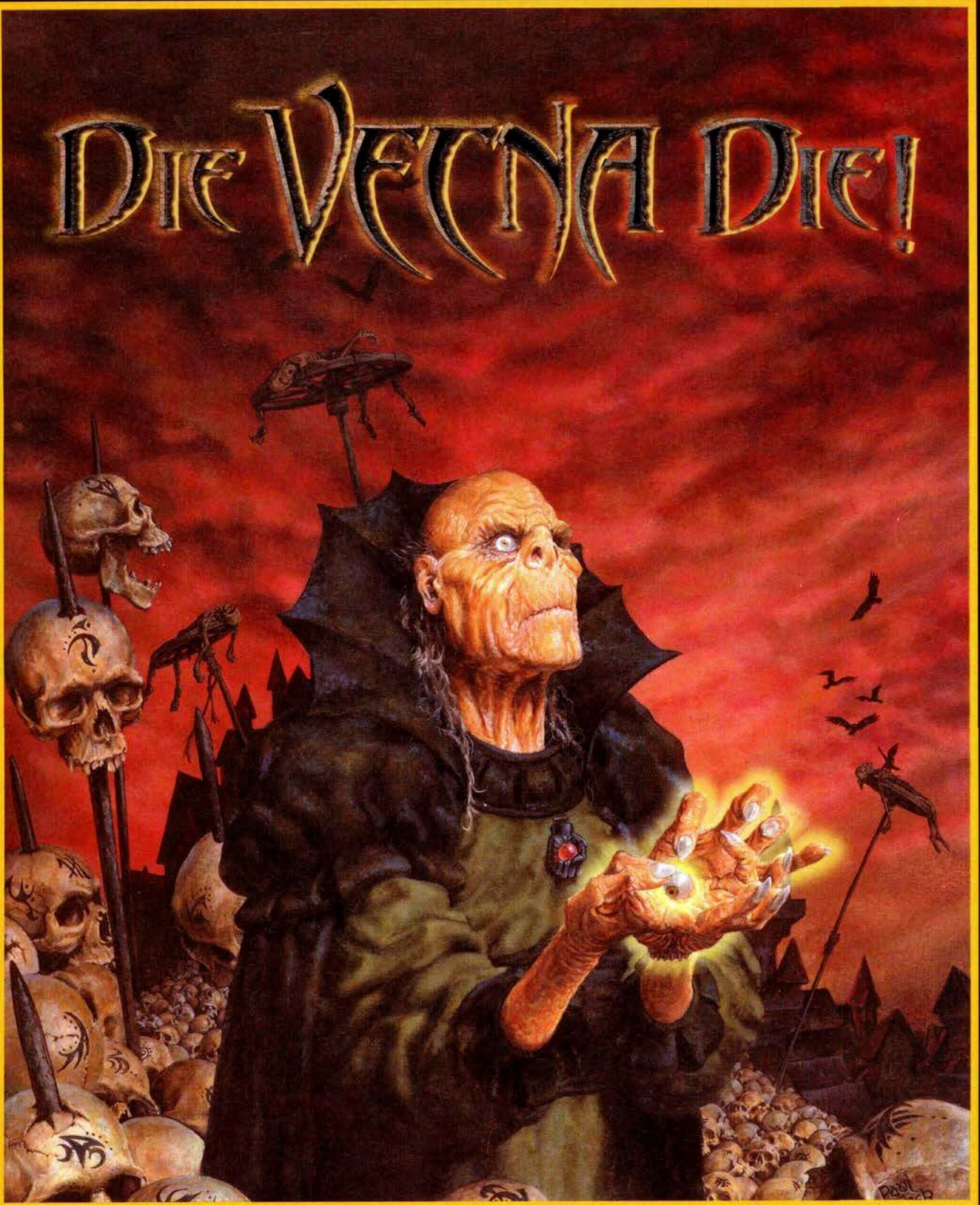


# Advanced Dungeons & Dragons®

Adventure

# DIE VECNA DIE!



*Bruce R. Cordell and Steve Miller*

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## Die Vecna Die!

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# Introduction

"[...] the Serpent speaks directly to Vecna. Others—daring to call themselves wizards, magicians, and sorcerers—manipulate the tiniest aspects of the Serpent and call it magic. But Vecna speaks to the Serpent, and the Serpent speaks back."

—Vecna Reborn

Once upon a time lost to history, there lived a mortal man called Vecna. Vecna plumbed the arts of magecraft, eventually becoming the most accomplished and powerful wizard of all times and spaces. When a betrayer's blade maimed and cut him down, Vecna rose again, infused with secrets of magic no mortal was ever meant to know. He was now a true demigod, while the relics of his former body gained fame in their own right. His power magnified many times over, Vecna schemed, laying audacious plans designed to transform himself into a true god, possibly even a supreme god. Just when all portents aligned with Vecna's will, the demigod was snatched from his former abode and forcibly caged in a misty realm. Vecna's imprisoning dimension, known as the Demiplane of Dread, offered diversions that successfully sidetracked the Maimed Lord, for a time.

Vecna is nothing if tenacious. His goal of true godhood is too grand to suffer from misty distractions, and he has just recently (in demigod terms) put those distractions behind him. Now, the demigod's full concentration is focused on ascension. If Vecna perseveres, the very gyres of the multiverse may come undone and be cast down in ashes by Vecna, transfigured!

## Preparation

This AD&D® adventure is designed for four to six player characters (PCs or heroes) of 10th to 13th level. Even with the impressive abilities and powers that a party of this level can command, the adventure is challenging, and in some cases, deadly.

*Die, Vecna, Die!* is a stand-alone adventure, but Dungeon Masters (DMs) can easily insert it into their ongoing campaign. Dungeon Masters can alter names of temples, castles, lands, and even nonplayer characters (NPCs) described in this product if doing so would ease incorporation of this adventure into their campaigns. Those DMs familiar with the GREYHAWK®, RAVENLOFT®, and/or PLANESCAPE® settings can find familiar references to use as easy attachment points for personal campaigns, but such familiarity isn't required.

This adventure references sites and places touched upon in a few past AD&D products; however, none of those products are necessary to play *Die, Vecna, Die!* As a self-contained adventure, it also possesses special rules and unique references. As always, the DM should have a copy of the *Player's Handbook (PHB)* and the *DUNGEON*

*MASTER® Guide (DMG)*. A copy of the *MONSTROUS MANUAL™* tome is also useful, but not mandatory.

Text that appears in unshaded boxes is player information, which the DM can read aloud or paraphrase when appropriate. Shaded boxes contain important information for the DM, including new monster descriptions, new magic items, and special rules. Generally, monster descriptions are provided with each encounter as appropriate. However, there are two types of stat blocks: full descriptions for those complicated beings that appear only once, and short descriptions for those beings who appear more than once. Dungeon Masters can turn to the Appendix for full descriptions of these latter creatures.

Finally, the Adventure Background and the Adventure Summary sections provide the DM with framework information necessary to run the adventure. In addition, DMs can use these sections to extrapolate scenarios should the heroes move off the adventure track.

## Adventure Background

Despite Vecna's entrapment in the Demiplane of Dread, long-laid plans have come to fruition. In Vecna's quest to achieve full and permanent godhood, he instigated several alternative strategies in the millennia of his existence. Many of these designs have played out with little to recommend them, but elements of more sinister schemes continue to move unnoticed.

One such plan has promise at this point. Sometime during the span of years before his imprisonment, Vecna went to a lot of trouble secretly fabricating two tablets inscribed with a true dweomer in the Language Primeval. Then he buried them in a plausible archeological site. True dweomers represent 10th and higher level magic, and they can be understood and cast only by spellcasters of 20th level or higher. The Language Primeval, a surpassingly powerful magical grammar, was spoken by the Ancient Brethren, the Elders, and other semimythical races when all the worlds were young or yet unborn. As a confidant of the Serpent, Vecna has some knowledge of this purely magical tongue, and so he recorded a spell of uncommon power.

The tablets were a set-up, secretly aimed at a handful of demipowers who met Vecna's criteria. The very power of the magical language recorded upon them made the tablets and all consequences of their discovery proof against almost every form of scrying and divinatory magic. Even when gods wielded such magic, the tablets remained steeped in mystery, save for a tantalizing clue hinting at transcendental significance.

Though any of a handful of demipowers would have served Vecna's purpose, the corpse king Iuz took the bait. Having stolen the tablets from their original discoverers several years ago, Iuz has slowly brought his considerable resources to bear on the tablets. The more

Iuz learned, the more the ancient formula seemed, to him and all his divinatory means, an ancient dweomer of stupendous strength, whereby a demipower might bootstrap itself to full ascension!

The particulars of the dweomer, according to Iuz's study anyway, require a portion of flesh from the original body of any other demipower (called the "sacrificial" demipower). While in possession of the relic, the candidate demipower must cast the spell recorded on the tablets within a span of a few feet from the sacrificial demipower. Energized by the dweomer and using the relic as a conduit, the full power of the sacrificial demipower flows to the candidate demipower, and in so doing, elevates the candidate to full godhood. Or so the tablets promise. The tablets lie.

The actual magic resembles the formula in Iuz's possession as recorded on the tablets; however, the real formula requires the sacrificial demipower to willingly instigate the magic of transfer as a catalyst. Then, when the tablet dweomer concludes, the real candidate demipower speaks the capstone phrase in the Language Primeval, which initiates the transfer through the relic conduit. As it stands, only Vecna knows the phrase.

## Adventure Summary

The heroes of the adventure accidentally discover that Iuz is up to no good, and if obscure clues contain any truth, has come dangerously close to winning actual godhead. True heroes who wish to prevent such an event can do what they feel is necessary to stop Iuz.

On Iuz's trail, the heroes journey to Tovag Baragu, a mysterious site sacred to vanished Vecna. Arriving at the circle of stones, the heroes discover that Iuz and his forces have preceded them, leaving the temple in turmoil. An investigation of the stone circle reveals that Vecna cultists have created a crossplanar structure of sorts, using the dimensional portals of Tovag Baragu. Heroes who negotiate the strange temple find additional relics of Vecna, Vecna cultists, and remnants of Iuz's forces. When they finally penetrate to Tovag Baragu's heart, they find a powerful gate, magnified by the series of lesser portals that connect the transdimensional structure. It lies open to Vecna's realm of imprisonment, still open after Iuz's use of it a few weeks past.

Heroes who make the leap find themselves in Vecna's transplanted realm, which is known in whispers as Citadel Cavitius. Again Iuz has preceded the heroes; however, with such a large structure to contend with, many challenges face the heroes before they finally catch up to Iuz and attempt to stop him from executing his terrible plan. The heroes are in for a surprise when they discover that it is Vecna who is actually the demipower most likely to achieve godhood.

If Vecna ascends, PCs with relics of Vecna's former body are immune to his direct power. Able to withstand

Vecna's might by the protection of their relics, heroes are nonetheless stunned through the very same relics, and they can only watch as Vecna flexes his divine muscle. The new god forces the Demiplane of Dread to funnel him directly into Sigil, City of Doors, in the Outer Planes. Sigil is the supreme planar crossroads, and its underlying structure serves as some sort of keystone for the entire planar hierarchy.

The heroes quickly learn that ascension is only the first part of Vecna's agenda. In fact, Vecna appears to be making a play for the role of supreme deity of the multiverse, even if it means bringing down the current Planar Order in wrack and ruin.

Again, true heroes follow the newly ascended power, too new to godhood to properly manifest more than a single avatar. The City of Doors is under duress, and the whole multiverse begins to quake and shake. A full god should never stand within the City of Doors, yet Vecna's anomalous presence can't be denied. While the Lady of Pain stands idly by for mysterious reasons, Vecna sets himself up in the Armory. The heroes are all that stand in the way of total planar dissolution, but even if Vecna is finally ousted, the cosmology of the planes will never be the same.

## Involving the Player Characters

Among all the heroes, demipowers, and even gods of the multiverse who might step in to attempt to prevent the events presented above, why does it fall to the heroes of your game to take up the gauntlet? Moreover, with such titanic events playing out, why wouldn't aforementioned deities take notice and "do something?" There are two reasons. First, the quest has to fall to someone, and the powerful 10th- to 13th-level PCs of your game are pretty good candidates. Secondly, Vecna's no dummy. The two tablets in which he has invested so much effort are artifact-level items, and events bound up with the tablets are proof vs. divination and precognition. Even scrying is scrambled in tablets' vicinity. Thus, concerned gods have little chance to learn of the event beforehand. Once events are underway, heroes could possibly alert their own gods of the true danger when they realize what's actually happening. However, initial information is too sparse for alerted gods to do anything other than send their PC followers to learn more. Moreover, as the adventure unfolds, there is little opportunity for anyone other than the heroes to effect change because of the adventure structure. Once Vecna crashes Sigil, the multiverse's fate becomes particularly precarious. If any other deity entered the City of Doors' many gates, it would all come tumbling down that much sooner (and so Sigil's guardian, the Lady of Pain, keeps out all other godly interlopers, as she always has).



So, it's chance or fate that propels the heroes into this scenario, while many other worthies never learn of it. Dungeon Masters can utilize one or more than one of the following hooks, or make up their own reasons to explain the heroes' presence at (or en route) to Tovag Baragu.

### Vigilantes

The heroes discover that Iuz has vacated his traditional seat of power, along with a large force. No one knows where the demipower and his small army are bound. Though divinations are shrouded, a bungling servitor of Iuz (named Ignassi), requisitioned twenty casks of Greyhawk ale for Iuz's forces a month past. In the margin, Ignassi absentmindedly scribbled "re: celebration following Iuz's sack of Tovag Baragu and subsequent ascension." This clue can come to the heroes in a fashion engineered by the DM, or by an acquaintance in the brewing business who fulfilled the order a month ago, but just now forwarded the clue to one of the heroes. Should the heroes wish to research Tovag Baragu, see Book One: Tovag Baragu.

### Treasure Seekers

If the DM has the opportunity ahead of time, he can plant a treasure map in an unrelated adventure still being played by the PCs. This map shows an isolated site called Tovag Baragu within a desert land known as the Dry Steppes. Scribed on the map are these words:

"The congregation has returned, gathering Vecna's bodily relics, of which the Hand and Eye are only the most famous. Brother, if you have your bequeathed relic, bring it to your fellows at the Stone Circles, Tovag Baragu, where wonderful things are set to unfold."

This message was obviously sent from one Vecna cultist to another, and it somehow found its way to the location where the heroes discovered it. If analyzed for age in some manner, the writing is about ten years old. True treasure seekers are sure to follow this clue up. See Book One: Tovag Baragu for the information that the PCs can learn through research.

### Own a Relic

The PCs may own the *Hand* or *Eye of Vecna*, or they may have had dealings with it (or similar relics) in the past. In this case, they receive a message. The message may have been sent many years ago, but it has only recently reached its intended recipient. The message reads something like the following:

"Your contact with a relic of the Whispered One is known to us. If you bring it, or information regarding it, to us in our fastness of Tovag Baragu, a great reward shall be yours. This we swear before the Maimed Lord, Vecna."

The message is signed "The Disciples." Attempts at divination fail. Any sort of research brings the bulk of the heroes into contact with an NPC of the DM's choosing (or another PC), who is acting on information provided in any of the hooks. Additional information on Tovag Baragu follows in the next chapter. Dungeon Masters may need to adjust the text in the relevant sections if the PCs own one or more of the Vecnan artifacts!

### Divine Warning

Maybe these events are so significant that despite how well the tablets and Vecna's plan are shielded, rumor of the plot has come to a deity whom one or more of the heroes worship or revere. As deities are wont to do, one or more of the heroes are chosen to act in the deity's stead, so that they can discover what's really happening in Tovag Baragu. The method of warning is best left to the DM, who knows his or her PCs and their godly affiliations.

# Book One: Tovag Baragu

Tovag Baragu is an outwardly simple structure. Though it resembles a circle of stone obelisks and rude archways, many of the arches contain portals to other times and places. Almost a decade ago, the Stone Circles began to manifest even stranger properties, as presented under "Ins and Outs of Tovag Baragu."

## Researching Tovag Baragu

Though the information below is presented in digestible bits perfect for rewarding hero research, the information is also a good introduction for DMs new to Tovag Baragu. Recent events in the vicinity are noted.

- Tovag Baragu ("Navel of the Oerth," translated from the Bakluni tongue), also known as the Stone Circles, is found on the salty shore of Lake Udrukankar, deep in the heart of the Dry Steppes. It is a mysterious structure of massive stone blocks.
- Tovag Baragu is ancient, although its precise origins are unknown. Most scholars believe it is the only surviving structure of an old human empire. An event known as the Invoked Devastation destroyed that empire.
- Steppe nomads who inhabit the locale hold the Stone Circles to be holy ground. They could take a dim view of strangers poking around the pillars.
- People attribute strange magical powers to Tovag Baragu. Explorers' journals describe how distant scenes were magnified when viewed through the stone arches, while some scenes may have been scryed magically. Tovag Baragu may also affect the local weather.
- Some believe that Tovag Baragu can scry distant times and planes, and that it might even provide a gate to these locations.
- Tovag Baragu is somehow important to a cult of Vecna worshipers. According to the lore of some recordkeepers, the cult enjoyed a resurgence almost twenty years ago, although it was stifled. About seven to ten years ago the faithful congregated once more, and those who answered the call supposedly convened at Tovag Baragu, where they remain.

## Ins and Outs of Tovag Baragu

Claims that the Stone Circles can open portals to distant planes and, more importantly, distant times, are true. Up until recently, the portals opened in a random and uncontrollable manner. However, Vecna cultists who returned to Tovag Baragu ten years ago seemed to discover the secret of opening new portals, though the

location that each portal opened to remained random. In truth, the "secret" of manipulation of the portals ties more directly to a cosmological shift instead of the discovery of an arcane ritual. In fact, Tovag Baragu's original ability of allowing access to the future is partly to blame for the proliferation of parallels.

In the future, an event so catastrophic occurs that all the planes of existence are shaken (see Book Three: City of Doors). The repercussions of this event propagated into the past and altered Tovag Baragu in the present.

Now, Tovag Baragu accesses dozens of dimensionally separated, parallel versions of itself. These parallels are fractures in reality, though each location is set in its own half-world. These half-worlds are *not* small demiplanes that share metaphysical real estate with the Ethereal Plane. They are distinct planes, but they remain unfinished, or at least not completely realized. Though the event remains mysterious, lack of understanding hasn't slowed the Vecna cultists. Most of the half-worlds extend only a few dozen miles from the parallel version of Tovag Baragu they encompass. At their edges, these planes give way to an echoing void, which proves lethal for any hero that makes this final plunge.

The cultists have moved into the fractured Tovag Baragu, and over the past decade, they have created a transdimensional fortress. There, many "rooms" are accessed through archway portals, and each such passage burrows ever deeper into a nested series of half-worlds within half-worlds. Still, the portals do not waver, and it is easy to map an analog of the transdimensional structure claimed by the cultists (see Tovag





Baragu Transdimensional Map). Additional information concerning archway portals and how they work is presented below under the Area Descriptions section.

Despite fractured realities and uncertain connections between inner and outer planes within specific Tovag Baragu parallels, undead function normally, priests receive their spells without incident, and enchanted weapons do not waver in their power. Presumably, the portals' connections provide sufficient attachment with the Prime to cancel effects that might otherwise occur.

## Investigating Tovag Baragu

Iuz moved himself and his strike force to Tovag Baragu through a series of teleport hops. High-level heroes may find this or similarly direct methods the easiest way to access the site. To a large extent, the DM's choice for Tovag Baragu's exact location will influence high-level players' travel arrangements, and as such, those details are left to the DM. (If the DM has access to past Vecna adventures, he or she can use the information within them to help. Otherwise, the DM can do as he or she chooses.)

If playing the adventure as a one-shot game, the DM can skip the preliminaries and begin the adventure on Tovag Baragu's doorstep. In this instance, parcel out the

points described under Researching Tovag Baragu to the PCs.

## Random Encounters

The encounters in Tovag Baragu occur in two distinct zones (see the map). The zones are designated Baragu Network (B) and Adytum (A), and they represent the subjective level of reality possessed by the half-worlds of each zone. The Baragu Network includes the area around Tovag Baragu in a radius of about 1 mile. The Baragu Network also incorporates the areas in keyed entries 1–13. The Adytum includes the deepest areas, which are described in the keyed entries 14–63.

### Wandering Monster Table, By Zone

| B | A | Encounters (1d20)                   |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1 | – | Rogue ferox, (2d4), area 4          |
| 2 | – | True ghouls, (1d4+2), Appendix      |
| 3 | – | Centaur rangers, (1d2+1), area 4    |
| 4 | 1 | Ogre warriors, (3d6+2), Appendix    |
| 5 | 2 | Fingers of Vecna, (1d4+1), Appendix |
| 6 | 3 | Teeth of Vecna, (1d6+1), Appendix   |
|   | 4 | Stone guardians, (2d4), Appendix    |
|   | 5 | Trolls, (1d4), area 20              |
|   | 6 | Carrion Shamblers, (1d2), area 32   |

**Using the Table:** Every six hours the PCs remain within or near Tovag Baragu, roll 1d20. On a 1–6, an encounter occurs. Any result above 6 indicates that no encounter occurs during that four-hour period. If an encounter is indicated, use the number just rolled and reference the table above, according to the current zone of the heroes. For instance, if the players are in area 5, they are in the Baragu Network (B). Cross-referencing the B column, their roll of 2 indicates an encounter with true ghouls. However, heroes in area 26 are in the Adytum (A), and a roll of 2 indicates an encounter with Fingers of Vecna.

Stats for each encounter are not reprinted above, but notes indicate where a similar creature's stats can be found. The number in parentheses indicates the number of monsters encountered.

## Area Descriptions

The "outermost" version of Tovag Baragu and the parallel versions that make up the areas of the transdimensional structure are presented in numbered entries hereafter. Each numbered entry correlates with the map.

### 0. Surroundings

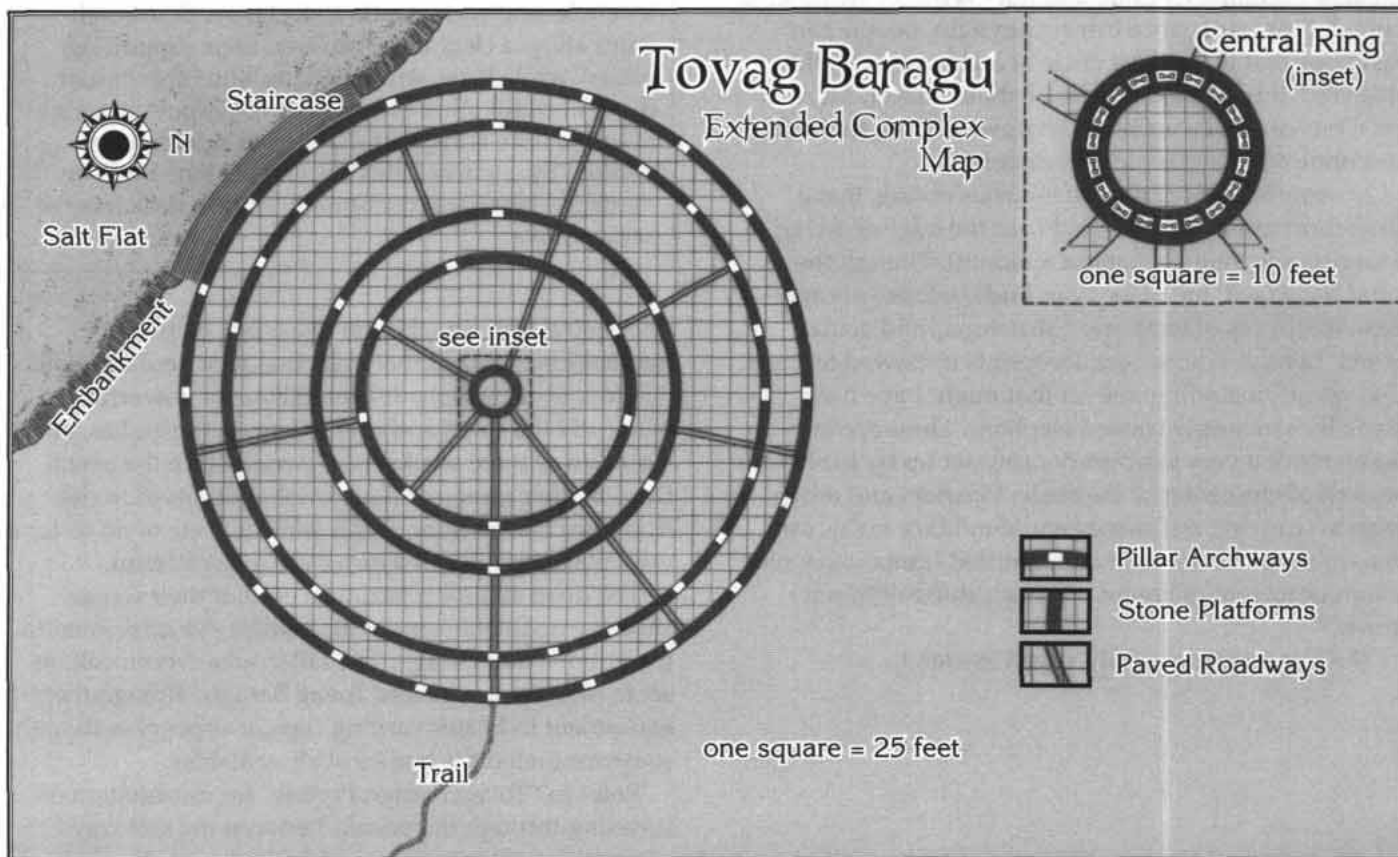
**Dry Steppes:** The Stone Circles are located in the Dry Steppes, a vast semiarid, grass-covered plain. In places, the Steppes are lightly wooded, but near Tovag

Baragu, even the grass has a difficult time of it. Steppe nomads wander the grassland, husbanding small herds of buffalo and other meat animals. Nomads include human and centaur tribes. Given to gathering at Tovag Baragu for a yearly festival, the nomads stay clear of the site at other times, except as noted in the keyed entries below.

**Lake Udrukankar:** Tovag Baragu lies astride a vast salt lake called Udrukankar. Long ago, the lake was alive, but now it's nothing more than a dead sea, sunken and surrounded by parched salt flats.

**Tovag Baragu Complex:** Refer to the Tovag Baragu Extended Complex Map. The inmost hub is keyed to area 1.

An artificial circle, which is tiled in pale stone blocks nearly a mile in diameter, is situated at the edge of a salt flat. Sand, windblown soil, and encroaching salt cover much of the circle. Closer to the center of the vast circle, huge, smooth obelisks of the same white stone form a series of smaller concentric circles. The pillars are entirely featureless, though some are fluted. Each pillar towers 40 feet into the sky, and many of them form impressively high archways. Roadways of the ubiquitous white stone rise a foot above the detritus, connecting the various circle segments, from edge to center.

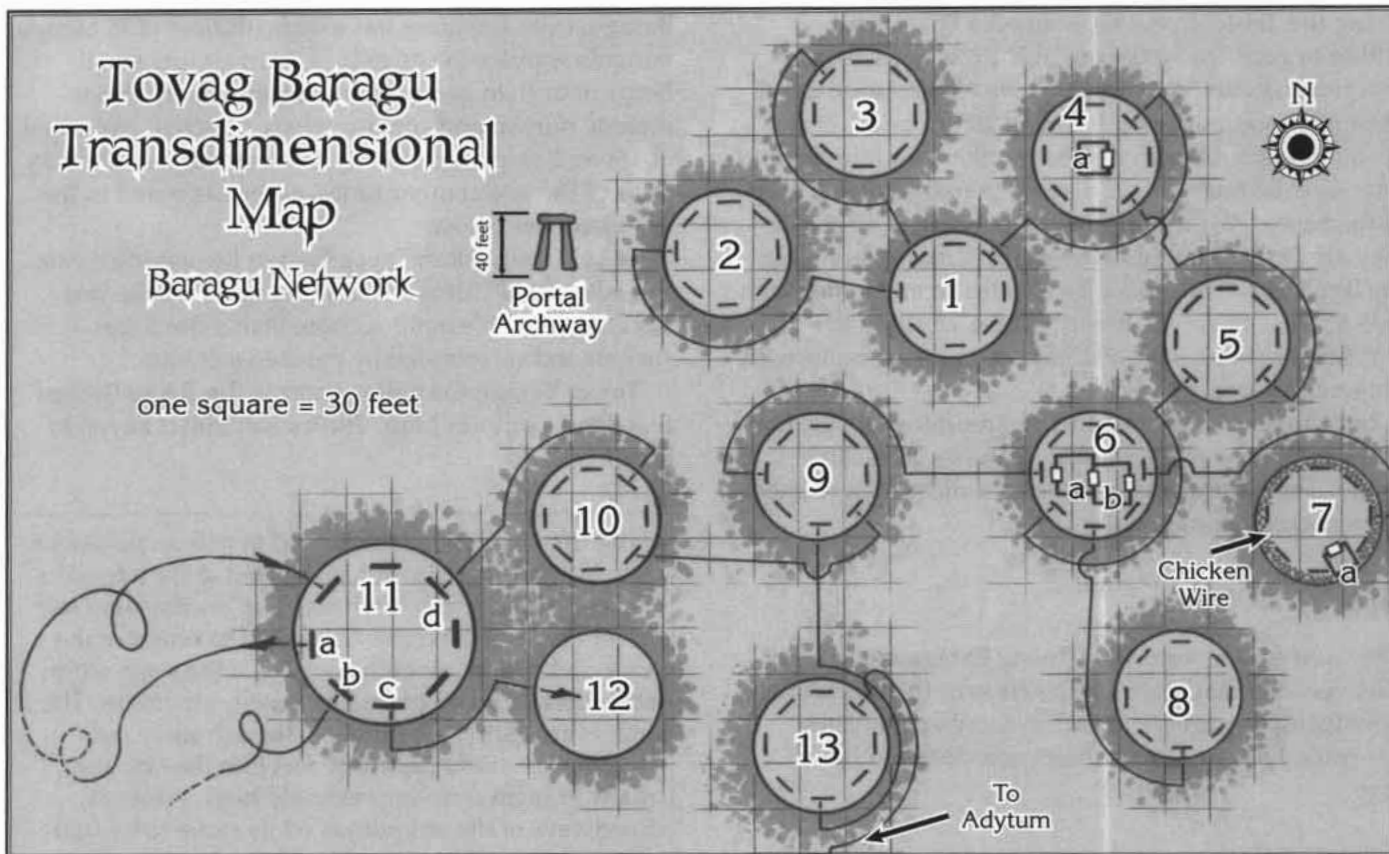




# Tovag Baragu Transdimensional Map

Baragu Network

one square = 30 feet



Casual observation reveals that despite encroachment of the elements, the circle remains immune to erosion. The expanse is completely flat, and not even a single pillar is canted. From a distance during daylight, people can easily see that the inmost circle of archways is thickly clustered, forming a diameter of about 90 feet. Moreover, bits of smoke visibly waft upward from the center, and unmoving forms are also discernible.

An examination of the outer circles reveals that a large force must have camped near the edge of Tovag Baragu some time ago (about a month). Though the wind has raged, the heroes can find evidence of campfires, footprints of temporary structures, and actual prints. Besides booted feet, footprints of clawed feet are also visible, including one set that might have been made by a viciously clawed elephant. These are the remnants of a very temporary camp set up by Iuz before he entered the center of the circle. Warriors and others used to studying the movement of military forces can make a rough estimate of one hundred humanoids, plus some contingent of bound monsters difficult to pin down.

The inmost circle is fully keyed in area 1.

## 1. Tovag Baragu Prime

Eighteen archways bound the central 90-foot-diameter circle, and each stands 40 feet high. Some archways allow a clear view between their supporting pillars, while haze, strange lights, and other visual distortions fill other throughways. Unmoving forms litter the hub, lying as if flung from a detonation marked by a scarred and blackened stone tile. The damaged block still continually emits a dark haze of acrid smoke.

The central hub was the site of a quick battle. Five humanoids of mixed race and class lie where they fell, laid low by a sneakily delivered blast of powerful magic. By the smell and rot evident on the bodies, at least two or three weeks have passed since the event. Despite the passage of time, smoke continues to rise from the charred floor, and it will continue to do so for a year, marking Iuz's first strike on Tovag Baragu.

The dead all bear a tattoo on each of their wrists showing a skeletal hand with a single eye implanted in the palm—Vecna's sign. The fallen were Vecna cultists set to monitor access into Tovag Baragu. Though their equipment indicates varying class, it appears as though someone looted the bodies of all valuables.

Refer to "Tovag Baragu Portals" for information on traveling through the portals between the archways.

### Tovag Baragu Portals

As shown by lines on the Tovag Baragu Map, the parallel versions of the core circle are dimensionally connected. The portals are usually generated between two obelisks. The connecting lines on the map indicate that a passage through one portal egresses travelers through the same spatial portal in the parallel. While spatial congruence is preserved through the portals, other conditions often vary widely.

Travelers access a portal by stepping between two obelisks, only to find themselves stepping out of a similarly placed portal in a parallel Tovag Baragu. Travelers can stand half in one parallel and half in another if they stop between two portals. Similarly, they can stretch a rope between two parallels via a connecting portal.

A traveler cannot teleport or pass ethereally through a portal to a parallel. In fact, unless specifically noted otherwise, most of the half-world parallels do not even connect to the Border Ethereal Plane, and thus, no ethereal phasing is even possible.

Most Tovag Baragu parallels contain eighteen archways (thirty-six obelisks). Of those, only eight archways are ever likely to possess a portal. As shown on the map, these arches are equidistantly spaced. Among those likely archways, only a few archways in each parallel actually contain active portals, but only prior knowledge or experimentation indicates which of the eight archways are portals and which are merely putting on a display. Active and quiescent portals alike produce the following visual effects, rolled randomly by the DM if necessary (observation alone is insufficient to identify a portal from an inactive archway):

#### Portal Facades

| 1d6 | Effect   |
|-----|--|
| 1   | No observable effect   |
| 2   | Distant objects seem $\times 2$ as far   |
| 3   | Distant objects seem $\times 10$ closer  |
| 4   | Sheen of neon violet ripples between obelisks every few minutes  |
| 5   | Curtain of impenetrable darkness hangs between obelisks  |
| 6   | Shows a DM-fabricated scene, unless actually active, in which case portal reveals a location in the connected half-world geographically close to the parallel Tovag Baragu |

Inactive portals could be energized, leading to new half-worlds; however, the cultists are happy with the current size and layout of their temple.

The cultists who inhabit the current incarnation of Tovag Baragu always access the portal leading to area 4 from here, because the portals leading to Baragu parallels 2 and 3 are traps for the unwary and uninitiated.

### 2. Sea of Blood

Cold seawater extends to the limit of sight in all directions, completely drowning the otherwise familiar circle of Tovag Baragu. Faint glimmers of light reach down from the uncertain surface above.

This parallel contains a structure identical to Tovag Baragu Prime, drowned beneath a Lake Udrunkankar so swollen that it merged with the closest ocean about a thousand years past. Seawater and air doesn't pour through the portal on its own, but it accompanies travelers in either direction in small quantities (as an explosion of trailing bubbles, or a great splash of seawater).

In this half-world, reality extends only for about 30 miles in all directions. At the periphery of the half-world, water streams into the void in an impressive waterfall, though the sea level never drops. Where physics holds sway, little differentiates the "land" surrounding the parallel Baragu from a standard shallow sea floor, complete with sea life. Extraordinarily large sea creatures, both natural and magical, share the wine-dark sea with ferocious sahuagin.



The sea surface is only about 100 feet above, but that is impossible to assess without swimming up to check. (DMs should remember that the archways stand about 40 feet tall.) Also, light or dark conditions prevail depending on the time of day in Baragu Prime.

Unprepared heroes who enter this portal must make a saving throw vs. paralyzation to avoid becoming completely disoriented for 1 round, which could become a problem as far as breath conservation goes (see "Quick Water Rules"). Of more immediate concern are all the sahuagin who hunt the area. Sahuagin are humanoids who appear to have been crossed with sharks some time long ago. The Vecna cultists tend to throw prisoners through the portal at random times, assuring that a few sahuagin are always on patrol in hopes of a meal.

Remains of past sahuagin meals on this side of the portal include a small patrol Iuz sent to scout out this portal two weeks past. Remains include gnawed humanoid and ogre bones, rotting clothing, a few pendants showing Iuz's symbol (a grinning human skull), an unbroken *potion of extra healing*, and a *staff of striking* hidden amid the debris left by feasting sahuagin.

**Development:** The sahuagin latch onto anything, probe or person, who enters the portal. If a probe (such as a rope or a pole) comes into sight, the sahuagin

attempt to pull through whoever might be holding onto the other side. (Use an opposed Strength check; the combined sahuagin force equals a Strength of 21.) If a person looks into the portal, the sahuagin descend on the poor fool with pirhanalike frenzy. The nearby sahuagin priestess simultaneously attempts to immobilize heroes with her spells (and she casts a *dispel magic* on water-breathing effects employed by the PCs, if any). Should a remote probe convince PCs to avoid this portal, roused sahuagin venture into the realm of air for a brief foray, and they attempt to steal at least one PC, bringing that poor sod back into their watery realm as a tasty treat.

**Sahuagin hunters (18):** AC 5; MV 12, swim 24; HD 2+2; hp 18 each; THAC0 19; #AT 4 (bite/rake/rake/poisoned trident); Dmg 1d4/1d4/1d4/1d6+1 and poison; SA poison inflicts 5 points of damage with successful save or 15 points with failed save, can sense foes in water even in complete darkness or even if foes are invisible; SW -2 saving throw penalty vs. light-based attacks, -2 saving throw penalty vs. magical fire and suffer 1 extra point per die of magical fire damage; SZ M (6' tall); ML steady (12); Int average (10); AL LE; XP 175 each.

**Sahuagin priestess:** AC 5; MV 12, Sw 24; HD 5+5; hp 45; THAC0 15; #AT 4 (bite/rake/rake/poisoned trident); Dmg 1d4/1d4/1d4/1d6+1 and poison; SA poison inflicts 5 points of damage with successful save or 15 points with failed save, can sense foes in water even in darkness or even if foes are invisible; SW -2 saving throw penalty vs. light-based attacks, -2 saving throw penalty vs. magical fire and suffer 1 extra point per die of magical fire damage; SZ M (6' 7" tall); ML steady (12); Int high (14); AL LE; XP 2,000.

**Special Equipment:** a few trophy skulls-on-chains and a wand of frost (12 charges) taken from Iuz's followers.

**Spells (5/3/1):** 1st—*bless, cause fear, curse, darkness, sanctuary*; 2nd—*hold person* (x3); 3rd—*dispel magic*.

### 3. Grasp of the Earth

Only a few dozen red, swollen stars light the black void above. Despite the darkness, it's warm and humid, and an odor redolent of garlic and cinnamon wafts through the air. Except for a few out-of-place miniature pillars here and there, the familiar high archways of Tovag Baragu bounds the wide stone circle.

This fractured reality is best left alone, although it serves Vecna cultists as a trap for those attempting to gain entry into the heart of the transdimensional structure without an invitation (and therefore, directions). It is always dark in the parallel, but strangely warm and

#### Quick Water Rules

*Movement, proficient and unencumbered:*  $\frac{1}{2}$  movement rate  $\times$  5 in yards.

*Movement, proficient and lightly encumbered:*  $\frac{1}{2}$  movement rate  $\times$  5 in yards.

*Movement, proficient and moderately encumbered or heavier:* Cannot swim; sinks.

*Movement, not proficient and unencumbered:*  $\frac{1}{2}$  movement rate  $\times$  5 in yards.

*Movement, not proficient and lightly encumbered or heavier:* Cannot swim; sinks.

*Movement, wearing metal armor:* Cannot swim; sinks.

*Hold breath, prepared:*  $\frac{1}{2}$  Constitution in rounds.

*Hold breath, encumbered and/or exerting self:*  $\frac{1}{2}$  Constitution in rounds.

*Hold breath, exerting and unprepared:*  $\frac{1}{2}$  Constitution in rounds (minimum 1 round). When breath is let go, victim drowns next round.

**Underwater melee:** Only thrusting attacks are effective. Heroes are assessed a -4 penalty to initiative and all attacks suffer a -4 penalty to hit. In addition, all weapon specialization effects are nullified. At DM's discretion, some weapons wielded by land-dwellers inflict reduced damage.

**Underwater missiles:** Thrown weapons are ineffective, and crossbows operate at  $\frac{1}{2}$  normal range.

humid. Beyond the circle, reality holds sway only for about 300 yards before giving way to the void. Within that area, stony stalagmites poke up from ground in a seemingly random dispersion. Two such stalagmites are situated within 20 feet of the portal connecting to area 1.

The stalagmites are not what they appear to be. Instead, they're living creatures—the result of a “union” of a mind flayer and a roper. The resultant monster is called a urophion. The creature has six tendrils, and, like a roper, appears as a rocky protuberance to simple observation. However, unlike a roper, a urophion hungers for gray matter, and its tendrils act much like illithid tentacles. Vecna cultists keep the two nearby urophions well fed.

Remains of past meals on this side of the portal include a small patrol sent by Iuz to scout out this portal two weeks past. Remains include two drow elf corpses, sans brains. The bodies all bear Iuz's grinning skull sign. The corpses have obviously been looted, though the looters are nowhere in evidence.

**Development:** Urophion tendrils can reach up to 50 feet and through the portal. In the event a remote PC probe convinces PCs to give this parallel a miss, the urophions attack through the portal with their tendrils. The urophion can melee at a distance with its tendrils, while its body resides safely up to 50 feet away.

**Urophions (2):** AC 0; MV 3; HD 12; hp 96 each; THAC0 9; #AT 6 (tendrils); Dmg 1d4+2×6; SA organic infravision, opponents suffer a -2 penalty to surprise if attacked by an urophion, psionic powers; SD ignore lightning, half damage from cold; SW -4 penalty to saves vs. fire; MR 45%; SZ L (9' tall); ML fearless (20); Int genius (17-18); AL LE; XP 9,000 each.

**Special Abilities:** Psionic abilities—can use these “spell-like” abilities 1/round at will: *suggestion*, *charm person*, *charm monster*, *ESP*, *levitate*. Can mind blast 1/turn. The mind blast power affects a cone shaped area 60' long, 5' wide in front of the mind flayer, and 20' wide at the far end of the effect. All within the cone must make a saving throw vs. wand or be stunned and unable to act for 3d4 rounds.

**Notes:** A tendril is AC 0, requiring 6 points of damage from a single hit of an edged weapon to be severed. Each successful tendril attack inflicts damage and holds the target (removable with a successful Bend Bars/Lift Gates roll by the victim). When at least one tendril holds the victim, the victim must make an opposed Strength check (urophions have a Strength of 21) or be pulled through the portal. In addition, each succeeding tendril attack by the urophion accrues a cumulative +1 bonus to hit (to a maximum of +5 to hit for the last attack). Once four tendrils have attached to the victim, the urophion has sufficiently immobilized

the struggling target to draw its brain out in the next round. Against a victim stunned by the psionic attack, the urophion inserts its tentaclelike tendrils into the victim's skull and draws out its brain, killing the victim in 1 round (the urophion can't use its blast through the portal). A drawn-out brain is immediately drawn back by one of the tendrils to the urophion's mouth, where it is eaten, while the remaining tendrils continue to melee with the victim's companions, if any.

#### 4. Checkpoint

The familiar wide stone circle of Tovag Baragu stands in the midst of a lush rainforest. Mighty boles reaching up hundreds of feet sport thick blue vegetation. The jungle trees curtail sight outside the diameter of the extended circular complex. Within the inmost circle of archways stands a 20-foot-square, 30-foot-high crenellated stone tower. Around the tower, extensive bloodstains and debris of conflict are readily apparent. Beyond the inmost circle of archways, several large hide tents are visible.

This parallel served the cultists as a guard post. Beyond the circle, reality holds sway for about 100 miles in all directions before giving way to the void. Within that space, a weirdly colored tropical rainforest is stalked by gargantuan dinosaurs, which usually never enter the pale stone of Tovag Baragu.



Iuz and his forces killed the guards originally posted here by the cultists, and they moved further into the transdimensional temple. Since then, a few surviving cultists have gathered from other parts of the temple and holed themselves up in the tower. In addition, a band of centaur nomads from the Prime have penetrated to this point, and they have set camp beyond the inmost archways. The nomads view the disruption caused by Iuz's forces as the perfect opportunity for a holy cleansing: the sweeping of Tovag Baragu clear of the profane Vecna cultists.

**Development:** The wily nomads note the heroes' interaction with the Vecna cultists in the guard tower while hidden in their tents. If the heroes become "amiable" with the hated cultists, the nomads launch an attack (they can't get to the guards up in their tower, but they can reach the heroes!). Unfortunately, the cultists do not help the PCs if the nomads attack. On the other hand, should the heroes fight the cultists, the nomads view the heroes more leniently, and they emerge if the heroes are victorious. The worst-case scenario pits the PCs against both the cultists and the nomads, but only particularly haughty and nonpolitical characters are likely to draw such a response.

**Guard Tower:** The entry to the tower has a *wizard lock* spell (cast at 20th level) placed on it. The entry provides access to the hollow undertower and the stairway to the top. The tower is enchanted such that those who stand on top can see invisible creatures. Furthermore, the center 10-foot-diameter of the open tower top is sunken 5 feet, and it holds a *minor globe of invulnerability*, which is not normally visible from the ground due to the tower's height. The *globe* is the perfect defense against *fireball* spells thrown from below targeted upon the center of the tower (*fireballs* targeted outside the 10-foot-diameter center of the tower are not directly affected). The crenellations offer 50% cover to the guardians (-4 to all attack rolls).

The tower holds eight cultists. The leader of the surviving cultists, Ugwaerel (see area 61), recently posted these replaced guards here. The guards (which includes Noal at the time the heroes approach) verbally challenge interloping heroes. Should the heroes indicate enmity toward Vecna or Vecna's cultists, the guards attack. Should the heroes claim to be "hunting Iuz" or something similar, the guards remain suspicious and may refrain from violence, but they first quiz the heroes. They wonder if the characters are undercover agents of the cult. Quick thinking and believable roleplaying on the players' parts could stave off immediate conflict. The guards know the following facts:

- Iuz and a large force of humanoids and monsters attacked the temple. Though many of his forces were slain, Iuz triumphed, and his forces penetrated into

the Adytum, where the Disciples of Vecna are located. Ugwaerel, a potent priestess, leads the Disciples.

- These guards are not high enough in the cult to be considered Disciples (instead, they are of the rank just below Teeth and Fingers), and thus they have never been allowed access to the Adytum.
- Yes, it's true that relics of the demigod Vecna are enshrined in the Adytum.
- Savages from the Dry Steppe have begun to invade the temple, but it is "only a matter of time" before they are driven forth or slain for defiling Vecna's Temple, Tovag Baragu.

The cultist guards will not accompany heroes or give them particularly detailed directions, even should their tenuous alliance hold.

