

An important scroll is in a nobleman's study. Get it. Getting the PCs Involved

•The noble's servant is sent to get the scroll, but he doesn't have the magical chime to get past the guardians. If you don't help, he's fired (or worse).
•While the noble and his entourage are gone, this is the time to sneak in and get the scroll you need.

Encounter Key

 The rim of the courtyard well is crusted with mustard lichen. A knee-high pillbug is nibbling it. If approached, the bug retreats through one of several narrow tunnels. It is wary but friendly.

2. A mobile of birdcages swirls in the three-story space. If the pillbug curls up, the bug chimes, and the birdcages form a wire golem that hunches to block the entry to 3 for an hour, then resetting.

3. The parlor has a wall that is pigeonholes for scrollcases secured by a grating, and a trio of comfortable chairs. The grating is enchanted, so if disturbed without the key, worn metal gets red-hot. (The target scroll is hidden here.)

 Alcoves hold undead servants that are roused if the bug alarm chimes. Their green blood magically stains for a week, evidence against attackers.

5. The upstairs bedroom/library has a pivoting bookshelf, and the backside has secret ledgers for a profitable blackmail and smuggling operation.

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Bandits have been using an old dwarf tower as a base. A dwarf hero mummy laid to rest there (with a special item) was displeased.

Getting the PCs Involved

Hired by a town to investigate the raids.
A key to an artifact is buried with the hero.

Encounter Key

 Main level: Five bandit bodies are strewn about the makeshift kitchen. Bloody footprints lead downstairs. A couple carrion crawlers can easily be spotted gnawing away.

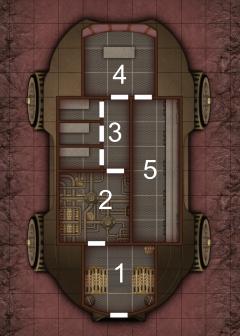
2. Upper level: Several beds line the walls.

3. Roof: As the PCs all clear the stairs, Giant vultures (attracted by blood) swoop down!

4. Lower level: Crates (raiders' supplies)line the walls. The blood trail leads to the secret door. But if there is any light at all, the PCs can't see the door, nor does it work in any way. Only high level magic also has an effect. (If PCs are stuck,

hint they see a door's outline when light is further away.) In darkness, an outline and opening button appear.

5. Coffin & altar: A key to an artifact rests on the altar. "Bless Your Quest" is written above the altar in Dwarven. If a PC prays and describes a worthy need of the key, it levitates and may be taken. If taken otherwise, the mummy Attacks!
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An important knight has been kidnapped, taken to the hells, and imprisoned in a war machine.

Getting the PCs Involved

•The knight has information the PCs need.

• An Order hires them to liberate the knight.

Encounter Key

 Engine Room: Unlocking the door to enter the machine is difficult. Heated metal transfers through lockpicks, burning the opener's hands. Inside are minor devils operating the engine.

Pipe-filled Chamber: Red-hot pipes fill this chamber. Ducking and squeezing between them is a hard challenge. Accidentally touching a pipe deals

moderate fire damage.

3. Jail: One cell contains the knight Ser Starcel. Breaking him out is easy, but doing so causes the doorway to area 2 to seal shut. It can only be opened by the key in area 5.

4. Viewing Station: Shows the infernal landscape. Unoccupied until key is taken from area 5 with-

out replacement (see below)

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5. Armory: Iron key to unlock the area 2-3 door is at end of hall stocked with valuable weapons, including a magic sword. Two devils here maintain the weaponry. If the key is taken and not immediately replaced, a major devil is summoned to area 4.



A scholar has discovered the headquarters of a long-defunct secret society and wishes to recover their library of ancient tomes or a cryptic artifact

Getting the PCs Involved

A PC is an academic in touch with the scholar.
The Society also has an artifact the PCs need.

Encounter Key

The entrance to the society is at the bottom of an old well; gargoyle serpents lurk in the walls

an old well; gargoyle serpents lurk in the walls and attack intruders.

The front area of the Society is locked behind

2. The front area of the Society is locked behind three book-covered doors; taking the wrong one triggers a trap. The correct books are those who authors were members of the Society; clever PCs may find other ways to identify them.

3. The PCs find a false library that ensnares readers minds; its books are filled with false secrets supposedly torn from the minds of previous visitors.

4. The true library contains a half-blind undead scholar, who has been reading undisturbed for centuries and hunts by sound. Killing the scholar shatters his wards, and the library will fill with water. The PCs must identify valuable books and get them to safety before it floods.

5. A shrine in the back of the library has the artifact on an altar. But man-bats guard it—and the library may already be flooding!

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Augustus, a wealthy miser, cursed his hometown on his deathbed. The amulet that dispels the curse is in his tomb.

Getting the PCs Involved

• The curse is spreading past the town's borders, and the PCs home is in its path.

• The townsfolk promise that anyone who dispels the curse can keep the miser's gold. Encounter Key

1. A statue of Augustus lies at the crypt's entrance, inscribed "For the Boatman". Coins placed on the statue's eyes sink into it, and the door slides up. The pricier the coins, the longer it stays open.

2. The antechamber was guarded by a clay golem, but Augustus used a cheap mage to enchant it and it shattered, bringing down sections of the room. Golem parts in the rubble and attack!

3. A hall lined with wicker effigies of townsfolk that Augustus hated. They ignite and attack in-

truders, whispering his complaints.

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4. Augustus's crypt is filled with miasma. The PCs must disarm traps and locked doors as the poison weakens them.

5. When the amulet is claimed, Augustus's shade erupts forth, drawn by greed and hatred. It attempts to steal the amulet back, fighting anyone who stops it.



The oppressive king's unofficial torturer has taken an ally or resistance leader captive. Break him out. Getting the PCs Involved

A kidnapped ally of the party is being tortured.

They owe a favor to the resistance.

Encounter Key

 Some tips lead to an unassuming warehouse used as a front for anonymity & the king's deniability.

1. Guardroom: A ladder leads down to a guardroom. The two guards are usually playing cards, but easily notice intruders and ready their bows. Loud noise will attract those in area 2 and later 5.

2. Kitchen/Dining: Except at night, 2-3 people are here cooking, eating, or gambling. Secret door out. 3. Barracks: The guards & assistants bunk here. 4-6

people are usually here at night, 2 during the day.

4. Torturer's Room: At night, unless there is a disturbance or he's inspired to work, he rests here.

5. Study: The torturer and an assistant are likely here if not at night (and even then they may be).

6. Torture Chamber: An figure lays on the rack. Each step in the room causes the rack to stretch and the figure to scream. At the GM's choice, this

may have a magical or mechanical (pressure plates) cause. If magical, notes in the study will show a hand signal to bypass it. If mechanical, a hidden switch is inside near the door, placed low. Sidequest Decks: 5 Challenge Lairs © 2023 Inkwell Ideas, Inc.

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