at random times and places though out the forest. Most are not large enough for medium sized creature to pass through but these gates frequently let in small rodents and animals. These creatures are found throughout the forest.
5. The forest is always changing and it will be different each time the PCs enters it.

Changing Forest: The DM should change the layout and encounters of the Forest each time the PCs re-enter it thought a gate.

6. There are also many large, permanent **magical gates** into the Garden of Limbo. To use one of these gates to enter or leave the garden one must have the key to that gate. There is a gate located in the Temple of Bacchus called the Dolphin Gate that grants access to the Garden.

Magic Gate: HP X ; etc

Wandering Monsters in the Forest of Limbo.

Roll on the wandering monster chart each time the PCs come to an entry area or for each 6 hours the PCs spend in the garden:

D4 Encounter

- | | |
|-----------|-----------------------------|
| 1: | Meteor Shower |
| 2: | 1d6 Small Rodents |
| 3: | 1d6 Drunken Warriors |
| 4: | Sticks to snakes |

1. Meteor Shower

A shower of small meteors rains down out of the "Sky" in a spectacular display of light and fire. After one round of streaking lights, the meteorites strike the trees and possibly hit the PCs. The shower lasts for 1d6 rounds. PCs may gain cover bonuses from the meteorites by sheltering under the thick tree branches.

Meteors: 1d6 might hit each PC per round; +15 to hit; 1d10 damage from branch splinters and burning rock. Note this "natural" damage to the trees does not cause branches to turn into snakes

2. 1d6 Small Rodents. Several small rodents such as Rabbits, Squirrels, Chipmunks, or Skunks emerge form the forest wall.

Rodent (1d6) Tiny Animal; CR 1/8; HD 1/4 d8; hp 1; Init +2; Spd 15 ft., climb 15 ft., swim 15 ft.; Space/Reach 2-1/2 ft./0 ft.; AC 14 (+2 size, +2 Dex), touch 14, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +0; Grp -12; Atk Bite +4 melee (1d3-4); Full Atk Bite +4 melee (1d3-4); SA -; SQ Low-light vision, scent; AL Always neutral; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +1; Str 2, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 2
Skills: Balance +10, Climb +12, Hide +14, Move Silently +10, Swim +10
Feats: Weapon Finesse

3. 1d6 Drunk Barbarian Berserkers. A group of cruel human barbarians with spears and daggers have been questing for answers in a war to destroy other tribes. They have temporarily found their answers in wine that flows freely through the forest in many areas. They are extremely drunk and agitated. They attack in a frothing berserk for the slightest reason and with out any regard for their personal safety.

Drunk Barbarian Berserkers (1d6): Human Bbn 3; CR 4; Medium humanoid; HD 3d12+18; hp 47; Init +2; Spd 40 ft.; AC 10 ; touch 10, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +3; Grp +6; Atk +9 melee (1d8+6/x2, spear) or +6 ranged (1d8+6/x2 spear); Full Atk +12 melee (1d8+6/x2, spear) or +6 ranged (1d8/x2, spear); SA —; SQ improved uncanny dodge, rage 4/day, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge; AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +4; Str 22, Dex 16, Con 22, Int 8, Wis 9, Cha 10.
Skills and Feats: Climb +9, Jump +9, Listen +7, Survival +7; Dodge, Weapon Focus (spear).



Drunken Rage (Ex): This is similar to the barbarian rage ability (+4 to Str, +4 to Con, +2 on Will saves, -2 to AC for up to 6 rounds) in every way except that this rage will stack with the barbarian rage ability and can be done for three encounters in a row.

Improved Uncanny Dodge (Ex): Cannot be flanked except by a rogue of at least four levels higher than the barbarian.

Rage (Ex): +4 to Str, +4 to Con, +2 on Will saves, -2 to AC for up to 6 rounds

Trap Sense (Ex): Intuitive sense that alerts him to danger from traps, granting a +1 bonus on Reflex saves and a +1 dodge bonus to AC against attacks by traps.

Uncanny Dodge (Ex): React to danger before his senses would normally allow him to do so. He retains his Dexterity bonus to AC even when caught flat-footed.

Possessions: 4 spears, dagger.

4. Sticks to Snakes. An accidental breaking of a branch by the PCs or some other creature causes the forest to react to this perceived an attack. 1d6 branches change in to large **Poisonous Snakes** and attack offender.

Snake, Huge Viper (1d3) Huge Animal; CR 3; HD 6d8+6; hp 33; Init +6; Spd 20 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 20 ft.; Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft.; AC 15 (-2 size, +2 Dex, +5 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +4; Grp +15; Atk Bite +6 melee (1d6+4 plus poison); Full Atk Bite +6 melee (1d6+4 plus poison); SA Poison; SQ Scent; AL Always neutral; SV Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +3; Str 16, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2
Skills: Balance +10, Climb +11, Hide +3, Listen +7, Spot +7, Swim +11
Feats: Improved Initiative, Run, Weapon Focus (bite)
Poison(Ex): A viper snake has a poisonous bite that deals initial and secondary damage of 1d6 Con, Fort DC 14. The save DCs are Constitution-based.

The Dolphin Gate

A magic gate to the Forest of Limbo is found in the Temple of Bacchus in the garden behind the main idol in the large worship area. It is a large gold plated door (hardness X, HP X, etc.) set with light blue & white marble. This particular gate is called the Dolphin Gate because of the leaping and dancing dolphins embossed upon the door. The door is magically barred and can only be opened with the Dolphin Key. The high priest of the temple usually carries the key and access to the oracle through this gate is normally restricted to members of the temple or to those making a large donation and gaining approval of the temple council. Once through the gate, PCs find that the gate is identical from both sides.

Start

The PCs have managed to obtain the Dolphin Key and have found their way to the Dolphin Gate.

Before you lay a passage with a roof and walls of interwoven roots, branches and vines of a vast and thick forest. Except for the tunnel before you, the forest walls are so thick as to prove impassable to but the tiniest of creatures.

Area 1: The Fountain of Pan (EL X)

The tunnel opens into a grassy clearing in thick, dark, woods. An eerie light, like moonlight, filters down from an opening in the trees high above. Impassable forest walls line the clearing except for two openings that form tunnels through the forest walls. The tunnels head off one to the northeast and one to the northwest. In the center of the clearing, lit by the white glow of the light above and surrounded by ten classical marble pillars is a large marble fountain. In the center of the fountain is a statue of Pan playing panpipes. The fountain flows with a deep purple liquid.

A large red-skinned, toad-like creature dozes, with its small-clawed hands resting on its huge potbelly to the side of the fountain in the grass. In one hand is a silver six-tube flute. A pair of goat-legged humanoids appears to be sneaking up on the Toad creature.

The toad creature is a **Red Toad Demon** named Slagathor. He is resting after traveling through the garden. The two creatures sneaking up are **Satyrs** named **Darius** and **Gaius**.

Development: Darius and Gaius are trying to sneak and steal back their panpipes from the sleeping Toad Demon. The demon found the panpipes and claimed them as his own. Unless the PCs quickly intervene the Satyrs will fail at their attempt and wake up the demon, which will attack all he sees in a fit of rage (including the PCs). If the Satyrs survive and are given their flute back, they will be friendly with the PCs. If the PCs agree to let the Satyrs out the dolphin gate, they will tell the PCs the following information about the Forest of Limbo:

1. The paths of the forest are ever changing.
2. The only way in & out is through the gate you have the key to.
3. The oracle is at the center of the garden
4. If you find yourself in a maze, beware of the extremely large Minotaur.
5. An extremely powerful knight of darkness is also searching for the oracle.