**Nomad Tents:** A group of twelve nomad centaurs, their leader Balophan, and their pet Ferox (related to a mongoose, but grown to huge proportions) have penetrated to this parallel. They have set up camp in five tents in the extended circle of Tovag Baragu. Balophan, a ranger of some renown, leads the nomads. The nomads know the following facts:

- Cultists of Vecna have taken over sacred Tovag Baragu, and they must be removed. The leaders of the cult are called the Disciples of Vecna, and they are ensconced further within the parallels. A powerful woman named Ugwaerel leads them.
- Iuz is not beloved of the nomads, but the nomads would be stupid to ignore the opportunity left in Iuz's wake.
- Iuz is set to destroy Vecna, and that can't be bad.

Heroes who befriend the nomads can add doughty Balophan to their number, while the rest of the nomads remain encamped in this parallel to monitor cult movements in and out of Tovag Baragu. If the heroes return to this area after an absence of more than one day, they find the nomad encampment wiped out and footprints of gargantuan sauropods trampled into the ground.

**Muquetho, male human M14 (Vecna cultist):** AC 0 (*cloak of protection* +2, *Dex* bonus, *armor* spell, *staff of power*); MV 12; hp 31; THAC0 16 (14 with *staff of power*); #AT 1 (*staff of power*); Dmg 1d6+2; SZ M (5' 8" tall); ML elite (14); Str 8, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 18, Wis 11, Cha 12; AL NG; XP 11,000.

**Special Equipment:** *wand of fire* (12 charges), 2 *potions of healing*, *ring of mind shielding*, 342 gp.

**Spells (5/5/5/4/4/2/1):** 1st—*armor*, *magic missile* (×2), *identify* (×2); 2nd—*mirror image*, *rope trick*, *scare* (×2), *wizard lock*; 3rd—*dispel magic* (×2), *fireball* (×2), *water breathing*; 4th—*charm monster*, *dimension door*, *ice storm*, *Leomund's secure shelter*; 5th—*cone of cold*, *magic jar*, *pass-*

wall, teleport; 6th—contingency, invisible stalker; 7th—delayed blast fireball.

*Notes:* Muquetho is no fool. If he is summoned to come to the tower's top by Noal, he'll prepare his *contingency/teleport* combination. If he reaches 5 hit points or less, the spell takes him well outside the bounds of Tovag Baragu and places him in the care of a cultist priest far away.

**Noal Dicken of Argo, male human C7 (Vecna cultist):** AC -1 (*platemail* +2, shield, and Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 40; THAC0 16 (14 with *mace* +2); #AT 1 (*mace* +2); Dmg 1d6+3; SA cast spells (see equipment), turn undead; SZ M (6' 1" tall); ML champion (16); Str 13, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 17, Cha 10; AL LG; XP 2,000.

*Special Equipment:* *knucklebone of channeling* (nonrelic bone allows worshiper to channel spells from trapped Vecna at full level), 123 gp.

*Spells (5/5/3/1):* 1st—*command, cure light wounds* (×3), *detect evil*; 2nd—*aid, augury, barkskin, hold person, know alignment*; 3rd—*cure deafness, prayer, remove curse*; 4th—*cure serious wounds*.

**Vecna cultists, male and female humans, F7 (6):** AC 4 (studded leather, Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 55 each; THAC0 14 (12 with Dex (bow only), 10 within 30-foot range); #AT 2; Dmg 1d6/1d6 or 1d6+2/1d6+2 (longbow or longbow within 30'); SA bow specialists; SZ M (6' tall); ML average (9); Int very (12); AL N; XP 650 each.

**Balophan, male centaur, R7:** AC -1 (Dex bonus and *studded leather barding* +1); MV 18; hp 60; THAC0 14 (12 with Str bonus and *longsword* +1, 12 with Str bonus and *shortsword* +1, 12 with hooves, 7 vs. ogres); #AT 4 (*longsword* +1/*shortsword* +1/*hoof*/*hoof*); Dmg 1d8+2/1d6+2/1d6+2/1d6+2 (Str bonus); SA fight two-handed with no penalty, Tracking (18), Move Silently (53%) and Hide in Shadows (65%) in natural surroundings (chances halved in city or dungeon settings), animal friendship, +4 to hit vs. racial enemy (ogres); SZ L (9' tall); ML elite (14); Str 17, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 15; AL N; XP 3,000.

**Centaur nomads (12):** AC 4; MV 18; HD 4; hp 32 each; THAC0 17 (16 with Str bonus); #AT 3 (spear/hoof/hoof); Dmg 1d6+1/1d6+1/1d6+1 (Str bonus); SZ L (8' tall); ML elite (13); Int average (10); AL N; XP 175.

**Ferox (huge mongoose):** AC 6; MV 18, swim 9; HD 10; hp 80; THAC0 10; #AT 3 (claw/claw/bite); Dmg 1d10+2/1d10+2/2d12+2; SA can jump up to 30' on level ground, tree to tree, or obelisk to obelisk; SZ H (14' long) ML elite (13); Int low (5); AL N; XP 1,400.

## 5. Twisted

The familiar circle is not; it is strangely twisted, as if the pillars were pulled like taffy, then reset. The stone paving bulges unevenly in places, and some of the archways have fallen. Racing red clouds paint the sky, strewn with ruby bolts of energy discharge. Utter darkness holds sway in the extended circle. Several unmoving figures, both humanoid and monstrous, lie in various positions within and outside the inmost circle. Other figures move out in the shadows of the extended circle and group more or less around the dead.

This parallel, never too steady, starts dissolving in the wake of Iuz's attack. Before then, daily rituals by the cultists kept the shrinking void at bay. Now, reality contracts, held "open" only by the aperture of the Stone Circles. Without maintenance (which any cultist could perform, given several hours a day), this link in the transdimensional temple collapses in 3d4 months. After that, the portal connections may find a new configuration, or, all the deeper parallels could be lost forever.

Signs of conflict within the inmost circle include the stripped bodies of eight cultists (all with Vecna eye-in-hand tattoos), three particularly nasty looking ogres wearing ogre-size banded mail (some with Iuz grinning skull paraphernalia), a few dead centaurs, and several spots of drying protoplasm impossible to identify.

Feeding on the dead are true ghouls, escaped from their pen (see area 7). Live prey draws the ghouls like moths to a flame. Ghouls follow heroes through portals if not dealt with.

**True ghouls (3):** AC 3; hp 36 each; THAC0 15; #AT 3 or 1; Dmg 1d6/1d6/1d8 or by weapon.

## 6. Crossroads

The familiar wide stone circle of Tovag Baragu stands in the midst of a hilly meadow. Grassy downs extend to the horizon in all directions, but the overcast sky limits vision. Two stone buildings stand on the stone paving within the inmost circle of archways. One is a stable and the other some sort of barracks or inn.

This parallel connects four others, allowing the cultists to use it as a crossroads. It is perfect for stabling beasts of burden and serving as a waystop.

**A. Stable:** Unfortunately, something has ripped the doors of the stable from their hinges, and all the horses, donkeys, and stranger beasts within are either slain or fled. Worse, the carrion has drawn several true ghouls (who've escaped their pen in area 7), and any investigation of the barracks draws an attack.



**B. Inn:** The two-story structure is in disarray. The doors and lower windows are smashed, and the tables, bar, and kitchen are completely ransacked (though a few small bottles of spirits and a half keg of bitter are found, if searched for). The bodies of cultists, a single ogre warrior, and several mercenaries (part of Iuz's force) lie where they fell in battle. All the bodies show signs of ghoulish feeding.

The doorway to the upper floor is barred from within, and all the windows are covered on the inside with black cloth attached by many nails. A horrible smell of intense rot pervades the floor, but the heroes find no obvious source. Five rooms appear empty to a cursory search, but someone is here. A special mercenary separated from Iuz's main force has set herself up in the upper story for the present. The vampire Ilya Noma has created a crude coffin (a cavity in the floor filled with earth) beneath one of the beds. Happy to be free of Iuz, neither does she desire to join the heroes or their cause—in fact, she's become a bit thirsty, and she regards exploring PCs and NPCs as nothing more than prey. Ilya prefers guerilla tactics as opposed to a straight-up fight, if the PCs are strong.

**True ghouls (6):** AC 3; hp 36 each; THAC0 15; #AT 3 or 1; Dmg 1d6/1d6/1d8 or by weapon.

**Ilya Noma, Vampire:** AC 1; MV 12, fly 18 (C); HD 8+3; hp 67; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4 and energy drain (blow or touch); SA *charm* gaze (-2 penalty on victim's save vs. spell), energy drain (2 levels with each successful attack), summon 10d10 rats or bats, Strength 18/76; SD regeneration (3 hit points/round), immune to non-magical weapons, *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, poison, paralysis, and death magic, half damage from cold or electricity, assume *gaseous form* as per spell, *shape change* (to bat) as per spell, *spider climb* as per spell, automatically assumes *gaseous form* if reduced to 0 hit points; SW can be turned, repelled by garlic, mirrors, and forcefully presented holy symbols, suffers 1d6+1 points of damage when splashed with holy water or struck by holy symbol; SZ M (5' tall); ML champion (16); Int exceptional (15); AL CE; XP 8,000.



## 7. Ghoulbreak

A single moon, bloated with yellow-green radiance, lights the chill night. Rusted chicken wire gleams in the moon's gibbous light, stretched tight around the familiar inmost circle of obelisks. Broken grave-stones fill the plain in all directions beyond the extended circle. Dimly visible humanoid figures, hundreds of them, lurch and stumble among the tombstones. A faded wooden shack stands between two obelisk archways, backed up to the chicken wire fence. The bodies of several humanoids are strewn between the entry portal and the shack.

If the cultists could have removed this parallel from their network, they would have. Failing removal, they've wrapped the 40-foot-high archways with an encircling cage of narrow mesh wire and chicken wire to keep the natives out. The natives are predominately represented by unending hordes of true ghouls. They roam the stygian graveyard beyond the chicken wire, starving, fighting among each other, and grieving their aeon-long torment below the unmoving moon. Thankfully, they don't bother to test the chicken wire, undoubtedly seeing it as a more substantial barrier than it truly is. Should the heroes press out beyond chicken wire, they find undecipherable inscriptions on the tombstones (scribed in the Language Primeval, should any hero even recognize it), and ever more ghouls. It's possible that greater ghoulish powers are similarly abroad in the unending night, but reality only holds sway for a 66-mile radius before edging into the void.

The bodies show signs of ghoulish feeding and are stripped of all valuables. Most of the bodies are those of cultists, but a few human mercenary fighters with Iuz's stamp are also represented. The heroes' mere entry into this parallel is enough to get the attention of ghouls responsible for the deaths of all assembled; see below.

**Ghoulshack:** This large shack backs up to the stretched chicken wire fence. The shack's rear is a ghoulish lock system, designed to allow cultists to shuttle single ghouls from the surrounding parallel and into the safe enclosure for use as easy labor once commanded. However, Iuz's attack disrupted operations, and now the ghoulish lock is jammed open.

The PCs' entry into this realm draws 1d4 true ghouls through the open ghoulish lock after 2 turns. After that, 1d4 true ghouls emerge through the ghoulish lock every 5 rounds. This continues, even if the heroes leave this realm, until fully 100 ghouls come through. These 100 divide into packs of 10, and they begin to hunt the heroes, and any other living thing, through the portal system. Should the heroes reenter this parallel, more ghouls are attracted as just described.

The heroes can attempt to prevent this invasion by unjamming the ghoulish lock. It is jammed open by the

ghoulkeeper, whose attention wavered when it shouldn't have. He was forcibly pulled through an aperture that really shouldn't have allowed the passage, if physics is any guide. In any event, his horribly gory remains now muck up the works. A thief who spends 1d4+1 rounds studying the jam can repair the mechanism with a successful Find/Remove Traps roll at a -20% penalty (multiple retries are allowed). Unfortunately, the thief must stand outside the shack, and if he or she remains overlong (10 rounds), the ghouls converge on the site at a rate of 2d4/round.

True ghouls hail from an unknown place, which has caused them to become more potent and dangerous than common ghouls.

**True ghouls (1d4 per 5 rounds):** AC 3; hp 36 each; THAC0 15; #AT 3 or 1; Dmg 1d6/1d6/1d8 or by weapon.

## 8. Farm Isles

The inmost circle of archways rests like an island on a vast pink ocean; the extended circle is missing or drowned. Several other islands, more natural than the stone circle, are visible across the water. The farthest appear as a green haze, while those nearer, only about a mile off, show obvious signs of cultivation. A pall of smoke hangs over the nearest, and it's easy to see that whole fields have been burned. Several canoe-like boats are pulled up to the stone shore, while several oversized bivouac tents are set up within the circle. A huge humanoid with violet, warty skin tends a large boiling kettle near the largest tent.

Eight tents hold a total of sixteen ogre warriors and two half-ogre commanders (called Kadars). The kettle-tender is a regular ogre, who gives warning the moment he notes intrusion to this parallel. Heroes who make a show of strength can get out of this parallel without a battle, but overzealous PCs have a fight on their hands. The ogres become particularly angry if heroes lead ghouls here—roleplaying skills determine if the resultant fight is a free-for-all or a chance for the PCs to band together with the ogres against the ghoulish threat.

Split off from Iuz's main force, this still-dangerous ogre company has set itself up in the parallel the cultists were using to grow staples and husband animals. Despite their desertion from Iuz's main force, these ogres don't look kindly on the interruption of the new "world" they've claimed for themselves.

The islands in the distance are each about a mile in diameter, and they hold small populations of native halflings enthralled by the cultists for the production of food. It's possible that a few cultists might live on some of the farther-flung isles; however, they stay clear of the





circle since the ogres have claimed it and the nearby isles (sixteen ogres live on each of the nearest three isles). Ogres make poor landlords, and now all the nearest farm isles are put to the torch and their halfling populations decimated (ogres boil their meals, if time allows). Though it may not be obvious at first (or at all), this parallel is a true world, and it extends indefinitely, encompassing many geographies, life forms, and cultures.

**Development:** If heroes talk to the ogres for any length, they learn that the ogres are basically ignorant of Iuz's plans, aside from penetrating to the heart of Tovag Baragu. They do know that Iuz is shepherding particularly valuable tablets, but nothing more substantial. Heroes who explain they are after Iuz without revealing their reason (stopping him) may persuade one of the two Kadar to join the PCs as an NPC under the DM's control. Half-ogres are temperamental and easily set off. In fact, a half-ogre in the party's midst makes it almost certain that future encounters with cultists end in bloodshed.

**Half-ogre Kadars (2):** AC 2; MV 12; hp 48 each; THAC0 12; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d6+6.

**Ogre warriors (16):** AC 5; MV 12; hp 48 each; THAC0 12; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d6+6.

### 9. Lightless, and . . .

Except for the faint flicker that portal archways sometimes display, this place is utterly lightless. By their placement, it appears that the archways maintain their familiar pattern and spacing, but it is impossible to see the floor, sky, or what might lie beyond the obelisks.

Besides being lightless, the parallel is weightless! Thankfully, an envelope of breathable air is maintained by cult spells previously cast. A steady rope bridge once connected two archways through this parallel (the portals to areas 6 and 9), but ghouls recently gnawed it away. What shreds of reality exist here extend about three miles beyond the inmost circle of archways. The lightless and weightless nature of the parallel proceeds indistinguishably into the void.

The weightless nature is quite dangerous to heroes who enter the parallel. Without forewarning of the weightless conditions, heroes must make a Dexterity check at a -4 penalty to avoid launching themselves into space at a movement rate of 9 (PCs who enter the parallel at a run or under other adverse conditions may be assessed even larger penalties by the DM). With forewarning, a Dexterity check at a +4 bonus to the roll allows heroes to maintain position near their entry portal without spinning out of control (and on up toward an eventual meeting with the void).

Even for heroes with initial control, a straightforward Dexterity check is necessary each time a physical movement is called for. On a failed Dexterity check, the hero begins to spiral up into the dark. Flying spells, ropes, and other precautions are a necessity here. In addition, heroes might not think to note where they came from. If they fly out uncontrollably, have them make Direction Sense checks or other suitable checks to determine where they came from. (If they paid close attention to the portal they came from, then recognition of that portal isn't as much of a problem.)

**Development:** A few other castaways float around in the darkness: an ogre, a ghoul, a centaur, and a few simple cultists. For every 10 rounds the heroes remain in this parallel, there is a 50% chance that a drifter comes within arm's reach. Stats for such encounters can be pulled from previously noted area descriptions.

## 10. Icy Fresh

The familiar stone obelisks and their supported archways appear in crystal duplicate here. The ground appears to be pure ice extending out into the extended circle and plain beyond. The cold is intense, but it is overshadowed by the monstrous silhouette above.

The silhouette is that of an extremely large and angry white dragon. Have PCs roll initiative. The moment the heroes (or subset thereof) enter this parallel, the dragon uses its initiative to drop the massive iceblock it held squarely in front of the portal leading back to area 9. Until the ice melts or is shattered (see below), access between areas 9 and 10 is not possible.

Assuming the dragon, named Rhule, traps any heroes, it growls out in Common, "I knew more would come! For forsaking the covenant, your lives are forfeit!" A few random corpses (ghouls and Iuz regulars) attest to Rhule's treatment of prior visitors.

The so-called covenant was between the dragon of this icy realm (its sole hermit inhabitant) and the cultists, who agreed to leave it alone. With Iuz's attack, many transgressions have occurred, and Rhule, not a fair or pleasant creature in the best of times, is out for blood. The heroes must fight or flee (through the unblocked portal if they can choose it quickly enough). Rhule possesses some stats greater than those standard for a white dragon great wyrm, and he is thus referred to as an elder wyrm.

The icy parallel of Tovag Baragu is perched on an ice moon of a gas giant planet which in turn circles slowly around a dark star. Beyond that, who knows where reality ends and the void begins. Tidal forces keep the atmosphere of the ice moon warm enough to melt out breathable gases, but only just. The dragon loves it here. Heroes without heating magic who stay more than a

few hours begin to freeze to death, and they succumb in 1d20 hours plus their Constitution ability score.

**Breaking the Ice:** The ice block blocking the portal between here and area 9 is 40 feet high, and 20 feet wide and deep. Damage in excess of 250 hit points shatters it, but because of the cold temperature, damage to the block regenerates at a rate of 1 point per round. Heroes in area 9 cannot enter the blocked entrance, but they can attack the barrier from their side (though physical attacks require Dexterity checks to avoid the rebound throwing the hero into a weightless spin).

**Rhule, White Dragon, Elder Wyrm:** AC -10; MV 9, fly 40, jump 30; HD 23; hp 200; THAC0 3; #AT 3 (claw/claw/bite) + dragon maneuvers; Dmg 1d10+12/1d10+12/3d10+12; SA cold breath (24d10+12), *affect normal fires, pyrotechnics, heat metal, suggestion, hypnotism*, detect gems; MR 40%; SZ G (100' long); ML fearless (20); Int exceptional (15); AL CE; XP 24,000.

*Notes:* The dragon possesses no overt hoard, since it considers ownership of the ice moon enough. If the DM determines that Rhule does possess a hoard, that hoard should be very difficult to find and require several weeks of travel over the moon's surface to reach.

## 11. Fading

The inmost archways rest in their familiar positions, but they are somehow bleary and smeared. In fact, the circle appears bloated and drained of color, as if everything were stretched a fourth again as large as they once used to be. Runes are roughly inscribed on the pale stone flooring, meandering and almost illegible. Beyond the inmost archways and extended circle, the landscape is gray, and it merges moodily with a gray horizon.

This parallel is losing touch with the Tovag Baragu network, and as it does so, it is slowly expanding like a carnival balloon that is dangerously overinflated. Within 13d6 months, this parallel may cease to exist.

Past travelers who've unwisely explored the archways in this parallel have inscribed various warnings in front of the functioning archways, in Common.

**A. Slide:** The portal is losing coherence, and it currently drops travelers back into this parallel via a nearby archway.

"A slide outside and back again  
New friends test the sane."

Unfortunately, the strained interstices expose the traveler to conditions outside standard cosmology, though only briefly. Mindbending philosophies take on physical weight, if only briefly, and have a 20% chance to

actually alter the person of the traveler. If altered, the traveler takes on a new attribute chosen by the DM or rolled randomly from the following table:

| 1d4 | Effect  |
|-----|---|
| 1   | 1 hand replaced with a tarantulalike body and legs (legs serve as fingers);                 |
| 2   | 1 foot replaced with a hoof (-1 move penalty)   |
| 3   | Four tentacles now surround player's mouth (-6 Charisma and severe social repercussions);   |
| 4   | Head and one hand rearranged (sadly, traveler cannot handle this and expires in 1d4 rounds) |

Multiple trips may add multiple deformities.

**B. Annihilation:** The archway appears to function, but any object thrown into it does not come safely to rest in some more distant reality. In fact, an object frays into annihilation, and its disparate points are scattered across the void. Heroes who probe this portal with a pole or other anchored projection have the opportunity to learn of their peril when the object is cleanly truncated, trailing fine bits of fiery residue.

"Ten years and more since they've gone  
We planned reunion but I'm still alone."

**C. Solitude:** This archway accesses area 12. Unfortunately, this archway provides one-way access, and it drops travelers rudely into area 12 without the benefit of a return portal.

"A land of peace and eternal solitude  
Sequestered an uncertain interlude."

**D. Ice:** This archway leads back to area 10.

### *Ninev's Stepping Stone*

The enigmatic *stepping stone* appears as a thin rectangular block of silvery talc. Arcane sigils are inscribed over its entire surface. When placed upon a solid surface and trod upon by a free-willed entity, the stepping stone executes an effect similar to *teleport without error*, transporting its single passenger and itself to any location selected by the traveler. However, to energize the transfer, *Ninev's stepping stone* permanently drains the traveler of one life energy level that travelers can regain only through *restoration* or normal adventuring. Travelers of less than 2nd level or 2 Hit Dice appear at their location dead. Because of its level-draining property, *Ninev's stepping stone* should be used only as a final contingency.  
XP Value: 0                      GP Value: 4,000

"All pilgrims want to leave alive  
Run the icy gauntlet; survive."

## 12. Point of No Return

Something is different . . . there are no archways! The pavement still extends out almost a mile in radius, but the area is empty of archway and obelisk. The paving rests on a high promontory where the air is thin, and it overlooks a wide mountain valley. The campfire and tent of at least one other traveler is pitched close to the center of the pale stone circle. Three slain ghouls lie farther away, thrown onto a larger pile of offal.

This parallel contains no natural method of returning to the transdimensional structure of Tovag Baragu, or for that matter, any known plane of existence. Unless heroes have access to magic permitting direct planar travel (*plane shift*, *teleport without error*, or similar effects), they could be trapped here, though an inhabitant here possesses a means of escape. Reality holds sway for about 50 miles, holding a half-world of mountainous terrain, complete with an ecology suited to such heights, as well as a tribe or two of competing giants.

Iuz's attack caught Vecna cultists off guard. The attack killed many on the periphery, while others fled. One such refugee, Orlanko of Dyvers, trapped himself here. Orlanko subsists on rations, supplemented by a stewed marmot now and again. He isn't entirely upset by his situation, and in fact he views it as a sabbatical. If he becomes lonely, he can use an item he possesses to return to more traveled planes, though doing so will cost him much (see the sidebar for *Ninev's stepping stone*).

**Development:** Orlanko speaks to diplomatic heroes if no representatives of Iuz obviously accompany the party (spying Iuz's regulars, he assumes the heroes share similar loyalties and attacks or flees at the DM's discretion). He tolerates centaur nomads, though the latter counsel heroes to destroy Vecna cultists on sight!

Orlanko knows much of the same information noted for the cultist guards under area 4, plus he knows the following facts: The inner portion of the transdimensional temple is called the Adytum, and it is mostly contained on a single half-world. The cult keeps its most sacred relics (all from Vecna) ensconced therein. Iuz may be after one or more of the relics, but he especially seeks the *Hand* or the *Eye*.

If the heroes promise to aid Orlanko to free the temple of Iuz's influence, the cultist cuts his sabbatical short and joins the heroes. Orlanko insists that with his help, the heroes should have little difficulty in penetrating to the Disciple's Sanctum at the center of the Adytum. (He's wrong.) If centaur nomads travel with

the heroes, the heroes must choose between cultists and nomads as allies-of-the-moment very shortly after the meeting.

Orlanko possesses an item capable of extricating himself from this half-world (*Ninev's stepping stone*), but he is reluctant to use it. He'd much rather use a method provided by the heroes. Should the party need to rely on the *stone*, they can use it, one at a time, to travel to area 11. Orlanko then pitches the stone through the portal leading back to this parallel before the heroes know what he's doing.

**Orlanko, male halfling F7/M5:** AC 4 (*elven chain mail +1*); MV 6; HP 61; THAC0 14 (11 with *spear +3*); #AT 2 or 1; Dmg 1d6/1d6 (*shortbow*) or 1d6+3 (*spear +3*); SA halfling abilities, cast spells; SZ S (3 '6" tall); ML steady (12); Int very (12); AL NE; XP 2,000.

*Special Equipment:* wand of fire (6 charges), *Ninev's stepping stone*, pouch with 215 gp.

*Spells (4/2/1):* 1st—*charm person, magic missile, feather fall, spider climb*; 2nd—*invisibility, web*; 3rd—*fireball*.

### 13. Partly Cloudy

Little distinguishes this particular circle of Tovag Baragu from its many similar manifestations. In fact, beyond the extended circle, the dry steppe to the east and the salt flats and open water to the west bear a striking resemblance to Tovag Prime. However, if this is the Prime, someone has managed to quickly build several small structures on the periphery of the extended circle.

In fact, this is not the Prime but another parallel. The structures, about forty-five in all, comprise a small village where many of the cultists lived when not partaking in cult business or attending cult rituals. Should any cultist accompany the heroes, the cultist refers to the small conglomeration of buildings as "Cirithburg."

A few moments of study reveal the scars of recent conflicts, though no bodies or other overt clues now remain. Likewise, the buildings show signs of limited siege, and some are completely burned. All are completely stripped of useful items (courtesy of Iuz's passing forces) and are mostly ruin within.

One ransacked structure holds a detachment of five cultist lay wizards, part of a military order known as the Teeth of Vecna. This detachment has lost its leader, and the regulars are paranoid. Unless a cultist already accompanies the heroes (say, Orlanko from parallel 12), the Teeth coordinate to attack the heroes with a magical ambush 4 rounds after they enter the parallel. The Teeth follow heroes through portals to conduct their ambush, and they reinforce any other aggressive force the heroes may have stirred up. Even if Orlanko accompanies the heroes, the Teeth are quite suspicious, since Orlanko has

been missing since the beginning of the attack. The Teeth suspect an impostor, and at the DM's discretion, attack the heroes anyway. Attacking Teeth first cast *invisibility* on themselves.

**Teeth of Vecna (5):** AC 8; MV 12; hp 20 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6.

### 14. Welcome to the Adytum

A single high archway accesses a space that otherwise doesn't seem too similar to the inmost circle of archways of other parallels. The tall archway stands at the end of a 20-foot-wide underground hall, which leads toward the southwest and opens up into a larger lighted area. The heavy walls are mortared slabs, but the ceiling, which drops down to a height of 10 feet, appears to be carved from sedimentary stone. Small alcoves are inset on both sides of the wall, each containing small statuettes.

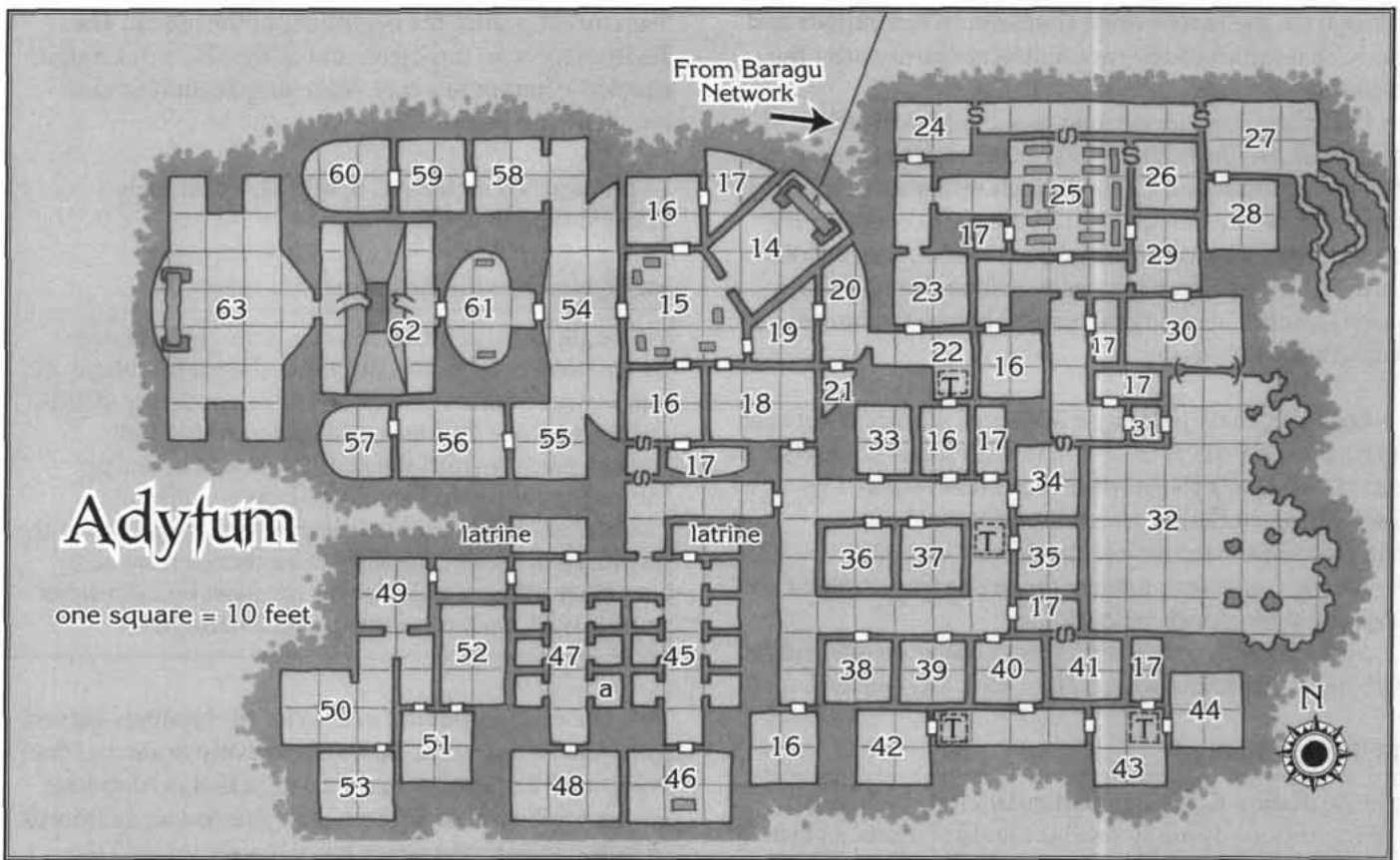
This chamber is the first in a series of chambers carved and built within solid stone, collectively known as the Adytum. The parallel Tovag Baragu that existed here was entombed in solid stone that goes on for hundreds of miles, though the space immediately around the circle was originally open. The cult burrowed and cut, mortared and built, and created the inner sanctum for their temple. Many cultists, called closeted priests, never leave the temple for any reason. Fresh air flows in through the archway, but in the outer rooms of the complex, things are a bit stale and cold.

The hall is clear of danger, but it shows obvious signs of recurrent battles (such as scorch marks over older scorch marks, blood stains over older blood stains). The small statuettes are stone effigies of Vecna in his various guises, but they otherwise possess no special virtue. Heroes who make too much of a disturbance draw a response from area 15.

### 15. Tovag Foyer

Pallid green-yellow light shines from guttering lanterns hung above the chamber. Several onyx altars are evenly spaced around the hall, around which several hunched humanoid figures crouch, feeding on carrion. Six onyx statues lie scattered around the chamber randomly, and twice that number rest brokenly in piles of rubble. Several stone doors lead off the chamber. The portal consists of a shiny alloy, and it is graven heavily with relief sculpture.

The onyx statues are stone guardians who defend the temple from outsiders. They attack the heroes on sight, unless a Vecna cultist of at least 6th level countermands



it. The hunched humanoids, true ghouls out on a lark, wear spiked collars and harnesses, though all the leashes are bitten through. They ignore the stone statues, but attack any living creature indiscriminately. If the combat in this chamber goes over 10 rounds, the ogre warriors from area 19 come to investigate, and they deal with the heroes as noted under that entry.

Before Iuz's attack, this chamber served the cultists as a meeting ground, as well as a working ritual area. Priest of the foul faith called down dark necromantic powers under Vecna's beneficence, though they conducted more in-depth ritual experiments in special holy chambers (areas keyed to 16). The stony figures are animate stone guardians, and they served both as ritual aids and as guardians should any ritual get out of hand.

The satellite hallways and chambers that lead off the central subterranean hall house food for the living, quarters for the closeted priests, and special vaults where the relics of the faith are sealed away for safety's sake. The ornate western door leads to the main chapel and associated primary reliquaries—unless the heroes possess relics of Vecna, they cannot pass (see area 54).

**Development:** Vecna cultists may reveal to the heroes (under questioning if not briefly allied) that Iuz's attack triggered a magical defense that utterly blocks entry to the Atrium (area 54) and the holy chambers to the west, unless one bears a holy relic of Vecna. Unfortunately, Iuz and much of his force got through before the defense was activated. Worse, the two major arti-

facts of Vecna—the *Hand* and the *Eye*—lie beyond the Chapel, having recently been brought to the Temple for safekeeping. Cultists have brought other relics to the temple, though none are quite so famous as the first.

Should the heroes realize that the rest of the temple contains many relics of Vecna, and if they begin to make plans to obtain some, allied cultists vehemently oppose the heroes. Should the heroes proceed (really, their only option), allied cultists betray heroes at their first good opportunity.

**Stone guardians, in Vecna's image (6):** AC 2; MV 9; hp 35 each; THAC0 15; #AT 2; Dmg 1d8+1.

#### Ghoul-light

Ghoul-light is a greenish-yellow light shed by special lanterns. These lanterns burn an oil that is procured only at great expense from a distant subterranean kingdom, and it is a closely guarded secret known to only a few of Vecna's priests. The weak glow provided by the lanterns discomfits drow, inflicting the same penalties as a *continual light* spell, but it does not neutralize infravision. In addition, it reveals invisible creatures or those hiding in shadows within 50 feet. This light shines throughout the Adytum, starting with the foyer.

**True ghouls (6):** AC 3; hp 36 each; THAC0 15; #AT 3 or 1; Dmg 1d6/1d6/1d8 or by weapon.

## 16. Supplication Chambers

Ebony tapestries bearing the ubiquitous hand and eye symbol adorn half of the wall space, leaving the rest for wooden shelves. Glass, clay, treated leather containers, among other things, stuff the shelves. The floor space is given over to two large benches, upon which rests all manner of alchemical equipment. The chamber is in an obvious state of disarray.

Unless the heroes clear the entire temple, each supplication chamber keyed to this entry likely contains wandering elements of the temple and its invasion. Immediately roll 1d20 on the Wandering Monster Table for the possibility of an encounter when the heroes first enter each chamber. Encountered monsters are usually looking for a hidey-hole, a safe place to stage an attack on enemy forces, or loot.

Each of the supplication chambers served the cultists in the manner that brought them closest to their god—the discovery of secrets. Cultists once spent endless hours in these rooms, seeking knowledge. With bone scalpels, undead familiars, and the clarity of mind that only a complete lack of conscience and ethics can bring, the cultists attended to elaborate distillations, evisceration-dissections, inquisitions of summoned oracles, and grotesque experiments on necrotic flesh. The cultists, refusing to allow exhaustion to stand in the way of their “holy” search for knowledge, often sustained themselves with foul elixirs and necrotic infusions for days and even weeks at a time. These unholy drugs and temporary skin grafts of energized necrotic tissue are one of the foul secrets uncovered by the cult (see area 17).

In the wake of Iuz’s attack, heroes find that the forces ransacked most of the chambers and smashed much of the equipment and many of the canisters upon the shelves. A determined search has a 75% chance per turn of revealing one item from the following list. Once discovered in a specific room, cross the item off the list.

| 1d10 | Result   |
|------|--|
| 1    | Bone scalpel (enchanted, never dulls)                |
| 2    | Material component, 300 gp gem                       |
| 3    | Material component, 400 gp gem                       |
| 4    | Material component, 500 gp gem                       |
| 5    | Vial, weak acid (1d6 hp in 5-foot range if thrown)   |
| 6    | Vial, strong acid (2d6 hp in 5-foot range if thrown) |
| 7    | Vial, quicksilver (100 gp value)                     |
| 8    | Vial, poison (Type A)                                |
| 9    | Vial, poison (Type E)                                |
| 10   | Vial, poison (Type N)                                |

## 17. Knowledge Vaults

Iuz’s forces have forced open and ransacked some of the rooms keyed to this entry (35% chance). The DM can roll ahead of time, or he or she can do so when heroes first find another knowledge vault. Note that the vault keyed to this entry that connects to area 43 is never ransacked prior to the heroes’ discovery of it.

If not already ransacked, the heroes find these doors (stone reinforced with iron) securely locked and magically trapped (pressing a *knucklebone* to the pull handle bypasses both the trap and the lock).

Unless a PC disengages the trap, any attempt to open or bypass the door triggers a contingent *slow* spell cast at the 20th level of ability that affects a 10-foot radius in front of the door. At the bottom of the same round, a second contingent *teleport* delivers six stone guardians from a place of storage, who attack heroes (who may be surprised) at the start of the very next round.

**Stone guardians (6):** AC 2; MV 9; hp 35 each; THAC0 15; #AT 2; Dmg 1d8+1.

Unransacked vaults are filled with valuable items.

Metal cabinets line the room, allowing only a small access to the chamber between. Some cabinets appear only large enough to store knickknacks, while others are big enough to hold man-sized objects, or larger. All the cabinets contain a small metallic keyhole.

Knowledge vaults store the accumulated secrets, in applied or prototype form, which the cultists have teased from the world. Though cabinets line each of these chambers, only a subset (1d6 small cabinets and 1d2 large cabinets per room) contain an applied secret. The rest wait to be filled. Whether empty or full, each cabinet is locked and trapped with a poison needle (Type D; Injection; Onset 1d2 min; Strength 30/2d6).

Heroes interested in searching through the cabinets must first disable the locks and traps. Cabinets randomly chosen are 20% likely to contain an item of interest, until the heroes discover 1d4 small cabinets and 1d2 large cabinets with secrets in a particular room, after which the heroes find only empty cabinets in that room. Secrets are drawn from the following list; once discovered in a specific room, cross the secret off the list.

## 18. Lounge

Burned tapestries and carpet, overturned and splintered furniture, and the fetor of death, including real dead bodies, fill this chamber.

### Small Cabinets

#### 1d6 Result

- 1 An enchanted *knucklebone* in felt-lined cedar box allows cleric of Vecna to channel spells from Vecna despite his entrapment in the Demiplane of Dread.
- 2 A necrotic elixir of concentrated lifeforce in a red lacquered vial (enchanted) contains 1d3 doses. It grants the imbiber a +2 bonus to Constitution score and gives the ability to go without food or sleep for 24 hours. An 8-hour refractory period follows, during which the imbiber suffers a -2 penalty to the Constitution score and a -1 penalty to all rolls. It radiates evil (if a PC detects for it), and it sends nightmares during refractory period.
- 3 A necrotic elixir in pale blue lacquered vial (enchanted) contains 1d3 doses. The stolen life force within grants the imbiber the ability to regenerate 1 hp/round. It regenerates a total of 30 hps before the effect ends.
- 4 A necrotic skin patch (enchanted, 3" in diameter) sits in the cabinet. A total of 1d2+1 patches are separated by cork wafers. If applied to skin, it creates a temporary graft, which slowly imparts its stolen life energies to the wearer. It grants a +4 bonus to Constitution score and gives the ability to go without food or sleep for 3d6 days. A 4-day refractory period follows, during which wearer suffers -4 penalty to Constitution score and a -3 penalty to all rolls. Repeated use gives the wearer a permanent gaunt and sallow appearance. It radiates evil if a PC detects for it, and it sends virulent nightmares during the refractory period.
- 5 Inside are 1d3 clay pills wrapped in green parchment (enchanted). Concentrated from grave soil and infused with stolen magic, the clay pills grant imbiber invisibility to all undead for 24 hours, or until imbiber attacks specific undead.
- 6 Inside are 1d3 clay pills with orange stripes wrapped in silver parchment (enchanted). Concentrated from grave soil and magically processed brainmeal, the clay temporarily transfers knowledge to the imbiber. The imbiber gains special knowledge or one of the following proficiencies for one day (DM should pick one that the imbiber does not already possess): 1—Tracking, 2—Blindfighting, 3—imbiber realizes how to bypass outer trap on one of the Reliquaries randomly selected, 4—imbiber learns a secret password that allays the fears of cultists when it is spoken (at least until the imbiber takes an action that contradicts cultist goals).

### Large Cabinets

#### 1d4 Result

- 1 *Hellball*: This item is a 1-foot-diameter, 5-pound sphere of utter blackness. It was extracted from a petitioner (suffering soul) in the Nine Hells. In the particular region where extracted, this sphere served as a spiritual ball and chain. The sphere afflicts the first creature to touch the sphere with naked skin (or ectoplasm), merging with its victim who fails save vs. death magic. The sphere's movement beneath skin is visible now and then as it distorts torso, limbs, and face. A successful merger

This chamber once served the closeted priests as a comfortable place to gather for relaxation and informal discussions. Now, smashed sculptures of Vecna and the demigod's besmirched sign are also in evidence.

Currently, the cultists hold this chamber and many of the rooms to the south and west of this chamber. A detachment of Teeth (cult wizards) and Fingers (cult thieves) watch the ruined lounge from the hallway immediately outside (18a). Any investigation by non-cultists brings a surprise magical attack, followed immediately by backstabs made possible by the secret door through area 16, which allows thieves to get into position behind heroes. A prolonged battle (20 rounds or longer) could bring cult reinforcements, and possibly even Iuz's forces after enough time.

**Development:** Attempts at diplomacy (should the heroes have an alliance with other cultists) brings the response, "If you are with us, your first task is to clear out the befouling forces of Iuz, who hold most of the northeast Adytum. You've no reason to come here!" Heroes who acquiesce can avoid this battle, for now.

**Teeth of Vecna (5):** AC 8; MV 12; hp 20 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; replace *invisibility* with *mirror image*.

**Fingers of Vecna (5):** AC 4; MV 12; hp 30 each; THAC0 18 (14 with backstab attempt, 16 with crossbow); #AT 1; Dmg 1d4.

### 19. Art

The doors to this chamber are barred from the inside. Heroes must use a Bend Bars/Lift Gates roll, or resort to magic, to gain entry. Unless particularly quiet, they rouse the inhabitants, who prepare an ambush.

Shattered frames, scorched easels, and ashen parchments are all that remain of an austere gallery of art. It seems that most of the frames have been gathered together for use as kindling. Several ghoulish bodies are hewn and stacked in the far northern corner.

afflicts the victim with torturous pain so extreme that a successful save vs. paralyzation must be made each round to take any action other than writhe in pain. The sphere may be cast out of the victim with a *remove curse* cast at the 13th level of ability or higher—if the victim makes a successful save vs. death magic (only one save is allowed).

2. *Animate Greatcoat, Minor*: This item is sewn from integument harvested from powerful undead. It grants the wearer a +2 bonus to AC, and it acts as both *cloak of the bat* and *cloak of arachnida*, but not both in the same 24-hour period. In addition, the greatcoat is intelligent, possessing an Ego and Intelligence of 16 each. The greatcoat can manipulate normal objects and move under its own power, and it independently attacks foes if not worn (AC 8; HD 11; hp 50; THAC0 10; #AT 2 (sleeves); Dmg 1d6+1/1d6+1; SZ M (5' tall); ML fanatic (18); Int exceptional (16); AL NE; XP 2,000). The *greatcoat* may act to betray or save its wearer, or slink away while its wearer sleeps, at the DM's option. It radiates evil if detected for, and it is turned as "Special."
3. *Transfer Apparatus*: This device is a heavy leather body sheath that completely covers its wearer like a mummy. Bone buttons allow the suit to be completely closed from the exterior (and interior, but it's tricky). The sheath trails an organic-looking tube, 10-foot long, that ends with a needle-sharp metal spike. The spike can be thrust into any object, living or nonliving (but not undead). Should any conscious humanoid creature put on the sheath while or when the spike is thrust into an object, the

mind of the humanoid in the sheath transfers into the object, while the mind of the object, if any, is destroyed. Into unmindful objects, the transfer is automatic, although transferring one's mind into inanimate objects does not grant mobility into said object (thus transfer into a statue or the wall imprisons the mind). Into mindful objects, such as animate statues or living creatures, the mindful object gets a save vs. death magic. If the object succeeds, no transfer occurs (but the mind in the sheath is feeble-minded for 2d6 hours). If the object fails, the mind in the sheath transfers to the object and gains full use of the mobility and physical abilities, if any, possessed by object. Following transfer, successful or not, the sheath and tube rots into dust immediately.

4. *Emergency Golem*: A human-sized flesh golem stands in reserve, wearing a hard clay seal over head, torso and arms. Inscribed on the seal are the words "Break in Case of Emergency." If broken, the golem animates and serves the first person it sees. Unfortunately, golem's chance to go rogue is tripled (3% cumulative chance/round of combat to break free of compulsion and attack master).

**Flesh golem**: AC 9; MV 8; HD 9; hp 40; THAC0 11; #AT 2; Dmg 2d8/2d8 (fists); SD immune to non-magical weapons, immune to all spells save the following: fire- and cold-based spells slow a flesh golem for 2d6 rounds, electrical spells heal a flesh golem 1 hit point per damage die; SZ L (8' tall); ML fearless (19); Int semi (4); AL N; XP 2,000.

A Kadar and a few ogre regulars hold this chamber, venturing out only now and then as their food runs low. They attack heroes, calling on troll aid from area 20 if any remain (the trolls respond 3 rounds later). A battle that lasts longer than 10 rounds brings any surviving cultists from area 18 to investigate.

**Development**: Should the heroes deal diplomatically (or question) the Kadar, named Druelnarg, he knows the following information:

- Druelnarg desperately misses his half-brother, Festnarg, who accompanied Iuz through the interstice in area 54. Thus, Druelnarg schemes to raid a reliquary, where he can pick up a relic to access area 54.
- Only those with relics may pass into the Atrium since Iuz's penetration caused a magical lockdown.

**Druelnarg, Half-Ogre Kadar**: AC -1 (*banded mail* +2, Dex bonus); MV 12; HD 10; hp 80; THAC0 11 (6 with *two-handed sword* +2, Str bonus); #AT 2; Dmg 1d10+8 (*two-handed sword* +2, Str bonus); SZ L (8' tall); ML steady (12); Int average (9); AL CE; XP 4,000.

*Special Equipment*: Pouch with 325 gp and bone chits.