Tactics: Slagathor attacks first with stunning croak, and then with pounce on the nearest PC. Darius and Gaius, while armed with bows, mostly run around screaming and are of little help during the fight.

Treasure: Drinking from the fountain's dark wine gives the affects of a *potion of heroism*. This power will only work once per individual drinking from the fountain. Also, if the fountain's wine is removed from this area will lose its heroism ability.



Slagathor, Red Toad Demon Large Outsider(Chaotic); CR 8; HD 8d8+21; HP 62; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; Face/Reach 5x5/10 ft; AC 18 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +8 natural); Atks Bite +11 melee(2d8+5), 2 claws +9 melee(1d4+2); SA Pounce, Implant, Stunning Croak, Summon Slaad; SQ Fast Healing 5; Resistances; AL CN; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 20, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 6 . Skills: Climb +12, Jump +14, Listen +6, Move Silently +5, Spot +10 Feats: Dodge, Multiattack

Resistances (Ex): All demon toads have acid, cold, electricity, fire, and sonic resistance 5.

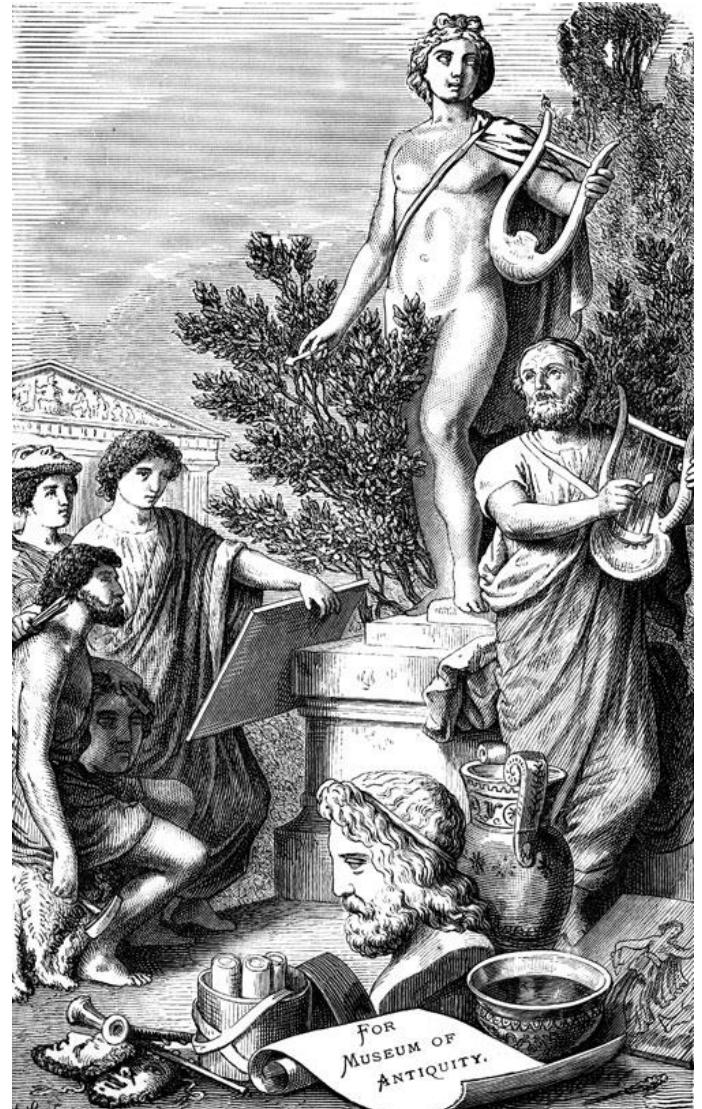
Pounce (Ex): If a red demon toad leaps upon a foe during the first round of combat, it can make a full attack even if it has already taken a move action.

Stunning Croak (Su): Once per day a red demon toad can emit a loud croak. Every creature within 20 feet must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 16) or be stunned for 1d3 rounds.

Summon Demon Toad (Sp): Once per day a red demon toad can attempt to summon another red demon toad with a 45% chance of success. On a failure, no demon toad answers the summons. Summoned creatures automatically return whence they came after 1 hour. A demon toad that has just been summoned cannot use its own summon ability for 1 hour.

Darius and Gaius, Male Satyrs Medium Fey ; CR 2 (without pipes) or 4 (with pipes); HD 5d6+5; hp 22, 30; Init +1; Spd 40 ft.; Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; AC 15 (+1 Dex, +4 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +2; Grp +2; Atk Head butt +2 melee (1d6) or shortbow +3 ranged (1d6/x3); Full Atk Head butt +2 melee (1d6) and dagger -3 melee (1d4/19-20); or shortbow +3 ranged (1d6/x3); SA Pipes; SQ Damage reduction 5/cold iron, low-light vision; AL Usually chaotic neutral; SV Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +5; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 13. Skills: Bluff +9, Diplomacy +3, Disguise +1 (+3 acting), Hide +13, Intimidate +3, Knowledge (nature) +9, Listen +15, Move Silently +13, Perform (wind instruments) +9, Spot +15, Survival +1 (+3 aboveground). Feats: Alertness, Dodge, Mobility

Pipes(Su): Satyrs can play a variety of magical tunes on their pan pipes. Usually, only one satyr in a group carries pipes. When it plays, all creatures within a 60-foot spread (except satyrs) must succeed on a DC 13 Will save or be affected by charm person, sleep, or fear (caster level 10th; the satyr chooses the tune and its effect). In the hands of other beings, these pipes have no special powers. A creature that successfully saves against any of the pipe's effects cannot be affected by the same set of pipes for 24 hours. The save DC is Charisma-based.



Area 2: Pit Trap (EL 6)

In this area of the tunnel trough the forest is a pit trap that drops 40 feet. A pressure plate on the floor of the pit triggers a stone door to slide upwards revealing an archway in the north wall at the bottom of the pit. The room beyond has permanent *continual darkness* and contains **2 rust monsters**. The stone door (4" thick, Hardness 8, HP 60, Stuck 28, Locked 28) automatically slides shuts and is *wizard locked* after the room is entered. Bacchus placed this obstacle here to help ensure adventures not worthy of his oracle were eliminated.

Tactics: The rust monsters aggressively attack seeking to rust weapons and then amour.

Treasure: On a centaur skeleton at the back of the room is a +2 Composite Longbow (+4 Str bonus).

Wide-Mouth Pit Trap: CR 6; mechanical; location trigger, manual reset; DC 25 Reflex save avoids; 40 ft. deep (4d6, fall); multiple targets (all targets within a 10-ft.-by-10-ft. area); Search DC 26; Disable Device DC 25.



Rust Monster Medium Aberration ; CR 3; HD 5d8+5; hp 30, 27; Init +3; Spd 40 ft.; Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; AC 18 (+3 Dex, +5 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +3; Grp +3; Atk Antennae touch +3 melee (rust); Full Atk Antennae touch +3 melee (rust) and bite -2 melee (1d3); SA Rust; SQ Darkvision, scent; AL Always neutral; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +5; Str 10, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 8 Skills: Listen +7, Spot +7 Feats: Alertness, Track

Rust(Ex): A rust monster that makes a successful touch attack with its antennae causes the target metal to corrode, falling to pieces and becoming useless immediately. The touch can destroy up to a 10-foot cube of metal instantly. Magic armor and weapons, and other magic items made of metal, must succeed on a DC 17 Reflex save or be dissolved. The save DC is Constitution-based and includes a +4 racial bonus. A metal weapon that deals damage to a rust monster corrodes immediately. Wooden, stone, and other nonmetallic weapons are unaffected.

Area 3: Minotaur Maze (EL 12)

The tunnels here narrow, turn, and split in a confusing maze. The Minotaur's maze is enchanted to cause a confusion spell (DC 20) to affect the PCs as soon as they see the Minotaur. One very large **Fiendish Minotaur** lives here.

Tactics: The Minotaur knows every inch of his maze, including all smells and sounds (with-in his maze +10 spot, search, listen, smell, track, move silently, and initiative). When he detects the PCs in his maze he will stalk the PCs by moving through the maze to attempt to attack by surprise from behind or a flank. He will take advantage of the confusion spell and attacked those confused first.

Treasure: The minotaur wears +2 platemail sized for large creatures. He carries a large double bladed axe. In the area marked X on the map is a large club that is actually a large jeweled scepter of gold (3000gp) that has been covered in mud.

Zondar, Fiendish Minotaur Large Monstrous Humanoid ; CR 5; HD 6d8+12; hp 60; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; AC 14 (-1 size, +5 natural), touch 9, flat-footed - (see text); Base Atk +6; Grp +14; Atk Greataxe +9 melee (3d6+6/x3) or gore +9 melee (1d8+4); Full Atk Greataxe +9/+4 melee (3d6+6/x3) and gore +4 melee (1d8+2); SA Powerful charge 4d6+6, smite good; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., natural cunning, scent, Darkvision 60 ft, resistance to cold 5 and fire 5, Dr 5/magic, SR 11; AL Always evil (any); SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +5; Str 19, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 7, Wis 10, Cha 8. Skills: Intimidate +2, Listen +7, Search +2, Spot +7

Feats: Great Fortitude, Power Attack, Track

Natural Cunning(Ex): Although minotaurs are not especially intelligent, they possess innate cunning and logical ability.

This gives them immunity to maze spells, prevents them from ever becoming lost, and enables them to track enemies. Further, they are never caught flat-footed.

Powerful Charge(Ex): A minotaur typically begins a battle by charging at an opponent, lowering its head to bring its mighty horns into play. In addition to the normal benefits and hazards of a charge, this allows the beast to make a single gore attack with a +9 attack bonus that deals 4d6+6 points of damage.

Smite Good(Su): Once per day a fiendish creature can make a normal melee attack to deal +6 extra damage against a good foe

Area 4 Puzzling Statue

In a small clearing to the side of the main tunnel of tree branches is a marble statue of a warrior in breast plate, greaves and plumed helm. He holds out both hands, palms up, with fists closed. On the base of the statue is a riddle in elfish.

"I am completely solid, yet through me you see another world, one in which right is left and left is right and the unreadable is readable."

The answer to the riddle is a mirror. This is also a clue on how to get what the status holds. If the answer is spoken out loud and the speaker stands in front of the statue, it will animate for up to 10rds and mirror the actions of the speaker. If the speaker opens his fists the statue will do so also and reveal a gold key. Another PC can garb it or the speaker can turn his hand upside down causing the statue to drop the key. If the speaker steps out from in front of the statue or ten rounds end the statue returns to its original position. The key fits the portcullis in area A9, once it is used in the lock it is magically transported back into the closed fist of the statue.

Area 5 Perytons with 1 Oracle attendant captured – attempting to flee the service of the Oracle. She high up in a nest and will silently get the PCs attention while the Peryton's sleep. The tree is on an island in the river and surround by giant Cray fish. She wears a periapt of proof against poison that will help resist the effects of the wine at the oracle which she will give to the PCs for helping her. She also has the following information:

Her duties include to cultivate grapevines and collecting wine from the river and brewing it with the grape to make a the very fine and very strong wine that is used by the oracle. Strength Potion

Spells neutralize poison;

This creature looks like a giant lobster with a sharp snout and eyes on movable and flickering stalks. Two large claws

protrude from its thorax in front of four other pairs of spindly walking legs. Its exoskeleton is dark brown in color

Crayfish, Monstrous Large Vermin (Aquatic); CR 3; HD: 4d8+8 (26 hp); Init: +0; Speed: 20 ft. (4 squares), swim 40 ft., burrow 5; AC: 15 (-1 size, +6 natural), touch 9, flatfooted 15; Base Atk/Grapple: +3/+10; Atk: Claw +5 melee (1d6+3, 19-20/x2); Full Atk: 2 claws +5 melee (1d6+3, 19-20/x2); Space/Reach: 10 ft./5 ft.; SA: Constrict 1d6+3, improved grab; SQ: Darkvision 60 ft., water dependency, vermin traits; AL: N; SV: Fort +6, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 10, Con 14, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 2; Skills: Hide +0, Spot +4, Swim +11; Feats: Improved Critical (claw)

Constrict (Ex): On a successful grapple check, a monstrous crayfish deals 1d6+3 points of damage.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a monstrous crayfish must hit with a claw attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can constrict.

Water Dependency (Ex): A monstrous crayfish can survive out of the water for 1 hour per 2 points of Constitution (after that, refer to the drowning rules in the DMG).

Area 6 Portcullis (EL 6)

In the small clearing here a large iron portcullis blocks the way. On the other side are eight **drunk barbarian berserkers** who can be seen drinking from the river of wine. They negotiate with the PCs to open the portcullis. However they are very drunk, demanding and belligerent. Any perceived insult from the PCs will send them into a berserk drunken rage and they attack.

Tactics: They attack thought the portcullis by throwing spears. If the PCs gain fire superiority thought the portcullis, or they throw all their spears, they will seek cover and wait for the PCs to open the portcullis before attacking. If the PCs wait at least 15 minutes before opening the portcullis the Drunken rage effects will have worn off.

Development: The key from the statue area A8 will cause the portcullis to magically slide up. The key then magically transports back to the statue. The warriors are on a quest from their village to find the oracle to seek answers on how to defeat a neighboring rival village.

Treasure: Each carries a pouch of gold with 10d10 gp.

See the wandering monster section for the stats on these **drunk barbarian berserkers**

Area 7: Su-Monsters (EL 7)

The tree-lined tunnel widens and splits here. Several shallow streams of clear dark red liquid flow out of the roots of the thick forest submerging the intersection before exiting through the roots of the trees on the opposite side. The pool is 20 feet in diameter but only one foot deep, but the loose, sandy soil at the bottom has become **quicksand**. Upon investigation the liquid is found to be a wine.

High above, in the tall tree trunks that form the roof of this area, a band of **3 vicious Su-monsters** make their lair. They aggressively attack any one passing beneath them.

Development: the red liquid is the **River of Wine** (see properties of the plain).

Tactics: The Su-monsters gang-up on one opponent attacking from above when the PCs are either caught in the quicksand or attempting to bypass it. Bypassing the quicksand is possible by climbing and traversing the jumble of thick tree branches and roots that surround the intersection (climb DC 10).