**Ogre warriors (6)**: AC 5; MV 12; hp 48 each; THAC0 12; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d6+6.

## 20. Statuary

Artful placement of delicate statuary is gone, replaced by shattered stone with only hints of form, smashed pedestals, and a layer of sand. Over all, the stink of refuse and of creatures confined for too long hovers like a physical entity.

Trolls, more of Iuz's original force, hole up here. Should any conflict occur within a room or two of them that includes other forces of Iuz, the trolls move to fortify besieged Iuz regulars. The trolls all possess brands on their foreheads—Iuz's grinning skull symbol—and their hair is adorned with small animal and shrunken human skulls. They do not parley, unless the heroes offer them a supply of three or more days food. Also, they pass up an opportunity to beat on heroes if true ghouls are around for them to attack.



**Trolls (4):** AC 4; MV 12; HD 6+6; hp 54 each; THAC0 13; #AT 3 (claw/claw/bite); Dmg 1d4+1/1d4+1/1d8+4; SA severed limb can continue to attack; SD regeneration (3 hp/round); SW cannot regenerate damage from acid or fire; SZ L (9' tall); ML elite (14); Int low (7); AL CE; XP 1,400 each.

### 21. Where Trolls Fear to Tread

The chamber remains securely locked, despite the fact that the trolls camped so long just outside the room.

The door in front of you is carved with relief sculpture showing the tortures awaiting any who open it.

The door has such graphic images that the trolls decided to give it a miss.

The door appears locked, but in fact, it is the magically enchanted treasured sculpture on display here. Any attempt to force the door awakens it from its dozing state, causing it to morph into a humanoid stone figure, from which darkness streams from its missing eye and drips from its severed hand—it is carved in a guise of Vecna! The statue attacks as an enhanced stone golem, attempting to slay those who disturbed it. Nothing lies beyond the golem save dust.

**Guise-of-Vecna stone golem:** AC -3; MV 12; hp 120; THAC0 3; #AT 2; Dmg 4d8/4d8.

### 22. Trapped Hallway

A new trap lies just south of the elbow of the corridor, and it was created by order of the self-proclaimed commander of the remaining forces of Iuz, Saranay (see area 23). Most of Iuz's forces know of it, and they avoid it, but none of the Vecna cultists who've found it have survived to tell about it. Once sprung, the mercenaries in area 23 emerge from their locked redoubt (if the heroes haven't previously dealt with them) and attack, attempting to push others into the trap.

**Trap:** When more than 20 pounds of weight rests on the trapped area, as shown on the map with a **T**, two sections of the floor swing down, dropping victims into an excavated pit, unless they can make a saving throw vs. paralyzation to catch themselves on the edge. Those who fail their saving throw fall 20 feet into the rapidly narrowing cone-shaped pit, and they are funneled directly onto a 6-foot-long spike, which inflicts 3d6 points of damage (in addition to the 2d6 points for the fall). On a failed saving throw vs. death magic, the spike remains embedded within the victim, trapping him or her like a fly on a needle.

### 23. Command Post

The door to the command post is barred from within, unless activity outside has brought those inside to

investigate. Heroes who get past the door find a chamber converted to a temporary barracks.

Overtured shelves now serve to bar the doors. The books that once graced their shelves now fuel the central fire. Smoke from the fire has colored all the surfaces here an ashen shade of gray. The air here is hot, close, and heavy with the odor of burnt paper. Bedrolls lie along the walls, and extra weapons, water, and rations are stacked on the floor.

The mercenaries, their leader Saranay, and her enchanted pet Nogrog are quite suspicious of any interlopers, and they most likely assume heroes are cultists (especially if any cultists accompany the party). Even if accompanied by other forces that once loyally served Iuz, the paranoid group here is only 50% (+/- reaction adjustment  $\times$  5) likely to accept a diplomatic end to the encounter. If the heroes avert combat, Saranay sends one mercenary with the heroes to aid them and to make certain they do not harbor any cultist sympathies.

This chamber and the forces holed up here represent the most organized cluster of Iuz's forces remaining behind within the temple. Though all the forces expected to follow Iuz, not all made it through to the inner temple area before it was magically locked down. In Iuz's absence, the loyal forces continue their attempt to quell all remaining cultist activity. Saranay sent a few small search parties to explore the northeast portion of the Adytum from this chamber, but for the most part Iuz's forces have not penetrated past this point. If conflict occurs with the heroes, Saranay fights smart, allowing the mercenaries and Nogrog to soften up the heroes while she invisibly maneuvers for a backstab.

**Development:** Through diplomatic means, questioning, or looting of the vanquished foe (a journal note), the heroes can discover that Saranay hopes to discover a tome called the *Compendium Maleficarum*. According to the note, considerable potent lore is recorded therein, as befits a tome holy to the demigod of secrets. More importantly, the note theorizes that the tome, possibly in or near the cult library, contains magical code keys that might allow a single person into the inner temple without incorporating a relic into his or her body.

**Saranay, female human T9:** AC 0 (*cloak of protection* +4, leather, Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 63; THAC0 16 (13 with *short sword* +3 and 16 with *dagger of stabbing* +2 offhand attack, 10 with *shortbow* +2, Dex bonus); #AT 2; Dmg 1d6+3/1d4+2 (*short sword* +3 and offhand *dagger* +2) or 1d8/1d8 (*shortbow* +2); SA backstab  $\times$ 5, thief abilities; SZ M (6'1" tall); ML elite (14); Str 13, Dex 18, Con 15, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 13; AL NE; XP 5,000.

*Special Equipment:* dagger of stabbing +2 (increases backstab multiplier by 1), ring of invisibility, ring of free action, scroll of monster summoning VI, magic leash (owner controls Nogrog as if a familiar), 1,246 gp.

*Thief Abilities:* PP 63%, OL 60%, F/RT 63%, MS 66%, HS 60%, DN 61%, CW 62%, RL 35%; RS 75%.

**Mercenaries, male and female humans F8 (10):** AC 1 (Dex bonus, banded mail, shield +1); MV 12; hp 80 each; THAC0 13 (10 with Str bonus, specialization, longsword +1); #AT 2; Dmg 1d8+5 (Str bonus, specialization, longsword +1); SZ M (6' tall); ML elite (14); Int high (13); AL NE; XP 1,400 each.

*Special Equipment:* 2d4 × 50 gp.

**Nogrog, "pet" gorgon:** AC 2 (metallic hide); MV 12; HD 8; hp 64; THAC0 13; #AT 1 (horns); Dmg 2d6; SA breath petrifying effect in cone (5' wide at origin, 60' long, 20' wide at end) 4/day; SZ L (8' tall); ML average (10); Int animal (1); AL N; XP 1,400.

## 24. Head Librarian

This unoccupied chamber is a well-appointed private room. Tapestries grace the wall, crystal lamps hang from the ceiling, and wooden furniture fills the room, including a bed, an armoire, a mirror, and a small desk.

The head librarian for the cultists, Thalifon Burset, was killed during the initial invasion. A search of his room turns up some letterheads with Thalifon's name, writing materials, reshelving orders for arcane-sounding tomes, and a variety of Vecna cultist paraphernalia in the armoire, including ceremonial robes, tattooing equipment, and a stencil of Vecna's eye-in-hand sign. A secret drawer in the desk (trapped with poison gas that inflicts 2d10 points of damage in 15-foot radius) contains a list of the reliquaries and their contents:

Reliquary of the Scalp: *Scalp of Vecna*  
Reliquary of the First Digit: *First Digit of Vecna*  
Reliquary of the Second Digit: *Second Digit of Vecna*  
Reliquary of the Medial Digit: *Third Digit of Vecna*  
Reliquary of the Other Eye: *Right Eye of Vecna*  
Reliquary of Appetite: *Molar of Vecna*  
Reliquary of the Night: *Incisors of Vecna*  
Reliquary of the Traveler: *Foot of Vecna*  
Reliquary of the Heart: *Heart of Vecna*  
Reliquary of the Body: *Skin of Vecna*  
Reliquary of the Head: *Head of Vecna*

## 25. Archive of Secrets

Crystal lamps light this 20-foot-high chamber, though most have gone out. The remaining light shows a large library that has suffered at the hands of vandals. Several bookshelves lie toppled over on the floor, spilling many books. Most of the visible books appear as if someone tore them, burned them, or used them to create a crude mattress near the southeastern corner of the room.

A human cleric of Iuz, Dopa Nu' Larseen, spends his waking hours in the library, and he is responsible for much of the damage. He's been driven mad by the loss of all but his 1st and 2nd level spells (which occurred when Iuz passed into the Demiplane of Dread). Never having been cut off from his deity before, Dopa hasn't reacted too well. He waylays the heroes, whom he calls "cursed demons from the invisible moon!"

A search of the library turns up many usable volumes, although the most obviously arcane and secret-filled are but empty burned husks (courtesy of Dopa). The library seems devoted to arcane and necromantic lore. Any wizard who takes the time to gather the disparate, and who has means of toting the resulting 1,000 pounds of books, can supplement his or her personal magical research library. The entire lot is a 6,000-gp value when calculating the effect on the wizard's personal library; if sold, the books fetch only 3,000 gp.

**Dopa Nu' Larseen, male human C10:** AC 1 (platemail, shield +1); MV 12; hp 47; THAC0 14 (11 with flail +3); #AT 1 (flail +3); Dmg 1d6+4; SA cast spells, turn undead; SZ M (6' tall); ML champion (16); Str 13, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 17 (4 due to insanity), Cha 14; AL N; XP 2,000.

*Special Equipment:* flail +3 "Fragosite" casts *flame strike* 2/day from skull-ball.

*Spells (6/6/--/--):* 1st—*cure light wounds* (×3), *detect evil*, *detect magic*, *sanctuary*; 2nd—*detect charm*, *hold person* (×3), *know alignment* (×2).

## 26. Compendium Maleficarum

This secret door to the room with the *Compendium Maleficarum* is trapped with a magical curse. Unless disabled or bypassed using the password (all cultists above 10th level know it: HUERLOMUN), those passing the lintel must make a saving throw vs. spell at a -4 penalty. Those who make their saving throws experience a shooting stomach cramp and suffer 1d4 points of damage. Those failing their saving throw take 2d10 points/round for 5 rounds, as their stomach briefly animates and attempts to wriggle free. Survivors are immune to this curse in the future.

Shadows fill this room, and stray light is quickly extinguished. A shallow depression in the center of the chamber surrounds a pedestal. Upon the pedestal is a book. Bound within the book is palpable evil, which emanates from it in dark, cloudy vapors.

The tome upon the pedestal is the holy book of the cultists of Vecna. It is the vile *Compendium Maleficarum*, or at least a parallel reflection of that notorious book spoken of in evil myth. The book is dangerous, but filled with secret lore. Cultists accompanying the heroes or finding them here attack noncultists who touch or read the holy book. If heroes destroy the tome, they are forevermore marked, and they may never deal amicably with cultists of Vecna again. A theft of the tome ensures that bounty hunters eventually follow after them.

**The *Compendium Maleficarum*:** The tome is 2 feet to a side and around 6 inches thick. Its pages are stiff and appear to be sheets of bone. Rumors suggest that the ink of the foul tome consists entirely of the blood of still-living (at the time of the writing) donors. Cleverly enough, a spine of a deceased creature serves the same function for the book, with nubby ribs clasping the top and bottom endcovers.

The *Maleficarum* professes the central dogma of the Adytum: plumb every secret. That's it. Well, that's not entirely it. Actually, the dogma indicates that morals,

### **Torture**

#### **(Necromancy)**

Sphere: Necromantic      Level: Priest 5  
Range: 120 ft.              Components: V, S  
Duration: 2 rounds        Casting Time: 5  
Area of Effect: 1 target    Saving Throw: Negates

The caster asks the target a question as he or she fashions a terrifying phantasm of demonic torture and casts it into the mind of the target. If the target fails the saving throw and does not truthfully answer the caster's question, the target is racked with ultimate agony and loses half of his or her current hit points (round down). If the target fails the first saving throw, the caster may ask a second question, which requires another saving throw in the subsequent round. If this saving throw also fails, the victim perishes from the effects of the torturous phantasm should he or she refuse to answer truthfully. Truthful answers do not allow the spell to cause pain or hit point loss in any circumstance, and the caster can ask a maximum of two questions before the spell ends.

ethics, and the contracts of polite society only hinder the advance of true knowledge. Furthermore, true knowledge can be gained only outside the normal sphere of life and death. The real secrets of the cosmos transcend life, and entities that deal in death and undead things are in the best position to ferret out the knowledge that is denied the living. Almost by definition, cultists of Vecna must therefore deal with undead entities and seek mastery over the same.

The second prong in Vecna's two-step scripture for discovering the true fabric of reality is through expansion of the senses to levels far beyond what they can normally bear. It's really all about excesses, especially the excess of pain that torture provides. To the cultist's of Vecna, torture is like a sacrament. To the uninitiated, cultists of Vecna are all certifiably insane.

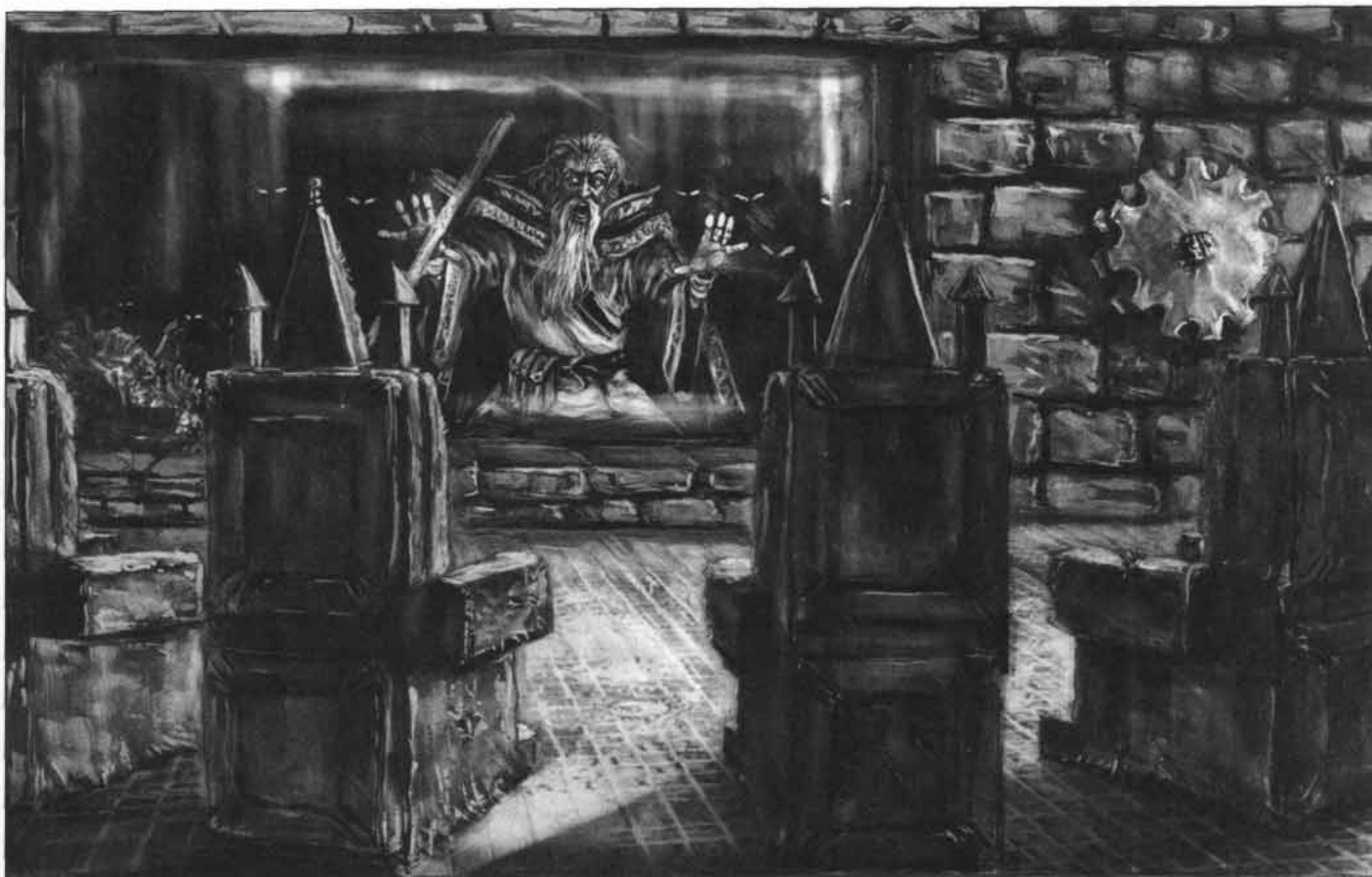
**Reading the *Maleficarum*:** Any character that idly flips through the pages of the *Maleficarum* must succeed at a saving throw vs. death magic or permanently lose 1 point of Wisdom. Those who read from beginning to end remain safe from this particular effect; however, any character of good alignment who ploughs through the perverse logic and foul magic recorded herein loses one life energy level when finishing. Those of more evil persuasion may attempt to glean secret spells from the tome: For each month's worth of casual reading (or week's worth of intense reading), the reader may make a saving throw vs. death magic. On a successful saving throw, the reader learns nothing, but on a failed saving throw, the reader discovers a new spell or secret. With the spell or secret comes an affliction: usually, the loss of a digit, hand, eye, or other extremity or organ, determined randomly by the DM.

The nature of the spell or secret elucidated by research is left up to the DM to determine, save for the first secret divulged. This first secret is a phrase that allows one person passage into the Inner Temple of the Adytum during a lockdown, regardless of possession of a relic ("May Vecna reign over all; life, death, and everything in between will call him master!"). A sample new spell, *torture*, is also provided, should the heroes spend overlong in study of this nightmare libram.

## **27. Deep Reach**

The stone walls of this chamber bear the inscriptions of countless sigils, signs, circles, and other arcane marks, often one over the other with little regard for previous writing. Several small tunnels lead away from the southeastern portion of the room, rough and unworked, with an obvious downward grade.

The chamber is currently uninhabited. The several small tunnels lead deeper into the earth that connect indirectly to the core of this parallel, which cultist legend suggests is a vast hollow called the Sunless Stead. From



time to time, cultists high on new knowledge gleaned from the *Maleficarum* have utilized foul rites to call forth emissaries from evil powers, who travel up these lean tunnels to confer with the principles of the *Adytum*. Thankfully for the heroes, no such emissaries lingered in the aftermath of Iuz's attack.

The winding tunnels are only 3 feet wide, and man-sized creatures will not find them easily navigable. They wind for several miles, ever deeper, before opening upon the Sunless Stead.

A description of that terrifying place is beyond the scope of this adventure, and heroes who attempt to spend the time traversing the nigh unnavigable passages may soon reach the same conclusion. *Dungeon Masters* with extra time may develop the Sunless Stead at their leisure.

### 28. Empty

Only dust, cobwebs, and a few shrouded human-sized cocoons currently inhabit this room.

The cocoons are chrysalides of cultists who've read far too much of the *Maleficarum*. Cultists who've lost so many extremities and organs begin to resemble human-sized slugs of blank flesh. Though death is the most likely result, sometimes these cultists grow a chrysalis. That which is born from those cocoons retreats down

the tunnels of 27, joining other monstrosities in the Sunless Stead.

### 29. Bindery

Tattered and patched hides are stretched on racks on the east wall—it appears someone was tanning these hides as leather. A large worktable and associated cabinets fill the northern wall. Rectangular leather pieces lie scattered over the workbench, as well as iron staples and heavy thread. A few half-bound books are also visible.

Cult apprentices staffed the bindery before the attack. They usually gather the raw material of the bindery from the leavings generated on *Newcomer's Eve* in area 32.

### 30. Observation Chamber

Comfortable, if moth-eaten, chairs are arranged in a semicircular pattern, allowing observers a good angle on a large crystal pane set in the southern wall. The crystal looks out over a dimly lit cavernous expanse, littered here and there with difficult-to-identify piles of litter. A large iron wheel is set in the wall just to the right of the crystal pane.

Slouching low in the chairs next to the crystal pane sit a couple of loose true ghouls. The ghouls ambush any heroes who move up close to the window. Should the heroes investigate area 31 before they find this one, the first heroes into the room may be surprised when the ghouls turn the wheel, which opens onto area 32.

The window looks out over area 32, which is known as Newcomer's Field. The seasonal festival Newcomer's Eve is a cult favorite, and they used to draw lots to reserve a place here in the observation chamber. See area 32 for more information. The pane is immune to nonmagical damage, and it suffers only the enchanted bonus damage from magical weapons (a hit by a *longsword* +2 does 2 points of damage), and 1 point per die of damage from magical attack. The pane shatters if it takes more than 300 points of damage.

The wheel operates the festlock (area 31). By turning it to the left, the eastern door of area 31 swings open and the western door closes. A turn to the right closes the eastern door and opens the western door. Normally, the wheel is turned to the right.

**True ghouls (2):** AC 3; hp 36 each; THAC0 15; #AT 3 or 1; Dmg 1d6/1d6/1d8 or by weapon.

### 31. Festlock

This small 10-foot-by-10-foot room contains doors tied to the wheel in area 29. Unless the heroes have previously meddled with it, the western door is open, while the eastern door is closed. Note that if heroes haven't already cleared area 30, the first few heroes into this chamber are cycled through as the western door closes and the eastern door opens (as operated by the leering ghouls in area 30).

The doors do not operate save by the wheel in area 30—only demolishing the iron-reinforced stone doors will open both passages simultaneously.

### 32. Newcomer's Field

Piles of litter are scattered throughout this dimly lit cavernous expanse. Carrion is the major component of each pile, and the odor of decay and rotting eggs is overpowering. Moving through the litter are many humanoid shapes, none of which live. A large crystal pane on the north wall allows a dim view into another chamber. A few daggers, clubs, and other weapons lie scattered on the floor, mixed in with the carrion piles.

The collected undead that roam here attack any living creature thrust into the chamber. Those normally thrown into the room are defenseless, and thus the first wave of undead to attack any heroes are relatively minor (skeletons, zombies). Should any PC use spells above 2nd level or demonstrate any other exceptional

### Newcomer's Eve

One of the most important holy days to the Adytmum occurs on the longest night of the year (winter solstice), which the cultists call Newcomer's Eve. New recruits are selected by secret cultists in distant cities and shipped via caravan to Tovag Baragu. Recruitment sometimes occurs overtly, in that cultists approach a likely prospect and ask if that prospect has any interest in joining a "secret but prestigious" organization. Other prospects are simply taken against their knowledge.

All prospects, both willing and unwilling, are cycled onto Newcomer's Field for the "Initiation Rite." The current cult members safely watch the spectacle from the observation chamber (area 30). They are stripped of all belongings, and Ugwaerel wipes all spells above 2nd level arewiped from the minds of spellcasters and cultists of competing gods. Wearing only simple robes, the prospects are told the real story: "Survive, and be welcomed as a Disciple of Vecna. Die, and Vecna rejects you. Let the rite commence!" The rite becomes all too clear as dozens of undead begin lurch toward the assembled group.

The few who survive eight hours of horror are given a short reprieve. The option of becoming a cultist of Vecna is laid out. Those who that take the binding oath immediately swear allegiance to Vecna. Survivors who do not take the oath are hobbled and given over to the ghouls.

ability, the true ghouls rouse from torpor 2 rounds later (otherwise they remain within several carrion piles). Worse, a carrion shambler wakes, and it is fully roused 3 rounds after the first use of powerful magic, enchanted weapons, or supernatural abilities. Unfortunately, a few carrion shamblers have gotten out of the field via the shenanigans of the two true ghouls in area 30.

**Carrion Shambler:** Taking their form from the piles of fleshy remains, carrion shamblers are undead agglomerates of undead tissue, first animated by cultist wizards, but now capable of reproducing on their own. At rest, they resemble a heap of rotting flesh, but when roused, they take on a roughly humanoid shape, wider at its base than its head.

**Skeletons (6):** AC 7; MV 12; hp 8 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6.

**Zombies (6):** AC 8; MV 6; hp 16 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8.

**True ghouls (4):** AC 3; hp 36 each; THAC0 15; #AT 3 or 1; Dmg 1d6/1d6/1d8 or by weapon.

### Lesser Known Vecnan Relics

The notoriety of the *Hand* and *Eye of Vecna* extends across many lands and worlds. Other relics of Vecna survive, but because Vecna's rise as a demipower occurred long after his *Hand* and *Eye* gained artifact status, other castoffs of his first physical body initially garnered no great distinction. Although mummified, most were lost, or destroyed outright when Kas brought Vecna low. Vecna returned as a demipower, manifesting an avatar from semidivine energy. At this time, surviving fragments of his original body (not required or part of Vecna's newest incarnation) gained relic status. Note that Vecna's physical avatar has no left hand or eye, but does possess all other portions of his body (the lesser relics are not true artifacts, and thus do not resonate with the demipower to the degree of the *Hand* and *Eye*).

The relics of Vecna are activated like the *Hand* and *Eye*. If placed in a position of corresponding anatomy on an animate body, the relic grafts itself into position, and takes on the "normal" functions of the missing body part, despite appearing mummified and dead.

Those who slice off or remove a portion of their own bodies to apply a Vecnan relic take damage normally; a finger, eye, or tooth is worth 2d6 hit points, while a whole limb or organ is worth 10d10. A vital organ, such as the heart or head, kills the hopeful recipient before the relic can be applied (and so compatriots must complete the grisly task). If the relic is authentic, the graft occurs, and the power of the relic returns life to the dead. Successful recipients who wish to remove a relic take damage from the removal as if severing their own flesh; however, their original flesh does not return, and the hit point loss is permanent until a suitable replacement can be found or a *regeneration* spell is used.

Aside from any innate abilities and/or curses transferred from the relic to the recipient, each relic also grants the recipient special abilities and protection should they ever come upon an avatar of Vecna. Those with relic grafts are immune to Vecna's direct power (such as spells and spell-like abilities) and are invisible to any attempts by Vecna's avatar to scry them in any manner. However, Vecna can still indirectly affect recipients with physical weapons, followers, and indirect consequences of spells.

Recipients (including recipients of the *Hand* or *Eye*) are more capable of affecting Vecna, possessing as they do remnants of his original body. The avatar cannot heal any damage inflicted by relic recipients, and furthermore, should any recipient grab and hold Vecna, while the grip lasts the avatar cannot magically depart. Should recipients actually kill the avatar of Vecna, the power's essence is ejected from the Outer Planes, finally returning to the world that spawned it: Oerth.

**Carrion Shambler:** AC -6; MV 6; HD 17; hp 136; THAC0 4; #AT 2; Dmg 2d8+8/2d8+8 (pummel/pummel); SA suffocation; SD immune to all blunt weapons, takes only half damage from slashing and piercing weapons, gains 1 HD and 1 foot in height for each dice of lightning damage thrown at it, immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, *fear*, fire, poison, paralysis, death magic, and cold-based attacks; SW can be turned as "Special," but requires 4 consecutive successful turns to affect it (due to conglomerate undead status); SZ H (12' tall); ML fearless (20); Int low (5); AL NE; XP 18,000.

**Special Abilities:** Suffocation—Medium-sized and smaller victims hit by both the shambler's attacks in the same round are caught up and pulled inside the carrion mass. Engulfed victims suffocate and die when their breath gives out (½ victim's Con in rounds) unless they make a successful Bend Bars/Lift Gates roll, or the shambler is killed. Note that engulfed victims take 10% of all damage suffered by the shambler.

### 33. Reliquary of the Scalp

The relief-carved door of iron and the walls, floor, and ceiling of the reliquary contain a fine lead mesh, preventing ethereal traverse (though teleportation is not affected). If someone opens the door without disabling or bypassing the trap, hundreds of magically summoned beetles pour forth from an open mouth of one of the relief sculptures on the door. The beetles cover the floor of the corridor outside for a distance of 15 feet in both directions. All creatures standing on the floor must succeed at a saving throw vs. paralyzation or take 10d6 points of damage from beetle-bites (a successful saving throw halves the damage). The beetles disappear the following round. The sound from the thousands of beetles also requires an immediate wandering monster check.

Vibrant mosaic tiles covers each wall, the floor, and the ceiling. At the center of the chamber stands a slim pedestal. The ornate pedestal holds a lamp-shaped container. Visible within its glassy panes is patch of dried scalp.

The lamplike reliquary pulses with visible radiance, but the mosaic tiles pulse with a dangerous arcane charge. Victims who step upon the mosaic take 8d6 points of electrical damage each round they remain on the trapped area, while those hovering or flying over take 1d6 points a round from arcs of electricity that leap from the floor and ceiling. The reliquary itself is not trapped, but cleverly locked (-40% penalty to Open Locks attempts). Within lies a relic of ancient Vecna: a mummified patch of scalp, complete with several strands of hair.

### *Scalp of Vecna*

The *scalp of Vecna* is a mummified flap of scalp and hair. The hair is white but sparse, attaining a length of 3 inches. The scalp radiates powerful magic that cannot be analyzed directly. Once in place, it appears as a white streak in recipient's normal hair, if any.

**Constant Powers:** +2% bonus to magic resistance.

**Invoked Powers:** Recipient can animate the hair at will, causing it to grow up to 30 feet in length twice per day, for a period of 20 rounds per use. The tendril can manipulate weapons, grapple size L and smaller foes, and otherwise manipulate objects at a distance with the recipients' level of skill or THAC0, in addition to taking normal actions in the same round. Grappled foes can make one attempt to Bend Bars/Lift Gates to break the encircling hair tendril; otherwise, they remain caught until the duration expires. Once the hair tendril grapples a foe, the victim can take no further actions.

**Curse:** Every month of attachment, the recipient must make a saving throw vs. spell. On a failed save, the recipient temporarily (4d4+4 hours) acts as if charmed by Vecna and acts according to that powers desires, if applicable. Dungeon Master's discretion is required.

**Destruction:** Any force, natural or magical, that can inflict 33 points of damage from a single blow, spell, or effect is sufficient to destroy the scalp. In addition, someone using the molars of Vecna can destroy the relic.

XP Value: 0

GP Value: 0

### 34. Reliquary of the First Digit

The relief-carved door of iron, and the walls, floor, and ceiling of the reliquary contain a fine lead mesh, preventing ethereal traverse (though teleportation is not affected). If someone opens the door without disabling or bypassing the trap, a relief-carved mouth on the door screams a curse. All who stand within 20 feet of the door must succeed at a saving throw vs. spell or be magically aged by 10d4 years. (Dungeon Masters should remind players to apply any age modifiers at this point.) The scream of the curse requires an immediate wandering monster check.

Vibrant mosaic tiles cover every surface. A slim pedestal fused with the floor stands at the chamber's center. The top of the pedestal holds a lamplike container. Visible within its glassy panes rests a thick, blackened digit.



The mosaic tiles hold an eldritch charge as described under area 33. The reliquary is securely locked (-40% penalty to Open Lock attempts). Within lies a relic of

### *First Digit of Vecna*

The *first digit of Vecna* is a mummified thumb from Vecna's original right hand, complete with a blackened, clawlike nail. The thumb radiates powerful magic that cannot be analyzed directly. Once in place, it functions as a normal thumb on the recipient's right hand, if a bit overlarge and ugly.

**Constant Powers:** +2% bonus to magic resistance.

**Invoked Powers:** With a thumbs-up or thumbs-down, the recipient can bless or curse an object or living being four times each day. On a thumbs-up, a +4 bonus is granted to all saving throws and attack rolls for 1 hour. In addition, animate creatures heal 3d6 points of damage. On a thumbs-down, the object or victim must succeed at a saving throw vs. spell or take 3d6 points of damage (make a saving throw for half), as well as suffer a -4 penalty on all saving throws and attack rolls for 1 hour. Whatever combination of thumbs-up or thumbs-down, the power cannot be used more than four times in any 24-hour period.

**Curse:** As *scalp of Vecna*, under area 33.

**Destruction:** As *scalp of Vecna*, under area 33.

XP Value: 0

GP Value: 0

ancient Vecna: a mummified thumb from Vecna's right hand.

### 35. Reliquary of the Second Digit

A trap in the floor (marked on the map) is concealed below the 10-foot-square section immediately outside the door of this chamber. Those who tread upon it must succeed at a saving throw vs. paralyzation or fall 40 feet into a spiked pit, taking 8d6 points of damage.

The relief-carved door of stone, as well as the walls, floor, and ceiling of the reliquary, contain a fine lead mesh, preventing ethereal traverse (though teleportation is not affected). If someone opens the door without disabling or bypassing the trap, the entire door animates as a guise-of-Vecna stone golem. The trap-door automatically holds up the golem, but it's triggered if the golem steps off it and any heroes still stand upon it. Should combat last longer than 3 rounds, DMs should make an immediate wandering monster check.

**Guise-of-Vecna stone golem:** AC -3; MV 12; hp 120; THAC0 3; #AT 2; Dmg 4d8/4d8.

Vibrant mosaic tiles cover every surface. A slim pedestal fused with the floor stands at the chamber's center. The top of the pedestal holds a lamplike container. Visible within its glassy panes rests a thin, blackened digit.

The mosaic tiles hold an eldritch charge as described under area 33. The reliquary is securely locked (-40% penalty to Open Locks attempts). Within lies a relic of ancient Vecna: a mummified index finger, from the right hand.

#### *Second Digit of Vecna*

The *second digit of Vecna* is a mummified index finger from Vecna's original right hand, complete with a blackened, clawlike nail. The finger radiates powerful magic that cannot be analyzed directly. Once in place, it functions as a normal forefinger on the recipient's right hand, if a bit overlarge and ugly.

**Constant Powers:** +2% bonus to magic resistance.

**Invoked Powers:** The recipient triggers the effect by pointing at a target palm up, then crooking the finger in a beckoning gesture. The target must succeed at a saving throw vs. spell at a -4 penalty or be charmed by the recipient for 1 hour. This invoked power can be used successfully once per day.

**Curse:** As *scalp of Vecna*, under area 33.

**Destruction:** As *scalp of Vecna*, under area 33.

XP Value: 0

GP Value: 0

#### *Third Digit of Vecna*

The *third digit of Vecna* is a mummified medial finger from Vecna's original right hand. The nail is especially long, and it almost resembles the blade of a small dagger. The finger radiates powerful magic that cannot be analyzed directly. Once in place, it functions as a normal middle finger on the recipient's right hand, if a bit clumsy due to the long nail.

**Constant Powers:** +1% bonus to magic resistance. Recipient can use the elongated sharpened nail as a *dagger* +4 that inflicts 1d6+4 points of damage on a successful strike. A necrotic poison on the finger blade forces victims to succeed at saving throws vs. poison or take an additional 1d4+4 points of damage.

**Invoked Powers:** The recipient can project the nail as a *crossbow bolt* +10 once per day with his or her ranged THAC0 score with a +10 bonus to his or her roll. The bolt does 3d6+4 points of damage, and living foes must succeed at saving throws vs. poison as described above. After being shot, the constant powers do not function for twelve hours (nor can another nail be shot), during which time the nail regenerates. The nail shot from the finger rots into uselessness seconds after impact.

**Curse:** As *scalp of Vecna*, under area 33.

**Destruction:** As *scalp of Vecna*, under area 33.

XP Value: 0

GP Value: 0

### 36. Reliquary of the Medial Digit

The relief-carved door of iron, and the walls, floor, and ceiling of the reliquary contain a fine lead mesh, preventing ethereal traverse (though teleportation is not affected). Unlike previous doors, etched runes make up part of the relief sculpture. The runes act as a riddle—an audible answer temporarily deactivates the trap on the door and within the room, and the door swings wide.

*Neither fowl nor fish;*

*Not bone or flesh;*

*And yet possesses,*

*Thumb and four fingers.*

**Answer:** Glove or gauntlet

If the heroes don't solve the riddle, or if they give an incorrect answer, the door remains locked (-40% penalty to Open Locks attempts or two *knock* spells to open). Unless the heroes disable the trap or give a correct answer, the nostrils on all the images in the door's relief sculptures vent poison gas. All within a 20-foot radius must succeed at saving throws vs. poison or be knocked unconscious for 3d6 rounds, during which time nothing short of a *wish* can awaken victims. The teapot whistle



### *Right Eye of Vecna*

The *right eye of Vecna* is a mummified eyeball from Vecna's original right eye socket. The eye resembles nothing so much as an albino prune, wrinkled and leathery. The eye radiates powerful magic that cannot be analyzed directly. Once in place, it functions as a normal eye in the recipient's right eye socket, though it appears hazed and milky as if blind.

**Constant Powers:** +3% bonus to magic resistance. Recipient can see in normal and magical darkness at a distance of 160 feet.

**Invoked Powers:** If the recipient fixes his or her attention on a target and wills the eye into action, the target must succeed at a saving throw vs. spell with a -5 penalty. A failed saving throw brings a haze of darkness over the victim's eyes, blinding the victim for one day. This power can be used successfully three times per day.

**Curse:** As *scalp of Vecna*, under area 33.

**Destruction:** As *scalp of Vecna*, under area 33.

XP Value: 0

GP Value: 0

of the venting poison gas calls for an immediate wandering monster check.

Vibrant mosaic tiles cover every surface. A slim pedestal fused with the floor stands at the chamber's center. The top of the pedestal holds a lamplike container. Visible within glassy panes rests a blackened digit sporting a knifelike nail.

The mosaic tiles hold an eldritch charge as described under area 33. The reliquary is securely locked (-40% penalty to Open Locks attempts). Within lies a relic of ancient Vecna: a mummified middle finger.

### 37. Reliquary of the Other Eye

The relief-carved door of iron, and the walls, floor, and ceiling of the reliquary contain a fine lead mesh, preventing ethereal traverse (though teleportation is not affected). If someone opens the door without disabling or bypassing the trap, a concealed vent in the ceiling pours acid into the 10-foot by 10-foot area immediately in front of the door. All within the area must succeed at saving throws vs. paralyzation to avoid being completely doused, suffering for 8d6 points of acid damage in the first round, 4d6 points of damage in the second round, 2d6 points of damage in third round, and 1d6 points of damage on the fourth and last round of burning. Those who succeed at their saving throw are still splashed, suffering for 2d6 points of acid damage on the first round and 1d6 points of damage

### *Molar of Vecna*

The *molar of Vecna* is a petrified tooth from Vecna's original body. Hard and blackened, the tooth appears flat and unexceptional. The tooth radiates powerful magic that cannot be analyzed directly. Once in place, it functions as a normal tooth.

**Constant Powers:** +3% bonus to magic resistance. Recipient gains a +4 bonus to saving throws vs. poison.

**Invoked Powers:** When the recipient of this relic triggers its power, he or she can eat and digest any nonmagical material in bite-size but otherwise unlimited quantities. The power lasts for 20 rounds each time it is triggered, and it can be used three times per day. If desired, the recipient can make a +4 bite attack for 2d6+4 points of damage. The recipient could conceivably eat through any solid nonmagical material (including earth, stone, or metal) at a rate of 1 square foot per 5 rounds. In addition, the *molar of Vecna* can destroy all of the various relics of Vecna.

**Curse:** As *scalp of Vecna*, under area 33.

**Destruction:** As *scalp of Vecna*, under area 33.

XP Value: 0

GP Value: 0

on the second round. No wandering monster check is necessary, unless victims scream loudly from the burning acid.

Vibrant mosaic tiles cover every surface. A slim pedestal fused with the floor stands at the chamber's center. The top of the pedestal holds a lamplike container. Visible within its glassy panes is a pale, shrunken orb.

The mosaic tiles hold an eldritch charge as described under area 33. The reliquary is securely locked (-40% penalty to Open Locks attempts). Within lies a relic of ancient Vecna: a shrunken, mummified eye.

### 38. Reliquary of Appetite

The relief-carved door of iron, and the walls, floor, and ceiling of the reliquary contain a fine lead mesh, preventing ethereal traverse (though teleportation is not affected). If someone opens the door without disabling or bypassing the trap, a yellow shaft of light shines from the floor, bathing all within the hallway containing this door in its sickening light; on a failed saving throw vs. spell, victims feel 3d6 hit points drain out of them (the feeling is akin to being weak with hunger).

### *Incisors of Vecna*

The *incisors of Vecna* are from Vecna's original body. Hard and blackened, the teeth have exceptionally long roots, and they come to natural razor-sharp points. The teeth radiate powerful magic that cannot be analyzed directly. Once in place, they function as normal teeth, although a recipient who doesn't want to reveal their presence must always make a conscious effort not to reveal the vampirelike fangs.

**Constant Powers:** +1% bonus to magic resistance (each).

**Invoked Powers:** Both teeth must be in place to invoke this relic's power. Only usable twice per month during any 8-hour period, the relic transforms the recipient into a vampire. Once the transformation is triggered, the entire 8 hours must elapse before the recipient returns to his normal state. While a vampire, the recipient operates with most of the special abilities of a standard vampire, and all a vampire's special weaknesses. The recipient fights with a vampire's Strength, but with his own THAC0 (modified by vampiric Strength). The recipient retains all normal saving throws, spells, and knowledge of proficiencies. Even if the recipient vampire drains a victim to death, that victim will not rise as a vampire.

**Curse:** As *scalp of Vecna*, under area 33. In addition, good recipients who kill another neutral or good creature by blood or level drain are wracked with guilt for the following week (-5 on all actions, attack rolls, and saving throws). If this occurs three times, the recipient switches alignment and may become an NPC at the DM's option.

**Destruction:** As *scalp of Vecna*, under area 33.

XP Value: 0

GP Value: 0

Vibrant mosaic tiles cover every surface. A slim pedestal fused with the floor stands at the chamber's center. The top of the pedestal holds a lamplike container. Visible within its glassy panes is a blackened tooth.

The mosaic tiles hold an eldritch charge as described under area 33. The reliquary is securely locked (-40% penalty to Open Locks attempts). Within lies a relic of ancient Vecna: a petrified molar.

### 39. Reliquary of the Night

The relief-carved door of iron, and the walls, floor, and ceiling of the reliquary contain a fine lead mesh, preventing ethereal traverse (though teleportation is not affected). If someone opens the door without disabling or bypassing the trap, icy mist seeps from the open

eyes, nostrils, and mouths of all the figures on the door's relief sculpture. All within the hallway containing this door must succeed at a saving throw vs. spell or take 8d8 points of damage from the cold (a successful saving throw halves the damage).

Vibrant mosaic tiles cover every surface. A slim pedestal fused with the floor stands at the chamber's center. The top of the pedestal holds a lamplike container. Visible within its glassy panes are two blackened teeth.

The mosaic tiles hold an eldritch charge as described under area 33. The reliquary is securely locked (-40% penalty to Open Locks attempts). Within lies a relic of ancient Vecna: a matched set of incisors.

### 40. Reliquary of the Traveler

The relief-carved door of iron, and the walls, floor, and ceiling of the reliquary contain a fine lead mesh, preventing ethereal traverse (though teleportation is not affected). If someone opens the door without disabling or bypassing the trap, the faces visible in the relief sculpture on the door briefly animate to chant a stored spell: a *fireball* cast at 10th level, inflicting 10d6 points of fire damage to all in the hallway (successful saving throw cuts total damage in half). Because this *fireball* conforms to the shape of the space allowed, the effect spreads up to thirty-three 10-foot-by-10-foot-by-10-foot cubes, or as many spaces as open doors allow. Such an explosion calls for an immediate wandering monster check.

### *Foot of Vecna*

The *foot of Vecna* is from Vecna's original body. Hard, and blackened, the left foot is also attached to an attenuated ankle and lower calf—jagged, blackened bones protrude from the end. The foot radiates powerful magic that cannot be analyzed directly. Once in place, it functions as a normal foot, although a recipient walks with a strange hitch to his stride.

**Constant Powers:** +1% bonus to magic resistance. All kick attacks enjoy a +3 bonus to attack and damage rolls.

**Invoked Powers:** The recipient has access to several spell-like abilities that can be triggered by act of will. The spell-like abilities activate four times per day in any combination, at the 20th level of ability. The spell-like abilities are *jump*, *spider climb*, *free action*, *water walk*, *featherfall*, and *levitation*.

**Curse:** As *scalp of Vecna*, under area 33.

**Destruction:** As *scalp of Vecna*, under area 33.

XP Value: 0

Value: 0

Vibrant mosaic tiles cover every surface. An unadorned door provides an exit in the southern wall of the reliquary. A slim pedestal fused with the floor stands at the chamber's center. The top of the pedestal holds a lamplike container. Visible within its glassy panes is an amputated, shriveled foot.

The mosaic tiles hold an eldritch charge as described under area 33. The door in the southern wall is not trapped in either direction and allows access to the reliquaries keyed to 42, 43, and 44. The reliquary is locked (-40% penalty to Open Locks attempts). Within lies a relic of ancient Vecna: a roughly amputated foot.

#### 41. Reliquary of the Heart

The secret door of iron that leads to this chamber, and the walls, floor, and ceiling of the reliquary, contain a fine lead mesh, preventing ethereal traverse (though teleportation is not affected). If the heroes open the secret door without disabling or bypassing the trap, all living creatures in a 10-foot radius of the secret door must succeed at a saving throw vs. death magic or suffer heart failure and death.

##### *Heart of Vecna*

The *heart of Vecna* is from Vecna's original body. Tough and leathery, it resembles a large heart-shaped hunk of jerky. The *heart* radiates powerful magic that cannot be analyzed directly. More so than the other relics noted herein, removal of a potential recipient's heart is a deadly serious operation, and it most likely kills the recipient. If compatriots complete the operation by placing the *heart of Vecna* in the recipient's chest cavity, it resurrects the recipient (although to begin with, the recipient begins with only 1 hit point), and from that time forward functions as a normal heart, although a recipient's chest bears horrible scar tissue that never heals.

**Constant Powers:** +1% bonus to magic resistance. The heart confers regeneration like that of a *ring of regeneration* (restores 1 point of damage per turn and slowly regenerates lost limbs and organs, unless replaced with a relic).

**Invoked Powers:** The recipient can make a called shot (-4 penalty to attack roll) touch attack, targeting a foe's chest. If hit, the recipient must succeed at a saving throw vs. death magic or die of a heart attack. The recipient can trigger this effect only once per month.

**Curse:** As *scalp of Vecna*, under area 33.

**Destruction:** Must be eaten by someone using molars of Vecna.

XP Value: 0

GP Value: 0

##### *Skin of Vecna*

The *skin of Vecna* is from Vecna's original body, and it once covered the left half of his face, neck, and upper chest. Tough and leathery, it is still flexible enough to be unrolled. The skin radiates powerful magic that cannot be analyzed directly. Once in place, it functions as a normal skin; however, the left side of the recipient's face, neck, and upper torso obviously doesn't match the skin on the right side, what with its darkly scabrous color and texture.

**Constant Powers:** +4% bonus to magic resistance. Recipient always enjoys the effects of *resist fire* and *resist cold*.

**Invoked Powers:** The recipient has access to several spell-like abilities that can be triggered by act of will. The spell-like abilities can be triggered four times per day in any combination, at the 20th level of ability. The spell-like abilities are *mirror image*, *polymorph self*, *stoneskin*, and *protection from lightning*. All manifestations using *polymorph self* retain the telltale skin mismatch, as appropriate.