Treasure: High up in a hollow tree (search DC 30) is a +3 shield made of platinum and silver with ivory inlays, scroll of *shrink item*, a master craft gladiator short sword worth 600 gp and 2 emeralds worth 100 gp each.

Quicksand: DC 8 Survival check to spot, charging or running characters do not get a check and are carried 1d2×5 feet into the quicksand. DC 10 Swim check every round to tread water, or a DC 15 Swim check to move 5 feet. If failed by 5 or more, the character begins to drown (see the Swim skill description). Characters below the surface may swim back to the surface with a successful Swim check (DC 15, +1 per consecutive round of being under the surface). To pull out a character trapped in quicksand a rescuer needs a tool that enables him to reach the victim and requires a DC 15 Strength check to pull the victim, and the victim must make a DC 10 Strength check to hold on. If the victim fails, a DC 15 Swim check is required to stay above the surface. If both checks succeed, the victim is pulled 5 feet closer to safety.

Su-Monkey Tiny Magical Beast Hit Dice: 3d10+1 (26, 24, 20 hp) Initiative: +2 Spd: 30 ft. (6 squares), climb 30 ft. AC: 14 (+2 size, +2 Dex), touch 14, flat-footed 12; Base Attack/Grapple: +1/-12 Attack: Bite +5 melee (1d3-4); Full Attack: Bite +5 melee (1d3-4) Space/Reach: 2-1/2 ft./0 ft. Special Attacks: Psychic crush Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., familiar immunity, low-light vision, mental immunity; Saves: Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +2; AL: NE Abilities: Str 3, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 3, Wis 14, Cha 14 . Skills: Balance +10, Climb +10, Hide +10, Listen +3, Spot +3 Feats: Weapon Finesse

Familiar Immunity (Ex): A su-monkey may not be summoned as a familiar.

Mental Immunity (Ex): A su-monkey is immune to all mind-affecting effects.

Psychic Crush (Sp): Once per round, a su-monkey can target a single individual within 30 ft. with a mind-affecting psionic attack. The victim must succeed at a DC 15 Will save or suffer 1d8 points of damage. The save DC is



Charisma based. This ability is the equivalent of a 3rd-level spell.

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Area 8 Cyclopes and Sheep (EL 10)

The forest opens up to a large pastureland. The sky above glows with a pale golden light. In the middle of the meadow, two small plateaus rise about fifteen feet above the surrounding terrain. A gentle creek flows through the meadow and **6** strange shiny yellow **sheep** graze below the plateau. Standing on top of each plateau is a large one-eyed giant.

Tactics: The Cyclops throw rocks and spears from the plateaus at any one detected entering the area. One is awake and on guard at all times. The sheep are domesticated and will not flee unless attacked.

Development: The creek here is of wine. At the base of the northern plateau is a cave in which the two Cyclops live. Inside are crude tools for sheering, a forge for melting fleece and a form to make gold ingots.

Treasure: Hidden under some sleeping skins in the back of the cave are five gold ingots worth 500 gp.

Cyclops, Huge Giant (Earth); CR: 10; HD: 13d8+65 (123, 100 hp); Init: +1 (Dex); Speed: 40 ft.; AC: 19 (-2 size, +1 Dex, +10 natural); Attacks: Gargantuan greatclub +18/+13 melee; or rock +8/+3 ranged; Damage: Gargantuan greatclub 2d8+16; or rock 2d8+11; Face/Reach: 10 ft by 10 ft/15 ft; Special Attacks: Rock throwing; Special Qualities: Rock catching, darkvision 60 ft; Saves: Fort +13, Ref +5, Will +4; AL: CE; Abilities: Str 33, Dex 13, Con 21, Int 7, Wis 10, Cha 13

Skills: Climb +15, Jump +15, Spot +5

Feats: Cleave, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack

Rock throwing (Ex): Cyclopes can throw rocks with a range increment of 120'.

One-eyed (Ex): Cyclops suffer a -2 penalty to ranged attacks because they lack depth perception.

The Cyclops first appeared in Deities and Demigods (Gary Gygax, 1980).

Golden Fleece Sheep Medium Animal; CR1/4; HD: 2d8+2 (11 hp); Init: +1 Spd: 30 ft. (6 squares) AC: 13 (+1 Dex, +2 natural), touch 11, flat-footed Base Atk/Grapple: +1/+1 Atk: Bite +1 melee (1d4) Full Atk: Bite +1 melee (1d4) Gore +3 melee (1d6+1) Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft. AL: N; SA: Golden fleece; SV: Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +0; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 1, Wis 11, Cha 4; Skills: Listen +4, Spot +5;

Feats: Alertness

Golden Fleece (SA) : Sheep with this ability magically produce wool that is made of gold. Shearing a healthy Golden Fleece Sheep yields 500 gp per sheep per month.

Area 9: Nightmare Marsh

The forest here is a dark and brooding marshland of wine-water. Drifting patches of fog and sulfuric smoke fills the area. Periodically small pockets of methane gas burst forth from the ground and burst into flame lighting up areas of the swamp. Galloping just over the surface of the swamp igniting these fires are three **Nightmares** wearing **Horseshoes of a Zephyr**.

Tactics: The Nightmares initially due not notice the PCs. If they are attacked or the PCs attract their attention, they charge and attack. PCs close to the nightmares are subject to 1d2 blasts per nightmare of methane gas per round. Roll location of the blast using the grenade strike table with the Nightmare as the center. Each blast does 4d6 (SR Reflex for 1/2) and does not harm the Nightmares.

Development: During any fighting the largest of the Nightmares breaks a Horseshoe of Zephyr causing it to fall into the deep muck of the swamp where he quickly becomes completely stuck. This nightmare is essentially helpless and can be captured and/or rescued by astute PCs. The Nightmare will actually be grateful if rescued and spared, regardless of the fate of its companions, and will serve as a mount for a PC for one year. The nightmares have made their lair in a rocky cave near the back of the marsh.

Treasure: Two sets of **Horseshoes of a Zephyr** (the third set is broken and ruined).

Nightmare (3) Large Outsider (Evil, Extraplanar); CR 5; HD 6d8+18; hp 60, 55, 50; Init +6; Spd 40 ft., fly 90 ft. (good); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; AC 24 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +13 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +6; Grp +14; Atk Hoof +9 melee (1d8+4 plus 1d4 fire); Full Atk 2 hooves +9 melee (1d8+4 plus 1d4 fire) and bite +4 melee (1d8+2);

SA Flaming hooves, smoke; SQ Astral projection, darkvision 60 ft., ethereality; AL Always neutral evil; SV Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +6; Str 18, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Skills: Concentration +12, Diplomacy +3, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (the planes) +10, Listen +12, Move Silently +11, Search +10, Sense Motive +10, Spot +12, Survival +10 (+12 on other planes and following tracks)

Feats: Alertness, Improved Initiative, Run

Flaming Hooves (Su): A blow from a nightmare's hooves sets combustible materials alight.