**Curse:** As *scalp of Vecna*, under area 33. Also permanently reduces the recipient's Charisma score by 5 points.

**Destruction:** As *scalp of Vecna*, under area 33.

XP Value: 0

GP Value: 0

Vibrant mosaic tiles cover every surface. A slim pedestal fused with the floor stands at the chamber's center. The top of the pedestal holds a lamplike container. Visible within its glassy panes is a fist-sized lump of desiccated tissue

The mosaic tiles hold an eldritch charge as described under area 33. The reliquary is locked (-40% penalty to Open Locks attempts). Within lies a relic of ancient Vecna: his preserved heart!

#### 42. Reliquary of the Body

A trap in the floor (marked on the map) is concealed below the 10-foot section immediately outside the door of this chamber. Those who tread upon it must succeed at a saving throw vs. paralyzation or fall 40 feet into a spiked pit, taking 8d6 points of damage.

The relief-carved door of iron, and the walls, floor, and ceiling of the reliquary contain a fine lead mesh, preventing ethereal traverse (though teleportation is not affected). If someone opens the door without disabling or bypassing the trap, all creatures standing within a 10-foot radius of the door must succeed at saving throws vs. spell or be teleported into the nearby pit trap at a position 10 feet below the opening (a fall resulting in 7d6 points of damage).

Vibrant mosaic tiles cover every surface. A slim pedestal fused with the floor stands at the chamber's center. The top of the pedestal holds a lamplike container. Visible within its glassy panes is a thick roll of leathery parchment.

The mosaic tiles hold an eldritch charge as described under area 33. The reliquary is securely locked (-40% penalty to Open Locks attempts). Within lies a relic of ancient Vecna: a mummified roll of skin.

#### 43. Empty

The relief-carved door of iron, and the walls, floor, and ceiling of the reliquary contain a fine lead mesh, preventing ethereal traverse (though teleportation is not affected). When heroes first encounter this chamber, the iron door stands ajar, its trap (if any) inactive.

Vibrant mosaic tiles cover every surface. Another relief-carved door provides an exit in the eastern wall of the reliquary. A slim pedestal fused with the floor stands at the chamber's center. The top of the pedestal holds a lamplike container. The container stands open, and nothing is visible within its glassy panes.

The mosaic tiles do not contain an eldritch charge, unlike the other reliquaries. The relief-carved door leads to another reliquary (area 44). The reliquary is empty. In fact, the relic once stored here (right hand pinkie) was taken by Ugwaerel. As the Highest Disciple, Ugwaerel has dispensation to claim one relic as her own. Note that this relic allows Ugwaerel to pass to and from the Inner Temple at will.

#### 44. Reliquary of the Head

A trap in the floor (marked on the map) is concealed below the 10-foot-square section immediately outside the door of this chamber. Those who tread upon it must succeed at saving throws vs. paralyzation or fall 40 feet into a spiked pit, taking 8d6 points of damage.

The secret door of iron that leads to this chamber, and the walls, floor, and ceiling of the reliquary contain a fine lead mesh, preventing ethereal traverse (though teleportation is not affected). If someone opens the secret door without disabling or bypassing the trap, a mundane poison needle (with save or die poison, Type E) jabs whoever first touches the door.

Vibrant mosaic tiles cover every surface. A slim pedestal fused with the floor stands at the chamber's center. The top of the pedestal holds a lamplike container. Visible within its glassy panes is a mummified head.



The mosaic tiles hold an eldritch charge as described under area 33. The reliquary is securely locked (-40% penalty to Open Locks attempts). Within lies a mummified head. The head radiates powerful magic that cannot be analyzed directly. It is hairless and toothless, and most of its skin is peeled away. Should anyone think to check closely, it possesses two shrunken orbs hidden deep in the eye sockets. This is the only obvious clue that this head is a fake, but let the heroes come to their own conclusions. Despite the fakery, those who make a successful Ancient History check have heard stories of this very item (though no story indicates that it is a fake). Legends speak of the Head of Vecna appearing in out-of-the-way dungeons. Some accounts speak of whole groups of would-be tomb raiders succumbing to the power of the head, by their own hands (which is true, as far as it goes).

Someone went to a lot of trouble creating the fake, including enchanting it in such a way that its powerful and unanalyzable power would invite scrutiny. Its placement here could indicate that the cult was taken in by the fakery, though it might also be a sign of Ugwaerel's strange sense of humor.

Being a fake, an attempt to place the "head of Vecna" on a freshly beheaded corpse fails; the mummified head just rolls off and drops to the ground. If possible, the DM should avoid outright laughter as long as possible, just in case the would-be tomb raiders want to try their head on a potential recipient or two.

#### 45. Teeth and Fingers

The stone hallway opens onto several small cells to the right and left. Broken sculpture, burnt tapestries, and refuse litters the hallway.

The cells that lead off the hallway served as a temporary residence for rotating bands of Teeth and Fingers of Vecna (cult wizards and thieves). Each cell is crammed with three bunk beds, each capable of sleeping four cultists. The 15-foot-high ceiling is adorned with space-saving hooks, from which personal satchels, bags, and equipment hung. Currently, it appears as if Iuz's forces looted and burned the cells. Though this bank of cells had the capacity to hold over eighty cultists simultaneously, many cultists lived in remote areas found within the Baragu network of portals. A search of the refuse is 60% likely to turn up small items of value per room searched, including a pouch with 156 gp, a *potion of healing*, a gem worth 300 gp, a *potion of invisibility*, and a *potion of extra-healing*.

Heroes who are particularly loud in a search through the cells alert the residents of the hallway to the west (area 47) to their presence.

#### 46. Chapel

A few holed-up cultists bar the door from within. The terrible scratch marks on the outside of the wooden door attest to a pack of true ghouls who tried to get in. Thankfully, those ghouls have left now, but nothing short of forcing the door (Bend Bars/Lift Gates) grants access.

Tipped and scattered pews cover a floor tiled with green and yellow stone. A cracked font to the left of the door has leaked most of its water. The obsidian altar against the far wall is cracked in two pieces, and the holy symbol of the hand and eye have been mostly chipped away. The stench of death is strong here.

Unfortunately, the three cultists who holed up in this chamber didn't realize that they'd barred a devious true ghoul into the chamber with them. When exhaustion set in, the ghoul arose from its position beneath a fallen pew and killed the refugees.

The cultists' well-gnawed bodies lie mangled below the pews, and a ghoul feeds upon one of them. The ghoul, knowing the heroes outnumber it, waits with its most current meal beneath a pew. Unless the heroes look under its pew, the ghoul doesn't attack.

The bodies still possess their belongings, which include 440 gp, a *short sword* +2, *incense of meditation*, and two *potions of healing*. The altar possessed a secret cavity for storage of unholy implements, but Iuz's troops cracked and looted the cavity.

**True ghoul:** AC 3; hp 36; THAC0 15; #AT 3 or 1; Dmg 1d6/1d6/1d8 or by weapon.

#### 47. Disciples

The stone hallway opens onto several small cells to the right and left. Evidence of broken sculpture, burnt tapestries, and refuse litters the hallway, though some attempt has been made to sweep up.

The cells that lead off the hallway served as residence for the core cultists in the temple: the Disciples of Vecna. Most of these Disciples were clerics with limited access to spells (1st and 2nd level, due to Vecna's incarceration in the Demiplane of Dread), though in the short term most hoped to fashion special fetishes that would allow them to channel a full complement of spells for their level. The disciples hoped to bring about Vecna's release and full ascendance. Those who aren't dead (which are few in number) are closeted, and they haven't been out in the world for many years.

Each cell contains two bunk beds and four slender armoires, though Iuz's forces fully smashed and looted all but one of the cells. The chamber labeled "a" currently holds four Disciples. Note that a *glyph of warding* is engraved in the lintel, which inflicts 7d4 points of cold damage to any who pass and are not sworn to Vecna. The Disciples Buliard and Leila are limited only to 1st- and 2nd-level spells; however, Morda Sash possesses a *knucklebone of channeling*, which grants her access to a full spell complement.

**Development:** The Disciples in this hall are not too keen on diplomacy with heroes who appear to be cooperating with any faction of Iuz or who openly possess looted relics of the temple. If conflict ensues, the Disciples grimly engage the heroes. One full round after the beginning of any conflict, Ignassi in area 48 emerges to bolster his disciple allies. Attempts at diplomacy are aided by heroes who openly revile Iuz or have evidence of past encounters against Iuz's forces. Even if the heroes and Disciples reach a brief accord, these Disciples never accompany heroes. Under diplomatic or other forms of questioning, the Disciples may reveal the following bits of information:

- The Disciples are mostly scattered or slain by Iuz's forces. The survivors continue to attempt to reconsolidate the temple, but communication between surviving Fingers, Teeth, mercenaries, and other forces remains tenuous.

- Orlanko was thought killed immediately in the onslaught, and he is looked upon with suspicion, should he accompany the party.
- Vecna may be in danger from Iuz's magical assault.
- Father Ignassi commands the remaining Disciples, Teeth, and Fingers from Ugwaerel's old chamber (area 48); however, Highest Disciple Ugwaerel still lives, and contends with Iuz's forces left behind in the Inner Temple.
- A magical lockout prevents easy access to the Inner Temple (also called the Atrium). In fact, while the lockout remains in effect (for another year), the entrance simply doesn't exist for any who do not themselves possess a relic of Vecna.
- As the Highest Disciple, Ugwaerel alone is given permission to possess a relic, and thus may pass back and forth between the Atrium and outer Adytum.

**Morda Sash, female human C7 (Disciple):** AC 2 (platemail, shield); MV 12; hp 38; THAC0 16 (15 with *mace* +1); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+2 (*mace* +1); SZ M (6' 1" tall); ML champion (16); Int high (14); AL LE; XP 2,000.

*Special Equipment:* knucklebone of channeling (nonrelic bone that channels full complement of spells from trapped Vecna), 56 gp, *potion of gaseous form*.

*Spells* (5/5/3/2): 1st—*command* (×2), *cure light wounds* (×3); 2nd—*hold person* (×4), *know alignment*; 3rd—*create food & water, hold animal, glyph of warding*; 4th—*cure serious wounds, sticks to snakes*.

**Buliard and Leila, male and female humans C7 (Disciples):** AC 2 (platemail, shield); MV 12; hp 38 each; THAC0 16; #AT 1 (*mace*); Dmg 1d6+1; SZ M (6' 1" tall); ML champion (16); Int high (13); AL LE; XP 975 each.

*Special Equipment:* 2d6 ×10 gp each.

*Spells* (5/5): 1st—*command* (×2), *cure light wounds, entangle, sanctuary*; 2nd—*charm person, hold person* (×2), *silence 15' radius, spiritual hammer*.

#### 48. Ugwaerel's Chamber

The door to this chamber is obviously trapped with a *glyph of warding*. Any who open this door and are not sworn to Vecna trigger the *glyph*, which delivers 10d4 points of electrical damage. Furthermore, the door to the chamber is barred from within, unless its resident, Ignassi, has previously come into the hallway.

The air here is fresh, not stale and laden with death and smoke. White light shines from two hanging crystal lanterns, illuminating a well-made desk, bed, bookcase, armoire, and miscellaneous holy trappings designated by the eye-in-hand symbol of Vecna.

This chamber belongs to Ugwaerel, the Highest Disciple, but she's not home; she's in the Narthex (area 61). Acting in her stead is Ignassi, a cultist whose position of authority outstrips his competence. In fact, his indiscretions may be responsible for the heroes' presence here to begin with.

**Development:** Ignassi knows and reacts just as the Disciples presented under area 48. However, despite his higher position, his manner is obviously more uncertain and given to ineptitude.

Should the situation allow the heroes to search through the assembled furnishings (only if the heroes dispatch Ignassi), they find few items of value: an aspergillus (holy water sprinkler) filled with unholy water, three sticks of *incense of mediation*, a wineskin filled with Tovag Reserve (acts as *potion of heroism*), and a total of 3,434 gp in loose gems. A search of the desk also unearths some very old correspondence with a group known as the Doomguard.

The correspondence is written in purple ink on a pale skin. Though inscribed in Common, many unfamiliar terms and slang usages are evident. By the condition of the skin, the message is a few years old. The gist of the message is that some faction of a larger group known as the Doomguard have prepared an entry into their "place of strength" called the Armory for their brothers-in-faith. The text suggests that on finding a small blue door inscribed with a hand and eye over a symbol of a stylized animal skull, one need only press one's "channeling knucklebone" upon the door to gain entry. The correspondence is signed "Pentar."

**Ignassi, human male C10 (Disciple):** AC 0 (platemail, *shield* +2); MV 12; hp 43; THAC0 14 (12 with *warhammer* +2); #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+3 (*warhammer* +2); SZ M (6' tall); ML champion (16); Int low (7); AL N; XP 5,000.

*Special Equipment:* *decanter of endless water*.

*Spells* (6/6/4/4/2): 1st—*bles*, *command, cure light wounds* (×3), *entangle*; 2nd—*hold person* (×3), *know alignment* (×2), *withdraw*; 3rd—*dispel magic, glyph of warding, summon insects* (×2); 4th—*cure serious wounds, protection from good 10' radius, repel insects, spell immunity*; 5th—*flame strike, raise dead*.

#### 49. Commissary

Smashed wooden tables, splintered chairs, and shattered crockery covers the floor. Several animate skeletons stand idly by.

This commissary shows the rampages of Iuz. The skeletons (five total) were animated as commissary servitors, and thus are not commanded to attack or guard. They will defend themselves if attacked.

**Skeletons (5):** AC 7; MV 12; hp 8 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6.

### 50. Kitchen

Cabinet doors ripped off their hinges litter this kitchen. Cooking implements, pots, pans, and all manner of kitchen paraphernalia lie scattered amid many well-gnawed bodies in cultist robes.

Other than implements one might expect to find in a kitchen large enough to feed up to two hundred people, nothing particularly useful is located among the detritus (the gnawed corpses, three total, are looted).

### 51. Wine Storage

The oaken door to this chamber is smashed open.

Most of the wooden wine racks that fill this room are tipped and smashed, their contents sodden. Glassy shards litter the floor.

Wine was important to the cult, both for ceremony and for relaxation. Grown and bottled on one of the parallels, the finest selections were brought here. A search through the debris reveals three unsmashed bottles of a special label red, Tovag Reserve.

The unsullied wine is incredible. The first time a hero imbibes one full goblet of this wine, he or she is affected as per a *potion of heroism*. Additional wine adds no additional benefit for a full 24 hours. Each bottle contains four glasses (doses).

### 52. Cold Storage

Frost coats every surface, while icicles hang from the ceiling and from the many portions of preserved meat.

A permanent cold spell keeps this icebox frosty. (Heroes who spend too much time here would eventually freeze to death, at a rate of 20 hit points per turn.) Many different cuts of beef, chicken, pork, and other less identifiable herd animals hang here. An enterprising ghoul has also hung two cultists from a hook way in the back. Heroes who undertake to remove said cultists from their high place discover the half-eaten bodies are also looted.

### 53. Dry Storage

Wooden shelves stuffed with jars and dried goods fill the chamber. Recent vandalism brought more than a few shelves low, spilling their broken contents upon the floor.

Cultists from area 47 still come here to forage when they become tired of using *create food & water*. Heroes who require provisioning can find all manner of dried and preserved foods here.

### 54. Atrium

The door to this chamber consists of shiny alloy, and it's heavily graven with relief sculpture. It appears normal to casual inspection, but any attempt to open it by someone without a Vecnan relic reveals it as an apparent false door. Nothing lies beyond but rock, and all divinatory, ethereal, and anecdotal analysis proves out the observation. On the other hand, to someone with a Vecnan relic, it appears to open normally into a chamber. Paradoxically, a living or otherwise animate entity who views a relic recipient open the door still sees only naked rock. An attempt by this entity to follow a recipient through the stone results in a crack on the head. All the areas beyond this door (areas 54 to 63) share the same there-not-there quality.

If Orllanko or another higher-level cultist accompanies the party, he or she indicates that in the aftermath of Iuz's attack, temple defenses kicked in too late and have sealed away the Atrium and Inner Temple. Only those in possession of a Vecnan relic may pass, and only the Highest Disciple Ugwaerel has such dispensation. Orllanko knows that the *Compendium Maleficarum* may offer a single individual the ability to pass into the Atrium, and may point heroes toward this goal first.

Of all possible cultist allies, only Orllanko would even consider accompanying heroes who have defiled the *Compendium Maleficarum* by reading through it or who possess Vecnan relics, if the heroes are particularly diplomatic. Moreover, cultists who note Orllanko and heroes with Vecnan relics working together brand Orllanko as a traitor to the faith.

Plates of mirror-bright metal tile the walls, floor, and ceiling in this semicircular chamber, and all are heavily graven with relief sculpture. A crystal eye-shaped lantern hangs down from the center of the ceiling, its blazing yellow light highlighting the pile of carrion filling this chamber in ghastly detail.

Ogres, mercenaries, true ghouls wearing collars, cultists (Disciples, Fingers, Teeth, and other varieties) and even a few centaurs fell in titanic battle here. Some died in melee, other from a combination of powerful spells, while some cultists stand glassy and half-melted into the floor—these died at the personal hand of Iuz.

It is obvious that someone has looted these bodies, as all valuables have been picked clean, and many of the bodies are in different positions from where they fell (if bloodstains are any indication).

A heavily graven font on the eastern wall holds a small amount of unholy water (3 vials' worth). If splashed on a good cleric or a paladin, a vial inflicts 2d4 points of damage (and heals the same amount if applied to any form of undead).

### 55. Gauntlet of the Eye

This antechamber contains burned and blasted tapestries, smashed sculpture, and scorched stone. Of the decoration that remains, it seems clear that the eye symbol predominated. The silvery door to the west is half melted, and it slumps off its hinges. Lying near the door is a slumped 5-foot-diameter metal orb, melted and magically corroded, but still recognizable as a large eye.

Iuz came this way, intent on retrieving one of Vecna's primary artifacts: the *Eye of Vecna*. The orb was an Eye-inspired iron golem dispatched by Iuz and his elite followers on his way into the gauntlet.

### 56. The Machine

Gears, springs, and shiny metallic discs with razor-edges fill this chamber. Many of the discs are jammed halfway in some of the hundreds of slits in the walls. Many others lie crumpled and melted upon the stony floor. A 5-foot-wide path is cleared through the sharp jumble, leading to an obsidian door on the western wall, though that door now manifests only as rocky chunks.

When properly working, the Machine, a magically animate creation of the Disciples, turned this entire chamber into a flashing, slashing nightmare of death. Someone inscribed a *symbol of death* above the western door, but the power of the demigod Iuz burned it out and sundered the door beneath it.

### 57. Reliquary of the Eye

Burnt and shattered tiles cover the floor and ceiling, while metallic relief sculpture adorns the walls, though the sculpture's figurines and heads all slump as if exposed to exceptional heat. The stump of a pedestal stands in the chamber's center. Near it lies a shattered lamplike reliquary. A velvet depression within the reliquary is empty, but it looks large enough to hold a small 1-inch-diameter sphere. Bloody graffiti spatters one wall, above the crumpled form of a fallen cultist.

The blood-inked graffiti reads: "Iuz was here." And so he was, and when he left, he had the *Eye of Vecna* firmly ensconced in place of his own. In fact, a thorough search

of the chamber yields up a rotted eye that Iuz plucked from his own head. Iuz's eye possesses no special properties, though it could serve as a potent spell component, at the DM's option. (Dungeon Masters may need to adjust this text if one of the heroes already owns the *Eye of Vecna*.)

### 58. Gauntlet of the Hand

This antechamber contains artfully arranged tapestries and sculptures. Though several scenes showing a powerful and fell lord are shown, the blazing symbol of a withered hand predominates. A huge iron statue, sculpted and cut to form a disembodied hand, is poised on its fingertips, next to a smooth silvery door on the west wall.

The iron hand possess the enhanced stats of an iron golem. The 8-foot-tall hand-shaped golem attacks any who come within 5 feet of the silvery door, or who attempt to attack the golem. Due to its unique structure, the golem can attack with three pummeling, loglike fingers simultaneously, as it rears back on its palm, thumb, and pinkie. The golem follows victims once provoked, though not over any obvious traps; if the heroes want to get past it, leading it away may be their safest choice. A battle that lasts more than 10 rounds with the golem in this chamber attracts the attention of Ugwaerel from area 61!

**Hand-shaped Iron Golem:** AC 0; MV 6; HD 18; hp 164; THAC0 3; #AT 3; Dmg 4d10 (finger-pummel); SA emits poison gas on any opponent within 10-feet every 7th round (save or take 6d10 points of damage); SD affected only by +3 or better weapons, immune to all spells save electricity which slows it for 3 rounds and magical fire that repairs 1 hp/die of damage normally inflicted; SW may be affected by rust monsters; SZ L (8' tall and wide); ML fearless (20); Int non- (0); AL N; XP 15,000.

### 59. Horrors of Midnights

If the heroes open the smooth silvery door between this chamber and area 58 without disabling or bypassing the trap (or if a Remove Traps roll fails), all creatures standing facing the door must succeed at saving throws vs. death magic or see something terrible. Their companions' reflections in the door morph into horrible monstrosities, merging human and green slime characteristics. Witnesses become convinced that slimy monstrosities have replaced their companions, and these witnesses savagely attack their friends to their best ability. Those suffering from the delusion can attempt saving throws vs. death magic every second round to see if they throw off the glamour.



The plain stone chamber is empty. Various shades stain the hard floor, though all past residue has drained through the hundreds of half-inch holes in the floor. The door on the far side of the chamber is closed, and it is apparently composed of obsidian.

Heroes who think to look up at the 15-foot-high ceiling notice that is perforated with thousands of needle-wide holes. Any animate being composed of anything other than stone triggers an aerosol cascade of green slime from the ceiling 3 rounds after entry. The spray of slime coats everything in the chamber evenly, though excess slime drains down the drains in the floor. A single saving throw vs. death magic allows heroes to shed all their outer clothing and armor, and scrape slime from exposed skin. Those who fail to do so are consigned to be liquefied with the equipment in 1d4 rounds, and drain away through the floor vents into oblivion, leaving nothing but a stain. Heroes may also be saved, even if they fail their saving throw, if they receive a *cure disease* before complete dissolution.

After a refractory period of 10 rounds, the trap is once again capable of being triggered, and it does so should any creature remain in or enter the chamber. Cultists bypass this trap by kneeling in the doorway and chanting the words "Vecna grants us safe passage through the rain of death. All hail Vecna!"

### 60. Reliquary of the Hand

The obsidian stone door to this chamber is cleverly locked (-40% penalty to Open Locks attempts, although it does open to two *knock* spells). A tiny *symbol* is inscribed above the door. From a distance it cannot be read, but anyone with normal vision can make it out well enough to trigger its stunning effect: One or more creatures whose total hit points do not exceed 160 are stunned for 3d4 rounds, dropping anything they are

#### *Last Digit of Vecna*

The *last digit of Vecna* is from Vecna's original right hand. The thin and bony pinkie retains a jagged, fungus-eaten nail. The digit radiates powerful magic that cannot be analyzed directly. Once in place, it functions as a normal finger.

**Constant Powers:** +3% bonus to magic resistance. Recipient doesn't require somatic components for spellcasting.

**Invoked Powers:** The recipient can cast an extra spell from any spell currently memorized once every 4 hours.

**Curse:** As *scalp of Vecna*, under area 33.

**Destruction:** As *scalp of Vecna*, under area 33.

XP Value: 0

GP Value: 0

holding. Unless the heroes quickly usher stunned creatures out of the chamber, the victims find themselves in trouble from the green slime aerosol described in area 59. The *symbol* remains active until it has affected up to 160 hit points' worth of creatures. Once used up, the *symbol* fades; however, it reappears 1 hour later at full strength (a successful *dispel magic* vs. a 20th-level spell delays reappearance for 8 hours).

The obsidian door, and the walls, floor, and ceiling of the *Hand's* reliquary contain a fine lead mesh, preventing ethereal traverse (though teleportation is not affected).

A mosaic of green and gold tiles cover the floor and ceiling, while stone relief sculpture adorns the walls. An elaborately carved iron pedestal rises from the floor, holding a shining lamplike reliquary. A withered, disembodied hand rests within the clear crystal panes.

Here lies the true *Hand of Vecna*! The reliquary requires three successful *knocks* or Open Locks attempts (with a -20% penalty) to open. The mosaic tiles are not trapped; however, the stone relief sculpture contains a potent magical trap. Every 4 rounds an animate creature remains within the reliquary, all the heads shown in the relief sculpture voice the words, "Join us!" All within the reliquary must succeed at a saving throw vs. death magic or be pulled into the sculpture, becoming another decoration for the already overly embellished room. (If this adventure started with a PC already owning the *Hand of Vecna*, then adjust this section as necessary.)

If someone casts a *remove curse* or *stone to flesh* spell upon a victim of the room's curse, the victim slowly returns to flesh over the course of 2 rounds. This does not render the victim immune from the continuing chorus intent on drawing the heroes into the fresco. A *dispel magic* successfully cast against a 20th-level effect provides a window of 1 hour before the relief sculpture begins its deadly siren call again.

Refer to the *Hand of Vecna* described in the Appendix for full stats on the *Hand*.

### 61. Narthex

Crumbled and shattered sapphire tiles cover the floor, and remnants of silk tapestries drape the walls. Thousands of tiny points of light on the ceiling, reminiscent of a star-strewn night sky, provide dim illumination. Thirty feet of space separates two facing altars that are tucked into the northern and southern curve of the room respectively. The bone-pale altars are embellished with variegated relief sculptures. The southern altar is set with a variety of implements, both holy and alchemical.

The Highest Disciple Ugwaerel rests in this chamber, unless the heroes have previously drawn her out. Ugwaerel is the high cultist of the Adytum, and she also possesses a Vecnan relic (her right pinkie finger). Ugwaerel has served as the high cultist for over 100 years, and her life has been extended through a series of painful operations involving necrotic tissue and Vecna-channeled spells (she isn't particularly pleasant to look upon). Ugwaerel often deals directly with an entity called the King of the Ghouls that abides in the Tovag Baragu parallel described in area 7, and from this contact enjoys an escort of five true ghouls (who wear collars).

Among the alchemical supplies and holy appurtenances assembled on the southern altar, a spherical *hellball* also rests (see area 17).

**Development:** Ugwaerel attacks PCs who have cooperated with any faction of Iuz, or who openly possess looted relics of the temple. (She has also used her *crystal ball* to watch the heroes at various points and contact her minions with *messenger* as necessary.) At the DM's option, diplomatic heroes may delay Ugwaerel for a parley. Attempts at diplomacy are aided by heroes who openly revile Iuz, or have evidence of past encounters against Iuz's forces. Even if a brief accord is reached, Ugwaerel eventually insists that heroes divest themselves of all pillaged Vecnan relics if they wish to obtain her support. Ugwaerel knows everything ascribed to both Orlanko and the Disciples in area 47, plus the following:

Iuz transited from Tovag Baragu to the realm of Vecna, in the holy Apse. However, he left behind powerful forces to foil pursuit. Those forces inhabit the intermediary chamber, called the Nave, as well as the Apse. Ugwaerel has been whittling away those forces, and she eventually hopes to break through and provide what aid she can to her lord Vecna.

**Highest Disciple Ugwaerel, female human P20 of Vecna:** AC -4 (*full plate* +1, *shield* +1, Dex); MV 12; hp 80; THAC0 8 (5 with *mace* +3, 4 with *staff sling* +4); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4 (*mace* +3) or 1d4+5 (*staff sling* +4); MR 3% (relic); SZ M (5' 7" tall); ML champion (16); Str 15, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 16, Wis 18, Cha 7; AL LG; XP 15,000.

**Special Equipment:** *mace* +3 (hollow head acts as aspergillus, sprinkles unholy water on targets hit in melee), 2 *scrolls of heal*, 1 wineskin of Tovag Reserve (acts as *potion of heroism*), 2 *potions of extra-healing*, *ring of fire resistance*, *ring of wishes* (1 wish remaining), *gauntlets of hellball handling* (allows wearer to hold, carry, or throw a *hellball* as introduced in area 17), *knucklebone of channeling* (grants Vecnan priest full spell complement), *last digit of Vecna*.

**Spells** (11/11/10/9/7/5/2): 1st—*cause light wounds* (x2), *command* (x2), *cure light wounds* (x2), *curse*, *detect good*, *detect magic*, *light*, *sanctuary*; 2nd—*barkskin*, *enthrall*

(x2), *heat metal*, *hold person* (x2), *messenger* (x2), *spiritual hammer* (x3); 3rd—*call lightning*, *cause blindness*, *create food & water*, *dispel magic* (x2), *glyph of warding*, *locate object*, *meld into stone*, *negative plane protection*; 4th—*abjure*, *cause serious wounds*, *cure serious wounds*, *free action*, *neutralize poison*, *protection from good* 10' radius, *protection from lightning*, *reflecting pool*, *repel insects*; 5th—*cause critical wounds*, *cure critical wounds*, *flame strike* (x2), *raise dead*, *true seeing*, *wall of fire*; 6th—*blade barrier*, *forbiddance*, *harm*, *heal*, *word of recall* (to area 15 of the Adytum); 7th—*creeping doom*, *unholy word*.

**True ghouls (5):** AC 3; hp 36 each; THAC0 15; #AT 3 or 1; Dmg 1d6/1d6/1d8 or by weapon.

## 62. Nave

A 20-foot-wide chasm splits this coal-black chamber, running north to south. A shattered span of stone may once have connected the 5-foot-wide catwalks on either side of the chasm, but an apparently bottomless chasm has claimed most of it. Several large humanoids with massive bows patrol the western catwalk.

A permanent *glyph* inscribed in the ceiling, hidden unless subjected to close scrutiny, automatically casts a *dispel magic* at the 20th level of effect whenever any spell or entity passes the midpoint of the chamber, moving east to west. This may dispel spells (such as *fly* on individuals, or *creeping doom* cast on a foe across the chasm, for example) and could destroy potions. Though inscribed by cultists, the *glyph* now serves to protect Iuz's forces on the opposite side of the chasm.

The chasm acts much like a Tovag Baragu portal. At a depth of 120 feet, it leads directly into the space between spaces (an echoing void of utter nothingness that proves instantly lethal for any entity that makes this final plunge).

The western catwalk currently holds six ogre warriors, each clipped to a personal 10-foot-long chain anchored to the wall.

**Development:** The ogres fire volley after volley of arrows at any who enter the chamber, and if necessary, they can call on reinforcements from the Apse (area 63). These ogres are each equipped with an ogre-sized Strength bow (and are specialized in its use) and 100 ogre-sized sheaf arrows. The bows can't be used by any except ogres or others of ogre size.

Should any hero enter melee range, nearby ogres relinquish their bows and attempt to grab heroes, intending to fling them bodily into the chasm. Ogres who score a hit ignoring a target's armor (but taking into account target's Dex and any magical adjustments to armor) nab a Medium or smaller size target. Breaking the ogre's grip requires a successful Bend Bars/Lift



Gates roll (at a +30% bonus); otherwise the target takes the plunge on the ogre's next action on the next round.

**Ogre warriors (6):** AC 2; MV 12; hp 48 each; THAC0 12 (9 with bow); #AT 2; Dmg 1d8+6.

### 63. Apse

If a conflict occurred in area 62, the occupants of this chamber know of the heroes' advance. Unless reinforcements are sent, a magical *blade barrier* normally seals the entrance to this chamber (though instead of flashing blades, the barrier seems to be composed of hundreds of flying skulls with grinding, gnashing teeth).

A portal archway dominates this 40-foot-high chamber. The portal stands in a shallow niche along the western wall. Heavy mist fills the entire archway. Veins of oily fog have spread out from beneath the arch, and they run along the walls and ceiling as if exploring. A layer of fallen plaster covers the floor in drifts and dunes, though the denuded walls and ceiling still contain a few patches of white here and there. The drifts are much trampled and blood-stained and are especially trodden down near a cache of barrels and parcels.

The last of Iuz's forces left behind to hold the gateway stand in the desecrated Apse of Vecna's Temple. The forces include several ogre warriors, a few half-ogre Kadars, a few human warriors sworn into Iuz's service, and their surviving ogre mage leader called Korbador the Cruel. The cache of supplies left by Iuz has begun to dwindle, and with it, morale. However, a good fight against Iuz's enemies is certain to reinvigorate these hardy forces. Regardless of the heroes' attempts at diplomacy, those assembled here are operating on Iuz's final command, which was to slay all who enter here. Unless heroes have penetrated to this point with uncanny secrecy, the forces assembled here commit themselves to fulfilling that command.

**Veins of Mist:** The mists are unconscious feelers of mist born in the Demiplane of Dread. As Vecna grows his strength, the entire plane begins to reverberate with his desires. Thus, the misty veins are particularly dangerous to any creature that brushes them who are not cultists (or who do not possess a relic or artifact of Vecna). Nonprotected offenders must succeed at saving throws vs. spell or be grabbed and drawn through the mist-filled archway.

**Archway:** Similar to the portal archways of outer Tovag Baragu, this archway houses a portal. Unlike other portals, this portal opens onto a fully formed demiplane, the Demiplane of Dread. In addition, it is not a two-way portal. Once on the other side, travelers

### Portal Index

The *portal index* is a small device that looks like a corroded fob of brass about 3 inches in diameter. Many small seams and etchings give the *index* an arcane appearance. Runes once decorated the fob, but most are worn or corroded away, making it difficult to tell different surfaces apart. The fob rotates along three axes, creating up to 72 unique configurations. When the *index* is manipulated within 5 feet of an active archway portal in Tovag Baragu, the current focus of the portal shifts to a new half-world selected randomly by the DM. Any creatures on the opposite side of portal whose focus has been shifted are cut off without special magical means of planar transport, or unless the fob is used again to bring the cut-off half-world back into the current Baragu Network.

In fact, the 72 settings correspond to 72 unique half-worlds, of which only 13 are currently described in this product (entries 1–13). The DM may choose to link a previously described half world, or make up locations at his or her discretion. Canny characters who experiment with the *portal index* may figure out that a particular configuration always leads to a particular half-world. However, manipulating the fob to a desired half-world requires a successful saving throw vs. spell (a failed saving throw indicates the portal now links to a random half-world, though the user believes otherwise).

The *portal index* works only in conjunction with Tovag Baragu archways; however, at the DM's discretion, the *portal index* could also affect other fixed gates or portals by manipulating the item. Linking portals other than the archways into the Baragu Network has a 3% cumulative chance of destroying the *portal index*.

XP Value: 1,000

GP Value: 2,000

may be hard pressed to leave that dreadful place. See the next chapter, Citadel Cavitius, should any hero enter the portal. If someone uses the portal index on the archway (see below), the veins of mist refocus the archway once more on the Demiplane of Dread 10 rounds later.

**Beneath the Plaster:** A determined search beneath the drifts of crumbled plaster bring to light several items of possible interest. Heroes can find many looted bodies (the loot has since been thrown into the portal as tribute to Iuz), a crumbled altar still containing the *Chalice of the Cult*, the *portal index*, several *Vecnan wafers*, and an unlooted strongbox containing a *chime of interruption*, 7,600 gp, and an eye-shaped diamond worth 5,000 gp.

**Ogre warriors (10):** AC 5; MV 12; hp 48 each; THAC0 12; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d6+6.

### Chalice of the Cult

The 1-foot-tall *chalice* is carved from a single bone, and inlaid with gold filigree. A small hinged cap holds a small amount of liquid inside the chalice that magically deliquesces after one week if drunk or poured out.

The imbiber calls up a contagion birthed from the cesspits of hell that affects all targets in a massive contiguous area centered on the imbiber. True cultists of Vecna possess immunity to the effect, but all other living things, including noncultist imbibers, within a 50-foot radius are immediately afflicted with raging fever and running sores from the hellborn disease, thus taking 10d6 points of damage (succeed at saving throw for half damage). The supernatural contagion runs its course in just seconds in the mortal plane, and those that survive its infection for more than one round are freed from its diabolical grasp. However, these latter victims act at –6 penalty on all actions and saving throws for the next 10 rounds (–3 on all actions and saves for the next 5 rounds, if the original saving throw was successful). However, those who initially fail their saving throw against this effect are tainted, and they must forevermore make all saving throws against Vecnan cultists at a –1 penalty.

XP Value: 0

GP Value: 0

**Half-ogre Kadars (3):** AC 2; MV 12; hp 48 each; THAC0 12; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d6+6.

### Wafers, Vecnan

*Vecnan wafers* are 1-inch-diameter pieces of flat bread inscribed with an eye on one side, a hand on the other. *Wafers* are found wrapped in wax paper in sets of four. Each *wafer* is consecrated to Vecna, and is thus unholy. Those who eat a *wafer* gain the blessings of Vecna, varying in strength depending on the number eaten at one time. Eating one *wafer* grants the imbiber an *augury* at the 10th level of effect, two grants the imbiber a *cure serious wounds*, three grants a *true seeing*, while eating all four grants the imbiber a *heal*. Those who do not follow Vecna experience different effects. One *wafer* causes a *curse* to fall upon the imbiber, two makes the imbiber feel wrenching internal pain (effect is equivalent to a *cause light wounds*), three has the effect of a *disintegrate* spell upon the imbiber (saving throw allowed), and four affects the imbiber as if a *harm* spell had been cast upon him or her.

XP Value: 100 each

GP Value: 300 each



**Warriors of Iuz, male humans F12 (3):** AC -2 (platemail, *buckles of protection* +4), MV 12, HD 10+2; hp 55 each; THAC0 9 (8 with longsword); #AT 2; Dmg 1d8+2 (longsword, specialization); SZ M (6' tall); ML elite (14); Int very (12); AL NE; XP 3,000 each.

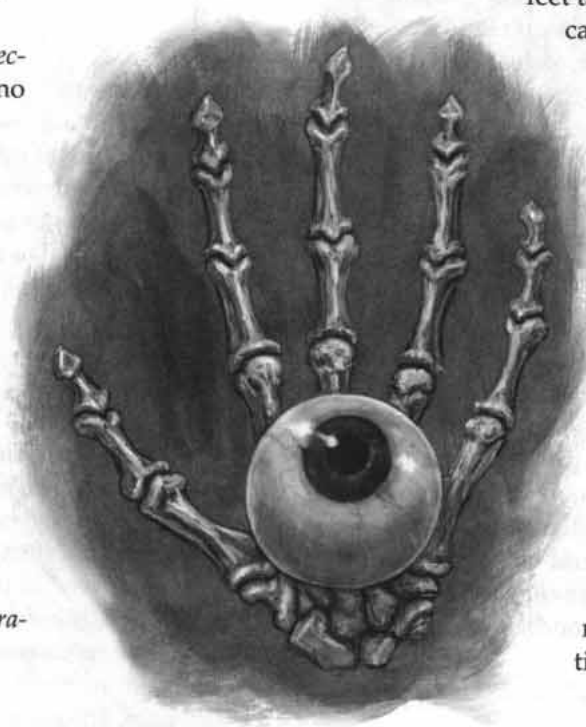
*Special Equipment:* *buckles of protection* +4 (grinning skull, Iuz's sign, no benefit for those who do not worship Iuz).

**Korbador the Cruel, Ogre "mage," C10:** AC 0 (in any form); MV 9, fly 15 (B); HD 5+2; hp 42; THAC0 15 (11 with ogre-sized *two-handed sword* +1 and Str bonus); #AT 1; Dmg 1d10+7 (ogre-sized *two-handed sword* +1 and Str bonus); SA ogre mage abilities, casts priest spells; SD regenerate 1 hp/day. SZ L (10'6" tall); ML elite (14); AL CE; XP 5,000.

*Special Equipment:* 3 potions of extra-healing, knucklebone of channeling.

*Special Abilities:* Ogre mage abilities, modified. At will, Korbador can fly (for 12 turns before resting 12 turns), become invisible, cause *darkness* 10' radius and *polymorph self* (restricted to humanoid between 4 and 12 feet tall). Once per day, Korbador can cast *charm person*, *sleep*, *gaseous form*, *blade barrier*, and *cone of cold*.

*Spells* (6/6/4/4/2): 1st—*cause light wounds* (x2), *command* (x2), *cure light wounds* (x2); 2nd—*hold person* (x3), *obscurement*, *silence* 15' radius, *withdraw*; 3rd—*animate dead*, *cause disease*, *flame walk*, *glyph of warding*; 4th—*cause serious wounds* (x2), *cure serious wounds* (x2); 5th—*flame strike*, *wall of fire*.



## Where to Next?

Once the heroes go through the portal after Iuz, go to the beginning of Book Two: Citadel Cavi-tius.

# Book Two: Citadel Cavitius

At the end of Book One, the party pursued Iuz through a portal on the world of Oerth. The heroes now find themselves in a place that even the gods choose to avoid: Vecna's seat of power within the mysterious Demiplane of Dread.

The circumstances that unfold in this section of the campaign are in part preordained, having been carefully manipulated by Vecna over the past few years. These events are also in part the result of the chaos instigated by the citizens of the fear-filled city of Citadel of Cavitius, Iuz and his minions, and, of course, the heroes.

## Continuing the Campaign

As the heroes enter the portal, they find themselves surrounded by swirling mists of brilliant colors. There is nothing else to see, no matter which direction they look. The heroes must each make a saving throw vs. paralyzation. Those who fail behave as though affected by a *confusion* spell for 2d6 rounds.

Standing in the swirling colors merely forces more saving throws vs. paralyzation, one per round of inactivity. As soon as the party starts to move, the colors start to fade, and the party finds itself walking through absolute darkness, though the air is wet and cool to the skin. Any light sources brought by the heroes dimly illuminate a fog around them so thick that a person can see only inches ahead. The heroes need to take measures to avoid becoming separated, particularly if some party members failed saving throws earlier.

All magical attempts to escape this area fail. Planar travel devices and magic are strangely useless.

In whatever direction the party moves, only the thick fog exists. All the heroes can do is move across mist-covered ground that feels uneven and spongy. Any attempt to examine the "soil" fails, as it dissolves into mist whenever a hero tries to scoop up a handful.

After the heroes walk through the mists for 1d6+4 minutes, a figure materializes. Dressed in tattered black robes and carrying a huge scythe, its face hidden in the deep shadows of its hood, the figure points a bony finger at a point behind the heroes and says in a hollow voice, "You are not welcome here. Return whence you came." If the heroes become separated, each group meets an identical figure, with the same results. Any hero who stands still must again make a saving throw vs. paralyzation or be affected by *confusion* for 2d6 rounds. If anyone attacks this figure, see later for the consequences.

If the party reverses course and heads back, an identical robed figure appears before the heroes 1d6+2 minutes later, points in a different direction, and says, "You

are not welcome here. You must go hence." Again, separate groups meet the same figure.

If the heroes follow the new direction, they travel for 1d6+1 minutes before confronting a third robed figure. It points in a third direction, instructing them, "You must leave this place at once, or perish."

If the party once again obeys, the heroes encounter a fourth identical figure 1d6 minutes later. This figure says, "You were warned. Pay the price."

A robed, scythe-armed figure appears for each party member, surrounding the group if possible. Each hooded figure instantly attacks one hero and fights that character to the death, automatically gaining initiative each round. These robed figures are supernatural beings called minor deaths that have been pressed into service by the dark powers of the Demiplane of Dread, in an attempt to keep the party from getting involved in the events that are about to unfold. (For more information on the dark powers, see "The Demiplane of Dread in Brief" sidebar.)

**Minor deaths:** AC -4; MV 16, fly 24 (B); hp 33; THAC0 automatic hit; #AT 1; Dmg 2d8.

If anyone attacks a minor death at an earlier time, the above combat takes place at once, one minor death attacking per hero. In short, the heroes cannot avoid this battle.

If a minor death is defeated, its black form bursts into a flock of 1d6+7 ravens. These large, jet-black birds squawk loudly as they fly up and vanish into the mists. They do not attack the party and cannot be struck by weapons or magic. A minor death that slays a hero will also disperse into ravens, removing itself from the combat.

When the last raven spawned by a destroyed minor death vanishes overhead, the mists around the heroes begin to lift. The party finds itself in a strange new location. The DM can read or paraphrase the following boxed description as desired.

The thick fog lifts, and you discover that you are at the end of a blind alley in an unfamiliar city. The only light around you emanates from a crystalline, skull-shaped lamp mounted on a wall bracket about 10 feet high, at the entrance to the alley. A light, very cool breeze stirs your clothing, and you hear the wind moaning loudly overhead.

The walls around you are strangely smooth and off-white in color, surrounding you on three sides. A row of second-floor windows, black and lightless, can be seen 15 feet overhead. As you look up, you have the sensation of being in a canyon. The buildings around you rise an astonishing nine full stories toward a dark sky, where angry black clouds rush

along, driven and torn by distant, gale-force winds.

The rough cobblestones at your feet are littered with splintered bones, scraps of paper, broken glass and pottery, several huge dead rats, and splattered garbage and waste. The stench of rotting meat and ripe sewage wafts up from a nearby sewer grate. The air is quite cool, as if it were almost winter.

In addition, those heroes who can pray for, receive, and cast priest spells feel a dreadful cold shiver pass through each of them. For unexplained reasons, these individuals feel a sudden and deep sense of isolation, as if they were forever lost.

Thus, the party arrives in the darkest corner of the Demiplane of Dread: Citadel Cavitius, the home of Vecna.

## The Demiplane of Dread in Brief

The Demiplane of Dread (the RAVENLOFT setting) is a mysterious corner of the multiverse, ignored or avoided by gods and feared by planar travelers. Enigmatic, god-like forces rule over strange realms they built among the misty tendrils of the Border Ethereal plane. Somehow, these dark powers transported vast chunks of the Prime Material plane into their sphere of existence, creating disturbing mirror images of Prime Material locations, mixing and matching geographic elements and cultures as they did. These places are now separate domains in the demiplane. Some of these lands are clustered together in continents, while others exist as isolated islands surrounded by thick fog.

The goals and purposes of the dark powers of the Demiplane of Dread are as unknown as they are, but one thing remains consistent in their actions: At the heart of every domain brought into existence is a man, woman, or creature who committed deeds of great evil. Each such ruler is at once powerful and powerless, as the land around usually contains elements that bring that ruler great pleasure while at the same time forever deny that which the ruler desires most.

This section of *Die, Vecna, Die!* takes place within the Demiplane of Dread. The heroes fall under the influence of the dark powers, like everyone else who enters their domains.

### Special Rules for the Demiplane of Dread

The following paragraphs summarize the most important mechanical aspects of running adventures in the RAVENLOFT setting. Dungeon Masters who do not have access to the *Domains of Dread* hardbound (TSR #2174), the definitive source for running AD&D horror campaigns, can use this material instead.

The demiplane's dark powers seem to draw twisted delight in making life more difficult for champions of

good. Whether this is because those powers seek the defeat of those heroes or are forcing the heroic impulses of such brave-hearted individuals to greater heights by inflicting great adversity upon them, no one can say. All that is known for certain is that luck is rarely on a hero's side within the confines of this malign demiplane.

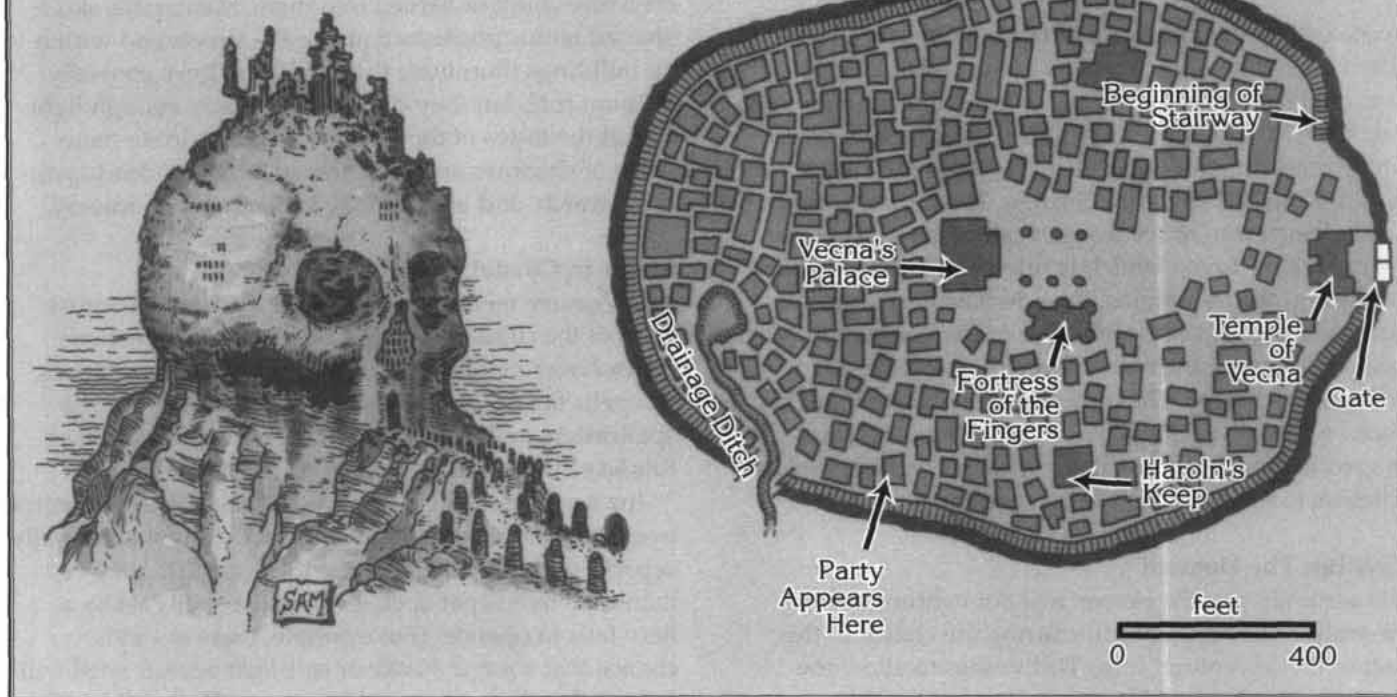
All saving throws are made at a base penalty of -1 for the duration of the party's sojourn in the Demiplane of Dread. Additional saving-throw penalties take effect when the party is in the vicinity of Vecna or Iuz. Within 30 feet of either evil demigod, a hero takes an additional penalty of -4, for a total base penalty of -5.

The dark powers also meddle in the special relationship that exists between the gods and the clerics, specialty priests, and paladins who serve them. The first sign of this is a strange chill that passes over these holy persons as they enter the Demiplane of Dread, followed by a hollow feeling as if their gods have grown distant. Some speculate that such characters have been isolated completely from their patron powers, and that their spells and other powers are now being granted by the dark powers themselves. Less extreme individuals suggest the dark powers are trying to isolate the clerics and paladins from their gods, but that all they can do is to twist the divine gifts.

Specific difficulties encountered by those casting cleric or druid spells include the following. (Complete details are provided in *Domains of Dread*, Chapters Eight and Nine.) The DM is strongly urged to become familiar with these spell alterations, as they will significantly affect the heroes' ability to cope with their abysmal new environment.

- Divination spells of 3rd level or higher fail automatically.
- Spells and magic items that usually reveal a being's alignment now reveal only the law/chaos axis. The dark powers permit evil and good beings to avoid discovery.
- Summoned extraplanar creatures, such as elementals, do not depart at the end of a spell's duration. Instead, they are trapped within the confines of the Demiplane of Dread. The creatures realize this, if intelligent, and immediately turn on the summoner, with all control over them lost and gone.
- Conversely, spells and magic items that allow heroes to leave their current domain or the demiplane itself (such as *teleport* and *plane shift*) automatically fail. The same is true of spells and magic items that allow the spellcaster to contact beings on another plane. In this case, neither the *Hand of Vecna* (which the heroes possess) nor the *Eye of Vecna* (which they do not) is able to transport its owner out of the demiplane, regardless of the artifact's powers. This is because those two artifacts are obeying the will of their cre-

# Citadel Cavivius



ator, Vecna, who means for these devices to be brought into his presence (see area 72).

- Paladins lose the ability to *detect evil*, but they can instead determine if a being is chaotic when using this ability.
- Paladins also lose their resistance to magical diseases, as well as the ability to cure them.
- The paladin's *protection from evil* power is weakened, granting only a -1 penalty to attack rolls made by evil creatures within its area of effect.
- All attempts by clerics and paladins to turn undead in this dreadful realm are made at a -3 penalty to the roll. All results indicating the automatic destruction of undead become automatic turning instead. This results from the "sinkhole of evil" effects described in *Domains of Dread*, Appendix Three (Priests).

Wizards are not immune to the impact of the dark powers, as their spells, too, are altered.

- No Greater Divination spells (5th level or higher) function within the demiplane.
- All attempts to travel to a different plane, or communicate with beings on a different plane, fail automatically.
- Summoned extraplanar creatures, such as invisible stalkers or elementals, do not depart at the end of a spell's duration. Instead, they are trapped within the confines of the Demiplane of Dread. The crea-

tures realize this, if they are intelligent, and turn on their summoners, voiding all magical control over them.

- *Monster summoning* spells in Vecna's domain of Cavivius produce the following results when cast by someone who is not native to the domain or is not a follower of Vecna (the monsters being taken from the sewers beneath the city): *monster summoning I*, 3d4 giant rats; *monster summoning II*, 1d6 large spiders; *monster summoning III*, 1d4 huge spiders; *monster summoning IV*, 1d3 huge scorpions; *monster summoning V*, 1d3 giant spiders; *monster summoning VI*, 1d3 carrion crawlers; *monster summoning VII*, 1d3 boalisks. All of these summoned creatures vanish at the end of the spell's duration. Statistics, if required, should be drawn from the *MONSTROUS MANUAL* tome.
- Necromantic spells work at doubled efficiency in terms of effect and duration. (*Animate dead* creates twice the number of undead, *vampiric touch* drains twice the number of hit points, and so on.)

Certain other spells have greatly altered effects on this demiplane, as outlined in *Domains of Dread*, Chapters Eight and Nine. If the DM has this volume, the changed effects of those spells can be applied.

*Domains of Dread* provides for additional game mechanics and penalties in effect on this demiplane, in Chapters Six (fear, horror, and madness checks) and Seven (powers checks). These mechanics add much to



the roleplaying environment of this realm and are highly recommended.

## Vecna's Domain in the Demiplane

Vecna is the most powerful of those beings who were gifted with their own domains in the Demiplane of Dread. His realm is half of an island in the demiplane: a vast desert covered by a perpetual state of twilight. A single road cuts through this terrain to cross a great volcanic mountain range (the Burning Peaks), allowing the Lord of Secrets to move troops against the sole neighboring realm, Tovag, which is ruled by Kas the Bloody-handed on the mountains' far side. The very sands of Vecna's desert drain the life force of those who venture into it, so leaving the road is even more deadly than facing Kas's troops. The only permanent settlement in Vecna's domain is Citadel Cavitius, a massive, skull-shaped fortress within which Vecna has orchestrated his schemes to finally ascend to full godhood.

### Cavitius: The Domain

It is assumed that the heroes will not venture beyond the walls of Citadel Cavitius during the course of this part of the adventure. If the DM wishes to allow the party to stray beyond Vecna's seat of power, the RAVENLOFT products *Domains of Dread* and *Vecna Reborn* (TSR #9582) offer full details on the environment. Otherwise, the gates of Citadel Cavitius remain closed for the duration for the heroes' stay in Vecna's city. Overhead rage gale-force winds of such power that they make winged or magical flight impossible. Attempts to teleport beyond the walls automatically fail, although the DM should make die rolls in secret—and ignore the results—so the players think their heroes might have a chance to escape. (Again, no power of the *Hand* or *Eye of Vecna* functions to permit escape from this demiplane, as noted earlier.)

### Citadel Cavitius: City of Dread

Citadel Cavitius consists of several layers of structures, all of which are made of a smooth, off-white substance that appears to be bone. (This bone construction material has an item saving throw equal to bone with a +2 bonus, using Table 29 in the *DMG*.) The party has no reason to venture into the lower depths of the city in the course of this adventure, so this area is not described.

Citadel Cavitius is home to ten thousand humans and approximately five thousand undead of every sort. The corporeal undead in Citadel Cavitius stride confidently down the city's streets, dressed in elegant clothing, armor, and jewelry. The ragged living folk fear them, knowing that to get in their way is certain doom. Incorporeal undead stick to the plentiful shadows and hidden places of the city, silently making their way through the streets on unknowable errands.

The city is completely surrounded by a wall so thick that many buildings have actually been built upon or within it. In addition to those buildings built within the outer skull shape, the interior shell walls have many structures built or carved into them. Many pale, skull-shaped lamps positioned above the streets and within all buildings illuminate the city. These burn eternally without fuel, but they do not offer nearly enough light to suit the tastes of the living. The lamps leave many areas of shadows and darkness in which undead spirits hide, watch, and occasionally lash out at the unwary.

### Magic in Citadel Cavitius

Fairly severe restrictions on magic use operate across most of the citadel, enforced by Vecna's tremendous control over magic forces. Under usual circumstances, all spells fail except those cast by Vecna-worshipping spellcasters and undead minions. For the duration of this adventure, however, new rules apply.

Iuz's presence in the city has lessened Vecna's control over magic. Spells may now be cast by anyone normally capable of doing so. However, there is a 10% chance, increased by 5% per spell level, that a spell cast by a hero fails to operate. (For example, there is a 15% chance that a *magic missile* or *cure light wounds* spell will fail to take effect when cast by a hero. The spell is still lost from the caster's memory.)

Vecna's clerics, wizards, and undead minions cast spells normally, however. Vecna's clerics in Cavitius also gain a +1 bonus to die rolls when attempting to command undead.

### Treasure in Citadel Cavitius

Unless otherwise noted, most coins found in this bizarre realm are all extremely ancient, greatly worn over centuries of use. They were manufactured during the time of Vecna's empire on Oerth and have various symbols of skulls, spiders, snakes, and magical devices on them. No mint exists to produce new coins in this domain, though a sufficient amount of coinage is hoarded in the Palace of Vecna and in private collections to keep currency flowing, if thinly. Each coin is worth 2d100 times its standard value if taken to a wealthy and knowledgeable sage or collector once the heroes return to their homeworld, as the legend of Vecna has spread so very far and wide. A few coins (5%) were brought in from elsewhere, by adventurers from Oerth or other "normal worlds," or by refugees from other domains in this demiplane.

### Encounters in Citadel Cavitius

AD&D game statistics for commonly encountered monsters and NPC types in Citadel Cavitius are given in the Appendix. Where commonly encountered monsters and NPC types appear in the text, they are given hit points and any other special information needed to play them

properly. Rare or unique NPCs and monsters, however, are fully detailed where they are encountered in the text.

**Origins:** The human citizens of Cavitius were apparently brought to this demiplane from Vecna's capital in his ancient empire on Oerth, just prior to the empire's collapse. Most have dark hair and eyes, with light bronze skin, though with a sickly yellow hue from poor nourishment and frequent illness. Their universal poverty leaves them gaunt. They speak a form of ancient Flan (detailed below). They dress in a style of clothing common to that long-ago period, though their clothing is usually filthy, faded, and ragged. Demi-humans and humanoids are unknown here, except as very rare adventurers or as creatures of rumors and folklore.

While the undead definitely are "Vecna's Favored" in this domain, the undead nearly always ignore the city's living population. If the living can keep out of the way of the undead, they can eke out a bleak but tolerable existence in Cavitius. Still, daily life in constant horror and fear drives many of the people of Citadel Cavitius to depression or madness.

Many citizens deliberately take on the characteristics of the undead, starving themselves to appear almost skeletal in hopes of incurring Vecna's favor. Most citizens value strength of force over other virtues, stealing

and bullying one another. Outsiders find Cavitians a cold and distasteful people.

All slaves and prisoners in this city are human, but they have varied origins. Many were soldiers in the army of Tovag, captured after battles in the Burning Peaks. Others are common criminals from Cavitius who escaped receiving death sentences but must work at hard labor (effectively as slaves) for life. A tiny minority consists of unlucky adventurers who ran afoul of local nobles, or refugees who fled from other domains to arrive here (to their great regret).

As this land knows neither true day nor night, about one-quarter of the city's population is asleep at any one time. No citywide work schedules are known; each business or local lord dictates the work (and thus the sleep) schedule. Street traffic varies little over time, being usually sparse.

The various origins of the undead here are given with their descriptions.

**Language:** The universal language spoken in Citadel Cavitius is an ancient form of Flan, a tongue of the Flanaess of Oerth. Without magical aid, a hero who speaks modern Flan has a 10% chance to understand anything being said in this old tongue. If the Flan-speaking hero also has a nonweapon proficiency in Ancient Languages (ancient Flan), he or she can communicate with Cavitius's locals with 75% effectiveness.



If this same hero makes an Intelligence check on a particular communication, he or she can raise the level of understanding to 95%, but no higher.

**Undead:** Several guidelines apply when roleplaying the parts of the undead of Citadel Cavitius. First, all undead here, even if free-willed and intelligent, serve Vecna completely. Skeletons and zombies behave in robotic fashion, obeying the orders of any nearby intelligent undead or clerics of Vecna. Intelligent undead can, at Vecna's will, receive his mental commands in an instant; they then strive (regardless of their personal opinions) to fulfill those orders in whatever way they can, using their wits and experience to guide them like any live adventurer. Intelligent undead disobey Vecna only at their immediate peril, so they choose to obey and avoid destruction. Undead here also obey the commands of Vecna's clerics, but to a lesser degree.

On this demiplane, intelligent undead cannot have their minds read by anyone other than Vecna. Spells such as *ESP* automatically malfunction on undead, causing the caster to pick up seeming normal and irrelevant (but false) human thoughts. Optionally, if the undead fails a saving throw vs. spell, the spellcaster can read the undead being's true thoughts, but must immediately make a saving throw vs. spell or go mad, suffering the effects of a permanent *confusion* spell until a *heal* spell is cast on the sufferer.

Undead who become weakened in direct sunlight operate at full effect here, as direct sunlight does not exist. Spells such as *light* or *continual light* cause undead beings no harm, though many undead, such as shadows and wraiths, attempt to avoid bright light even here.

**Undead lords:** Within Citadel Cavitius, potent undead beings such as vampires, ghouls, death knights, ghosts, skeleton warriors, lichs, and master spectres vie for control. Vecna is aware of their presence and ambitions, but it serves his purpose to allow them to grow powerful, for they all serve him. So great has the deity's power become that no undead entity can resist his will—therefore he has no fear of them usurping him as foolish Kas once attempted.

Each of about two dozen major undead lords controls a portion of the Citadel's undead population, or at least has them as allies. Certainly Vecna controls all undead, but he chooses to send his orders through these would-be nobles. Occasionally, conflicts erupt between the forces of one lord and another, but these are kept small and secretive. If a lord were destroyed, the Eye (see area 69) or perhaps even Vecna himself would investigate. No lord wants to fall under such close scrutiny and risk annihilation.

The DM should be careful to avoid confusing the Hand and the Eye, the golems created by Vecna (described in "The Hand Moving" and in the description of area 69, respectively) with the *Hand of Vecna* and the *Eye of Vecna* (the artifacts of Vecna, described in the

### Heroes in Citadel Cavitius

In the eyes of every undead being in the city, new visitors are no different from long-term residents. This means that heroes can roam the city as they please, as long as they draw no attention to themselves and avoid confrontations with the undead. Demihumans and humanoids are curiosities, but given the nightmarish and oppressive environment, few citizens will look long at them, even at huge ogres, preferring to stay back, leave soon, and avoid trouble. The undead ignore nonhumans just as easily they will ignore humans, unless they become dangerously annoyed.

Appendix). The golems' names are written in roman type in the text (without "of Vecna" following them). The artifacts' names are written in italics, even in shortened form (for example: the *Hand* and *Eye*). Also, in all cases where the *Sword of Kas* is mentioned, the short form of this artifact's name is capitalized and italicized, like so: the *Sword*.

### The Welcoming Committee

Upon the heroes' arrival in Citadel Cavitius, the DM should give the party a few moments to quaff *potions of healing* or otherwise take stock of their condition. However, as soon as they are intent on exploring their surroundings, the DM should read or paraphrase the following:

"Well, I thought I smelled something fouler than usual around here!" a rough, deep voice shouts in Common. A tall, hulking figure steps into the entrance of the alley, shifting a wickedly pointed spear from one broad hand to the other. Even larger hulks appear to the left and right of him. They also carry spears and slowly advance toward you in the gloom. You realize that you are once again facing a group of Iuz's ogre warriors. The first figure continues to call out, letting his ogre warriors pass by him. "I thought my lord Iuz was mistaken when he predicted you would be strong enough to follow us. Shame on me for doubting the Old One! Now, we'll turn you into playthings for the necromancers in this hellhole!"

**Development:** If one of the half-ogre Kadars (commanders) survived events in the last Book and is a known adversary of the party, the DM should have that Kadar reappear here. The half-ogre taunts the heroes by mocking their battle prowess, while he motions his ogre troops to attack. However, as soon as the first ogre falls,

or the first ranged attack or spell is directed at him by the party, he flees. (The DM should make sure this character escapes. He reappears later in this section.)

This small ogre force should be enough for the party to handle, if the heroes were able to heal themselves. If half their number is slain, the remaining ogres pull back from combat and flee down the street, shouting their surrender. If their Kadar is going to abandon them, they have no intention of throwing their lives away. They are unlikely to live long in this environment without the guidance of their Kadar.

The Kadar has a *ring of all tongues* (continually translates all languages spoken within 60 feet, so the wearer both understands and is understood; does not enable translation of written or magical languages; ring changes size to fit any wearer; XP value 1,000). The ogres wear necklaces with *amulets of comprehending languages*, which grant the use of the *comprehend languages* spell (12th level of effect; 1 hour duration; can be used three times per day on command; touch required; XP value 500 each). One ogre has a *ring of all tongues*, as described for the half-ogre Kadar, above.

**Half-ogre Kadar:** AC 2; MV 12; hp 48; THAC0 12; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+6.

**Ogre warriors (8):** AC 5; MV 9; hp 33 each; THAC0 14; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+6.

Any ogre prisoner taken by the party provides some or all of the following information if given the assurance of being allowed to live. The ogre even offers to form an alliance with the party, delivering the following material over the course of subsequent roleplaying encounters.

- Iuz has been in Citadel Cavitius for about two or three days; the ogre is not sure of the exact time. (Apparently, time flows differently here than it does on Oerth.) Iuz and his forces hid briefly in an empty building, preparing their strike against Vecna.
- Even before the heroes stormed the temple on Oerth, Iuz had sent forces to Vecna's stronghold through other portals. During the past day, Iuz has organized his troops for a raid on Vecna's palace. (The ogre indicates four sleek towers and a shockingly high black one that rise together above the jumble of bone-colored structures and soot-streaked smokestacks.) The ogre knows that Iuz's raid is currently underway. When Iuz reaches Vecna, the Old One is prepared to "eat" the other demigod. (The ogre cannot further explain this, as this was what he was told would happen.)
- Iuz is certain of victory. Even if he fails to "eat" Vecna, Iuz has learned that anyone who has a certain "magic eye" or "magic hand," and uses a special "magic sword," can destroy the Whispered One by

striking him with the sword. One of Iuz's goals is to obtain this "magic sword," which he learned is being kept in the palace. Iuz already has the "magic eye" and is using it. His "new eye" shines red. (The ogre pantomimes that Iuz has actually put the *Eye of Vecna* into his own eye socket.)

- Iuz has taken most of his minions on his raid of the palace: "many, many, many" orcs, ogres, and humans. Three smaller forces were left behind in the city to kill the heroes if they gave pursuit. The ogre's group is described by the ogre as the most skilled of all of them. (The ogre believes this and is quite proud of it, but it is not true, as the heroes learn if they head for Vecna's palace. Although the ogre says three forces exist, the party will never encounter one of the groups, which was destroyed by the undead elsewhere in the city.)
- The natives of this city speak an old dialect that none of Iuz's servants understand. No one takes particular notice of strangers walking about. So, as long as the heroes don't start anything rough, they should be fine.
- A mixture of undead and living guards patrols the streets. Clerics wearing Vecna's symbol also roam around. They, too, do not appear to bother strangers unless accosted first. One of the mages with Iuz noted some problems with casting spells after he picked a fight with a cleric, although the cleric did not seem to have the same problems. (The ogre cannot explain the exact nature of the "magic problems" the mage encountered, except that they were "bad and awful.")

These traitors against their divine master, Iuz, explain their actions to doubting heroes by saying they do not wish to be trapped in Cavitius. Right now, the party looks like the safest bet to getting out of here. (Naturally, these NPCs will betray the party at the first sign of the balance shifting in the direction of Iuz's minions. But, until then, they behave like sniveling bootlickers, obeying every command given by party members as long as it won't obviously result in their deaths.)

## Getting to the Palace

Since the inhabitants of the city will mostly ignore the party, they are assumed to simply move through the streets to get to Vecna's palace. If the heroes ask a captive for advice, he or she suggests using the streets. The NPC further explains that Iuz plotted three different ways of approaching the palace. Two routes—through the streets and across the rooftops—were used by the teams that went to infiltrate the palace. If the party decides to cross the rooftops, most of the encounters described below take place in building stairwells and on roofs.

## By the Underground

The party might wish to enter the sewers and approach surreptitiously. If so, the heroes must fight off packs of ravenous ghouls (3d10+5 at a time, led by a ghoulish lord). The stench in the sewers is so great as to force each hero to make a Constitution check upon entering, with failure indicating the hero is so nauseated as to operate at only half normal Strength (round fractions down) in all regards, until leaving the sewers. Any attempt to run in the sewer or move during combat forces a Dexterity check. Failure means the hero slips in the filth and falls prone, losing all attacks and all shield- or Dexterity-based defenses for the rest of that round (while stunned) and all the next (while rising).

No maps of the sewers are provided with this adventure. The DM should just describe them as a labyrinthine, filth-caked system of tunnels, and roll 1d6 to determine the direction in which junctures go: (1-2) left and right, (3) right only, (4) left only, (5-6) left, right, or straight ahead. A ghoulish pack is encountered on a second 1d6 roll of 1-3 at each juncture, with a roll of 1 indicating a second ghoulish pack attacks the heroes from the opposite direction.

The party encounters eight junctures before reaching a set of indestructible bars that prevent further passage. A rusted ladder leads up to a manhole cover at the edge of area 1, the Plaza of the Whispered One, described later.

**Ghoulish lord (one per pack):** AC 4; MV 15; HD 6; hp 42; THAC0 15; #AT 3 (claw/claw/bite); Dmg 1d6/1d6/1d10; SA paralysis, disease; SD evil aura causing good heroes within 30' to suffer a -4 penalty to attack rolls, affected only by magical weapons or those made of pure iron, immune to holy water, telepathic psionics, contact with holy symbols, and to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, *fear*, and *circle of protection* spells that do not use cold iron; SW can be turned as a 7 HD undead; SZ M (5'-6' tall); ML elite (13-14); Int high (13-14); AL CE; XP 3,000.

*Notes:* A ghoulish lord is easily mistaken for a common ghoulish until one draws close. At that time, the fact that its tongue is elongated and covered in vicious barbs becomes clear. The tongue of the ghoulish lord is where most of the damage in the bite attack comes from.

A hero (including elves) struck by a ghoulish lord's fists must successfully save vs. paralysis or become unable to move for 1d6+6 rounds. Anyone bitten by a ghoulish lord contracts a horrible rotting disease unless a successful save vs. poison is rolled. An infected victim loses 1d10 hit points and 1 point each from Constitution and Charisma scores each day until cured with a *heal* spell. Death occurs if any affected score is reduced to zero. About 60+4d6 hours after death, the victim rises again as a ghast controlled by the ghoulish lord. Constitution

points are recovered at the rate of 1 point per day, but Charisma points are lost forever.

A ghoulish lord radiates an aura of evil so powerful that a good-aligned hero suffers a -4 to all attack rolls while within 30 feet of the creature. A *remove fear* spell negates the effect of the aura.

**Ghoulish (3d10+5 per pack):** AC 6; MV 9; HD 2; hp 16 each; THAC0 19; #AT 3 (claw/claw/bite); Dmg 1d3/1d3/1d6; SA paralysis by touch for 1d6+2 rounds; SD immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *fear*, and telepathic psionics; SW can be turned; SZ M (5'-6' tall); ML steady (11-12); Int low (5-7); AL CE; XP 175 each.

*Notes:* If possible, ghoulish attempt to trip or overbear an armored hero, possibly drowning the hero in a nearby pool of filthy water. Some immediately stop fighting to eat any person who is paralyzed or dead.

## Through the Streets

The undead and the living mingle freely in Citadel Cavitius. However, the DM should be careful not to portray the presence of undead as blasé or commonplace. Rather, the street scenes within the Citadel might be described thusly.

Two men, raggedly dressed, make their way down the street, their eyes sunken and their spirits obviously broken. Yet they apparently have the presence of mind to dart to the side of the street as a troop of animated skeletons, terrible in their finery and armor, marches past them, weapons held high. As horrible as this sight is, however, the two men seem more leery of the dark shadows into which they have been forced. And rightfully so—it would seem that these shadows move and waver as if they had an existence of their own.

As the party makes its way through the streets, it passes the following scenes. These should be intermingled with other descriptions of this shadow-filled city.

### The Doomed

A legless beggar whose face is rotting away from a dreadful infection holds out a hand and pitifully asks for food. The citizen is a veteran of the war against Tovaq and explains that he became afflicted when part of a war machine fell upon him. He views his disease as a punishment for having failed Lord Vecna on the field of battle.

Any hero who touches him or even speaks with him runs the risk of also becoming infected. The hero should make a successful saving throw vs. disease, modified by Constitution bonuses, or be afflicted with *mummy rot*.

**Citizen (0-level):** AC 10; MV 3; hp 1; THAC0 20; Dmg 1d2, armed with sharp stick.

### The Devoted

A Memory of Vecna stands on a street corner, singing the praises of his dread lord and stating that everyone should confess their sins. Vecna knows their secrets anyway, he claims, and by admitting their crimes their punishments will be less severe.

The cleric catches sight of the heroes as they venture through the streets, and, contrary to the behavior of the rest of the citizenry, he calls out to them. Having recognized them as foreigners in Citadel Cavitius, he decides to give them the opportunity to join Vecna's faithful. He first asks them to confess their sins to him. He then states that they must convert to the worship of Vecna, or things will go very badly for them in Cavitius, as all who do not profess obedience to Vecna are denied mercy and suffer a prolonged, hideous death.

If the party politely rebuffs this cleric, or offers him empty platitudes, he happily lets the group continue on its journey, urging all to visit the Temple of Vecna and giving directions to it. (The Temple of Vecna is described in *Vecna Reborn*, should the DM want to give the party the opportunity to visit it.) If any of the heroes attempts to argue religion with the cleric or is rude to him, he curtly tells them all to move on or else suffer Vecna's undying wrath.

Should the party attack the cleric, his two ax-wielding female bodyguards emerge from the crowd of onlookers to defend him. Panic quickly spreads among the citizens, who flee madly, and 1d6+2 members of Vecna's elite undead guard, the Reavers, arrive upon the scene within 1d4+1 rounds to see what is causing such a stir. The Reavers ride in on their skeletal steeds.

**Memory of Vecna:** AC 10; MV 12; hp 19; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+1.

**Female bodyguards (2):** AC 5; MV 12; hp 39, 33; THAC0 16; Dmg 1d8.

**Reavers (1d6+2):** AC 5; MV 9; hp 56 each; THAC0 18; Dmg 1d8.

**Skeletal steeds (1 for each Reaver):** AC 7; MV 18; hp 26 each; THAC0 17; Dmg 1d6/1d6/1d4.

### The Demented

The party hears a pitiful wail, spoken in recognizable Common behind them: "Oh gods! You've come! You've finally come!"

A young woman, as ragged as every other living citizen of Citadel of Cavitius, comes rushing up to them. Tears are streaming down her filthy cheeks and she is both laughing and sobbing at the same time. "I've been



waiting and waiting and waiting," she sobs. "I saw you in my dreams, but you never came. But now you're here. Now you can take me away from this awful place. You will take me away, right? I know each of you has part of the Lord of Secrets within you, but that's just so you can defeat him and the Old One, right? You're not evil or corrupt, and you won't die while fulfilling your destiny, will you? Please don't die. You have to succeed and rescue me from this horrible place!"

The words spill forth in a wild babble, and she doesn't stop speaking until a character with a high Charisma grabs hold of her and firmly orders her to stop. She then calms down and attempts to behave in a calmer fashion. However, it is clear to all that she has only the most tentative of grasps on sanity and that she may lose it again at any moment.

The young woman is Valuriss, from Darkon (another domain in the Demiplane of Dread). She fled from there with her father shortly after that nation's ruler (Lord Azalin) was slain, and petty warlords seized control of portions of the land. The Mists, however, deposited the pair here, a place far worse than Darkon. Her father quickly succumbed to the undead here, and Valuriss has been on the run ever since.

**Valuriss, female human T3:** AC 7 (Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 18; THAC0 20; #AT 1 (knife); Dmg 1d3; SA backstab x2 damage; SD thief skills, psionic wild talent; SZ M (5'5" tall); ML unsteady (5); Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 14, Str 9, Dex 17, Con 13; AL CN.

*Special Abilities:* Valuriss has a psionic wild talent (a long-range variation of *precognition*) that can be used 1/day.

*Thief Abilities:* PP 50%, OL 20%, F/RT 5%, MS 65%, HS 60%, DN 35%, CW 70%, RL 40%.

Valuriss has precognitive abilities that drove her to flee the looming chaos in her homeland. These talents also told her that the heroes were coming. "You aren't the first," she babbles on. "There were others, but they were unable to take me with them. I know you'll win. I've seen you standing over Vecna's destroyed corpse. I've seen you win. You'll win. You need to go to the palace, and you need to face Iuz and Vecna in the throne room and you'll win. But one of you needs to wear the hand. Are you wearing the hand? If not, you need to! Quick! Do it now! Then you need the sword—the sword of the traitor, Kas. It is kept in the palace, in Vecna's own library! You must wear the hand that was Vecna's and go to the palace. But take me with you, please! Please!"

Valuriss attempts to grab a sword or ax from one of the heroes, then cut off the left hand of the person carrying the *Hand of Vecna*. If no party member attempts to intervene, she is nonetheless frozen in her tracks by a barked order in the local language.

"You! Madwoman! I thought I told you to stop bothering the citizens!"

A group of ten humans with black tabards over their chainmail armor approach you. A skeletal hand with a lidless eye in its palm is embroidered on their tabards, over their chests. They resemble city watchmen, but they are better equipped than most city watches, as they are armed with battle-axes and longswords. Ragged citizens hurry out of their way.

"They may be foreigners like yourself, Valuriss, but that doesn't give you leave to disobey my orders," continues the speaker, a bald man carrying a battle-ax. "For your disobedience, you will be taken to the plaza and impaled! After your trial, of course."

With a wild shriek, Valuriss drops the weapon she holds. "No! No! You can't kill me! They're here to save me!" She suddenly bolts into an alley.

"After her!" cries the bald man, gesturing with his ax. "Kill her if you must!" The other humans obey without hesitation, drawing their weapons.

The party has encountered a patrol of the Fingers of Vecna, the police force of Citadel Cavitius. If the party attempts to defend Valuriss, the Fingers attack the characters with deadly force. The twelve members of this squad include a Finger commander, three Finger sergeants, and eight soldiers.

Unless a hero immediately chases after Valuriss, she vanishes into the shadowed alleyways, never to be seen again. If a hero does pursue, the DM should check Valuriss's Hide in Shadows ability with a die roll. If the check is successful, the hero can't find her. If it fails, the hero spots her hiding behind rubble, scared out of her wits. (If invited to join the party, and if she enters the palace, Valuriss dies horribly in the first combat encounter.)

**Finger commander:** AC 5; MV 12; hp 50; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 or 1d4.

**Finger sergeants (3):** AC 5; MV 12; hp 30 each; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 or 1d4.

**Finger soldiers (8):** AC 5; MV 12; hp 10 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 or 1d3.

### The Desperate

A man (0-level) comes up to the party with a desperate look in his eyes. He says, in the local language, "Please, you can help me! You are outlanders, and you are powerful. You can plead my case with Lord Haroln!"

If none of the heroes are able to understand the man, or if they give him the brush-off, he stumbles down the street and approaches a group of Fingers. They proceed

to beat him senseless. They then move on, leaving him bleeding and unconscious in the gutter.

If the party makes an effort to understand the man, he tells them that his pride and joy, his beautiful young daughter Innova, was seized by Fingers last week and taken to the palace. The magistrates have refused to hear his pleas on her behalf, and he has also been denied in audience with the Arm of Vecna, the leader of the Fingers. The man and his wife don't know why Innova was seized, but they both desperately want her returned. The father describes his daughter and asks the party if it will go to Vecna's palace, or to the fortress of Lord Haroln, the Arm of Vecna, to plead her case. He can offer the heroes only 13 cp for their effort, but it's his entire fortune. (He's telling the truth. The money was supposed to pay for the flight of his family to the neighboring land of Tovag. He says it is filled with war-hungry barbarians, but he now believes it might be a safer place than Cavitius.)

If the party agrees to plead the man's case, he rushes into his home to tell his wife the good news. (He gives the heroes directions to Lord Haroln's fortress first, although he strongly suggests they go the palace and let the magistrates there refer them to Haroln. He has heard that the Arm does not like to be disturbed.) However, the party barely gets three streets away from where they met the man before a wisp of smoke snakes its way down from overhead and materializes before them as a darkly handsome man in black and red robes. He has a holy symbol of Vecna around his neck.

"Greetings, outlanders," he says in a cool, mildly accented voice. "I could not help but overhear poor Jakkob's pleas on behalf of his daughter. I am Lord Haroln, the Arm of Vecna. It is a pleasure to make your acquaintance."

The man freely admits to being a vampire and a loyal servant of Vecna. He asks the party members to introduce themselves. When they are finished, he says:

"Our meeting was not as much of a coincidence as it might seem. I have heard Jakkob's pleas, and I have been investigating the fate of his daughter personally. I've been wrapping up the investigation by observing Jakkob and his wife. You do not need to involve yourselves in this matter. Jakkob is concerned for his child, as any mortal would be, but I assure you that she is quite all right. I will give him a similar assurance once my investigation is complete."

If asked why he is observing the parents of Innova, Haroln explains that the young girl revealed the parents are planning to flee to Tovag. Haroln wants to make

sure they are not spies intending to reveal valuable secrets to the enemies of Cavitius. (Tovag is ruled by Vecna's archnemesis, Kas the Bloody-handed, and the two domains are eternally at war.)

Haroln is lying to the party. He was watching Jakkob mostly to kill the man if he was going to instigate another round of pleas for the return of his daughter. Haroln really doesn't want to be bothered by such a petty matter. In addition, Innova has fallen prey to a lich (see area 60a).

**Lord Haroln:** AC -2; MV 12, fly 18 (C) or 9 (E); hp 66, THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4.

### The Destroyers

As the party moves through a particularly crowded and narrow set of streets, it is ambushed by a group of evil adventurers in the service of Iuz.

The press of living and dead citizens is particularly tight as you make your way through a section of streets that seem to wind to and fro like a snake. Curiously, some of the buildings even seem to have spots that appear like scales.

A pair of rag-clad children dart out from an alley, chasing a tight bundle of rags that they are kicking as one would a ball, proving that the spirit of children even survives in a hellish place such as this.

Suddenly, the street explodes in fire.

Every party member must make a saving throw. A 7d6 *fireball* has just been fired into the narrow street. The explosion rebounds off the confining walls, knocking all characters who fail their saves off their feet as well as inflicting full damage upon them and stunning them for 1d3 rounds. Other characters suffer only half damage and are capable of reacting immediately to the scene before them.

The smell of burning flesh and the screams of dying fill the alley. Dozens of victims, both living and undead, lay twitching on the ground as their last moments flee amid a haze of heat and pain. Through the acrid smoke, you see figures approaching, among them a towering, bearded giant and a smaller thin man. Both wear platemail with Iuz's grinning skull symbol on the chest.

"Well, well," says the bearded giant, drawing a large two-handed sword from a sheath on his back. "Looks like Kher's puny spell didn't get the dogs. Looks like he got everyone but *them*. Well, I like stand-up fights, so let's get down to it!"

With that, he issues a fierce battle cry and charges at you, swinging the sword wildly.



The two figures are Bear and Kelleth of Greyhawk, two particularly bloodthirsty servants of Iuz. They will not stop fighting until either they or the party are dead. Bear wades into combat directly while Kelleth hangs back and casts spells until he fails a Wisdom check, or until he is engaged by a party member. The rest of their force is lurking farther away, but the party can see them at the edge of the devastation: a warrior in glittering chainmail, a half-elf in black robes, and about a dozen orcs. (The half-elf is GERAL KHER and the warrior is LANNER HVIST.)

After two rounds of combat, five orcs rush forward to join the fray, and the half-elf fires a *magic missile* spell at any obvious spellcasters in the party and issues a taunt—most likely a racial slur of some sort. The warrior laughs loudly. Five more orcs rush into combat two rounds later. As soon as either Kelleth or Bear fall, the half-elf orders a retreat. The half-elf, the warrior, and KARK, the orc leader, vanish into a side alley. (Unless slain by the party before Kelleth or Bear are defeated, this trio should escape. They appear again later in the adventure.)

If this battle is going badly for the party, a pair of Reavers arrive to investigate the devastation, causing the NPC party to flee. Dungeon Masters should also feel free to add more foes if the battle seems too easy for the PCs.

**Kelleth of Greyhawk, male human P4 of Iuz:** AC 2 (platemail); MV 9 (slowed by armor); hp 32; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (quarterstaff); SA spells; SZ M (6'1" tall); ML elite (14); Str 13, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 9, Wis 16, Cha 17; AL CE; XP 420.

*Special Equipment:* staff of withering.

*Cleric Spells Memorized (5/4):* 1st—*cure light wounds* (×2), *command*, *protection from evil* (×2); 2nd—*flame blade*, *heat metal*, *hold person* (×2).

**Bear, male human F9:** AC 0 (platemail +3); MV 12; hp 90; THAC0 12; #AT 3/2; Dmg 2d4+3 (two-handed bastard sword); SZ M (6'7" tall); ML fanatic (18); Str 18/01, Dex 14, Con 18, Int 7, Wis 8, Cha 9; AL CE; XP 1,400.

*Special Equipment:* ring of vampiric regeneration.

**Geral Kher:** AC 9; MV 12; hp 56; THAC0 9; #AT 2; Dmg 1d10+4.

**Lanner Hvist:** AC 3, MV 9, hp 120; THAC0 9; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d8.

**Kark:** AC 5; MV 9; hp 8; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 or 1d8.

**Orcs (10):** AC 6 (studded leather, shield); MV 9; HD 1; hp 8 (×2), 7 (×3), 6, 5 (×4); THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 or 1d6 (spears); SA +1 to attack rolls while their leader lives; SD +1 to morale while the leader lives; SZ M (5'–6" tall); ML average (8–10); Int average (8–10); AL LE; XP 15 each.

However the battle ends, as soon as the evil NPCs have fled, a smoking door opens and a slightly singed man looks out. He gestures at the party to enter, saying in the local language that he is going to help them because he saw them fight those killers who have been terrorizing the neighborhood for the past two days.

The party's helper is named Rull (0-level), a local healer who has created concoctions using local materials that duplicate the effects of magic potions. Vecna's minions tolerate him because he cures a range of illnesses in the living population, making them more effective workers. Rull provides the party with eight potions that each offers the same effects as *cure light wounds*, and he treats them with his Herbalism and Healing proficiencies. As he does this, he says, "Those evil men have been waiting for you to show up. I didn't understand all of their speech, but from eavesdropping on them I have learned they are here in service of a god who wishes to replace Lord Vecna as ruler of our city. Apparently, this god fears only one thing—you. If you have made it to our city, you apparently are in possession of something that will make you resistant to their god's power, a legacy of Lord Vecna from the world you call home."

If the party shows Rull the *Hand of Vecna*, he nearly faints with shock. He urges one of the party members to use the artifact, stating that the hero will be able to draw upon the might of Vecna and defeat the evil god that has invaded the citadel.

If asked if he wants Vecna defeated as well, Rull hesitates, then says, "Yes. Lord Vecna and his servants are irredeemably evil. They visit much pain and suffering upon us here in Citadel Cavitius. However, they have never committed atrocities such as those you have just witnessed in the street. This other god is far more brutal than Vecna and must be stopped."

If the DM wants the party to meet up with Valuriss again, she might find them while they are resting at Rull's meager, cramped home. She tells the party of a new, dire vision she has had: Iuz has already infiltrated Vecna's palace. He is presently making his way to Vecna's throne room, where he will absorb the Maimed God's essence and destroy all of Cavitius, if the party doesn't stop him.

### The Goal

After the trek through the city, the party reaches one of the few open areas within Citadel Cavitius; the cramped street opens up to a broad plaza. Five gallows stand

upon the ground, each guarded by skeletal troops. In the distance, Vecna's palace reaches toward the darkened sky in all its glory. It is a massive stone structure that bears a distant resemblance to a hand, as five towers jut from its top. Four of the towers are identical, slender and bone white, seemingly carved from the same substance as the rest of the citadel. The fifth, however, is a deep black spire soaring higher than any tower the heroes have ever seen, its top so distant that it is difficult to see. The heroes gaze upon the Palace of Vecna, their destination.

## The Palace of Vecna

On the outside, this fearsome structure is an exact duplicate of Vecna's ancient seat of power, as his empire reached its height across a now-forgotten region of the Flanaess. The palace housed the legendary Spider Throne and was the site of Vecna's greatest political and magical triumphs (and, perhaps, his greatest mistakes).

Within this dread structure, the party must square off against the Old One for the life of Vecna himself. Little do they know that they are playing directly into Vecna's plans.

## Vecna's Master Plan

When Iuz launched what he hoped would be the final strike against Vecna, an ancient ally of the Whispered One—a supernatural beyond even human understanding—stirred. Known to Vecna as the Serpent, this being revealed Iuz's secret plan to Vecna, as it had revealed so many other secrets to him. The Serpent had previously told Vecna the truth about some of the multiverse's most shadowed beings: the dark powers that had restricted him to a physical form trapped within the Demiplane of Dread—and an even more mysterious entity, the Lady of Pain from the City of Doors.

Vecna suddenly saw a way clear to do what he had previously failed at, a way to escape the clutches of the dark powers and elevate himself to the status of a greater god. All he needed was a way to bypass the dark powers and gain access to the City of Doors. He might well shatter the entire universe in the process, but he would be free, his enemies would be vanquished, and he would probably have enough power to remake the universe. Yes, Vecna would remake the universe in his image, as it had always meant to be.

However, Vecna had to move carefully and slowly. He was playing a cosmic chess game against powers who had the same access to secrets that he did, so he had to think as if he was playing this game against himself. Therefore, Vecna placed himself on the board as the black king.

Vecna allowed Iuz to discover the "true way" to slay Vecna and absorb his essence. Vecna himself informed those who carried the news to Iuz of his "vulnerable state." Thus, the Old One, unwittingly, took on the role of the white queen.

Vecna had to hide his moves from his opponent with clever feints. The first of these feints was an elaborate plan that would supposedly lead to his resurrection as a mortal with the powers of a god, leaving behind the rotting shell that is his current physical form. As part of that scheme, Vecna saw to it that pawns were provided to the dark powers to be used to thwart his scheme. (These events are described in *Vecna Reborn*.)

Once that plan was seemingly defeated, Vecna started an almost identical one, banking on the fact that the dark powers would assume that he was blinded by rage. Carefully, operating in the background, he set events into motion on his homeworld of Oerth, instructing his followers to corrupt a gate to the Demiplane of Dread and to leak information to agents of Iuz. Vecna was certain that the dark powers would permit Iuz to enter Cavitius, as he was certain they knew that Vecna was manipulating Iuz.

Vecna needed everyone to believe that they were acting of their own accord, so only his clerics and a few undead have been let in on some of his plans. Both Iuz and the party of adventurers—the current heroes—will meet resistance, even if Vecna ultimately wants Iuz to meet him in this throne room high atop the Black Tower. Vecna has arranged for nearly all of his most powerful followers to be away in the Burning Peaks, battling the forces of Kas. His palace is now staffed by a comparatively weak force, mixed with foes such as death knights and vampires, to keep Iuz challenged, but not too challenged. Even Iuz's humanoids should get part of the way into the palace, if they are very lucky. The trap is laid. Now Vecna must wait for someone to take the bait.

## General Notes on the Palace of Vecna

The palace is impervious to all physical or magical force; nothing but a being on the level of another demigod or greater can harm it. Further, any form of magical transportation, such as *teleport* or *dimension door*, cannot carry a spellcaster to any point in the palace that the spellcaster cannot directly see at the time of casting. Planar, ethereal, or astral travel of any sort is impossible into or through the palace; Vecna's presence has warped space so that such spells and powers are useless. The palace has no windows, and there is no other entrance to the palace except through the huge front doors. Heroes might be fooled by a door on a small guarded watch room (area 4) on the west side of the palace, but this does not lead into the palace's

ground floor. In short, the heroes (as Iuz did before them) must walk in.

Unless otherwise noted, all ceilings are 12 feet high. All areas inside the palace are lit by the same type of skull-shaped lanterns that light the rest of the city.

The *Player's Handbook* rules for opening doors (Chapter One) should be studied, particularly with regard to opening locked, barred, or magically held doors. Some doors here are extremely difficult to close, requiring a Bend Bars/Lift Gates roll to do so.

All the restrictions of spellcasting apply within the palace, with one additional restriction: No divination magic of any kind functions within the palace walls, except that cast by spellcasters of Vecna, living or undead, or gained from magic items found in the structure. It is impossible for heroes to use spells or magical devices to scry into the palace itself.