Smoke (Su): During the excitement of battle, a nightmare snorts and neighs with rage. This snorting fills a 15-foot cone with a hot, sulfurous smoke that chokes and blinds opponents. Anyone in the cone must succeed on a DC 16 Fortitude save or take a -2 penalty on all attack and damage rolls until 1d6 minutes after leaving the cone. The cone lasts 1 round, and the nightmare uses it once as a free action during its turn each round. The save DC is Constitution-based. Because of the smoke it gives off, a nightmare has concealment against creatures 5 feet away and total concealment against creatures 10 feet or farther



away. The smoke does not obscure the nightmare's vision at all.

Astral Projection and Ethereallness (Su): These abilities function just like the spells of the same names (caster level 20th); a nightmare can use either at will.

Area 10 Drunk Centaurs blocking the trail

Centaur (12)

A group of centaurs lounge in this area drinking wine from a nearby stream. The largest centaur, which is about 8 feet tall, steps out from among them and lumbers into the center of the trail. He calls out for you to halt. "None may pass unless they can out wrestle me," he says in a deep baritone voice.

Development: The centaur demands a contest of wrestling to pass. He cares not about any size or weight difference he has with the PCs. The winner must either: Move their opponent for 3 consecutive rounds, pin their opponent for 3 consecutive rounds, or knock their opponent unconscious.

Tactics. Lacleades will attempt to move his opponent for 3 rounds pushing him back down the trail. If that fails he will attempt to knock him out though non-lethal attacks. If the PCs try to cheat or pass with -out winning the contest, the other Centaurs form a shield wall and charge and attack with spears. They fight to the death, as it is a matter of honor to them. If a PC defeats Lacleades, the Centaurs cheer them on and let them pass. They decline any offers of adventure wish to stay and drink and see what comes to them down the paths.

Lacleades, Centaur Large Monstrous Humanoid; CR: 3 HD: 4d8+20 (48 hp); Init: +2; Spd: 50 ft. (10 squares); AC: 14 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +3 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 12; Base Atk/Gpl:+4/+13; Atk: Longsword +7 melee (2d6+6/19-20) or composite longbow (+4 Str bonus) +5 ranged (2d6+4/x3); Full Atk: Longsword +7 melee (2d6+6/19-20) and 2 hooves +3 melee (1d6+2); or composite longbow (+4 Str bonus) +5 ranged (2d6+4/x3); Space/Reach: 10 ft./5 ft.; SQ: Darkvision 60 ft.; Saves: Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +5; AL: NG Abilities: Str 19, Dex 14, Con 18, Int 8, Wis 13, Cha 11; Skills: Listen +3, Move Silently +4, Spot +3, Survival +2 Feats: Dodge, Weapon Focus (hoof). Improved Unarmed Strike, Improved Grapple

Area 11 Dryads (EL X)

Three **Dryads** live in the clearing they are willing to offer several potions of healing and information about the forest if one PC with a charisma over 12 will agree stay with them for a period of one week.

Tactics: They seek companionship from a male they do not trust males and do not want more than one male at a time. They will give the PC who stays the following information base on his gather information check:

DC10 Fighting is not allowed on the grounds of the shrine of the oracle.

DC15 One must drink a goblet of powerful wine before asking each question to the oracle.

DC20 A Black knight seeks the oracle and passed by with his dragon a few days ago.

DC25 The Oracle is an aspect of Bacchus and is very powerful.

Dryad Medium Fey ; CR 3; HD 4d6; hp 14; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; AC 17 (+4 Dex, +3 natural), touch 14, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +2; Grp +2; Atk Dagger +6 melee (1d4/19-20) or masterwork longbow +7 ranged (1d8/x3); Full Atk Dagger +6 melee (1d4/19-20) or masterwork longbow +7 ranged (1d8/x3);

SA Spell-like abilities; SQ Damage reduction 5/cold iron, tree dependent, wild empathy; AL Usually chaotic good; SV Fort +3, Ref +8, Will +6; Str 10, Dex 19, Con 11, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 18

Skills: Escape Artist +11, Handle Animal +11, Hide +11, Knowledge (nature) +11, Listen +9, Move Silently +11, Ride +6, Spot +9, Survival +9, Use Rope +4 (+6 with bindings)

Feats: Great Fortitude, Weapon Finesse

Spell-Like Abilities: At will-entangle (DC 13), speak with plants, tree shape; 3/day- charm person (DC 13), deep slumber (DC 15), tree stride; 1/day-suggestion (DC 15). Caster level 6th. The save DCs are Wisdom-based.

Tree Dependent(Su): Each dryad is mystically bound to a single, enormous oak tree and must never stray more than 300 yards from it. Any who do become ill and die within 4d6 hours. A dryad's oak does not radiate magic.

Wild Empathy(Ex): This power works like the druid's wild empathy class feature, except that the dryad has a +6 racial bonus on the check

Area A12 Other Entry Points

These areas each have a gold-sheathed door set into the wall of the forest. These are each gates to and from different areas and require a unique key. Each door has a unique symbol of Bacchus such a wine jar, grapes, or a wreath.

Area 13 Trap Door Spider

The forest thins here and you notice many of the trees are dead in this area. Dead leaves and branched litter the trail floor.

Hiding under an expertly camouflage trapdoor is a huge spider (Search DC 30).

Tactics: The spider will feel the vibrations of the PCs as they approach and will wait until all but the last PC have passed and then will silently jump out of its trap door with surprise and attempt to grab the last PC and drag him in to it's tunnel. If all goes well the remaining PCs will not notice this and to them the last PC will have just disappeared.



Treasure: At the back of the web filled tunnel are several humanoid husks. On one is a leather bag with 3 potions, *Invisibility*, *Cure light wounds*, & *Resist cold*. There is also a wand of *Webs* 18 charges.

Monstrous Spider, Huge Huge Vermin ; CR 5; HD 8d8+16; hp 52; Init +3; Spd 30 ft., climb 20 ft.; Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft.; AC 16 (-2 size, +3 Dex, +5 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +6; Grp +18; Atk Bite +9 melee (2d6+6 plus poison); Full Atk Bite +9 melee (2d6+6 plus poison); SA Poison, web; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft., vermin traits; AL Always neutral; SV Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +2; Str 19, Dex 17, Con 14, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 2 Skills: Climb +12, Hide -1*, Jump +4*, Spot +4*

Poison(Ex): A monstrous spider has a poisonous bite. The details vary by the spider's size, as shown on the table below. The save DCs are Constitution-based. Fort DC 16, 1d8 Str initial and secondary.

Tremorsense(Ex): A monstrous spider can detect and pinpoint any creature or object within 60 feet in contact with the ground, or within any range in contact with the spider's webs.

Web(Ex): Both types of monstrous spiders often wait in their webs or in trees, then lower themselves silently on silk strands and leap onto prey passing beneath. A single strand is strong enough to support the spider and one creature of the same size. Web-spinners can throw a web eight times per day. This is similar to an attack with a net but has a maximum range of 50 feet, with a range increment of 10 feet, and is effective against targets up to one size category larger than the spider. An entangled creature can escape with a successful Escape Artist check or burst it with a Strength check. Both are standard actions whose DCs are given in the table below. The check DCs are Constitution-based, and the Strength check DC includes a +4 racial bonus. Web-spinners often create sheets of sticky webbing from 5 to 60 feet square, depending on the size of the spider. They usually position these sheets to snare flying creatures but can also try to trap prey on the ground. Approaching creatures must succeed on a DC 20 Spot check to notice a web; otherwise, they stumble into it and become trapped as though by a successful web attack. Attempts to escape or burst the webbing gain a +5 bonus if the trapped creature has something to walk on or grab while pulling free. Each 5-foot section has the hit points given on the table, and sheet webs have damage reduction 5/-. A monstrous spider can move across its own web at its climb speed and can pinpoint the location of any creature touching its web. Escape DC 16; Break DC 20; HP 14

Area 14 Yellow Musk Creeper and Zombies (EL 4)

Sweet, entrancing odors of fruit laden grape vines intertwined with blooming bright yellow flowers fill this area were the forest tunnel narrows. The strange flower bearing vines are light green with splashes of purple. The strange

vines intertwined with the grape vines are **Yellow Musk Creepers**.

Tactics. When a creature approaches within 10 feet; then the nearest flowers turn and puff a dust, smelling of musk, into the creature's face. Six yellow musk zombies hidden in the nearby foliage, breakout and attack.

Yellow Musk Creeper Large Plant; CR: 2; Hit Dice: 3d8+9 (22 hp); Initiative: +0; Speed: 0 ft; AC: 13 (-1 size, +4 natural); Attacks: Pollen spray +2 ranged; Damage: Pollen Spray 0; Face/Reach: 10 ft by 10 ft/0 ft (10 ft with pollen spray); Special Attacks: Pollen spray, intelligence drain, create yellow musk zombie; Special Qualities: Plant, bulbous root; Saves: Fort +6, Ref -, Will +1; AL: N; Abilities: Str 20, Dex -, Con 17, Int 3, Wis 11, Cha 9

Pollen Spray (Ex): An opponent hit by the spray must make a successful Fortitude save (DC 14) or be compelled to walk toward the plant, resisting all those who try to prevent it.

Intelligence Drain (Ex): When a victim reaches the creeper, dozens of tiny roots attach themselves to the victim's head and burrow to the brain. The victim automatically suffers 1d4 points of temporary Intelligence damage per round. Attacks on a root will cause it to release, but so many roots will be attached simultaneously that the intelligence drain cannot be prevented by such means.

Bulbous Root (Ex): The root of the yellow musk creeper lies just under the surface of the soil. The hit points listed above reflect the main root only. While the bulbs, flowers, and smaller roots (that attack the victim) can be burned, frozen, or harmed just as any other plant, they will eventually grow back from the main root.

Create Yellow Musk Zombie (Su): A victim reduced to 0 Intelligence dies instantly; a victim reduced to Intelligence 1 or 2 become a yellow musk zombie under the creeper's control. If the plant dies before reducing its prey to zombie status, the intelligence damage can be healed normally (through rest of magical means). If the mother plant is destroyed first, a zombie can be cured (i.e., returned to its normal state as it was) by a neutralize poison followed by a heal or restoration spell and four weeks of complete rest.

Blindsight (Ex): The yellow musk creeper has no visual organs but can ascertain all foes within 30 feet using sound, scent, and vibration. Plant: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and polymorphing. Not subject to critical hits.

Yellow Musk Zombie Medium-Size Plant CR: 1/2; HD: 2d10+4 (15 hp); Init: -1 (Dex); Spd: 20 ft; AC: 16 (-1 Dex, +2 natural, +5 chainmail); Atks: Longsword +4 melee; or slam +4 melee; Dmg: Longsword 1d8+3; or slam 1d6+3; SQ: Plant; Face/Reach: 5 ft by 5 ft/5 ft; Saves: Fort +3, Ref -1,

Will +0; AL: N; Abilities: Str 16, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 1

Plant: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and polymorphing. Not subject to critical hits. Plants have lowlight vision.

The Yellow Musk Creeper and Yellow Musk Zombie first appeared in the 1e FF (1981).

Area 15

HANGMAN TREE

Huge Plant; HD: 6d8+30 HP 57; Init: -2 (Dex); Spd: 0 ft (see text); AC: 17 (-2 size, -2 Dex, +11 natural); Atk: 3 vines +10 melee; Dmg: Vine constrict 1d6+8; Face/Reach: 10 ft by 10 ft/0 ft (15 ft with vine); Special Atks: Improved grab, constrict, swallow whole; SQ: Hallucinatory spores, SR 12, plant, fire vulnerability, vulnerabilities, blindsight; Saves: Fort +10, Ref +0, Will +1; Abilities: Str 27, Dex 6, Con 20, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 10; Skills: Hide +0* CR: 7, AL: NE

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the hangman tree must hit a Large or smaller opponent with its vine attack. If it gets a hold, it can constrict. Constricted foes are swallowed.

A single attack with a slashing weapon that deals at least 10 points of damage severs a vine (AC 15).

Constrict (Ex): A hangman tree deals 1d6+8 damage with a successful grapple check against Large or smaller opponents. Because it seizes its victims by the neck, a creature in the hangman tree's grasp cannot speak or cast spells with verbal components.

Swallow Whole (Ex): A hangman tree can try to swallow a Large size or smaller opponent by making a successful grapple check. The swallowed creature takes 1d6+4 points of crushing damage per round plus 2d6 points of acid damage from the hangman tree's interior. A swallowed creature can cut its way out by using claws or a small or tiny weapon to deal 25 points of damage to the interior (AC 20). Once the creature exits, contraction closes the hole; another swallowed opponent must again cut its own way out. The hangman tree's interior can hold one Large, two Medium-size, four Small, eight Tiny, sixteen Diminutive, or thirty-two Fine or smaller opponents.

Hallucinatory Spores (Ex): A hangman tree can release a cloud of hallucinatory spores that causes all creatures within 50 feet to make a Will save (DC 18) or believe the tree to be of some ordinary sort. A creature affected has no interest in attacking the hangman tree for 3d6 minutes unless the hangman tree attacks first.

Vulnerabilities (Ex): Electrical attacks deal double damage to the hangman tree; cold-based attacks paralyze the tree for 1 round per caster level; darkness causes it to act as if affected by the *slow* spell.

Fire Vulnerability (Ex): A hangman tree takes double damage from fire attacks unless the attack allows a save, in which case it takes double damage on a failure and no damage on a successful save.

Blindsight (Ex): Hangman trees have no visual organs but an ascertain all foes within 30 feet using sound, scent, and vibration.

Plant: Immune to poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and polymorphing. Not subject to critical hits or mind-influencing spells or effects.

The Hangman Tree first appeared in the 1e MM II (Gary Gygax, 1983).

Creeping Pit, Large Ooze CR:4 ; HD: 6d10+30 (63 hp); Init: -5; Spd: 30 ft (6 squares); AC: 4 (-1 size, -5 Dex), touch 4, flat-footed 4;

Base Atk/Grapple: +4/+11; Atk: -; Full Atk: -; Space/Reach: 10 ft/5 ft; Special Attacks: Entrap; SQ: Astral vortex, blindsight 60 ft, dualplanar, immunity to magic, immunity to weapon damage, ooze traits, portal, two-dimensional; Saves: Fort +7, Ref -3, Will -3; AL: N; Abilities: Str 17, Dex 1, Con 20, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 1

Entrap (Ex): A creeping pit can move into other creatures' spaces as a standard action, affecting as many as it can cover. Opponents can make attacks of opportunity against the pit, but if they do so they are not entitled to a saving throw. Those who do not attempt attacks of opportunity must succeed on a DC 16 Reflex save or be entrapped; on a success, they are pushed back or aside (opponent's choice) as the pit moves forward. There must be available floor space to which a potential victim can jump in order to even try to avoid the pit. Entrapped creatures take 1d6 points of falling damage for every size category the pit is above Medium. Entrapped creatures can escape from a creeping pit on a successful DC 15 Climb check. The save DC is Strength-based.