## Encounters within the Palace of Vecna

The Palace of Vecna bustles with activity. The palace is extraordinarily dangerous, however, as Vecna is aware of every action taken by every being within its walls.

Further, nearly all of those encountered are among Vecna's most loyal followers; they may not be particularly powerful, but they serve the Whispered One body and soul. Their devotion is such that living servants of Vecna receive a +4 bonus to resist all charm spells, while undead receive a +2 bonus to resist being turned, in addition to gaining the "sinkhole of evil" effects described at the beginning of this chapter. (As a result, a cleric hero has a -5 penalty to die rolls for turning.) Remember, too, that heroes cannot successfully read the thoughts of intelligent undead on this demiplane.

As the heroes move through the hallways of the palace, they meet a variety of Vecna's followers, minions, and servants. Day and night are meaningless terms to the denizens of Cavitus, so activity in the palace remains at a constant level.

Unless specifically noted, each group of NPCs should be engaged in a different kind of activity (such as delivering something, running to torture a prisoner, going to a meeting, or waiting for a comrade) and should also have a different appearance from the last group encountered. Players should not get the sense that their heroes are running into the same encounter over and over.

Whenever the party enters a new hallway or staircase, remains there for longer than a full turn, or reenters the area after spending at least a turn in any given chamber, there is a 50% chance of an encounter (1-3 on 1d6). If an encounter occurs, the DM should roll 2d6 and compare the result below to see who or what they meet.

| 2d6  | Result   |
|------|--|
| 2    | Vampire with 1d4 slave vampires, on a personal errand or going to meet with other vampires.  |
| 3-4  | 3d10 elite skeletons led by a wight, on patrol.  |
| 5-6  | A page (0-level) dressed in a simple black outfit, delivering a message to an undead noble.  |
| 7    | Skeleton warrior with 2d10 elite skeletons carrying chests and sacks of booty from the battlefield (treasure types A and Z, Table 84, DMG); they are heading for Vecna's palace, to the Black Tower. |
| 8    | 2d4 live servants going to a meeting of clerics (roll 1d6: 1-4, 0-level assistants in black clothing; 5-6, acolytes of Vecna).   |
| 9-11 | Ju-ju zombie singing hymns to Vecna followed by 2d6 zombies, carrying papers to a meeting of undead lords.   |
| 12   | See the Special Encounters section below.  |

**Vampire:** AC 1; MV 12, fly 18 (C) or 9 (E); hp 64; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4.

**Slave vampire:** AC 1; MV 12, fly 18 (C) or 9 (E); hp 50; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4.

**Elite skeletons:** AC 5; MV 12; hp 16; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6.

**Wight:** AC 5; MV 12; hp 32; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4.

**Skeleton warrior:** AC 2; MV 12; hp 72; THAC0 8; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10.

**Acolytes of Vecna:** AC 10; MV 12; hp 5; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4.

**Ju-ju zombie:** AC 6; MV 9; hp 36; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 3d4.

**Zombies:** AC 8; MV 6; hp 16; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8.

In addition to these encounters, the heroes may come upon signs of Iuz's passage throughout the citadel. Some are mere remnants of death and destruction, but others are actual troops. DMs can roll on the following chart each time the heroes enter a new area:

| 1d6 | Result  |
|-----|---|
| 1   | The walls are covered with graffiti written in Greyhawk Common. |
| 2   | A dead servant lies on the floor.                               |

- 3 A group of smashed skeletons are scattered all over the floor. A total of 1d4 dead ogres are also here.
- 4 A group of 1d4 ogres spots the heroes.
- 5 A group of 1d4 ogres with a half-ogre Kadar hails the heroes, for good or ill.
- 6 A group of 1d4 ogres and a half-ogre Kadar lies dead upon the floor. No other foes can be seen.

**Half-ogre Kadar:** AC 2; MV 12; hp 48; THAC0 12; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+6.

**Ogre warriors (1d4):** AC 5; MV 9; hp 33 each; THAC0 14; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+6.

### Special Encounters

The following special encounters allow the party to meet major personalities and gain specific information that advances the adventure. Whenever a special encounter is called for, the DM should roll 1d4, then locate the result on this table. Results are explained fully in the following section.

| 1d4 | Resulting Encounter  |
|-----|----------------------|
| 1   | Hunting the Hunters  |
| 2   | Dancing Queen        |
| 3   | More Dead than Alive |
| 4   | The Hand Moving      |

Many of the beings in this section can also be encountered in specific locations in the palace. The DM should adjust later encounters to reflect the outcome of any meetings that arise out of this section. The reverse is also true: If the party meets these characters in their fixed locations, the latter might not be encountered later in the hallways of the palace, or else the DM should adjust their appearances and actions to reflect previous meetings.

**1. Hunting the Hunters:** The heroes are not the only adventurers who have taken up the cause. One pair of long-time enemies of Iuz the Old is a married couple: Kendrel Hammend, a priest of Trithereon (god of independence, revenge, and retribution), and Carlenna Pen-trast, an illusionist. They pursued Iuz here from Oerth after getting wind of his desire to elevate himself to the status of full godhood.

Unlike the heroes, who entered the palace with Vecna's tacit permission, Kendrel and Carlenna were beset by obstacles and enemies at almost every turn. When the party encounters them, the pair is on the run from a death knight and a spellcasting mummy. (Kendrel successfully turned the other undead that were part of this particular force.) The pair is low on spells and hit points, and they will assuredly die within minutes if the party does not step in to assist.



Kendrel and Carlenna can be used as replacement player characters should a hero die early in this adventure.

**Kendrel Hammend, male human P12 of Trithereon:** AC -2 (*chainmail* +2, *shield* +2, Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 72 (currently 11); THAC0 14; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4+1 (*broadsword* +1); SA spells; SD spells; SZ M (5'9" tall); ML fanatic (18); Str 14, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 14, Wis 18, Cha 15; AL CG.

*Special Equipment:* *broadsword* +1 (+2 vs. *magic* using and enchanted creatures), *staff of curing* (10 charges), *scroll of plane shift*, *holy symbol of Trithereon*.

*Cleric Spells Memorized* (8/7/6/4/2/2): 1st—*command*, *cure light wounds*, *invisibility to undead*; 2nd—*spiritual hammer*; 3rd—*negative plane protection*; 4th—*cloak of bravery*; 5th—*cure critical wounds*, *dispel evil*; 6th—*blade barrier*. (All other spells were used.)

*Special Abilities:* Backstab ×2 damage as thief, *conjure animals* once per day, uses wizard's *monster summoning* spells as cleric spells of equivalent level.

*Notes:* Kendrel gave up his position as the head of Trithereon's church in the lake port of Willip, Furyondy, after becoming disgusted with political maneuverings in the chaotic hierarchy. He and Carlenna fell in love on a joint adventure against Iuz, and they married. Kendrel served for a time as cleric-in-residence at Carlenna's wizards' academy outside the walled town of Herechel, in eastern Furyondy. When minions of Iuz attacked and killed many of the students, he and his wife returned to their adventuring roots and dedicated themselves to eliminating Iuz once and for all.

**Carlenna Hammend, female human Ill12:** AC -1 (*gray robe of the archmagi*, *ring of protection* +2, Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 43 (currently 8); THAC0 17 (14 with *staff of striking*); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+3 (*staff of striking*); SA spells; SD spells; SZ M (5'6" tall); ML fanatic (17); Str 8, Dex 18, Con 16, Int 18, Wis 16, Cha 15; AL N.

*Special Equipment:* *gray robe of the archmagi* (base AC 5, 5% MR), *pearly white ioun stone* (regenerates 1 hit point/turn), *staff of striking* (12 charges remaining), *wand of fire* (5 charges), 2 scrolls of *dispel magic*.

*Wizard Spells Memorized* (5/5/5/5/5/2), at least one spell per level from the Illusion/Phantasm school: 1st—*burning hands*; 2nd—*knock*, *Melf's acid arrow*; 3rd—*spectral force*; 4th—*improved invisibility*; 5th—*teleport*; 6th—*disintegrate*, *project image*. (All other spells were used. Carlenna has a traveling spellbook with her, and the DM should determine which additional spells it contains.)

*Notes:* Carlenna was an adventuring wizard who did a service for King Belvor IV of Furyondy and was rewarded with a charter to form a wizards' academy in the eastern walled town of Herechel. Unfortunately, said service resulted in an intolerable inconvenience for

Iuz the Old. Eventually, the demigod's minions descended upon Carlenna's academy and slaughtered most of her students in revenge. Weeping over the body of her own apprentice, Carlenna vowed that she would not rest until either she or Iuz was irrevocably dead.

**Development:** Kendrel relishes battle and the use of powerful spells, but he is not rash. He always attempts to gain an edge through careful planning, ranged attacks, and advance castings of protection spells. Once engaged in melee, Kendrel is hard to distract or shake off, but he is sharp enough to know when a fighting retreat is in order. He dislikes overbearing people, although he understands the need for clear and good leadership in tight situations. He usually defers to his wife's judgment when it comes to planning overall strategies.

Carlenna is a strong-willed woman who expects others to respect her adventuring experience and intelligence. She places a premium on sound strategic and tactical planning, and a favorite dictum of hers is that a single protective or defensive spell, cast before battle, is worth two spells cast in the heat of combat. This cautious mindset and her ability to create and execute elaborate plans allowed Carlenna and her husband to make it into the Palace of Vecna alive.

When the party encounters him, Kendrel fails a saving throw against *hold person* cast by the pursuing mummy, falling to the ground. The death knight slays Kendrel on the following round if the party does not intervene. Also during this encounter, Carlenna's skill and luck have reached their limits. When first encountered, Carlenna has just drawn her *wand of fire* and is about to use the final charges to blast the mummy pursuing Kendrel and her.

The death knight pursuing them is Sir Loran of Trollpyre Keep. Sir Loran's history is given at area 64, where he normally resides. He relishes this opportunity to vent his rage and frustrations on hapless adventurers, using his *two-handed sword* +4, +6 vs. *amphibious creatures* called "Trollpyre's Defender." Should the heroes get in his way—by assisting Kendrel and Carlenna—he ignores the edict that Vecna handed down and turns his wrath on the party. He lets loose with his *fireball* once he is reduced to less than 20 hit points.

**Sir Loran:** AC 0; MV 12; hp 63 (currently 28); THAC0 4; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10+10.

**Kaleb Hoddypeak, mummy P6 of Vecna:** AC 3; MV 6; HD 6+3; hp 48 (currently 14); THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 1d12 (fist); SA *fear*, *mummy rot*; SD cannot be mind-read on this demiplane, hit only by magical weapons (cause half damage, rounded down), victims rot and cannot be raised without *cure disease* and *raise dead* cast within 6 rounds, immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, *fear*, cold, poison, paralysis, and telepathic psionics; SW *wish* or *resurrec-*

tion turns him into a 7th-level half-elf cleric, takes +1 point of damage per die of magical fire damage, can be turned, holy water does 2d4 points of damage per vial; SZ M (5'8" tall); ML champion (15); Int average (10); AL NE; XP 5,000.

**Special Equipment:** holy symbol of Vecna granting protection +2.

**Cleric Spells Memorized (5/5/2):** 1st—*command, cause light wounds*; 2nd—*hold person* (x2), *spiritual hammer*; 3rd—*dispel magic*. (All other spells were used.)

**Notes:** In life, Kaleb Hoddypeak was a half-elf from the Duchy of Geoff. He devoted a great deal of time secretly sabotaging the heroic undertakings of his famed half-brother Fonkin Hoddypeak, a full-blooded elf adventurer. Eventually, Kaleb discovered the Cult of Vecna and joined up, hoping the dark god would grant him secret knowledge to use in slandering Fonkin's name. Before Kaleb could deal a crippling blow to Fonkin, villagers lynched him for his evil ways and threw his body into a bog. Vecna was impressed with Kaleb's efforts and caused him to rise as a mummy. As Vecna began his latest gambit, he commanded the mummy to find his way to the shadowy recesses of the Demiplane of Dread.

**2. Dancing Queen:** The heroes hear a strange tune being played on a flute. If they look into the hallway, they see a beautiful girl in her teens skipping and twirling down the hallway with a pair of skeletal figures following silently behind her. Dressed in a diaphanous gown, she also wears an elaborate red caul (netted cap) made from silk, and a necklace with a large teardrop-shaped ruby (value 3,000 gp). She plays an eerie tune on a flute carved from a human thighbone. The skeletons wear long, black, hooded cloaks and carry large scythes. They look very much like the minor deaths that the heroes encountered earlier.

The girl is possessed by a lich who cast *magic jar* on her after having her abducted from the city beyond the palace walls. (If the heroes experienced the encounter "The Desperate" on their way through Citadel Cavitius to the palace, they recognize Innova from the description provided by her father.) Innova now serves as the new body for the lich, a loyal servant of Vecna who grew tired of masking her decaying body with magic. The necklace around her neck is not the lich's phylactery, and neither is a silvered canine tooth visible whenever Innova smiles. Innova's spirit is trapped within a gem located in the lich's lair (area 60a). The skeletal figures following the lich are skeleton warriors (with special weapons) that the lich has acquired as bodyguards. All are detailed below.

**Development:** If the heroes approach her, "Innova" looks shocked and stops playing the flute. (The lich is indeed startled, having just realized the heroes are "outsiders" and probably dangerous.) Following a minor

gesture she makes ("attack"), the "minor deaths" silently move forward to attack the party, focusing on any obvious spellcasters. If no such persons are in evidence, they focus on the toughest-looking fighters.

These two "minor deaths" are actually skeletal warriors. One skeleton warrior uses a smoky black *scythe* +2, *nine lives stealer* (as per the sword), and the other uses a gleaming silver *scythe of sharpness* (as per the sword, +1 on attack rolls). Each scythe has a reach of 5 feet around the front of the user. Because of the difficulty in using these weapons, the skeleton warriors attack last in each round of combat, after all heroes have made their attacks. The skeleton warriors obey the lich Meekali ("Innova") completely.

**Skeleton warriors "Minor deaths" (2):** AC 2; MV 12; hp 72, 73; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 2d8.

**Development:** During the fight, the girl shrieks and rushes toward the hero with the highest Charisma or who appears the best groomed; the skeleton warriors do not attack her as she does. She begs for protection in the ancient language spoken by the citizens of Citadel Cavitius.

Once the "minor deaths" have been defeated, "Innova" explains that an evil crone forced her into the role of slave. She further claims that she had been ordered by the crone to visit every floor in the palace while playing the flute as part of some sort of weird spell she was weaving. The two undead were there to make sure she followed orders. Breaking into sobs, she begs the party to bring her back to her parents and safety. She speculates that her parents might be able to sell the jeweled necklace she wears to someone in the neighboring domain and use the money to start a new life there.

Before the party chooses to leave the palace, however, the girl says that she overheard her captors discussing a powerful magical sword that could be used to slay their master. They said it was the Sword of the Traitor, and that it is kept in Vecna's private study. Innova is certain she knows which chamber that is and offers to take the heroes there.

Although the lich currently inhabits the body of a living being, she retains her ability to command undead, as well as her immunity to all mind-affecting magic. She also has the saving throws of a being appropriate to her class and level, but she does not have any of a lich's physical attacks. Further, a cleric of sufficient level can still turn her, as her evil spirit is present in the girl's body. Being turned does not drive the lich from the girl's body. (See the wizard spell *magic jar* for details.)

**"Innova":** AC 7; MV 12; hp 43; THAC0 9; #AT 1 (fists or kick); Dmg 1 hp.

Meekali is currently in a playful mood. If the party keeps "Innova" around, she attaches herself to the male party member with the highest Charisma. At first, she seems impressed by the handsome adventurer, but later she is more forceful in her advances. She uses *charm person* to get her way if she has to. She plays the infatuated girl for a time, but she eventually turns on the object of her affection, using her magic to kill him. If the party merely returns "Innova" to her parents, the lich goes on a magical rampage in that part of town soon after the heroes depart. Innova's parents are the first to die. The lich then returns to the palace, where the heroes might encounter her in her lair and possibly even "rescue" her again.

If the heroes grow suspicious of her or discern her true nature, Innova attempts to escape. She has very little attachment to her old body or the materials in her lair (area 60a), as she knows she can repeat the process of becoming a lich once this body grows old, or simply *magic jar* another female. If there's a female elf in the party, the lich might even attempt to *magic jar* her, ensuring that the lich has life and beauty for many centuries.

**3. More Dead than Alive:** A person well known to the party from past adventures in the campaign is seen walking down the hallway toward the heroes. The person should be at least a friend of one of the heroes; the closer the relationship, the better. The person wears attractive, clean, but somewhat revealing clothing. This character is shocked if confronted by the party, perhaps as shocked as the party is, and initially does not believe the heroes are who they say they are ("You've played these sick mind games before. I'm your slave, completely and utterly. Why do you continue to torture me?"). However, once the heroes make it clear they are not fakes—perhaps by revealing a secret that only they and the NPC know—the character desperately begs them for help.

The character was recently kidnapped (however long it was since the heroes had their first run-in with either the supporters of Iuz or Vecna). After being delivered to this terrible place, the character was subjected to mental and physical tortures, then turned into a vampire by two other vampires, male and female, covered in elaborate tattoos.

**Development:** While the vampire finishes his or her explanation, he or she makes a Wisdom check based on the character's old score. If the check fails, the character is overcome by the need to drain a living being of life energy, as well as the commandment (constantly emphasized by the vampire couple) to slay all who pose a threat to Vecna.

If the check is successful, the character shakes off the influence of the master vampire and begs to be destroyed, before the character fails to resist the master

vampire's urgings. The character also begs the heroes to kill the tattooed vampiric couple. (The DM gets to choose which of the pair is the character's actual master and sire.) The character gives the heroes directions to the chambers where the vampires live (area 38 on the map of Vecna's palace). If attacked, the character will not fight back, longing for true death, unless failing another Wisdom check when first taking damage. If the check fails, the character loses a fierce internal struggle against evil and attacks the party, hoping to slay them all.

**Vampire:** AC 1; MV 12, fly 18 (C) or 9 (E); hp 30; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4.

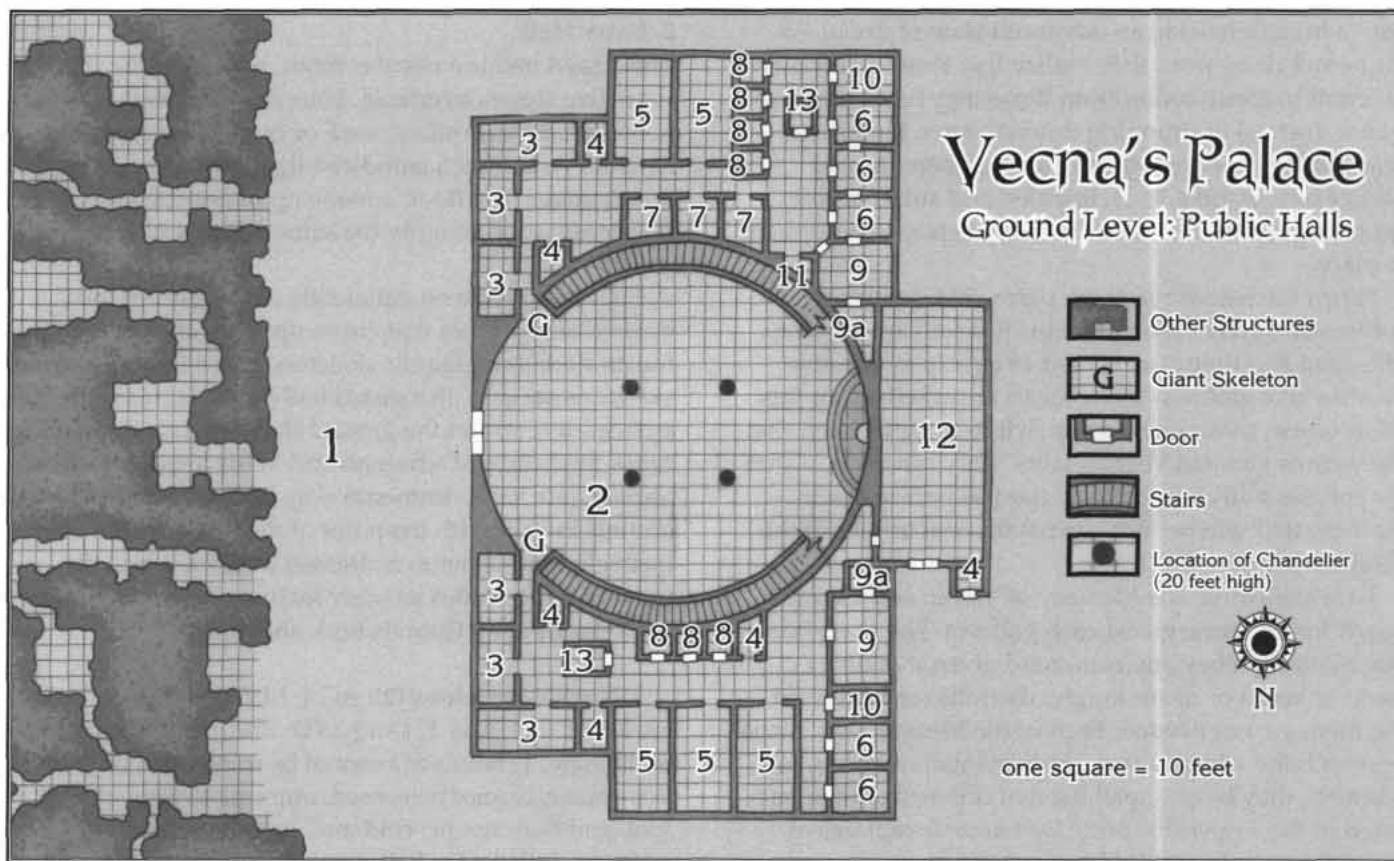
**4. The Hand Moving:** The heroes hear heavy footfalls moving toward them from around a corner or the top of a flight of stairs. The sound gradually grows louder. Eventually, a hideous creature comes into view. It is almost 7 feet tall, dressed in black robes, and made entirely of severed hands; its head and face alone consist of almost a dozen hands that have been stitched or melded together through other means. Even its "feet" are a pair of gauntlet-wearing storm giant hands.

This creature is a unique golem known as the Hand. It is one of Vecna's chief lieutenants in Cavitus, often acting as his emissary to those within the citadel who have attracted his attention for good or ill. Although highly intelligent, the Hand is not a subtle being. It states its goals, desires, and thoughts as bluntly and straightforward as possible.

**Development:** If the party confronts this creature, it raises its hands (which appear to have once belonged to a hill giant) in a peaceful gesture and communicates with everyone in a 90-foot radius by telepathy. Its "voice" sounds like a raspy whisper in the listeners' minds, and its telepathy is always accompanied by the sound of the golem snapping its many fingers at random. "I mean you no harm, strangers in the House of Vecna," it tells the heroes. "You have come here in search of other trespassers, and I am here to take you to their leader. He poses a threat to my master, the Whispered One, and I want you to eliminate him."

The Hand tells them that he requires them to defeat Iuz and states that it is in their own best interest to do so: If Iuz succeeds in his quest, he will become more powerful than ever, as his goal is to steal Vecna's power and add it to his own. The Hand claims that if Iuz succeeds, the Old One's first act will be to destroy Cavitus and all its inhabitants, including the heroes. He states, "Using my master's power, the Old One will add your life to his own, becoming so mighty that he will ascend to full godhood." (These last statements are false, but the Hand believes them to be true.)

The Hand continues to appeal to the party's self-interest, even pointing out that though Vecna may well



be considered one of the most evil beings in all of reality, are the heroes willing to sacrifice their lives to see him destroyed so *another* evil can take its place? The Hand offers to take them straight to Iuz, with a stop along the way (area 70) to permit the heroes to equip themselves with powerful weapons should they feel they require additional aid to defeat a demigod.

If the party has already allied itself with servants of Iuz, these servants urge them to attack and destroy the Hand. They claim the creature is lying and assure the heroes that Iuz will not harm them should he defeat Vecna. If pressed, they admit they believe their god is indeed here to steal Vecna's power for his own. If they have no other choice, the servants of Iuz attack the Hand on their own.

Other NPCs who have joined the party urge them to consider the Hand's proposal. Their opinion is that they can destroy Iuz and worry about Vecna later, Vecna being the lesser of two evils. (The exception to this is "Innova"; she acts terrified of both gods and urges the heroes to run away.)

If the party accepts the Hand's offer, it first takes them to area 70, the Forbidden Library, and allows each hero to select a magical weapon. It reveals all the powers of each weapon, but warns that they may also carry curses. The Hand does not know what the curses are, but it states that the Eye (area 69) might know. It promises to take the heroes to see its counterpart as soon as Iuz has been destroyed. The Hand then takes

the heroes along the most direct route to area 72, Vecna's throne room, at which point the events described in *The Final Confrontation* begin to unfold.

If the Hand is attacked, it does its best to defend itself and kill all who threaten it, including any of the heroes.

**The Hand:** AC 1; MV 9; hp 66; THAC0 11; #AT 2; Dmg 2d12.

## Ground Level: Public Areas

The ground level contains ceremonial chambers and meeting halls for the use of Vecna's chief law enforcers and those charged with keeping order in Citadel Cavitius. A few servants' quarters and garrisons for living and undead troops are also here. Kitchens and dining halls for the living inhabitants of the palace are located on this level. Few citizens of Cavitius, including many of the troops stationed beyond the palace walls, ever see more of the palace than this level. The only heavily guarded area is that where Vecna's hideous war machines are assembled (area 12).

### 1. The Plaza of the Whispered One

This is one of the few open areas in cramped Citadel Cavitius, and its presence makes the already large, austere palace seem even more so. Five gallows stand on the plaza, each with five nooses. Five pikes stand in a star pattern around each gallows. Each pike is adorned



with a human head in an advanced state of decay. As the heroes draw near, they realize that these gallows are different in construction from those they have seen elsewhere. Instead of dropping down to have their necks snapped by the noose, those executed here instead plunge onto a spike, to be impaled and suffer a slow, agonizing death. The noose is there merely to hold them in place.

When the heroes reach the plaza, 5d4 decaying corpses and 1d4+1 dying victims (0-level) are present. The dead and dying are spread as evenly as possible over the five gallows. If any locals are asked about this grisly scene, those present say (without expression) that the victims violated Vecna's laws. They further add that the corpses will eventually be used as part of a war machine that will be sent against the foul armies of the neighboring domain, Tovag.

Four skeletons, one Memory of Vecna, and a bodyguard for the cleric guard each gallows. The skeletons automatically obey any command given them by a cleric of Vecna or death knight; die rolls for commanding them are not needed. Each of the Memories of Vecna possess bone whistles and a holy symbol of Vecna. In addition, they have a spell list that differs from the one listed in the Appendix: *cause light wounds* replaces *cure light wounds*, and *hold person* replaces *aid*.

**Skeletons (20):** AC 7; MV 12; hp 6 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6.

**Memories of Vecna (5):** AC 5; MV 12; hp 24, 23, 21, 20, 19; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+1.

**Bodyguards (5):** AC 5; MV 12; hp 42, 41, 39, 38, 36; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 or 1d4.

**Development:** If a bodyguard's cleric is slain, that bodyguard immediately runs for the palace to summon further assistance if a morale check is passed. If the morale check is failed, the guard flees into the city to hide.

Any attempt to remove bodies, or help those who are not yet dead, causes the skeletons to attack the offenders, while the cleric first sounds the alarm (using a shrill whistle carved from a bone), then joins in the fray, accompanied by the bodyguard. The other clerics, bodyguards, and skeletons in the plaza descend upon the battle. Screaming civilians instantly flee for their lives. Just 2d4 rounds later, a death knight emerges from the palace with an additional 2d20+10 elite skeletons.

**Death knight:** AC 0; MV 12; hp 72; THAC0 8; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+6.

**Elite skeletons (2d20+10):** AC 5; MV 12; hp 16 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6.

## 2. Entry Hall

This grand hall is a circular room, with a ceiling that soars five stories overhead. Four chandeliers hang suspended from the ceiling, each of them glowing greenish-yellow, casting a jaundiced light over everything in the chamber. The floor is made up of polished black flagstones, each roughly the same width and length as a coffin.

Standing inside on either side of the gate, at the bottom of staircases that curve up along the walls to the fourth floor, is a gigantic skeleton. These two monstrous skeletons seem to also guard hallways that lead into the palace's interior on the ground floor. Each guard is four times the height of a human and holds a bastard sword appropriate for its immense size, its bony hands locked around the hilt with the point of the blade on the floor. Each gigantic skeleton is dressed in black robes, the hood of which hides its bony features from view. Large gold chains hang from its neck and waist.

**Gigantic skeletons (2):** AC 4; MV 12; HD 8+4; hp 64, 53; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 2d12; SA *fireball* (8d6 points of damage, 1/hour); SD cannot be mind-read on this demiplane, cannot be turned, immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, and fiery magic; cold and edged or piercing weapons inflict only half damage; missiles inflict only 1 point of damage per hit; SZ H (24' tall); ML fearless (20); Int low (7); AL NE; XP 8,000.

On the far side of the hall, four circular steps rise to a great black throne that appears to jut forward from a gigantic spider web that stretches across the entire back wall. Along the other walls are carvings of undead armies sweeping aside mounted cavalry whose tabards display sunlike symbols. A GREYHAWK campaign hero with the Ancient History proficiency who makes a successful check with a +3 penalty recognizes the throne and these carvings as matching some legendary descriptions of Vecna's throne room. If the hero rolls a 4 (1 plus the modifier), the hero further remembers a legend stating that when Vecna sat on the Spider Throne, he knew all that transpired within his ancient empire.

This chamber is an exact replica of Vecna's throne room as it appeared in the capital of his lost empire on Oerth. The throne is an exact replica of the Spider Throne, recreated here by the strange powers that govern the Demiplane of Dread. Vecna rarely uses it personally, but instead permits the Fingers of Vecna to use it to test the suitability of candidates. He also allows his chief law enforcers to pass judgment upon wrongdoers while sitting on it. (Vecna's actual throne room is located in area 72.)

The legends of the Spider Throne are true. Whoever sits on it sees, hears, smells, tastes, and feels every living sensation in Cavitius, from a fly being swatted to

a young couple's first kiss to a victim's agony as he is life-drained by a vampire. Those who sit upon the throne and retain a shred of their sanity are considered worthy to join the Fingers.

Any hero who sits on the Spider Throne must make a saving throw vs. death. If the saving throw fails, the hero is rendered catatonic by the sudden rush of images and emotions that flood the mind. (Only a *wish* can restore the hero's mind; otherwise, the limp hero does not move or attack, and does not react to any stimulus.) If the saving throw succeeds, the hero can handle the onrush of sensations, yet still behaves as though under the effect of a *confusion* spell for 1d4+2 hours. During recovery, the hero's alignment shifts to lawful evil, making the hero obsessed with imposing law and order through the use of force and terror tactics. From this point forward, the hero is immune to the effects of the throne unless specifically wishing to invoke its power. In the latter case, the hero chooses a certain person or place to be observed, then does so mentally. (Treat this as though the hero views the location through a *crystal ball with clairaudience*.)

**Development:** The skeletons by the doors do not move or acknowledge the heroes unless the heroes try to damage the Spider Throne or unless the heroes attack them first. The skeletons do not attempt to prevent the heroes from climbing the stairs, nor do they prevent the party from penetrating deeper into the palace. However, they do defend themselves and the Spider Throne until they or those who dare threaten any of them are destroyed.

### 3. Waiting Rooms

These austere chambers are lined with bare wooden benches. At each room's center stands a small table with a large clay jug. On the wall directly across from the door is a large mural symbolizing Vecna: a severed open hand with a staring eye resting on its palm. The hand's stump is at the floor, and the tip of the middle finger reaches the ceiling.

Citizens of Cavitius who wish to plead cases before a senior member of the Fingers of Vecna wait in one of these rooms until called upon. The wait can range from minutes or hours, so drinking water is provided. The clay jugs are enchanted; they refill with sulfur-tainted water every three hours. If a jug is removed from the palace, the magic is ruined. Further, a vampire is dispatched by Lord Haroln to locate the stolen item and bring the thief to justice (or just slay him on the spot).

Pleading cases before the Fingers has its risks. If the judge decides the plaintiff is wasting time, the judge has the right to order the poor soul to work for a period of time as a servant in the palace, be killed on the spot, or suffer any other penalty the judge fancies. The time spent waiting to plead the case might be wasted, as the Fingers might decide the case is so complicated that it



must be referred to Lord Haroln, the vampire noble who runs the Fingers of Vecna (see "The Desperate" in the Getting to the Palace section). The case usually dies at this point, for no living citizen of Cavitius is ever seen again after entering Lord Haroln's keep.

Finally, the waiting rooms have become favorite stalking grounds for a group of vampires. Lord Haroln is annoyed by even the few citizens who are desperate or foolish enough to turn to him for justice, so he has ordered these vampires to feed on the plaintiffs waiting in the palace, thus cutting down the number of mortals who might disturb him and force him to work.

When the party enters one of these rooms, the DM should roll 2d6 to determine who is present.

| 2d6 | Result   |
|-----|--|
| 2-4 | The chamber is empty.  |
| 5-6 | A vampire is about to slay a charmed victim (0-level); three other citizens are already dead. (This encounter occurs only once. If rolled again, the chamber is empty.)  |
| 7   | A one-armed shopkeeper has caught a thief robbing a shop (see below). The fighter wants the thief made into a zombie and enslaved to the store as punishment. (This encounter occurs only once. If rolled again, the chamber contains 2d8 citizens (0-level) pleading for permission to move to another home within the city.) |
| 8   | 2d8+2 citizens (0-level).  |
| 9   | 2d8 citizens (0-level) talking nervously about local (undead) politics, unaware of a vampire lurking here as a mist, seeking victims. The vampire targets the hero with the highest Charisma.  |
| 10  | 1d6+1 palace pages (0-level), who caught one of their number stealing food from the kitchen. (If rolled again, 2d8+1 citizens (0-level) are present, preparing to plead a case against an absent citizen they believe has been stealing food from them.)   |
| 11  | 1d4 nervous citizens (0-level), members of the same family seeking information on the fate of a relative who was taken away by the Fingers of Vecna.   |
| 12  | The walls, ceiling, and floor of the room are spattered with blood. There is no sign of those who were slain here, except for a few worthless items (such as a shoe, walking stick, hat, and glove) and 1d6 gp, 2d6 sp, and 2d6 cp scattered around the room.  |

**Vampire:** AC 1; MV 12, fly 18 (C) or 9 (E); hp 40; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4.

**Shopkeeper, male human F2:** AC 9 (leather apron and gloves); MV 12; hp 12; THAC0 19; #AT 1 (dagger); Dmg 1d4; SZ M (6'1" tall); ML steady (12); Int average (10); AL LE; XP 35.

*Notes:* This blacksmith is a five-year veteran of the war against Tovag, with many friends and contacts among the clergy of Vecna. He is fanatically devoted to Vecna and calls for the guards if the party behaves in a suspicious fashion (and not knowing the local language is plenty suspicious to him). His name is Klen.

**Thief, male human T1:** AC 8 (Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 5; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d2 (fists); SA backstab x2; SD thief skills; SZ M (5'3" tall); ML average (10); Int average (8); AL CN; XP 35.

*Thief Abilities:* PP 45%, OL 25%, F/RT 10%, MS 25%, HS 25%, DN 15%, CW 70%, RL 0%.

*Notes:* This petty thief pleads that he needs to support his family. He has no family, however. If helped by the heroes, he attempts to steal their valuables and escape at the earliest possible moment. His name is Vryh.

#### 4. Watch Rooms

These small chambers serve as duty stations for the living and undead soldiers charged with keeping peace among the citizens who come to the palace to meet with officers of the law. They also ensure that no one enters areas they are not allowed to access.

Citizens of Cavitius are limited to areas 1-3, while only clerics and wizards are permitted to enter area 12. The guards challenge any persons they notice passing their post, with the exception of those dressed in the robes of clerics or tabards of the Fingers of Vecna. The guards were not informed that Vecna wishes the party to reach his inner sanctum, so they order the party to exit the palace if none of the heroes are disguised as clerics or law enforcers (Fingers).

Present at each watch room are 1d4+1 palace guards and their commander, who is either a palace guard officer (roll 1d6: result of 1-5) or a wight (result of 6). If the commander is a wight, four elite skeletons stand at attention against the room's far wall as reinforcements, obeying only the wight's commands.

**Palace guards (1d4+1):** AC 8; MV 12; hp 10 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6.

**Palace guard officer:** AC 5; MV 12; hp 30; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8.

**Wight:** AC 5; MV 12; hp 32; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4.

**Elite skeletons (4):** AC 5; MV 12; hp 16 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6.

**Development:** Each watch room contains a horn. If combat erupts between the guards and the party, one of the humans attempts to reach the horn and sound the alarm. If an alarm goes out (audible over the entire first floor), an additional force of 2d6 palace guards and 2d6+1 elite skeletons, led by another wight, arrive on the scene in 1d4+1 rounds. They fight until destroyed or their morale breaks, at which point the survivors flee to summon more help. If a horn sounds, no other encounters on this level can be surprised by the heroes for the rest of the day. The only exception here is the watch room on the outside of the palace, on the west side; a horn sounded here attracts the attention of clerics at area 1.

**Palace guards (2d6):** AC 8; MV 12; hp 10 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6.

**Elite skeletons (1d6+1):** AC 5; MV 12; hp 16 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6.

**Wight:** AC 5; MV 12; hp 32; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4.

## 5. Meeting Halls

These multipurpose conference rooms are used for non-religious official functions involving the common citizens of Cavitius and humans stationed in the palace. (The citizens take part in religious rites at the public Temple of Vecna, located just within the gates to the citadel. This structure is detailed in *Vecna Reborn*.) Each chamber features a large mural of an outstretched skeletal hand with an eye on its palm, a dais with five chairs and a long wooden table upon it, a smaller table with three chairs, and rows of benches.

When the heroes enter one of these chambers, there is a 50% chance it is in use. The following table can be used to determine what activity is currently going on here.

### 2d6 Result

- 2-3 Vampiric rebirth ceremony: A group of 2d6+2 vampires are present to witness a newly created vampire rise from a bone coffin full of earth. (If the party previously befriended anyone in the citadel, that friend might be a good choice to be "reborn.") The assembled undead attempt to subdue the party so the new vampire can feed on one of the heroes and the rest can be used as "party favors."
- 4-6 A death knight presides over the trial of three murderers (novice mages). The killers proclaim their innocence while being held tightly in the grasp of six elite skeletons. Some 4d10 citizens (0-level) in the chamber shout out evidence and cry for the murderers' death.

The death knight proclaims the defendants guilty and sentences them to the gallows. The crowd cheers, the defendants struggle and shriek, and the elite skeletons take the guilty parties to area 1, where they are executed. If the heroes intervene, they face the combined wrath of the undead and the assembled citizens.

7 A Finger magistrate presides over a bitter family dispute conducted with much shouting and threats. His solution is to sentence everyone to the gallows, wiping out the entire dysfunctional family. The eight shocked citizens are escorted by 20 elite skeletons to area 1 and executed. If the heroes intervene, they are set upon by members of the Fingers and the undead who guard the plaza, while family members flee madly in every direction.

8-10 Here, 2d6 Memories of Vecna, with their bodyguards, meet with 1d6+2 Fingers commanders on how to deal with public unrest in Citadel Cavitius. If the heroes look or act suspiciously, everyone here prepares for combat, meaning to capture the heroes for questioning.

11 The Eye (see area 69) is lecturing on Vecna's philosophies to 2d20 acolytes of Vecna (hp 4 each). If the party enters the chamber, the Eye recognizes them instantly, having been warned by Vecna of their possible arrival. The Eye interrupts the meeting to command that the heroes be taken captive and delivered to one of the torture chambers on the third floor. The novice clergy leap up eagerly to obey, though one is quickly detailed by the Eye to summon further assistance (equal to the additional guard force described at area 4). The Eye then attempts to flee.

12 Roll on the "Special Encounters" table for a wandering encounter in the palace's hallways.

**Vampires (2d6+2):** AC 1; MV 12, fly 18 (C) or 9 (E); hp 64 each; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4.

**New vampire:** AC 1; MV 12, fly 18 (C) or 9 (E); hp 35; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4.

**Death knight:** AC 0; MV 12; hp 72; THAC0 8; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+6.

**Novice mages (3):** AC 10; MV 12; hp 4 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4; no spells.

**Elite skeletons:** AC 5; MV 12; hp 16; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6.

**Finger magistrate:** AC 5; MV 12; hp 50; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8.

**Memories of Vecna (2d6):** AC 10; MV 12; hp 35 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+1.

**Finger commanders (1d6+20):** AC 5; MV 12; hp 49 each; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8.

**Acolytes of Vecna (2d20):** AC 10; MV 12; hp 4 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4.

## 6. Dining Halls

The officers and troops charged with keeping order and security on the palace's ground level take their meals here, waited upon by downtrodden servants. They are occasionally joined by a cleric or higher ranking official who has matters to discuss with an officer, or, on rarer occasions, civilians with whom one or more of the Fingers are romantically involved.

The troops eat in shifts, so the dining halls almost always have someone in them. When the party investigates one of these rooms, the DM should roll 2d6 to determine the number and nature of the chamber's inhabitants. Servants present are apprehensive at the sight of the party, while all others are hostile unless one or more heroes are disguised as clerics or members of the Fingers. If heroes who are not properly attired do not retreat immediately upon being challenged, they are attacked by angry guards who initially attempt to subdue them so they can be used as target practice on the third floor.

| 2d6  | Result  |
|------|---|
| 2-3  | The chamber is empty.   |
| 4-5  | 2d6 servants (0-level), cleaning up after the latest batch of diners and preparing for the next group.  |
| 6    | 3d6 palace guards and 1d6 palace guard officers, dining and resting.  |
| 7    | 2d6+1 palace guards, 3d6+4 palace guard officers, and Lann, a powerful cleric of Vecna ("Great Thought"). He orders the party taken alive and delivered to one of the torture chambers. The cleric himself attempts to escape once the melee has started, planning to head for the lawful evil shrine and organize a defense there (area 49). |
| 8    | 4d6+6 palace guard officers, eating while their leaders (1d6 skeleton warriors) talk among themselves about the Burning Peaks war.  |
| 9-10 | 3d6 palace guard officers, dining with 2d6 civilian companions (0-level) and 1d4 vampires, the latter appearing to be civilians and merely talking.   |

- 11 3d6 ghouls (statistics at Getting to the Palace: By the Underground) are present, each feeding upon a newly slain victim (formerly a 0-level servant) laying on a table. The bodies of 1d6 other victims are on the floor. The ghouls entered the room through a removable sewer grating in one corner of the room, through which they will flee if attacked. The mangled victims cannot be raised from the dead.
- 12 1d6+2 vampires each feed upon a dying victim (0-level) held down on the table.

**Palace guards:** AC 8; MV 12; hp 10; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6.

**Palace guard officers:** AC 5; MV 12; hp 30; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8.

**Lann:** AC 6; MV 12; hp 52; THAC0 13 (11 vs. good beings); #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+3 (1d4+5 vs. good beings).

**Skeleton warriors (1d6):** AC 2; MV 12; hp 72 each; THAC0 8; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10.

**Vampires:** AC 1; MV 12, fly 18 (C) or 9 (E); hp 64; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4.

**Ghouls (3d6):** AC 6; MV 9; hp 16 each; THAC0 19; #AT 3; Dmg 1d3/1d3/1d6.

## 7. Barracks

These rooms are identical in appearance and serve as living quarters for the palace guards for the ground level and first floor. Each room contains six beds, a long table, and six chairs. At the end of each bed is a chest with spare uniforms, civilian clothing, and a pouch containing 3d6 gp, 2d10 sp, and 1d6 cp. Always present are 1d6+1 off-duty palace guards. There is a 10% chance that they have a visitor, typically a human citizen (0-level) who is a friend of a guard. Guards and any visitors attempt to sound an alarm if the party does not immediately retreat from the room.

For each turn spent in one of these rooms, there is a 20% chance that another guard arrives, having just come off his or her shift. This guard, too, attempts to sound an alarm at the sight of the heroes.

**Palace guards (1d6+1):** AC 8; MV 12; hp 10 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6.

## 8. Officers Quarters

These rooms all contain the same furnishings, although they also feature additional decorations or clutter that reflects the personalities of the individuals that reside here. Each room contains two beds, a table, two chairs, and a writing desk. There is a footlocker under each bed

that contains spare uniforms, civilian clothing, and a pouch with 1d4 gems valued at 1d6 × 10 gp each, 2d10 pp, 2d20 gp, and 4d6 sp. In addition, the DM should roll 2d6 on the following table for each chamber's additional contents. Each item can be found only once, after which that die roll has no result.

| 2d6  | Result   |
|------|--|
| 2    | A mace +2 and a <i>ring of contrariness</i> are stored in two separate chests.   |
| 3-4  | A palace guard officer sleeps in a bed.  |
| 5    | A <i>dagger -2, cursed</i> (as per the sword in the DMG) is driven into the table.   |
| 6-8  | Two palace guard officers do paperwork by candlelight. Each has a <i>dagger +3</i> .   |
| 9-10 | A palace guard officer and male relative (0-level) converse at the table.  |
| 11   | The chamber is strewn with human finger bones, and a dozen jawbones are piled on the table. It appears several people were using them in a game.   |
| 12   | The doorframe is hung with garlic, and a <i>bastard sword +2</i> hangs at the head of one bed. The sword transmits 1d6 points of damage by electric shock to anyone who touches it who is not lawful evil. |

**Development:** Officers question any person who invades their quarters. If the response is unsatisfactory, they call for guards to have the intruders arrested. If the heroes surrender, they are disarmed and taken to cells in one of the torture chambers. Their weapons are kept in the room where they were captured.

There is a 10% chance for each turn spent in these rooms that a new palace guard officer arrives, having come off his shift.

**Palace guard officer:** AC 5; MV 12; hp 30; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8.

## 9. Kitchens

These rooms are clean and bustle with activity. In each kitchen are ten servants (0-level), cooking food, doing dishes, or preparing meals for delivery to the dining halls or elsewhere in the palace. On a large, roaring fireplace, meat cooks on spits and pots boil as they dangle from hooks. The meat is from an unidentifiable animal (perhaps a human).

There is a 40% chance that a cook is present with a wooden spoon in one hand and a whip in the other, always ready to punish a servant who is lazy, sloppy, or appears to be stealing food. The cook is a lawful evil 2nd-level acolyte of Vecna (see below) with spells for use on spoiled meat. The cook also has a key to area 9a.

In addition to the cook, a palace guard (hp 6) lounges in each kitchen. The warrior is as likely to get whipped

for disturbing the servants or grabbing food as the servants are themselves for being slow. Both the cook and the fighter attempt to sound an alarm if intruders do not retreat from the kitchen upon being ordered to do so. The servants are too fearful to be of any help.

**Cook, male human P2 of Vecna:** AC 10; MV 12; hp 10; THAC0 20; #AT 1 (whip, 10-foot range); Dmg 1d3; SZ M (6' tall); ML average (8-10); Int high (13-14); AL LE; XP 120.

*Cleric Spells Memorized (2):* 1st—*purify food and water* (×2).

**Palace guards:** AC 8; MV 12; hp 10; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6.

## 9a. Cooks' Room and Pantry

The doors to this chamber are locked. It contains four narrow beds, a table and four chairs, and a small shrine devoted to Vecna—a golden sculpture of an outstretched skeletal hand with a lidless eye resting in its palm. The room is also crowded with chests and boxes, and it smells heavily of spices and cured meats.

The chests and boxes all contain spices, except for the small footlockers heroes can find under each bed if they look. They contain simple clothing, some notes on recipes each individual cook has devised, and 1d4 pp, 1d6 gp, 1d8 sp, and 1d10 cp.

There is a 25% chance that a cook (0-level) or palace guard is present, either sleeping, praying, or writing food orders.

**Palace guards:** AC 8; MV 12; hp 10; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6.

## 10. Servants Quarters

Eight dirty beds are in this room, with no weapons or valuables present. Clothes hang on pegs, and additional clothing can be found in boxes under each bed.

These chambers serve as the sleeping quarters for the servants. There is a 20% chance that servants of varying ages are present. Whenever the party enters one of these rooms for the first time, roll on the table below to determine who is quartered here. The servants are too terrified to offer help to the party, but they do their best to alert the guards.

| 1d6 | Result  |
|-----|---|
| 1-2 | 1d6+1 males (0-level).  |
| 3-4 | 1d8+1 females (0-level).  |
| 5   | 1d4+1 females (0-level), with 1d3 sickly infants.   |
| 6   | A single human male (0-level), comatose with festering sores all over his body. Anyone who enters this room must make a saving throw vs. poison. Those who fail the saving throw con- |

tract the same plague the servant suffers from. Diseased heroes develop sores all over their bodies two days later, losing 1 hit point per hour afterward until only 1 hit point remains. At this point, the victim slips into a coma. Death comes 1d10+2 hours later. *Cure disease* cast by a cleric of 9th level or higher cures the ailment, although the victim remains in a coma for 1d6 hours after being cured, and he or she loses 1 point of Charisma permanently due to scarring.

### 11. Waste Disposal

What appears to be a well shaft (with no surrounding wall) is at the center of this room. The shaft is engulfed in darkness 10 feet down, and not even *continual light* can dispel it. Light sources lowered into it likewise wink out.

The truth is that the well leads into an abnormally large and immobile *sphere of annihilation*. It is used to dispose of dead bodies deemed unfit for reanimation and all other waste generated within the palace. Anything or anyone a party member chooses to throw or lower into the well is destroyed forever.

Whenever the party enters this room, there is a 20% chance that 1d4 servants (0-level) are present, disposing of waste from huge buckets. None of the servants understand the nature of the well. All they know is that even the most foul-smelling waste that they throw into the well ceases to stink. Even human bodies disappear.

### 12. War Machine Construction Area

Cavitius is at war with its neighboring domain, Tovag. Their armies clash along the Burning Peaks range that separates the two nations.

Vecna directs the war in accordance with the methods he used to build his empire in Oerth's murky past. Even now, Vecna's living and undead forces go into battle accompanied by terrible engines of war powered by undead bodies and spirits mangled together in unholy ways. These engines have row upon row of skulls that scream chants of evil rituals. The magic released in these rituals mutilates the bodies of their foes, as well as the terrain around them. These engines are generators of uncontrolled, destructive magic.

Thankfully for the heroes and the citizens of Citadel Cavitius, the war machines do not become fully operational in the confines of Vecna's city, though their frameworks are constructed here. Each is a juggernaut shaped from a slab of stone, covered with hooks and depressions where bodies and skulls are mounted and enchanted once they arrive at the front. The tortured bodies and souls of captured soldiers from Tovag turn the war machines into true nightmares.

Each war machine frame is created by a small group of powerful spellcasters whose lowest level is 18th. This

potent force is not currently at Citadel Cavitius, having been sent by Vecna into the Burning Peaks to mount a special offensive against Tovag—at least, that was what Vecna told them. In truth, Vecna wanted all of his most powerful spellcasters to be out of Cavitius for two reasons: to allow Iuz to more easily invade his palace, and to prevent any of his most powerful henchmen from turning traitor on impulse (as Kas once did) or otherwise ruining Vecna's carefully laid plans. Vecna means to sacrifice his entire priesthood and all his followers to gain supremacy over this demiplane and, eventually, over the multiverse.

Only a small maintenance and protective force is present in area 12, consisting of four high-level clerics of Vecna ("Thoughts") and a high-level artificer (a wizard who specializes in creating magical objects) named Vaykan. The clerics are sickly and haggard from the taxing nature of their labors, but curative magic keeps them as healthy as can be. When his colleagues are away, the artificer spends most of his time with his wife and children elsewhere in the citadel. He usually comes to the palace a few hours every day to assist with the process of constructing the next war machine.

When the highest-level war-machine builders are in the city, they spend their time in the War Machine Construction Area, working until they collapse upon cots shoved up against the southern wall. All meals are brought to them by a single trio of servants, the only living beings permitted to disturb their work. Naturally, the golems called the Eye and the Hand, not to mention Vecna himself, can enter the hall at any time. Twelve zombies assist the spellcasters with any heavy lifting that is required.

There is a 20% chance that the artificer and clerics are sleeping when the heroes attempt to enter this room. If this is the case, the door is locked and *wizard locked* (10th level).

**Development:** If the party enters the room while the group of five is working, Vaykan flies into a rage and orders them to leave at once. He is intolerant of any disturbance, as he wants to complete work on each war machine so he can return to his family for a time. No matter what excuse the heroes offer, if they do not retreat immediately after Vaykan orders them to do so, he interrupts them by ordering the zombies to attack them. The clerics hesitate for 2 rounds, then join the fray. The artificer himself uses the few memorized spells he has that are useful in combat, then activates his *ring of invisibility* to sneak out and call every guard possible to the scene.

**Vaykan the Artificer, male human M10:** AC 8; MV 12; HD 9+1; hp 29; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (dagger); SZ M (5'9" tall); ML fanatic (18); Str 11, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 7; AL CN; XP 3,000.

*Special Equipment:* ring of invisibility.

**Special Abilities:** Vaykan is a highly skilled artist, artisan, and artificer. Given an original work of art (or detailed diagrams and descriptions of the same), as well as the proper materials, he can create an excellent forgery of any art object in 2d6+4 days. He has no moral scruples about the identity of his patron, focusing only on the quality of his work.

**Wizard Spells Memorized (4/4/3/2/2):** 1st—*magic missile*, *mending*, *unseen servant*; 2nd—*levitate*, *strength*, *spectral hand* (x2); 3rd—*wraithform*; 5th—*stone shape*. (All other spells were used.)

**Thoughts of Vecna, male humans M4/P8 of Vecna (4):** AC 10; MV 12; hp 35 each; THAC0 18; #AT 1 (*dagger +1/+2 vs. good-aligned creatures*); Dmg 1d4+1; SA command undead; SZ M (5'–6" tall); ML fanatic (17–18); Int genius (17–18); AL LE; XP 1,400 each.

**Cleric Spells Memorized (4/4/3/2):** 1st— *Bless*, *command*, *curse* (x2); 2nd—*heat metal* (x2), *hold person* (x2); 3rd—*animate dead*. (All other spells were used.)

**Wizard Spells Memorized (3/2):** 1st—*charm person*, *hold portal*, *magic missile*; 2nd—*magic mouth*, *Melf's acid arrow*.

### 13. Stairs to First Floor

The large metal doors at the bottom and top of this staircase can be (but are not now) closed and barred in order to slow any attackers who might invade the palace. The doors have not been used in a long time, and the hinges have been oiled only rarely. If a hero

tries to close them to prevent pursuit, the hero must make a successful Bend Bars/Lift Gates Strength roll in order to do so. Metal bars rest in brackets just beyond each doorway.

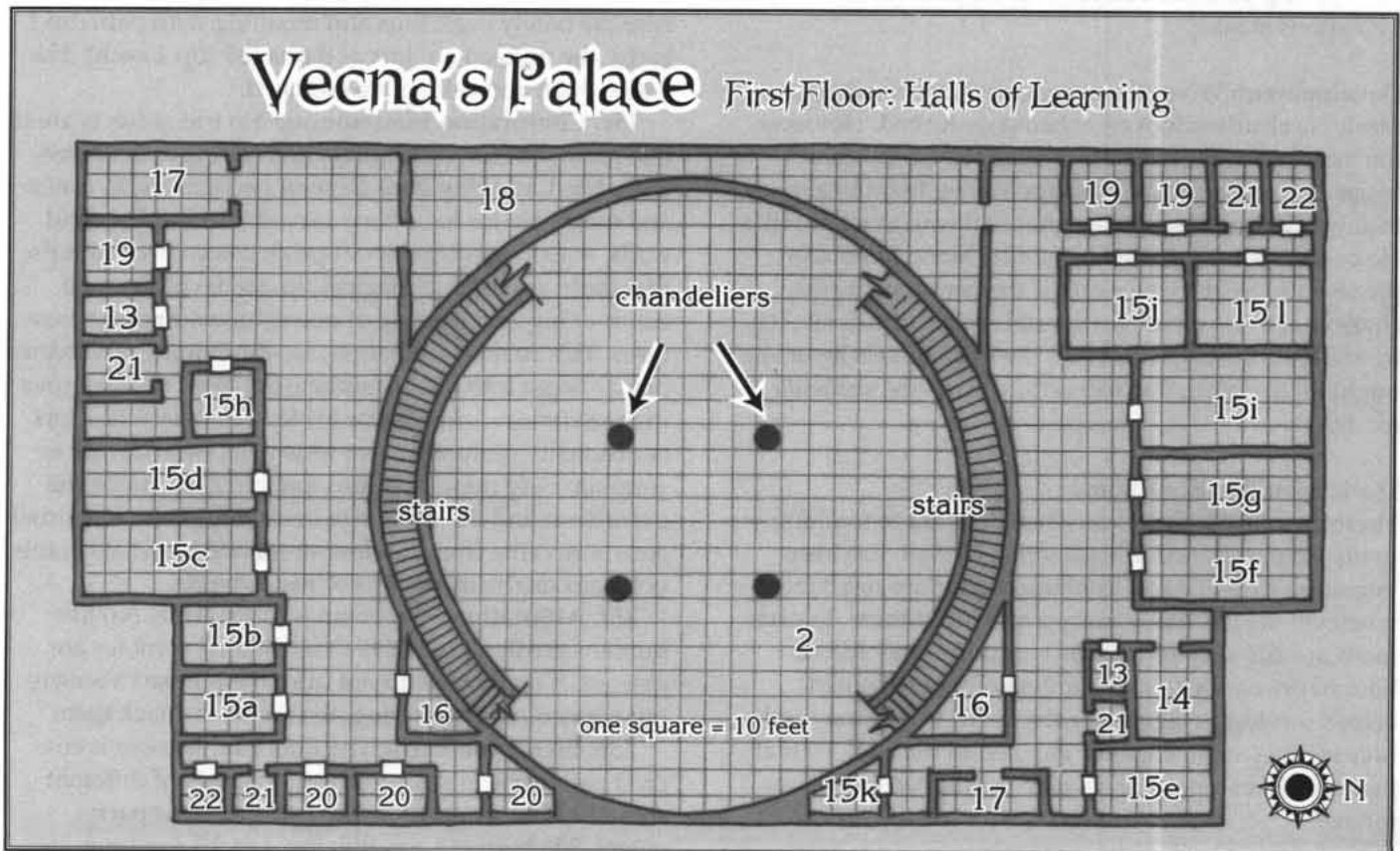
## First Floor: Halls of Learning

This level contains chambers for Vecna's troops and minions who live within his palace to practice with their weapons and for mages to practice their spells. The muffled sounds of explosions and metallic weapons clashing echo through the hallways, accompanied by ever-present screams of agony. Few of these rooms feature doors; anyone passing by can stop and view the activities within. The only closed-off parts of this level are an impressive library, several well-equipped mages' laboratories, and a few sitting rooms where spellcasters and weapons' masters rest and socialize.

### 14. Combat Practice Rooms

This chamber contains three wooden dummies covered with cuts and nicks, and racks containing clubs, staves, and wooden swords. One wall sports two well-used cloth targets. The floor is darkened in several places by dried blood.

This room is devoted to weapons training. Young humans preparing to become officers in Vecna's army, and all children of the Fingers of Vecna, are trained here by highly skilled weapons masters. Whenever the party





enters one of these chambers, the DM should roll on the table below to see who is present. The most powerful creature described is the instructor, the master of a particular weapon, and receives a +4 bonus on all attack and damage rolls with that weapon. All lower-level persons present are students armed with that weapon. (The DM can pick the weapon being taught or can roll on the table under area 24a.)

| 2d6 | Result  |
|-----|---|
| 2-3 | The room is empty.  |
| 4-6 | 2d6 recruits (0-level).<br><b>Finger commander*</b> : AC 5; MV 12; hp 50; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 or 1d4.  |
| 7-9 | <b>Wight*</b> : AC 5; MV 12; hp 32; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4.<br><b>Palace guards (2d6)</b> : AC 8; MV 12; hp 10 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6.                          |
| 10  | <b>Vampire*</b> : AC 1; MV 12, fly 18 (C) or 9 (E); hp 64; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4.<br><b>Palace guards (2d6)</b> : AC 8; MV 12; hp 10 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6. |
| 11  | <b>Skeleton warrior*</b> : AC 2; MV 12; hp 72; THAC0 8; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10.<br><b>Palace guards (2d6)</b> : AC 8; MV 12; hp 10 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6.               |
| 12  | <b>Death knight*</b> : AC 0; MV 12; hp 72; THAC0 8; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+6.<br><b>Palace guard officers (1d6+1)</b> : AC 5; MV 12; hp 30 each; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8.        |

\* Weapons master.

**Development:** When the party enters, the weapons master is clearly annoyed at being disturbed. However, the master does not instantly attack; he or she challenges the most obvious warrior among them to a duel, to show his or her students what real warriors fight like. He or she claims the duel is to "first blood," but then proceeds to fight to the death if the hero accepts the challenge, using whatever special abilities he or she has to win once the battle starts. If the master feels he or she might be defeated, the instructor calls to the students for aid.

### 15a-l. Spell Practice Rooms

These circular chambers are each devoted to teaching spells from a specific school of magic. Each has been treated so its walls and ironbound door are resistant to whatever destructive sorcery is practiced there. In each room are 2d6 skeletons, 1d6+1 zombies, and 2d6+2 human prisoners (0-level), unless otherwise noted below, serving as targets for the spells being practiced. Live victims are in cages or chained to the wall, so that they cannot escape. The specific details for each room follow.

**Skeletons:** AC 7; MV 12; hp 8; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6.

**Zombies:** AC 8; MV 6; hp 16; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8.

**15a. Elemental Air:** The room is spotless, but the live prisoners here are battered, some severely, from buffeting by various wind spells (hp 1 each). The zombies present are also battered (hp 2 each), and the skeletons have been completely smashed to bits.

**15b. Illusion:** No undead are in this chamber, but 3d6+2 additional humans (0-level) are here, all driven insane by the terrible visions they were forced to see. (The DM can use Table 9 in *Domains of Dread* to determine their insanity, or just assume that they are all homicidal and attempt to attack anything that comes within melee range of them.) Everyone in here is chained to the walls and can roam over about half a foot of space. The walls and floor here are covered with blood and debris.

**15c. Enchantment/Charm:** Present are only 2d6+1 human prisoners (0-level), but no undead. Some prisoners are insanely hateful toward Vecna's wizards, while others are slavishly devoted to a specific one. (Some suffer from the effects of multiple *charm* spells that have worn off, while others are currently under the influence of one or more spells.) The room is spotless.

**15d. Elemental Fire:** All the creatures in this room have been burned, some quite severely. The live victims here are barely conscious and moaning with pain (hp 1 each); the undead are just as damaged (hp 1 each). The walls, floor, and ceiling are scorched.

**15e. Conjunction/Summoning:** No test subjects are in this room, but the walls, floor, and ceiling are covered with dried, stinking gore. Several peculiar sigils, runes, and magic circles have been carved into the floor and walls. A successful Spellcraft proficiency check reveals that these are used in magical rituals devoted to the summoning and binding of powerful extraplanar creatures. This room is little used, as summoning any extraplanar being into the Demiplane of Dread is dangerous in the extreme. A few brave (or foolhardy) spellcasters occasionally perform minor tests here, even daring to summon very minor demons and the like just for the experience and the challenge in slaying them. The dried gore here came from careless summoners and assistants, not from sacrificial victims or test subjects.

**15f. Abjuration:** This room is fairly clean. No live humans are here, but 3d10+3 additional zombies are present. If the heroes do not utter the phrase "Vecna is our master" upon entering, the zombies attack them.

**15g. Elemental Earth:** The floor of this room is covered with earth and a variety of boulders of different sizes. No one seems to be present, but if the party enters, 3d6 battered zombies (hp 4 each) rise from the

earth to attack. No other beings, live or undead, are present.

**15h. Necromancy:** The smell of decaying bodies is strong even outside the doorway to this room. Within, 3d4 zombies (hp 8 each) shuffle about unchained, and decaying body parts lay strewn about the room as if they were the toys of some demented monster. No one is present. If the heroes enter this room, each hero is attacked by 2d6 crawling claws that were hiding among the more harmless body parts.

**Crawling claws (2d6):** AC 7; MV 9; HD ½; hp 3 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (vs. armored foes) or 1d6 (vs. unarmored foes); SD immune to *charm, sleep, hold, fear, cold, poison, paralysis, death magic, telepathic psionics, turning, holy water, and spells that control or raise dead*; SW *resurrection* causes immobility for number of turns equal to caster's level; SZ T (human hand); ML fearless (20); Int non- (0); AL N; XP 35 each.

**15i. Invocation/Evocation:** The awful smell of burnt flesh is strong outside this room. Within are the charred bodies of a dozen dead test subjects; it is impossible to tell if they were living or undead at the time they were completely burned up. The walls, ceiling, and floor are heavily charred.

**15j. Elemental Water:** No undead are in this room. The 2d6+2 human test subjects are held in various large glass containers of water. Only 1d6 have kept from drowning when the party arrives.

**15k. Divination:** Due to the dark powers that hold sway over the Demiplane of Dread, few divination spells function properly. Many mages nonetheless study the peculiar effects of attempting to cast divination spells in this room, hoping to overcome this problem. No test subjects are present.

**15l. Alteration:** There are no undead or normal prisoners in this blood-spattered room. Instead, there are 2d10+2 broken ones chained to the walls. They weep and beg the heroes to slay them. (These broken ones are actually human beings who have been permanently warped by the large amount of alteration magic that has been cast upon them.) If a hero frees a chained individual, the NPC flies into a berserk rage and attempts to kill the liberator (roll 1d6: 1-2), flees (3-4), or does nothing (5-6).

**Broken ones (2d10+2):** AC 7 (Dex bonus); MV 9; HD 3; hp 20 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1 (claws); Dmg 1d6; SD regenerates 1 hp/round; SZ M (4'-7' tall); ML unsteady (5-7); Int low (5-7); AL NE; XP 175 each.

When the heroes enter one of these rooms, the DM should roll 2d6 on the following table to see what kind of wizards are currently using the test chamber in question. (The wizards have cast most of their spells when

the heroes enter, but they should have two or three combat-worthy spells between them still. The inhabitants of the chambers treat the party as an addition to their test subjects, unless the heroes are disguised as clerics.)

| 2d6 | Result  |
|-----|---|
| 2   | The room is empty, aside from the test subjects.    |
| 3-6 | Kella Shivv (M5), with 2d6 novice mages.            |
| 7-9 | Lord Haroln, with 1d6+2 minor mages.                |
| 10  | Ylaan Tomas (vampire Nec5), with 1d6+2 minor mages. |
| 11  | Krakkat the Observant with 1d6 novice necromancers. |
| 12  | Crassius and Vellan (liches), with 1d6 war wizards. |

**Kella Shivv, female human M5:** AC 7 (Dex bonus); MV 9 (limps); hp 13; THAC0 19; #AT 1 (*dagger* +2 "Guardian"); Dmg 1d4+2 (dagger); SZ M (5'5" tall); ML unsteady (7); Str 7, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 17, Wis 14, Cha 12; AL NE; XP 650.

*Special Equipment:* *dagger* +2 (called Guardian), with the power to protect the wielder from six energy drains/day.

*Wizard Spells Memorized (4/2/1):* 1st—*chill touch, shield, magic missile, shocking grasp*; 2nd—*blindness, spectral hand*; 3rd—*hold undead*.

*Notes:* Kella's right leg was broken and badly set years ago. She walks with a pronounced limp. She often trains novice mages in spellcasting.

**Novice mages (2d6):** AC 10; MV 12; hp 4 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4.

**Lord Haroln:** AC -2; MV 12, fly 18 (C) or 9 (E); hp 66, THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4.

Unless he was destroyed earlier in this adventure, Lord Haroln pays a rare visit to the palace. He tells the party that he is here to ask questions about a missing girl, "Innova." If "Innova" is in the company of the party, he takes her with him when he departs, promising to return her to her family. (He means to slay the girl, but the lich possessing the girl's body will warn him off before that happens, so that Lord Haroln will merely release her.) The minor mages are his assistants and obey his commands without question. If Lord Haroln cannot reappear here for some reason, the DM should replace him with a vampire of similar ability (same XP value), but with 50 hp, a *ring of spell turning*, and a *rod of smiting* that transmits the vampire's life-draining touch through it, so it can drain two levels with each strike of the rod.

**Minor mages (1d6+2):** AC 10; MV 12; hp 8 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4.

**Ylaan Tomas, vampire Nec5:** AC 1; MV 12, fly 18 (C) or 9 (E); HD 8+3; hp 33; THAC0 11 (Str bonus); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4 (Str bonus); SA energy drain (two levels), gaze can *charm* (-2 penalty to saving throw), *shapechange* to bat or wolf, *spider climb* at will, slain victims turn into vampires; SD +1 or better weapon to hit, *regenerate* 3 hp/round, immune to *charm*, *sleep*, *hold*, *fear*, poison, paralyzation, death magic, and telepathic psionics, cold and electricity inflict half damage, can assume gaseous form at will; SW can be turned, vulnerable to sunlight, wooden stakes, and running water, holy water inflicts 1d6+1 hp per vial; SZ M (5'6" tall); ML champion (16); Int exceptional (16); AL CE; XP 11,000.

*Special Equipment:* dust of sneezing and choking, pale lavender ioun stone (can absorb up to 30 levels of 4th level or lower spells).

*Wizard Spells Memorized (5/3/2):* 1st—*chill touch* (x2), *magic missile* (x2), *shocking grasp*; 2nd—*blindness*, *mirror image*, *spectral hand*; 3rd—*dispel magic* (x2).

*Notes:* Ylaan is one of Vecna's more reliable vampires, a teacher who prefers to work only with low-level mages or necromancers.

**Krakkat the Observant:** AC -4; MV 6; hp 72; THAC0 9; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10.

**Novice necromancers (1d6):** AC 10; MV 12; hp 4 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4.

**Crassius and Vellan, lichs M18 (2):** AC -2 (*cloak of protection* +2); MV 6; HD 18; hp 69, 67; THAC0 9; #AT 1 (*freezing touch* or *dagger of venom*); Dmg 1d10 or 1d4; SA touch causes saving throw vs. paralysis (permanent duration); SD hit only by +1 or better weapons or monsters with 6+ HD, cannot be mind-read on this demiplane, *fear* aura causes anyone with 5 HD or less to flee for 5d4 rounds, high Intelligence grants immunity to low-level Illusion/Phantasm spells, immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, cold, poison, paralysis, death magic, electricity, *enfeeblement*, *polymorph*, insanity, and telepathic psionics; SW can be turned, vulnerable if phylactery is located; SZ M (6' tall); ML fanatic (17-18); Int supragenius (20); AL CE; XP 9,000 each.

*Special Equipment:* wand of fire.

*Wizard Spells Memorized (5/5/5/5/5/3/3/2/1):* 1st—*burning hands*, *charm person*, *magic missile* (x3); 2nd—*blur*, *darkness 15' radius*, *detect invisibility*, *stinking cloud*, *mirror image*; 3rd—*dispel magic* (x2), *fireball*, *hold person* (x2); 4th—*ice storm* (x2), *improved invisibility*, *polymorph other* (x2); 5th—*cloudkill*, *demi-shadow monsters*, *feeblemind*, *summon shadow*, *wall of force*; 6th—*death fog*, *flesh to stone*, *globe of invulnerability*; 7th—*finger of death*, *reverse gravity*,

*spell turning*; 8th—*power word blind*, *prismatic wall*; 9th—*wish*.

*Notes:* Crassius and Vellan were twin brothers and archmages who worked for Vecna at the height of his empire, but were cast into Citadel Cavitius for various perceived deficiencies. They changed into lichs in time and still serve Vecna as mage teachers. They have identical possessions and spells. If one is destroyed, the other uses *wish* to bring the destroyed brother to unlife again, at full strength.

**War wizards (1d6):** AC 9; MV 12; hp 40 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10.

## 16. Spell Research Areas

These chambers contain shelves with texts on esoteric spell interactions and obscure magical theories, a workbench with three stools, and one of the finest collection of spell research aids the heroes have ever seen, including two measured samples of every spell component required to cast every spell in the *Player's Handbook*, neatly sorted in what appears to be a knickknack shelf.

When the party enters one of these chambers, the DM should roll 2d6 and compare the result to the following table to see who (if anyone) is present. If the chamber is empty, the DM should check the table again for every turn the party spends here to see if anyone arrives unexpectedly.

| 2d6 | Result  |
|-----|---|
| 2-3 | Empty   |
| 4-6 | Researcher                                      |
| 7-9 | Advanced wight mage                             |
| 10  | Lord Haroln                                     |
| 11  | Gundarc the Bald                                |
| 12  | Gundarc the Bald, assisted by 1d6+2 wight mages |

**Researcher, male or female human M9:** AC 8 (Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 30; THAC0 17; #AT 1 (*dagger* +1); Dmg 1d4+1; SZ M (5'-6' tall); ML steady (11-12); Int genius (17-18); AL NE; XP 3,000.

*Special Equipment:* Boccob's blessed book, wand of magic missiles.

*Wizard Spells Memorized (4/3/3/2/1):* 1st—*charm person*, *detect magic*, *magic missile* (x2); 2nd—*bind*, *irritation*, *stinking cloud*; 3rd—*hold person*, *slow*, *vampiric touch*; 4th—*contagion*, *ice storm*; 5th—*summon shadow*.

**Wight mage (advanced), M5:** AC 5; MV 12; HD 4+3; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4; SA energy drain (one life level per touch), slain victims turn into wights; SD cannot be mind-read, hit only by silver or +1 or better magical weapons, immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, *fear*, cold, poison, paralysis, death magic, and telepathic psionics; SW can be turned, holy water does 2d4 points

of damage per vial, *raise dead* destroys wight instantly, avoids bright light; SZ M (5'11" tall); ML fearless (19); Int genius (18); AL LE; XP 4,000.

Wizard Spells Memorized (4/2/1): 1st—*shield, magic missile* (×2), *shocking grasp*; 2nd—*mirror image, spectral hand*; 3rd—*dispel magic*.

Notes: This twisted soul has devoted himself to carrying out Vecna's will for all eternity. He serves as an assistant to powerful undead and living spellcasters, and as an instructor to other wight mages who are mastering the magical arts in their undead state.

**Lord Haroln:** AC -2; MV 12, fly 18 (C) or 9 (E); hp 66, THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4.

If not slain in previous encounters, Lord Haroln, leader of Vecna's enforcers, is investigating some problems he's having with his *wand of lightning* (which now uses up two charges instead of one when activated). If "Innova" is mentioned or in the company of the party, he promises to make sure she is returned to her parents (see area 15). His reaction to the heroes' appearance here depends on their previous dealings. If Haroln cannot reappear here for some reason, the DM should replace him with a normal vampire (hp 33) with no spells, on an errand to pick up some papers on spellcraft for an undead lord.

**Gundarc the Bald, lich M18:** AC -2 (*cloak of the bat*); MV 6; HD 18; hp 72; THAC0 9; #AT 1 (*freezing touch*); Dmg 1d10; SA touch causes saving throw vs. paralysis (permanent duration); SD hit only by +1 or better weapons or monsters with 6+ HD, cannot be mind-read on this demiplane, *fear* aura causes anyone with 5 HD or less to flee for 5d4 rounds, high Intelligence grants immunity to low-level Illusion/Phantasm spells, immune to *sleep, charm, hold, cold, poison, paralysis, death magic, electricity, enfeeblement, polymorph, insanity*, and telepathic psionics; SW can be turned, vulnerable if phylactery is located; SZ M (6' tall); ML fanatic (18); Int genius (18); AL NE; XP 9,000.

Special Equipment: *staff of power* (20 charges), *wand of frost* (44 charges).

Wizard Spells Memorized (5/5/5/5/5/3/3/2/1): 1st—*charm person* (×2), *magic missile* (×3); 2nd—*darkness 15' radius, ESP, knock, Melf's acid arrow, mirror image*; 3rd—*clairaudience, dispel magic, fireball, hold person* (×2); 4th—*confusion, enervation* (×2), *improved invisibility, stonewall*; 5th—*cloudkill, feeblemind* (×2), *summon shadow, wall of force*; 6th—*death fog, death spell* (×2); 7th—*finger of death, reverse gravity, teleport without error*; 8th—*Bigby's clenched fist, Otto's irresistible dance*; 9th—*temporal stasis*.

Notes: Gundarc is another of Vecna's relatively loyal liches. He associates only with undead mages, hating all living ones with a passion. He has the permanent ability to comprehend languages.

**Wight mages (1d6+2):** AC 5; MV 12; hp 25 each; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4.

Two wight mages have the following spells: 1st—*magic missile* (×2); 2nd—*blindness*. Each of the rest of the group has these spells: 1st—*charm person, shield*; 2nd—*invisibility*. One random wight mage has a *wand of polymorphing* (12 charges) and will use it at first opportunity (XP is 3,000 for this wight).

**Development:** Whether interrupted by the heroes while working, or arriving to find the heroes present, the arriving spellcaster is annoyed at their presence. The spellcaster states that the room is reserved for work on a very complicated spell. If the party retreats or expresses interest in the spellcaster's work, the spellcaster's attitude improves slightly. (The spell is a combination of *Melf's acid arrow* and *programmed illusion*, or some other curious spell of 4th or 5th level.)

The spellcasters working in this chamber do not initiate hostile action unless the party attacks first. Further, until reduced to one-half total hit points, the NPCs do not use lethal spells against the party, relying instead on *hold person* or *charm* effects to subdue them. (Level draining is considered "nonlethal" by any wights present.) Servants then bring the heroes to area 17.

Any battle in or near this room attracts the attention of 1d4+2 palace guards, 2d6 zombies, and 1d4+1 wights, who arrive in 1d4 rounds. Stigel, a vampire who is also a 10th-level mage, arrives on the following round. (Stigel was looking for Lord Haroln.)

**Palace guards (1d4+2):** AC 8; MV 12; hp 10 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6.

**Zombies (2d6):** AC 8; MV 6; hp 16 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8.

**Wight:** AC 5; MV 12; hp 32; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4.

**Stigel, vampire M10:** AC 1; MV 12, fly 18 (C) or 9 (E); HD 8+3; hp 50; THAC0 11 (Str bonus); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4 (Str bonus); SA energy drain (two levels), gaze can *charm* (-2 penalty to saving throw), *shapechange* to bat or wolf, *spider climb* at will, slain victims turn into vampires; SD +1 or better weapon to hit, *regenerate* 3 hp/round, immune to *charm, sleep, hold, fear, poison, paralyzation, death magic, and telepathic psionics*, cold and electricity inflict half damage, can assume gaseous form at will; SW can be turned, vulnerable to sunlight, wooden stakes, and running water, holy water inflicts 1d6+1 hp per vial; SZ M (6'4" tall); ML champion (16); Int exceptional (16); AL CE; XP 11,000.

*Wizard Spells Memorized (4/4/3/3/2): 1st—burning hands, magic missile (×2), phantasmal force; 2nd—irritation, Melf's acid arrow (×2), mirror image; 3rd—blink, dispel magic, spectral force; 4th—enervation, ice storm, phantasmal killer; 5th—cloudkill, Bigby's interposing hand.*

*Notes:* This vampire received a *stoneskin* spell earlier from a helpful lich. The first eleven melee attacks against him have no effect.

### 17. Torture Chambers

Screams of pain and terror echoing from within these rooms can be heard everywhere on this level. These rooms are filled with terrible implements of torture that range from hot irons to bizarre contraptions resulting from centuries of studying human suffering and learning the most efficient ways to inflict pain without killing the victim. Those who are brought here are considered to be particularly noxious "criminals" who must be made to suffer before their final punishment is administered. In Vecna's domain, torture is never used to extract information from prisoners, as the Whispered One knows all secrets.

The back of the room is lined with four cages, each of which contain 2d4 individuals who have been subjected to varying degrees of torture. Most of these are citizens (0-level) of the city, although the DM can place captured minions of Iuz here, or perhaps even old friends of the party who were recently taken prisoner. Half of these persons are now insane and attack anyone who approaches or addresses them.

Four undead torturers are present in these rooms at all times. Known as inquisitors, these horrid servants of Vecna are horrid, rotting terrors whose clawed hands are charred from decades of handling red-hot torture implements. These monstrous creatures consider the infliction of pain upon the living as the highest form of art.

**Development:** Whenever the party enters a torture chamber, 1d4 inquisitors are present, practicing their art while the rest prepare the equipment for another victim or build new, innovative devices to assist their work. The inquisitors attack anyone who disturbs their work who is not a fellow undead or a cleric of Vecna. (The undead are not fooled by disguises, as they can sense who is a devoted follower of their undead lord and who is not.)

In addition to the inquisitors, there is a 40% chance that 1d6+1 palace guards are present to study the torture techniques of these undead horrors.

Members of the party who are captured might be brought here and locked in the cages. Their gear is placed on a nearby bench. The heroes then have 1d4+1 hours to concoct an escape plan; otherwise one of them is chosen for torture. Anyone who is tortured here loses half of his or her hit points and must make a successful saving throw vs. paralyzation or be driven

insane for 1d4 weeks. During this period, the victim suffers from a homicidal mania that makes him or her unable to tell friends from enemies, or recognize familiar places or situations. The scarred character also permanently loses one point of Charisma, which can be restored only by magical means, such a *heal* spell cast for this purpose.

**Inquisitors (4):** AC 4; MV 9; HD 6; hp 46, 39, 29 (×2); THAC0 15; #AT 2; Dmg 1d6/1d4 (claws/whip); SA *fear, paralysis gaze, disease*; SD cannot be mind-read on this demiplane, immune to all Illusion/Phantasm spells and to all mind-affecting magic (as if possessing Int 25 and Wis 25, as per Tables 4 and 5 in the *Player's Handbook*); SW loses 1 hit point/year it cannot harm anyone; SZ M (6' tall); ML fanatic (17–18); Int high (13–14); AL LE; XP 3,000 each.

*Notes:* The appearance of inquisitors is so terrible that when a hero first views one, he or she must make a successful saving throw vs. paralyzation or flee for 1d6 rounds (substitute a fear check if using the rules in *Domains of Dread*). If a hero meets the gaze of an inquisitor, that hero must make a successful saving throw vs. paralyzation or be paralyzed for 1d4 turns. Success means that the hero is immune to the gaze of an inquisitor thereafter. Anyone struck by an inquisitor's talons must make a successful saving throw vs. poison or contract a wasting disease. The disease reduces the hero's Strength and Constitution by 1 point each for every day that passes until the disease is cured. If either score reaches zero, the victim dies. Only a *cure disease* can rid the victim of this illness. The Strength and Constitution points return at the rate of 1 point each per day.

**Palace guards (1d6+1):** AC 8; MV 12; hp 10 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6.

### 18. The Library

This vast room is full of shelves that are packed tightly with books on every subject imaginable. Most of the books here are written in ancient tongues long forgotten on Oerth's Flanaess, in obscure languages that are now only the purview of scholars, or in a cant used only in religious incantations. Tables and chairs stand between the bookshelves, and here and there are even a few well-lit areas, so the living as well as the dead can comfortably study the texts. Many of these texts are magical in nature, and any type of magical text the DM cares to introduce into the campaign can be located here, if the heroes spend enough time searching.

When the party enters this room, a single lich is present, studying a pile of yellowed notes at a table. Although the lich immediately notes the presence of the heroes, it takes no action unless threatened. The lich is even helpful if a hero asks about a book of a cer-

tain type, pointing to the proper shelf. (The lich believes that unwelcome invaders of Vecna's palace would never bother to investigate a library.) It never gives its name.

At the center of the room is a series of writing desks. A dozen scribes dressed in black, hooded robes are seated at them, diligently and tirelessly copying manuscripts. They do not acknowledge anyone who might address them, because the scribes are undead, a specialized kind of zombie that does nothing but copy texts that are placed in front of it.

In life, these scribes served Vecna's church on Oerth, copying fragments of texts relating to his life and deeds. Once they passed from life, their bodies were drawn to Vecna's palace where they could continue the work they had started in life. Now they copy ancient histories from long-forgotten kingdoms that were crushed by Vecna's troops. Some histories include details on the life story of Vecna himself. Vecna intends to have copies of these books present in every temple devoted to him, believing that they contain the blueprint for his minions to follow when it comes to dominating Oerth and other worlds in the future as they did in the distant past. If the other domains of this demiplane survive Vecna's liberation from his prison, he intends to establish his church as the dominant one in all of them.

**Development:** The scribes are even more devoted to their task in death than they were in life. If anyone but a true cleric of Vecna disturbs threatens their efforts in any way (such as touching the inks, their quills, or any of the pages in front of any one of them), they all let out screams of mindless rage and move to attack the offender and any living being within 10 feet of the target. So devoted are the undead scribes to their task that they cannot be turned or controlled.

The cries of the scribes attract the attention of the solitary lich currently using the library. It walks over to investigate and joins the zombies in their attack, using its staff. The lich offers the heroes a chance to surrender once all the zombies have been destroyed, unless the party uses fiery attacks at any point during the battle. In the latter case, the lich attacks to slay all heroes, as it is appalled at the disregard shown for the treasure trove of knowledge the library holds. If the heroes surrender, they are given over to the Hand, who arrives 2d4 rounds after their surrender. He then makes the offer described under the special encounter titled "The Hand Moving."

**"The Unnamed," lich M20:** AC 0; MV 6; HD 20; hp 67; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10 or 1d6+3 (*staff of striking*); SA spells, touch causes saving throw vs. paralysis (permanent duration); SD spells, hit only by +1 or better weapons or monsters with 6+ HD, cannot be mind-read on this demiplane, *fear* aura causes

anyone with 5 HD or less to flee for 5d4 rounds, high Intelligence grants immunity to low-level Illusion/Phantasm spells, immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, *cold*, *poison*, *paralysis*, *death magic*, *electricity*, *enfeeblement*, *polymorph*, *insanity*, and telepathic psionics; SW can be turned, vulnerable if phylactery is located; SZ M (6' tall); ML fanatic (17-18); Int supra-genius (19); AL CE; XP 9,000.

**Special Equipment:** *staff of striking* that also causes victims struck to make a saving throw vs. paralyzation at -4 penalty or be paralyzed for 4d4 rounds.

**Wizard Spells Memorized (5/5/5/5/5/4/3/3/2):** 1st—*affect normal fires*, *charm person* (x2), *magic missile* (x2); 2nd—*blur*, *mirror image* (x2), *web* (x2); 3rd—*blink*, *dispel magic* (x2), *hold person* (x2); 4th—*dimension door*, *energization*, *improved invisibility*, *minor globe of invulnerability*, *polymorph other*; 5th—*chaos*, *feeblemind* (x2), *summon shadow*, *wall of force*; 6th—*anti-magic shell*, *death spell* (x2), *mass suggestion*; 7th—*finger of death*, *prismatic spray*, *spell turning*; 8th—*mass charm*, *maze*, *power word blind*; 9th—*energy drain*, *power word kill*.

**Notes:** "The Unnamed" never leaves area 18.

**Undead scribes (12):** AC 8; MV 6; HD 2; hp 9 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; SD cannot be turned or controlled, immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, *fear*, *cold*, *poison*, *paralysis*, *death magic*, and telepathic psionics; SW holy water inflicts 2d4 points of damage; SZ M (5'6"-6' tall); ML fearless (20); Int non- (0); AL N; XP 120 each.



## 19. Alchemical Laboratories

These chambers smell so strongly of chemicals that the heroes can detect the scent in the hallway outside, despite the closed heavy wooden doors that keep passersby from disturbing those working within. The doors to these chambers are locked, whether they are inhabited or not.

Within is one of the finest alchemical stills the party has ever seen, an elaborate tangle of golden tubes, vials, and spigots. The room also contains a virtual treasure trove of components needed to brew potions, allowing anyone skilled in the art of alchemy to brew 1d4+1 doses of any potion desired.

Further, each room has a rack of potion vials containing 2d4 *potions of healing*, 2d4 *potions of heroism*, 1d4 *potions of undead control*, 2d4 *elixirs of madness*, and 1d4 *potions of poison*, along with an additional 1d6 potions as determined by checking Table 89 in the DMG. While none of the potion vials are labeled, each has a distinctive shape to allow mages working here to tell them apart.

**Development:** When the heroes first enter one of these rooms, the DM should roll 2d6 and compare the result to the following table. The indicated beings working within are ready for potential combat once the heroes enter, having heard them at the door.

All beings working in these rooms are very annoyed if interrupted. If the heroes do not offer a good explanation for why they have entered, the short-tempered NPCs either attack (roll 1d6: 1–2), insist they leave immediately or else be killed (3–4), or storm out of the room to lodge a complaint with a superior (5–6). (The exception is Gundarc, who always attacks if disturbed by humans.) If the party is haughty, confrontational, or disrespectful, the NPCs attack. An alchemist who leaves to find a superior returns 1d10+5 rounds later with an NPC from area 24 (the DM can choose which one), accompanied by 2d6 palace guards (hp 6 each).

| 2d6   | Result  |
|-------|---|
| 2–4   | Empty.  |
| 5–6   | Gwier the Alchemist.  |
| 7–9   | Memory of Vecna.  |
| 10–11 | Lord Haroln.  |
| 12    | Gundarc the Bald and 1d6+1 wight mages (M3), exactly as described at area 16. |

**Gwier the Alchemist, female human M9:** AC 8 (Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 35; THAC0 14; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+4 (*dagger* +3, Str bonus); SZ M (4'11" tall); ML steady (11); Str 17, Dex 16, Con 17, Int 17, Wis 18, Cha 13; AL NE; XP 4,000.

*Special Equipment:* alchemy jug, oil of fiery burning (×3).

*Wizard Spells Memorized (4/3/3/2/1):* 1st—*affect normal fires, color spray, detect magic, magic missile*; 2nd—*bind, irritation, stinking cloud*; 3rd—*hold person, slow, vam-*

*piric touch*; 4th—*contagion, emotion*; 5th—*transmute rock to mud*.

*Notes:* Though short, Gwier is one of the most physically fit mages in Cavitius. She displays no emotions, operating in a very logical fashion.

**Memory of Vecna:** AC 5; MV 12; hp 24; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+1.

**Lord Haroln:** AC –2; MV 12, fly 18 (C) or 9 (E); hp 66, THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4.

Lord Haroln, leader of Vecna's enforcers, is waiting here to meet with another of Vecna's servants. His reaction to the party is based in part on previous interactions. He claims that he is working on tracking down a missing girl, "Innova," stating that he hopes the mage he is waiting for has some answers. (Haroln is actually waiting to collect a large gambling debt owed to him by one of the 9th-level mages who work here.)

If "Innova" is still with the party, he takes her into custody and insists that the party leave matters to him (see area 15). He summons guards if the party makes any threats or tries to hinder him in any way. If Haroln cannot reappear here for some reason, the DM should replace him with a vampire of similar ability.

**Krakkat the Observant:** AC –4; MV 6; hp 72; THAC0 9; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10.

If not previously destroyed, Krakkat is here teaching alchemy to his students. His reaction to the party depends in part on how the previous encounter played out. If he is already destroyed, the DM should simply change the name and sex of the lich and give her AC 0 and a *staff of withering*.

## 20. Sitting Rooms

These are comfortably appointed chambers, featuring several richly upholstered chairs and sofas strewn with soft pillows. At the center of each room stands a table with a wine bottle and six crystal glasses on a tray. The rooms are decorated mostly in blacks and reds and, like many other rooms on this level, are lit slightly better than most places in the palace.

There are always two servants (0-level) present, ready to provide massages, musical entertainment, and anything else to help the officers and mages unwind. (Unfortunately for the servants, this sometimes means severe abuse or death.)

When the party enters one of these rooms, the DM should roll 2d6 and compare the result to the following table to see who is present.

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| <b>2d6</b> | <b>Result</b>  |
| 2–6        | Enna and Craaven.  |
| 7–9        | Army general.  |
| 10         | Vampire.   |
| 11         | “Nine.”  |
| 12         | Roll on the table under Combat Practice Rooms (area 14). |

**Enna, Finger commander, female human F5:** AC 6 (Dex bonus, holy symbol); MV 12; hp 36; THAC0 15 (*dagger* +1) or 13 (second *dagger* +1); #AT 1 (*dagger* +1; *melee*) or 2 (*dagger* +1; *missile*); Dmg 1d4+1; SZ M (5'7" tall); ML champion (16); Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 15, Str 15, Dex 18, Con 14; AL LE; XP 420.

**Craaven, male human M2/P3 of Vecna:** AC 8 (*holy symbol of Vecna*); MV 12; hp 19; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d2 (*fists*); SZ M (6'1" tall); ML elite (14); Int 12, Wis 17, Cha 15, Str 15, Dex 11, Con 16; AL LE; XP 175.

*Special Equipment:* *holy symbol of Vecna* that functions as *ring of protection* +2.

*Cleric Spells Memorized:* (4/3): 1st—*cause light wounds* (×2), *cure light wounds* (×2); 2nd—*charm person or mammal*, *hold person* (×2).

*Wizard Spells Memorized* (2): 1st—*magic missile* (×2).

*Notes:* Enna and Craaven have been lovers for almost two years, far longer than most other relationships in Cavitius. They are devoted to one another, perhaps even more than they are to Vecna. One always surrenders if the other is in danger, hoping to trade his or her life for the other. They will not betray their lord, however, beyond giving the party directions to other places in the palace or city (which would not be much of a betrayal). If one is slain but the other lives, the survivor will do anything to kill everyone responsible.

**Vampire:** AC 1; MV 12, fly 18 (C) or 9 (E); hp 64; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4.

**Army general, male or female human F13:** AC 7 (*ring of protection* +3); MV 12; hp 78; THAC0 5 (*bastard sword* +2, Str bonus); #AT 2; Dmg 2d4+1 (*bastard sword* +2 *nine-lives stealer*, Str bonus); SZ M (6' tall); ML elite (14); Str 17, Dex 10, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 15; AL LE; XP 6,000.