Astral Vortex (Su): Certain magical effects that originate within the creeping pit create a vortex to the Astral Plane for one hour. Such effects include those that open an interdimensional rift, such as a gate spell, or that open a nondimensional space, such as a *bag of holding*. All creatures and objects inside the creeping pit when the vortex forms, as well as any unattended objects within 10 feet of the pit during the hour, are immediately pulled into the vortex and drawn into the Astral plane. All creatures within a 10-foot radius of the creeping pit during this hour must succeed on a DC 18 Reflex save or be drawn to the Astral Plane. The item or spell that creates the effect is immediately destroyed, and the creeping pit is destroyed at the end of the hour. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Dualplanar (Ex): The bulk of a creeping pit's body resides on the Astral Plane, but the outer edge of its opening exists on the Material Plane. Creatures that are stuck on the Material Plane find it difficult but not impossible to target the



creeping pit. Because the monster is dual-planar and therefore exists partially on the Material Plane, its foes on the Material Plane can attack the creature as if it had cover, and so it gains a +4 bonus to Armor Class and a +2 bonus on Reflex saves.

Immunity to Magic (Ex): A creeping pit is immune to any spell or spell-like ability that allows spell resistance.

Portal (Su): Once per hour, any unattended objects inside a creeping pit are transported to the Astral Plane. Creatures inside the creeping pit must succeed on a DC 18 Will save or be transported to the Astral Plane as well. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Two-Dimensional (Ex): Creeping pits are hard to see, even under ideal conditions, and it takes a DC 15 Spot check to notice one. Creatures who fail to notice a pit and walk into it are automatically entrapped. In conditions of poor illumination, the DC rises to 20.

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Area 16 River Crossing

Magical chariots drawn by panthers & leopards

Area 17 Oracle (EL 10)

The forest opens up into a large field with a rocky hill in the center. Atop the hill is a white marble; pillared building that is the home of the oracle. Three large eyeballs hover over the building watching every move you make. One hovers over each pedestal on either side of the stairs that ascend up to the entrance of the temple and one hovers at the apex of the temple roof.

A black dragon wearing a jeweled black saddle is lounging on the stairs to the temple, inside a knight in black plate mail can be seen talking and gesturing to something inside the shadows of the building.

Gerdain, a Black Knight, has asked his question of the oracle and also discovered the good nature of the PCs and their goals. He wants to stop them.

Development: The Oracle sits on a raised marble throne. She appears as a beautiful young woman wearing a simple white silk dress. Snakes are a part of her hair and her eyes glow with a green light. She is carrying a lyre, and a staff tipped with pinecone and twined with a vine. Attending her at all times are four beautiful female attendants (female human exp 3, hp 10). They accept donations and remove them to deep within the shrine. They also offer a potent wine to any seeking the oracle.

Tactics: The Oracle will not allow fighting with in the temple or its immediate vicinity. If fighting is attempted on the temple grounds by the PCs she will use her *time stop* ability to disarm the offenders, giving the weapons back only after a stiff warning. If she is threatened she activates her *stone to flesh gaze* and uses unlimited *plant growth* to make vines grow and hold the PCs

The hovering eyes are supernatural manifestations brought about by the Bacchus. They will also follow the Oracle's will and can be made to attack with a beam of energy that has one of the following affects: *hold person*, *charm person*, *lightning bolt* (20d6), *paralization* or inflict madness upon any intelligent being. All are at DC 25. Anyone who is touched by the staff of Dionysus' avatar must save versus spell or suffer from *confusion* as the priest spell.

Gerdain knows not to fight on the shrine's grounds, so before the PCs enter the shrine the Black knight will challenge and insult them. If the PCs avoid him prior to going to the oracle, he will attack them after they leave and are possibly under the affects of the wine. His intention is to destroy the PCs so that they cannot use any information gained by the oracle. The Black knight has stood the effects of the wine and has just asked about the PCs and their future goals. He has learned the PCs goals are in opposition to his.

Treasure: After a fitting donation has been made (1000 gp or greater value), and after successfully drinking the dangerously strong ceremonial wine, the oracle will truthfully, but some-what cryptically, answer a question. To avoid the affects of the wine the character must make a Fortitude check DC15 or be intoxicated (1d2 Dexterity & 1d2 Wisdom temporary ability damage). The oracle requires another drink of the wine (at a cumulative -1 Fort DC check penalty per drink) before answering each question (or alternately be granted a wish, miracle , or other power at the DM's discretion). The Oracle does not answer questions from (or grant wishes to) intoxicated individuals. An individual may come to the Oracle once per year.

The PCs should approach the Oracle one at a time after taking a drink of the wine offered by the attendants.

The oracle declares:

"Wine has a dual nature. On one hand, it is the embodiment of joy, pleasure, and camaraderie. On the other, it embodies brutality, idiocy, and madness. This twin nature is a reflection of the dual properties of the one I serve -imbibed in moderation, it brings pleasure and comfort, but in excess, it brings nothing but depraved misery. I will not grant an Omen to the depraved or suffer their presence"

If the PC is not affected by drunkenness she will answer one question. (The PC must drink again to ask another question)



The oracle herself will drink wine offered by an attendant and then appear to view a hallucination. She dramatically describes this vision to the PC as the answer to his question.

If the PC has failed the drunkenness save, she will immediately dismiss the PC telling them not to return for at least one year.

Gerdain the Powerful, Male Human, Blackguard 8; CR 8; hp 89;

Male human fighter 8; **CR 8hp 98** (8d10+32 HD); Init +3, Spd 20 ft.; AC 21, touch 15, flat-footed 18 (+3 Dex, +6 armor, +2 Deflect); Base Atk +8/+3; Grp +12; Space 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; Melee Greatsword +13/+8 (3d6+12 19-20/x2 plus 1 acid)*; Fort +10, Ref +5, Will +2; Atk Options Dodge Monkey Grip, Spring Attack, Great Cleave, Power Attack ; AL: N; Abilities Str 18 (+4), Dex 16 (+3), Con 18 (+4), Int 13 (+1), Wis 10 (+0), Cha 16 (+3); * Power attack of -1/+2 applied Feats Monkey Grip, Dodge, Mobility, Spring Attack, Cleave, Power Attack, Great Cleave, Weapon Focus (Greatsword), Weapon Specialization (Greatsword)

Skills 33 points

Possessions Black Dragonfang Dagger (Necklace) 452g, 1d4/19-20x2 plus 1 acid, 3 lbs.

Combat Gear +1 Black Dragonfang Large

Greatsword 3d6/19-20x2 S damage plus 1 acid, 2,400g, 18 lbs., +1 Black Dragonhide breastplate 1,700g, AC+6, max Dex +3, check penalty -3, 30 lbs., 20 ft., Ring of Protection +2

Uses one feat (Monkey Grip) from Complete Warrior.

Dragonfang weapons and their construction are outlined in the Draconomicon.

(Has black knight's dragon military saddle with saddle bags of *holding* [with 3000 gp and 12, 500 gp gems in it], gives +2 protection to mount and rider (while mounted), and also gives a +2 to riding airborne skill because of its fine craftsmanship. Has potions of *flying*, *haste* and *astralness*) a *wand of empowered, maximized magic missiles* (20 charges), +2 plate, +2 *Shield*, and a +3 *unholly, flaming* long sword, LE. *Scroll protection from cold*. Gold spiked, *armband of the king* (+2 all attributes). Black Skull Key (Opens gate to the stronghold of the Black Knights).

Nighthrage, Male Black Dragon, Young adult Large Dragon (Water); CR 9; HD 16d12+48; hp 152; Init +0; Spd 60 ft., fly 150 ft. (poor), swim 60 ft.; Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft. (10 ft. with bite); AC 24 (-1 size,+15 natural), touch 9, flat-footed 24; Base Atk +16; Grp +24; Atk Bite +19 melee (2d6+4) or Claw +19 melee (1d8+2) or Wing +19 melee (1d6+2) or Tail Slap +19 melee (1d8+6); Full Atk +19/+14/+9 melee (-5 secondary, -2 Multiattack); SA Breath Weapon (10d4/DC 21), Darkness, Spells (Caster level 1st); SQ Blindsight, Damage Resistance 5/magic, Frightful Presence (DC 19), Immunities (Acid/Paralysis/Sleep), Keen Senses, Spell Resistance (17), Water Breathing; AL Always

chaotic evil; SV Fort +13, Ref +10, Will +11; Str 19, Dex 10, Con 17, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 12
Skills: See Text
Feats: See Text

Breath Weapon(Su): A black dragon has one type of breath weapon, a line of acid.

Charm Reptiles(Sp): A great wyrm black dragon can use this ability three times per day. It works as a mass charm spell that affects only reptilian animals. The dragon can communicate with any charmed reptiles as though casting a speak with animals spell. This ability is the equivalent of a 1st-level spell. Other

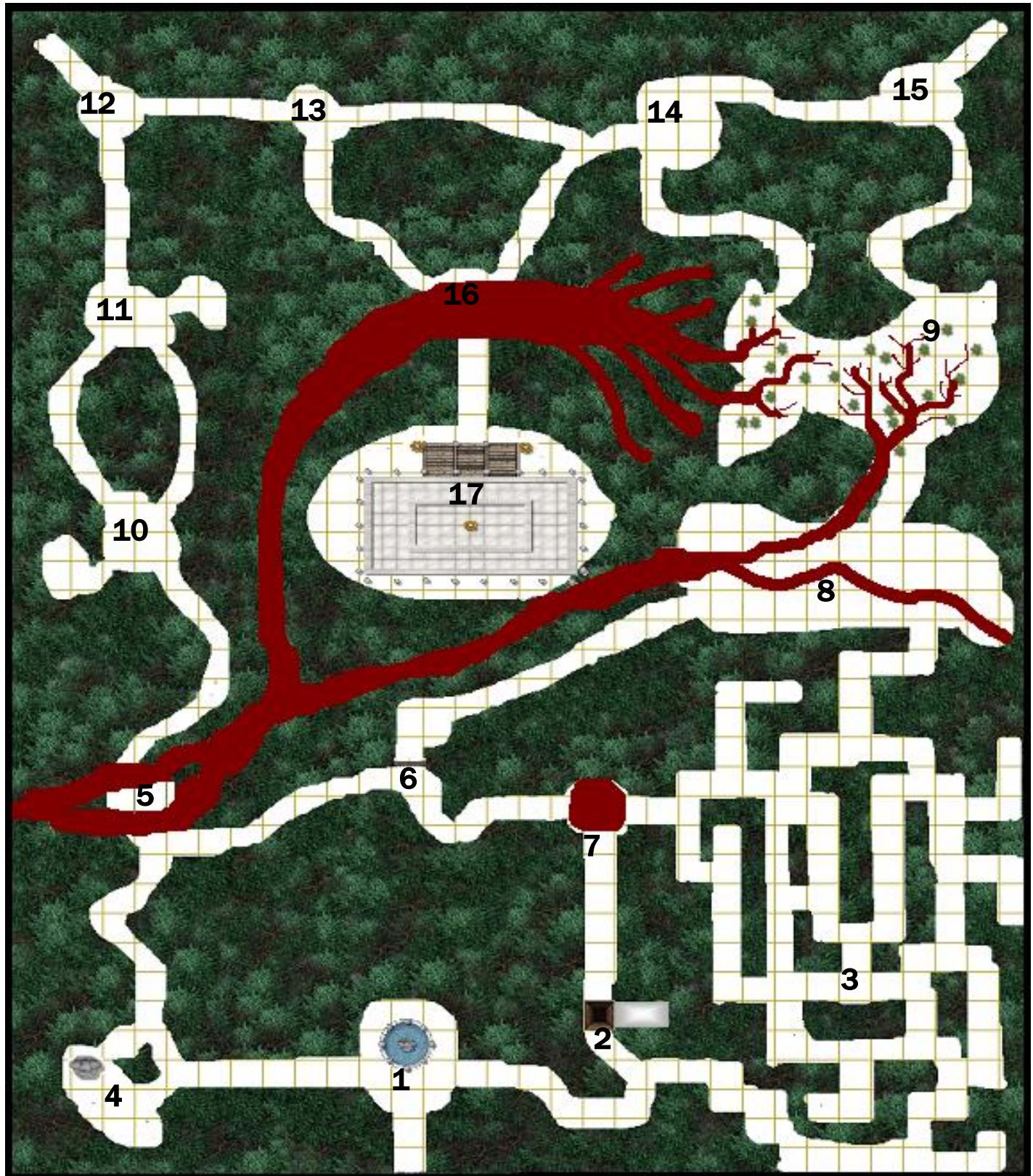
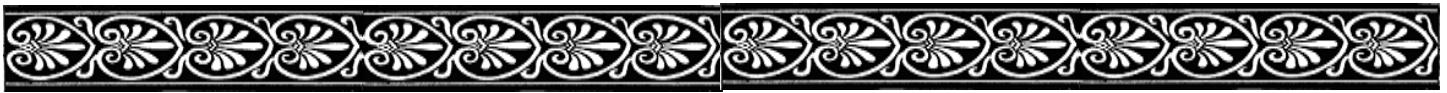
Corrupt Water(Sp): Once per day an adult or older black dragon can stagnate 10 cubic feet of water, making it become still, foul, and unable to support animal life. The ability spoils liquids containing water. Magic items (such as potions) and items in a creature's possession must succeed on a Will save (DC equal to that of the dragon's frightful presence) or become fouled. This ability is the equivalent of a 1st-level spell. Its range is equal to that of the dragon's frightful presence.

Spell-Like Abilities: 3/day-darkness (juvenile or older; radius 10 feet per age category), insect plague (ancient or older); 1/day-plant growth (old or older). (has dragon charm of +4 deflection) (spell using shield, magic missile, charm)

Water Breathing(Ex): A black dragon can breathe underwater indefinitely and can freely use its breath weapon, spells, and other abilities while submerged.

Oracle, Female Aspect of Bacchus: CR 20, hp 500, see NPC Appendix. (bard 17, wizard 12)

Leaving the Garden





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