*Special Equipment:* *necklace of missiles*.

*Notes:* The general is grateful to be away from the horrors of fighting in the Burning Peaks, and he or she is looking forward to a long massage. The general will be found in the company of four servants (0-level) of the opposite sex, making small talk and preparing to wash off the grime from the long journey to Cavitius. The sword is hidden under a robe on a table; the other magic items are always worn.

**Nine:** AC -2; MV 6; hp 65; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10 or 1d6+3.

**Development:** The indicated NPCs are usually friendly and outgoing, and, unless the party enters with weapons drawn, invite them to join them for a drink and some pleasant conversation. If the party is not disguised as clerics or others in Vecna's service, however, part of the conversation involves attempts to determine what they are doing here. The encounter can turn violent unless the heroes mention that they wish to stop Iuz.

## 21. Watch Rooms

These chambers serve as duty stations for the living and undead soldiers charged with reestablishing order if any of the off duty troops or students get too rambunctious or start fighting with one another. The guards challenge any persons they notice passing their post, with the exception of those dressed in the robes of clerics or tabards of the Fingers. The guards order the party to exit the palace if none of them are disguised as a cleric or law enforcer.

There are 1d4+1 palace guards and their commander, who is either a palace guard officer (roll 1d6: 1–2) or a wight (3–6) present in the room. If the commander is a wight, four ju-ju zombies stand at attention against the room's far wall, responding to the wight's orders.

Each watch room contains a horn. If combat erupts between the guards and the party, one of them attempts to reach the horn and sound the alarm. If this is successful, 2d6 palace guards and a palace guard officer arrive within 1d3 rounds, and 1d6+1 zombies and a powerful wight arrive the round following. Further, warriors and spellcasters from nearby rooms hear the sounds of battle and emerge to join the fray in 1d4+4 rounds; the DM should take a quick accounting of the possibilities and prepare for a potentially large melee.

**Palace guards:** AC 8; MV 12; hp 10; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6.

**Palace guard officer:** AC 5; MV 12; hp 30; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8.

**Wight:** AC 5; MV 12; hp 32; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4.

**Zombies:** AC 8; MV 6; hp 16; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8.

**Ju-ju zombie:** AC 6; MV 9; hp 36; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 3d4.



## 22. Stairs to Second Floor

Large metal doors at the bottom and top of this staircase can be closed and barred in order to slow any attackers who might invade the palace. The doors have not been used in a long time and the hinges have rarely been oiled. If heroes try to close them to prevent pursuit, they must make successful Bend Bars/Lift Gates rolls to do so. Metal bars rest in brackets just beyond each doorway so they can be barred.

## Second Floor: Barracks

Many of Vecna's elite officers, troops, and spellcasters are quartered here, be they living or undead. Since day and night have no meaning in Cavitius, there is a 50% chance that the inhabitants of a room are present, unless it is specifically labeled as uninhabited. Many of Vecna's elite troops are at the front, executing his war against the hated Kas. Few clerics are quartered on this level.

### 23. Troop Barracks

These rooms are identical in appearance, serving as quarters for the human and undead warriors charged with the defense of the palace, should it come under attack. The live soldiers here are all veterans of horrible battles waged in the mountains between Cavitius and Tovag.

Each chamber contains twenty-six beds and pegs upon which inhabitants can hang clothing and weapons belts. Several small tables with two chairs each are also here.

If the barracks are occupied, a chest at the end of each bed contains spare uniforms, civilian clothing, and a pouch containing 3d6 gp, 2d10 sp, and 1d6 cp. Always present are 1d10+1 inhabitants (see later), repairing equipment or resting. If the party is not disguised in guard uniforms or clerical vestments, the soldiers harass the party. Eventually, they draw weapons and attack.

Uninhabited or undead-inhabited barracks feature empty chests, with a fine coat of dust and ash on everything. Undead do not use the stripped bunks, only standing next to them at attention.

For each turn spent in one of these rooms, there is a 20% that an additional 1d4 warriors arrive, having just completed training or patrols. They attack the heroes on sight, unless the heroes are disguised in uniforms or priestly vestments.

To determine the nature of the warriors inhabiting a particular barracks, roll 2d6 and check the following table for 1d10+1 occupants.

| 2d6 | Result  |
|-----|---|
| 2-7 | <b>Palace guards:</b> AC 8; MV 12; hp 10; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6. |

|      |  |
|------|--|
| 7-10 | <b>Zombies:</b> AC 8; MV 6; hp 16; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8.               |
| 11   | <b>Palace guard officer:</b> AC 5; MV 12; hp 30; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8. |
| 12   | <b>Skeletons (20):</b> AC 7; MV 12; hp 6 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6.   |

### 24. Officer's Quarters

These rooms all contain the same furnishings, although they also feature additional decorations or clutter that reflects the personalities of the individuals that reside here. Each room contains a bed, a table, two chairs, and a writing desk. (The undead use the beds as extra tables.) A footlocker under the bed contains spare uniforms, civilian clothing, and pouches with 1d4 gems valued at 100 × 1d6 gp each, 2d10 pp, 2d100 gp, and 4d20 sp.

To determine the nature of the officer residing in a particular room, roll 2d6 and compare the result to the following table. The officer is present (resting, reading, writing, or fixing weapons or a uniform) only on a 25% chance when the heroes first enter a room.

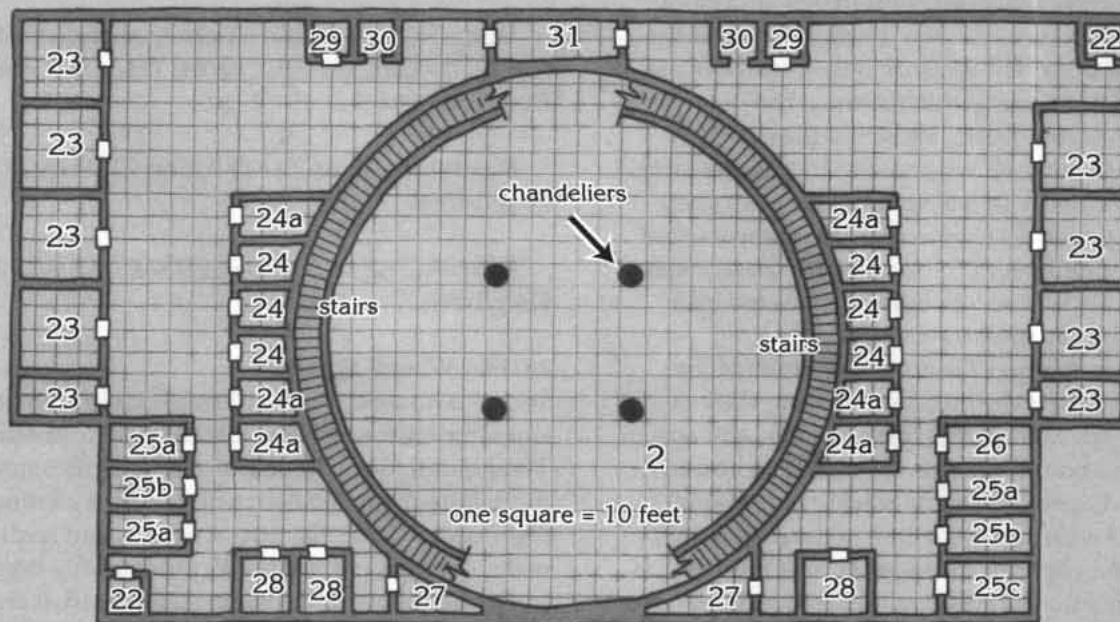
| 2d6 | Result   |
|-----|--|
| 2-6 | <b>Palace guard officer:</b> AC 5; MV 12; hp 30; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8.           |
| 7-9 | <b>Wight:</b> AC 5; MV 12; hp 32; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4.                          |
| 10  | <b>Vampire:</b> AC 1; MV 12, fly 18 (C) or 9 (E); hp 64; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4. |
| 11  | <b>Skeleton warrior:</b> AC 2; MV 12; hp 72; THAC0 8; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10.               |
| 12  | <b>Death knight:</b> AC 0; MV 12; hp 72; THAC0 8; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+6.                  |

In addition, each chamber has a 50% chance to contain one item from the following table. (Results can be varied and expanded to prevent repetition.) Dungeon Masters should not roll on the following chart if an officer was present on the previous one.

| 2d6  | Result  |
|------|---|
| 2    | A <i>longsword</i> +2 is on the bed.  |
| 3-4  | An army captain sleeps or reads papers here.  |
| 5    | A bowl containing a <i>Murlynd's spoon</i> is on the table.   |
| 6-8  | An army general does military paperwork by candlelight.   |
| 9-10 | A visiting Finger commander and a male relative (0-level) play a card game, waiting for their friend to return from duty. |
| 11   | The chamber is strewn with finger bones, and a dozen jawbones are piled on the table.                                     |
| 12   | The door frame is hung with garlic, and a <i>short sword</i> +2, <i>cursed berserking</i> hangs at the head of the bed.   |

# Vecna's Palace

Second Floor: Barracks



**Army captain, male or female human F3/M5:** AC 10; MV 12; hp 29; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (longsword); SA spells; SZ M (5'6"–6'6" tall); ML fanatic (17–18); Int genius (17–18); AL LE; XP 2,000.

*Special Equipment:* wand of paralysis (roll 1d6: 1–2), 1d4 potions of heroism (3–4), rod of terror (5), or ring of human influence (6).

*Special Abilities:* Vecna's live officers are expert commanders, highly skilled in small unit and battlefield tactics, and in the application of magic in combat. They possess the Spellcraft proficiency and receive a +1 bonus to all checks involving strategy and planning for battle.

*Wizard Spells Memorized (4/2/1):* 1st—detect magic, magic missile (x2), phantasmal force; 2nd—improved phantasmal force, scare; 3rd—dispel magic.

**Army general, female human F10:** AC 3 (bracers of defense AC 3); MV 12; hp 52; THAC0 8 (short sword of quickness +2, Str bonus); #AT 2; Dmg 1d6+3 (short sword of quickness +2, Str bonus); SZ M (6'3" tall); ML elite (14); Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 13, Str 17, Dex 11, Con 14; AL LE; XP 2,000.

*Notes:* The general is helping out the room's true occupant with whatever paperwork must be filled out for the palace officials.

**Finger commander:** AC 5; MV 12; hp 50; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 or 1d4.

There are both living and undead officers in Vecna's service. Among their duties when they are in the palace is to adjudicate disputes between others of Vecna's elite who want to use the various laboratories and training facilities on the first floor. They have the most trouble with the alchemists, who complain to them on an almost daily basis. (If the party upsets an alchemist in area 19, the individual comes to one of these officers to lodge the complaint and get help.)

## 24a. Weapons Masters' Quarters

These chambers are identical to area 24, except that each room is clearly inhabited by a devotee of a class of weapons. The DM can roll on the table for area 24 to determine the nature of the weapons master, but use the following table to determine the master's weapon of specialization. (All weapons masters gain a +4 to attack and damage rolls with their special weapons, and they always have their weapons in hand when confronted.)

| 2d6 | Result                              |
|-----|-------------------------------------|
| 2–4 | Mace                                |
| 5–7 | Longsword                           |
| 8–9 | Spear or staff                      |
| 10  | Bastard sword                       |
| 11  | Throwing daggers and slings         |
| 12  | Khopesh (two-handed fighting style) |

### 25a–c. Wizard Quarters

Specialist wizards who are primarily necromancers or invokers dwell in these chambers. Although many of these men and women also join the armies at the front, they are primarily instructors who assist the war wizards in honing their skills. All these rooms are *wizard locked*, whether the wizards who dwell there are in the palace or at the front. The wizards who dwell here are all 12th level. The rooms within feature a bed, a table with two comfortable chairs, and a workbench with some of the basic tools all wizards use in spell research. If a wizard is currently dwelling here, there is a chest with clothing, pouches of spare spell components, and their primary spellbooks. (The contents of these tomes are left to the DM to develop. Each is protected by a *sepia snake sigil* and *explosive runes*.)

The chambers marked 25a are the quarters of the necromancers and are chilling testaments to their dedication to their art, with skulls, black candles, and odious parts of bodies and the remains of undead creatures. There is a 10% chance that these rooms contain spell notes and vials with various lethal mixtures that are part of the ritual required to “ascend” to lichdom.

The chambers marked 25b are the residences of invokers. These rooms are swirling seas of chaos, with clothes, spell notes, weapons, broken or mismatched parts of alchemy stills, and half-eaten meals scattered about. The walls and floor are covered with scorch marks, as if destructive spells may have been triggered in the room.

The chambers marked 25c are the residences of generalist mages. These rooms contain neat stacks of parchment containing half-finished spell research, various selections of spell components, and a number of fine vessels and amulets suitable for enchanting.

Each chamber also contains a random selection of treasure, as determined by rolling on Table 84, treasure type Z, in the *DMG*.

**Development:** When the party enters one of these rooms, there is a 25% chance that its resident is here, if it has been determined that the resident is currently in Citadel Cavitius. Roll 2d6 and compare the result to the following table to determine who or what is present. The inhabitants of the room attack only if the heroes appear hostile when they enter, or if they are not disguised as clerics or officers of Vecna. Any specialty wizards already have *stoneskin* cast upon them.

| 1d6 | Result  |
|-----|---|
| 1–2 | 12th-level specialty wizard of appropriate type (the room’s resident).                      |
| 3   | Vampire who is a 12th-level specialty wizard of the appropriate type (the room’s resident). |
| 4   | The room’s resident and a guest: an invoker.  |
| 5   | The room’s resident and a guest: a death knight.  |
| 6   | “Nine” waiting for the room’s resident to return.   |

**Invoker:** AC 7; MV 12; hp 48; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+1.

**Necromancer:** AC 8; MV 12; hp 48; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+1.

**Vampire, M12 (spells as per specialty stats):** AC 1; MV 12, fly 18 (C) or 9 (E); hp 64; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4.

**Death knight:** AC 0; MV 12; hp 72; THAC0 8; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+6.

**Nine:** AC –2; MV 6; hp 65; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10.

### 26. War Wizard Quarters

Vecna’s war wizards are all dual-classed humans, warriors-turned-mages who specialize in destructive spells. Their quarters are models of military efficiency, featuring a carefully made bed, a desk with a comfortable chair, and a locker for their weapons and spell components. Any papers and books are carefully organized.

**Development:** If the room is inhabited, it contains a chest with spare clothing, weapons, and the resident’s spellbook, along with a selection of treasure type Z (from Table 84 in the *DMG*). There is a 30% chance the resident is present, either sleeping (1–4 on 1d6) or poring over battle plans (5–6 on 1d6). Although visibly irritated at being disturbed, the war wizards do not attack the party unless forced to defend themselves, or if the party has been rampaging through the palace and several alarms have been sounded; the war wizards leave the fighting on the battle field, unless given no choice.

Vecna’s war wizards are brilliant tacticians who are typically the commanders of front line troops, second only in their brilliance to the death knight generals who serve the Whispered One. They are not particularly interested in magic as an art, having turned to it strictly for its battlefield application. This focus is in accordance with Vecna’s wishes, and no one pushes them to widen their horizons. For this reason, their spellbooks are identical in content to the spells they memorize, with the addition of *read magic*.

**War wizards:** AC 9; MV 12; hp 29; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10.

### 27. Servant Quarters

Eight dirty beds are in this room, with no weapons or valuables present. Clothes hang on pegs, and additional clothing is packed in boxes under each bed.

These chambers serve as the sleeping quarters for the servants who tend to the needs of the officers and wizards stationed here. The servants who live and work on this floor are generally healthier and more pleasing in

appearance than those on the ground floor, but many are doomed to eventually serve as victims of magical experiments and spell research. There is a 20% chance that servants of varying ages are present. Whenever the party enters one of these rooms for the first time, roll on the table below to determine who is quartered here. Most servants are too terrified to offer any help to the party, and they do their best to alert the guards (unless otherwise noted).

| 1d6 | Result  |
|-----|---|
| 1-2 | 1d8 males (0-level).  |
| 3-4 | 1d6+2 females (0-level).  |
| 5   | 1d4 females (0-level), with 1d3 sickly infants.   |
| 6   | 1d8 females torturers, who are trained to assist in the private torture chambers (area 34). They pretend to be willing to help, but they all carry concealed daggers to attack the heroes using their backstab ability, then alert the guards at the earliest possible opportunity. |

**Torturers (1d8):** AC 8; MV 12; hp 4 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4.

## 28. Private Dining Rooms

When Vecna's officers or war wizards want to entertain (or feed off) someone special, they can use one of these finely appointed dining rooms to do so. Each features deep red carpets, wood paneling, a crystal chandelier that glows softly with the influence of a *continual light* spell, and a wood table of dark wood surrounded by four comfortable chairs. (The carpet and table are dark in color so the bloodstains are less visible.)

**Development:** When the party enters one of these rooms, the DM should roll 1d6 and consult the following table to see who (or what) is present. If the heroes are not disguised as servants of Vecna, the individuals here attempt to subdue them with nonlethal spells. If the party proves too difficult to subdue, those present switch to lethal tactics, fearing for their own lives. If the party is disguised, the individuals within merely become verbally abusive until the heroes leave or provide them with a good reason for the interruption.

| 1d6 | Result   |
|-----|--|
| 1-3 | Empty room.  |
| 4   | Two vampires and 1d4 dead victims.   |
| 5   | A 12th-level invoker, her husband (an army general), and a servant (0-level).                        |
| 6   | Krakkat the Observant, with a 12th-level necromancer, an alchemist, and two servants (each 0-level). |

**Vampires (2):** AC 1; MV 12, fly 18 (C) or 9 (E); hp 64 each; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4.

**Invoker:** AC 7; MV 12; hp 48; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+1.

**Army general, male human F10:** AC 2 (*platemail of command +1*); MV 12; hp 61; THAC0 8 (*longsword +3 frost brand*); #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d8+4 (*longsword +3 frost brand, Str bonus*); SZ M (5'5" tall); ML champion (16); Str 16, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 11, Wis 14, Cha 16; AL LE; 2,000.

**Notes:** The general and his wife were warned earlier by Vecna's agents that intruders were expected, so they prepared themselves as best they could. They will not attack the heroes unless attacked, but will not allow the heroes to enter their dwelling.

**Necromancer:** AC 8; MV 12; hp 48; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+1.

**Alchemist, male human M7:** AC 10; MV 12; hp 20; THAC0 16 (*dagger +2*); #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+2 (*dagger +2*); SZ M (6'1" tall); ML steady (12); Int genius (17); AL NE; XP 1,400.

**Wizard Spells Memorized (4/3/2/1):** 1st—*affect normal fires, detect magic, magic missile* (x2); 2nd—*bind, irritation, stinking cloud*; 3rd—*hold person, slow*; 4th—*contagion*.

**Krakkat the Observant:** AC -4; MV 6; hp 72; THAC0 9; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10.

## 29. Stairs to Third Floor

The large metal doors at the bottom and top of this staircase can be closed and barred in order to stop or slow any invaders. The doors have not been used in a long time, and the hinges have rarely been oiled. If heroes try to close them to prevent pursuit, they must make successful Bend Bars/Lift Gates rolls in order to do so. Metal bars rest in brackets just beyond each doorway, so the doors can be barred in one round.

## 30. Watch Rooms

These small chambers serve as duty stations for the living and undead soldiers charged with keeping peace among the residents of this floor, and to prevent passage to the upper levels by those who do not appear to belong here. The guards challenge any people they notice passing their post, with the exception of those dressed in the robes of Vecna's clerics or the tabards of the Fingers. The guards order the party to exit the palace if no heroes are disguised as Vecna's clerics or law enforcers.

**Development:** Present are 1d4+1 palace guards. Roll 1d6: On a 1-5, they are led by a palace guard officer; on a 6, they are led by a wight. If the commander is a wight, four skeletons stand at attention against the room's far wall; they obey only the wight's orders.

Each watch room contains a horn. If combat erupts between the guards and heroes, one guard attempts to

reach the horn and sound the alarm. In this event, 2d6 more palace guards and a palace guard officer arrive 1d3 rounds later, but no other help arrives.

**Palace guards (1d4+1):** AC 8; MV 12; hp 10 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6.

**Palace guard officer:** AC 5; MV 12; hp 30; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8.

**Wight:** AC 5; MV 12; hp 32; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4.

### 31. Stairs to Fifth Floor

This circular staircase bypasses the third and fourth floors, allowing for quick access between the barracks level and the corridors linking the Minor and Black Towers on the fifth floor. At the top of the stairs is a trapdoor that can be closed and barred. The hinges are well oiled, and the trapdoor can be locked with a slide bolt from the top, fifth-floor side.

#### 31a. Undead Guardian

Located halfway up the staircase, a unique crypt thing stands watch in a tiny chamber. Whenever someone climbs the steps, it emerges to block the path, fixing its fiercely glowing red eyes upon the individual while clutching a holy symbol of Vecna in one of its bony hands. In a hollow voice it says, "Who is our lord and master?"



The correct answer is "Vecna." If anyone in the stairwell gives a different answer, everyone present must make a saving throw vs. spell. Those who fail are instantly teleported to one of the cells in area 34. The holy symbol the crypt thing wears functions as a *scarab of protection*. However, the short silver chain from which it hangs is actually a *necklace of strangulation*.

Inside the crypt thing's chamber is a bier it rests upon when not active, and a small iron box containing three gems (worth 50 gp, 1,000 gp, and 1,400 gp). The box rests upon a book whose white covers are smudged with dirt and bloody fingerprints. This tome is a *book of vile darkness*.

**Crypt thing:** AC 3; MV 12; HD 6; hp 43; THAC0 1; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (claws); SA *teleport*; SD cannot be mind-read on this demiplane, immune to *charm*, *sleep*, *hold*, *fear*, *cold*, *poison*, *paralysis*, *death magic*, and *telepathic psionics*, cannot be turned or controlled; SZ M (6' tall); ML fanatic (18); Int very (11); AL N; XP 975.

## Third Floor: Entertainment Level

Vecna's chosen can relax and indulge themselves in whatever pleasure they desire on this level, be it a hot bath or the brutal slaughter of an innocent. The depravity of Vecna and his minions can be more clearly perceived here than in any other place within the palace walls.

### 32. Bath Chambers

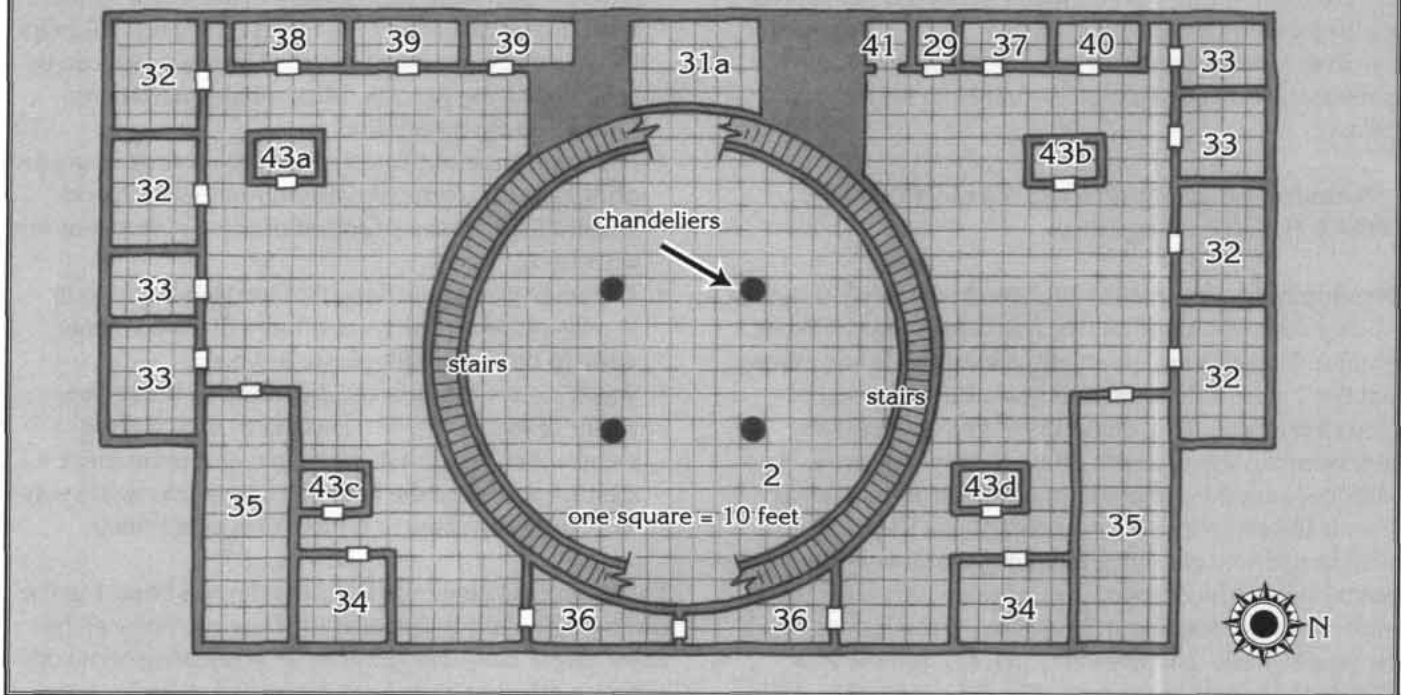
These chambers each contain a pair of black-tiled pools with warm water. Racks containing towels, soaps, bath salts, and perfumes line the walls.

The pools in the rooms are working displays of magical technology in action. Water flows from spigots that look like horned demon heads, but there is no visible place for the water to drain out. Further, no matter how filthy a bather, the water nonetheless gradually becomes clean.

There are always 1d2+2 servants (0-level) of either gender waiting to serve bathers. The first such chamber the heroes enter is occupied by a visiting mercenary who plans to join Vecna's forces here; he is being attended to by four servants. The mercenary, Vergis Vos, is without weapons and armor, apparently defenseless. Any minion of Iuz with the party always wants to kill any servant of Vecna encountered here. If the party takes the mercenary alive, he reluctantly helps the group reach area 72.

**Vergis Vos, male human F10:** AC 6 (*ring of protection* +2, Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 78; THAC0 8 (Str bonus); #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d2+6 (fists); SZ M (6'6" tall); ML steady (12); Str 18/00, Dex 17, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 11, Cha 12; AL LE; XP 2,000.

# Vecna's Palace Third Floor: Entertainment Level



*Notes:* This mighty villain, interrupted while trying to relax in a city full of dead people, attempts to seize a weapon from a party member and either slay them (if this seems possible) or escape to summon help.

### 33. Bed Chambers

Each door to one of these rooms is typically unlocked, but it can be locked from the inside with a slide bolt. (No keyhole is on the outside.) Within is a luxurious chamber featuring a large, soft bed, and a vanity table with a range of expensive perfumes and oils. Also present are several small jars of poisons (1d3 Type H, 1d3 Type M, and 1d2 Type O), indistinguishable from oils except for the black stoppers in their containers. There are always 1d2+2 servants of mixed gender wait here to serve those who enter.

There is a 30% chance that one of the following beings is also present, taking a break.

| 1d6 | Result              |
|-----|---------------------|
| 1-2 | Finger commander    |
| 4   | Xovon One-Eye       |
| 5   | Dumaar of the Peaks |
| 6   | Vampire             |

**Finger commander:** AC 5; MV 12; hp 50; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 or 1d4.

**Xovon One-Eye, male human F10:** AC 2 (*bracers of defense* AC 2); MV 24 (*boots of speed*); hp 59; THAC0 9 (*trident of submission*, Str bonus); #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d6+5 (*trident of submission*); SZ M (5'9" tall); ML steady (11); Str 18/50, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 13, Wis 9, Cha 8; AL CE; XP 2,000.

*Notes:* Xovon One-Eye hails from exactly the same hometown as one of the heroes (select at random) and was known to the hero as a bully and cheat. The DM can invent some past conflict between the two that was never resolved. Xovon is presently dressed in filthy, ragged clothing and appears completely defenseless, except for his dirty trident.

**Dumaar of the Burning Peaks, male human M15:** AC 5 (*Dex bonus*, *ring of protection* +3); MV 12; hp 26; THAC0 1 (*dagger +2/+4 vs. good-aligned creatures*); #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+2 or 1d4+4 (*dagger +2/+4 vs. good-aligned creatures*); SZ M (6'2" tall); ML steady (12); Str 13, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 18, Wis 9, Cha 6; AL CE; XP 7,000.

*Special Equipment:* *dagger +2/+4 vs. good aligned creatures*—any nonevil person who touches the dagger suffers 2d4 points of electrical damage per round.

*Wizard Spells Memorized* (5/5/5/4/4/2/1): 1st—*burning hands*, *charm person*, *friends*, *magic missile* (×2); 2nd—*bind*, *blur*, *ESP*, *irritation*, *levitate*; 3rd—*hold person*, *spectral force*, *suggestion* (×2), *vampiric touch*; 4th—*confusion*, *contagion*, *emotion*, *fear*; 5th—*Bigby's interposing hand*

(×2), *telekinesis* (×2); 6th—*Bigby's forceful hand, conjure animals*; 7th—*power word stun*.

*Notes:* Dumaar is one of a few of Vecna's high-ranking military officers present in the palace at this time. He is an ugly, battle-scarred mercenary who has served the Whispered One for the past year, but he is presently on leave. A deeply disturbed sadist, he selected his spells for use on one or more servants, to help him "relax."

**Vampire:** AC 1; MV 12, fly 18 (C) or 9 (E); hp 64; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4.

**Development:** In the third such room the party searches, they discover an attractive human servant (male or female). This servant is actually a incubus or succubus that has been summoned and bound here by one of Vecna's minions. This demon is not happy with its imprisonment here, and it offers to help the party. If no paladins or good clerics are present, the demon even reveals its true appearance and explains its predicament in order to convince the party that it is not a mere mortal slave. The demon used its telepathic abilities to learn many secrets about the palace. If the heroes break the wards on the chamber and free the demon, it is willing to share those secrets. The demon further promises to return to its home plane as soon as it gives a "farewell kiss" to its captor, life-draining that person to death.

Unfortunately, of course, the demon will discover within 1d4 turns of being freed that it cannot leave this demiplane at all, by any means. It then goes on a rampage for 1d4 turns longer, attacking everyone it meets at random through the palace, even the heroes (though the demon tries to avoid them at first by flying off in a rage). A demon loose in the palace adds much confusion, making it easier for the party to reach Vecna's throne room (area 72). All guard response times are tripled in this event, and the DM may improvise later encounters involving the demon's rampage.

Some important bits of information the extraplanar prisoner knows follows below.

- The *Sword of Kas*, a weapon that can destroy Vecna and most other gods, is stored in Vecna's private library in the main tower (area 70). The password to get through the wizard lock on the door is "*Paet vi har slykning*." (The language is that of the Ancient Brethren. The demon reveals that it means, "We have faith in the Serpent.")
- A powerful spirit is held captive in one of the minor towers (tower C). If the heroes bring down the wards around it, it might cause enough havoc in the palace and citadel to serve as a distraction while they complete their goals.

- Beware any black areas where light cannot penetrate. These contain *spheres of annihilation*.
- There is a disagreement between the Heart of Vecna (the high priestess of the Church of Vecna) and another high-ranking priestess by the name of Mizayana. Mizayana wants the Heart dead and will help the party achieve its goal if the Heart's death can be arranged in the process. Mizayana's quarters are located on the fourth floor.
- The temples on the fourth floor are protected by powerful magical wards. Be careful not to spill blood within them, or the strongest of these protections are activated.
- The staircase on this floor that leads to the temple level is protected by a ward that kills spellcasters who do not swear allegiance to Vecna.
- Vecna's physical form can be found in the highest tower of the palace. If it is slain, there is a good chance that Vecna will die a final and permanent death, because of the bizarre powers that hold sway over the demiplane in which he is imprisoned.

Three magical elements keep the demon bound to the room in which it is discovered. They are negated by *dispel magic*, *bless*, and physically scratching off a row of tiny sigils that have been engraved over the doorway. The demon might be convinced to reveal one hint per element of the spell that is negated, then provide all the information it knows once free. (It may be chaotic evil, but the demon also believes the heroes must be fearless and powerful to have gotten into Vecna's palace, so it wants to be on the heroes' good side.)

The demon does not know anything specific about the dark powers that rule the Demiplane of Dread, other than that they (it?) seem to delight in trapping everyone possible in this backward little part of the multiverse. The demon is certain that none of the heroes will ever leave this plane ever again, though it believes it can leave anytime it wishes. (It is wrong, as it will shortly learn.) This might be the first time the heroes are informed they are no longer on Oerth. If so, the demon patiently but quickly explains the information given under The Demiplane of Dread in Brief.

Although the demon is disposed to assist the party, it might not resist the temptation to *charm* a particularly good-looking character or one with a forceful personality. The demon simply wants to bask in the glory of once again having a slavishly devoted follower, and it will not take any destructive action toward the hero yet. If caught in the act, the creature apologizes, claiming that it gave into temptations and really is trying to help the party. It leaves soon thereafter, when its frustrated rampage begins.

**Succubus/Incubus:** AC 0; MV 12, fly 18 (C); HD 6; hp 22; THAC0 15; #AT 2 (fists); Dmg 1d3/1d3; SA energy drain; SD +2 or better weapons to hit, immune to fire, electricity, and poison, takes half damage from cold and gas-based attacks, never surprised; SW cannot escape this demiplane; MR 30%; SZ M (6' tall); ML elite (13); Int exceptional (15); AL CE; XP 11,000.

*Notes:* These demonic creatures have a form of *telepathy* that allows them to communicate with any intelligent life regardless of language barriers. They can also use the following spell-like abilities at will: become ethereal (as if using *oil of etherealness*), *charm person*, *clairaudience*, *ESP*, *shapechange* (to an attractive humanoid form—the natural appearance of a succubus or incubus is that of a unnaturally beautiful human with large batwings), and *suggestion*. On the Demiplane of Dread, they cannot use *plane shift* or *gate*.

### 34. Torture Chambers

These torture chambers are smaller and more intimate than the ones on the training levels. Nonetheless, they feature racks, thumbscrews, iron maidens, and everything else one would expect to find in a well-appointed facility devoted to the infliction of pain.

These rooms are here for those of Vecna's minions who enjoy making others suffer just for the fun of it. Specially trained servants and slaves, as well as a victim, stand ready here to assist any minion of Vecna who wants to use the equipment. When the party enters one of these rooms, 1d4 female torturers are present, along with an additional prisoner (0-level) chained to a table, awaiting torture. The torturers attempt to subdue anyone who is not disguised as a cleric, guard, or law officer, hoping to provide their masters with fresh meat.

If given a chance to surrender, torturers do so, offering to guide the heroes safely to wherever they want to go within the palace. However, as soon as the party has a random encounter with a powerful being, they cry out for help.

In the corner of each torture chamber is what appears to be a shaft, engulfed in impenetrable darkness beyond 2 feet down. Light sources lowered into the darkness wink out, and not even *continual light* can dispel it.

The truth is that the "shaft" terminates after 2 feet in an abnormally large *sphere of annihilation*. It is used to dispose of dead bodies that are deemed unfit for reanimation. The torture chamber here is for entertainment and relaxation, so an easy method of "cleaning up" has been provided. Anything or anyone a hero throws or lowers into the shaft is irrevocably destroyed. A pole or rope, if pulled back, is immediately seen to be missing any part put into the darkness, perhaps saving wise heroes by its example.

**Torturers (1d4):** AC 8; MV 12; hp 3 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4.

### 35. Target Practice Ranges

Just inside the door to this room are two shortbows, two composite long bows, and two crossbows. Also there is a quarrel with three dozens arrows, and a bundle of a dozen crossbow bolts. (There are 1d4 missiles of each type of +1 enchantment randomly inserted among the rest.) At the far end of the chamber are four sets of manacles mounted on a blood-spattered wall.

Some of Vecna's minions like to unwind with a little bit of target practice, but the sadistic warriors cannot fully enjoy themselves unless they are using live targets. When someone is here practicing marksmanship, a slave or servant (0-level) found to be lax in performing duties is manacled to the wall.

When the heroes enter one of these chambers, the DM should roll on the following table to see who is here.

| 2d6   | Result  |
|-------|---|
| 2-4   | The chamber is not currently in use.  |
| 5-6   | 1d3+1 enthusiasts and Finger of Vecna commander.  |
| 7-9   | 1d6+1 enthusiasts and Finger of Vecna commander.  |
| 10-11 | 1d3+1 Finger of Vecna commanders.   |
| 12    | 1d3+1 death knights, one of whom launches his fireball at the targets after missing a shot. |

**Ranged combat enthusiast, male or female human F6:** AC 5 (chainmail); MV 12; hp 55; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+1 (crossbow) or 1d4 (thrown dagger); SZ M (5'-6' tall); ML champion (15-16); Int very (11-12); AL any evil; XP 175.

**Finger of Vecna high commander, male or female human F9:** AC 5 (chainmail); MV 12; hp 90; THAC0 12; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+1 (crossbow) or 1d4 (thrown dagger); SZ M (5'-6' tall); ML champion (15-16); Int exceptional (15-16); AL any evil; XP 970.

**Death knight:** AC 0; MV 12; hp 72; THAC0 8; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+6.

**Development:** Combat in this room does not attract adverse attention, as it is not uncommon that fighting breaks out among those engaging in target practice here. If the combat lasts more than 6 rounds, however, a vampire happens to walk in, realizes the heroes do not belong here, and joins the fray.

**Vampire:** AC 1; MV 12, fly 18 (C) or 9 (E); hp 64; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4.

### 36. Slave Quarters

Many of these poor souls have been *charmed* either by vampires or spellcasters, so they do not view them-



selves as slaves anymore. The slaves are often attractive men and women who caught the eye of one of Vecna's minions and were then abducted. Others are former adventurers, but their minds have been scrambled so thoroughly that only a *wish* can cause them to remember their former life. There is no treasure per se in these chambers, but the slaves wear skimpy costumes that are adorned with jewels, making each outfit worth 10d10+25 gp.

Six slaves dwell in each room. The slaves are generally more healthy than the servants elsewhere in the palace: they were brought here for their good looks and their captors want to maintain those. Their simply appointed rooms are also cleaner. (Some of the slaves have scars from being tortured, but there are those among Vecna's followers who believe this enhances their attractiveness.)

To determine what kind of slaves dwell in a room, roll 1d6 and compare the result to the following table. There are 1d4-1 slaves (0-level) present.

| 1d6 | Result  |
|-----|---|
| 1-2 | 1d4-1 males (0-level).  |
| 3-4 | 1d6-1 females (0-level).  |
| 5   | 1d2 females (0-level), with 1d3 infants. At least one female is present here at all times.        |
| 6   | 1d4 males, all novice necromancers (hp 4 each) who assist wizards and liches with spell research. |

**Novice necromancer (1d4):** AC 10; MV 12; hp 4 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4.

### 37. Spectre Lair

These rooms appear to be disused slave quarters. They seem to have been ransacked, as beds and chairs have been overturned and in some cases even smashed to kindling. A faint layer of dust covers everything here, and long-dried blood stains the walls and floor in curious stippled patterns. The only light in these rooms is that brought by the heroes, or faint ambient light from the hallway.

These rooms are not as deserted as they appear. In the deepest shadows lurk 2d4+2 spectres, hiding behind overturned furniture and under the ceiling. They swarm out to attack the party, speaking with voices that sound like a dozen snakes hissing: "Join usss . . . join usss!" They will not leave this area.

**Spectres (2d4+2):** AC 2; MV 15, fly 30 (B); hp 56 each; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8.

### 38. Vampire Lair

These luxurious quarters feature soft couches, throw pillows, and elegant statuettes and paintings. The dominant colors are earth tones. Two humans appear to rest

in the room, lounging on throw pillows. They are a pale-skinned, fine-boned man and woman with the sallow features. They wear loose-fitting robes; their heads are shaven and covered with elaborate tattoos that go down their necks and disappear under their robes. They both seem startled at the appearance of the heroes.

These are Xaven and Kyrie, a mated couple of vampires. They hail from the distant domain of Hazlan, a land located elsewhere in the misty confines of the Demiplane of Dread. Their physical features are typical of the Mulan, the ruling human ethnic group from that land. Kyrie was turned into an undead by a vampire that was ultimately slain by a vengeful Xaven. However, his love for Kyrie was such that he could not bring himself to kill her, so he joined her undeath. The pair proceeded to launch a reign of terror that ended when the powerful lord of their land himself caused them to flee into the demiplane's Mists. They emerged in Cavitius and fell immediately into the service of Vecna.

Xaven and Kyrie are supremely arrogant, but smart enough not to annoy more powerful beings in the palace. They hail from a land where their ethnic group rules over the majority and, as they have not met anyone of their race in Cavitius, they consider themselves inherently superior to those around them. Nonetheless, they are quite happy with their new lives, as they have been permitted to study magic since arriving here—something they were forbidden to do in Hazlan. Meekali ("Innova"), the lich who lives in area 60a, is their tutor in the magical arts.

Vecna decreed that Xaven and Kyrie are to see that both the undead and a living have a pleasurable time when relaxing in his palace, and the pair take their duty very seriously. They not only consider themselves superior to those around them, but they are willing to prove it through the way in which they execute their duties.

All vampires in Cavitius must deal with Haroln to some extent, and this couple is no exception. Haroln has demanded that they do their part to reduce the number of people who get referred to him to have their disputes resolved, so they sometimes "recruit" new slaves (vampiric or otherwise) from the meeting halls on the ground level of the palace. Xaven suspects Haroln's behavior is contrary to the wishes of Vecna, and he plans to reveal this activity to Vecna when the Maimed God sees fit to grant him a personal audience. Xaven is keeping a detailed ledger of the activities that he and other vampires have undertaken on Haroln's orders to make his case watertight. (In truth, Vecna could not possibly care less. He has bigger matters to which he is attending that render these problems moot.)

**Development:** Xaven and Kyrie are initially polite, assuming the heroes might be guests who have lost their way. If anyone in the party hints that they are here to cause trouble in the palace or to kill Vecna, each vam-

pire tries to *charm* as many members of the party as possible, then offers to join their effort. (They intend to lead the party into area 39 to feed their slave vampires.)

If the heroes explain that they intend to stop or slay Iuz, however, the vampires eagerly offer to join the effort, commanding their enslaved vampires from area 39 to join the effort as well. (This greatly simplifies matters later during the events of the final confrontation at area 72, since Iuz's supporters will be occupied with saving themselves from enraged vampires.)

If the party attacks Xaven and Kyrie, the two fight to defend each other. Their coffins are not kept here, but are in area 58a. Similarly, the couple's major treasures are kept with their coffins, but the statuettes (four total, each representing mages in the middle of casting spells) are worth 200 gp each to a collector of fine art. The paintings (three paintings of powerful-appearing desert nomads in windswept dunes, and one portraying black unicorns roaming a barren landscape as brave hunters carefully approach) are worth 2d4x100 gp to someone who appreciates well-executed canvases.

**Xaven and Kyrie:** AC 1; MV 12, fly 18 (C) or 9 (E); hp 50; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4.

### 39. Vampire Slave Quarters

Nine hungry vampires, five females and four males, dwell in this simply appointed chamber. They are linked to the vampires in area 38 through the unholy bond that exists between vampires and their progeny.

The vampires here dress like the mundane slaves who dwell elsewhere on this level. They serve Vecna's undead minions, as well as living beings with exotic tastes in platonic companionship. They do not normally feed unless given permission by their masters, but any mortals who enter their chambers are fair game.

The vampires initially play the parts of pampered palace slaves, but eventually their hunger overcomes comes them and unwary heroes may quickly meet their doom.

**Vampires:** AC 1; MV 12, fly 18 (C) or 9 (E); hp 64, 62, 59, 55, 54 53, 52, 49, 48, 47; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4.

### 40. Zombie Quarters

Forty zombies are quartered here, and 3d10+10 are here at any given time. These creatures serve as guards, laborers, spell-testing subjects, missile targets, and even masseurs and partners for those among Vecna's minions with exotic tastes. Also here are 2d6 partially prepared corpses, soon to be animated as zombies. All zombies were convicted criminals or failed servants in life, slain within the last few days. Each zombie wears a simple tie-on kilt of white cloth, and nothing else. No treasure is present here.

There is a 10% chance each time this chamber is entered, following a delay of several hours, that a necromancer named Klea Torn and a novice necromancer are here, preparing or animating fresh bodies.

If any of the defenses in areas 49–51 are triggered, all the zombies here immediately leave, to help defend the shrines. They assemble in groups of ten, each group leaving 1d6+2 rounds apart after the defense has been triggered. The zombies use area 43 to reach the fourth floor.

**Zombies (3d10+10):** AC 8; MV 6; hp 16 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8.

**Novice necromancer:** AC 10; MV 12; hp 4; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4.

**Klea Torn, female human Nec9:** AC 8 (Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 30; THAC0 18 (17 with *dagger* +1); #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+1 (*dagger* +1); SZ M (5'6" tall); ML steady (11); Str 6, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 17, Wis 9, Cha 6; AL CE; XP 2,000.

*Special Equipment:* ring of spell storing with 3 animate dead spells.

*Wizard Spells Memorized (5/4/4/3/2):* 1st—*chill touch*, *magic missile* (x2), *unseen servant* (x2); 2nd—*levitate*, *magic mouth*, *spectral hand*, *strength*; 3rd—*hold person* (x2), *vampiric touch* (x2); 4th—*enervation* (x2), *extension*; 5th—*animate dead* (x2).

*Notes:* Klea lost her mind years ago when a rival *disintegrated* her children. She now considers the zombies she creates to be her family. If, through some bizarre chain of events, she should take a liking to one of the heroes, she will try to kill the hero and animate the body as part of the family.

### 41. Storage Room

This room contains clean sheets, extra pillows, bath salts, perfumes, scourges—extra supplies of everything that the living among Vecna's chosen need to relax in luxury.

### 42. Stairs to the Fourth Floor

This staircase leads to the palace's temple level. Three major shrines to Vecna are located there, along with most of the quarters for the clerics who were granted the honor of living in the presence of the Maimed God himself. Above the door, carved in the long-lost language of the Brethren, is the phrase, "Thou Who Knows the Power of the Serpent But Does Not Worship Our Lord Must Admit He Is Eternal Or Be Smote." The phrase can be read through the use of *comprehend languages* spell or a successful Read Languages skill check (with a -5% penalty). There are no obvious security measures on the stairs, but any spellcaster who is not wearing a holy symbol of Vecna and does not utter the phrase "Vecna is eternal" before climbing them must

make a successful saving throw vs. spell at the halfway point or be *disintegrated*.

#### 43a-d. Stairs to the Minor Towers

Each of these staircases leads directly to one of the four white "minor" towers that rise from the main structure of the building. See below for the appropriate tower description. These narrow circular staircases allow those climbing them to bypass the fourth floor. At the top of the stairs is a trapdoor that can be closed and barred. The hinges are well oiled, and the trapdoor can be locked with a slide bolt from the fifth floor side.

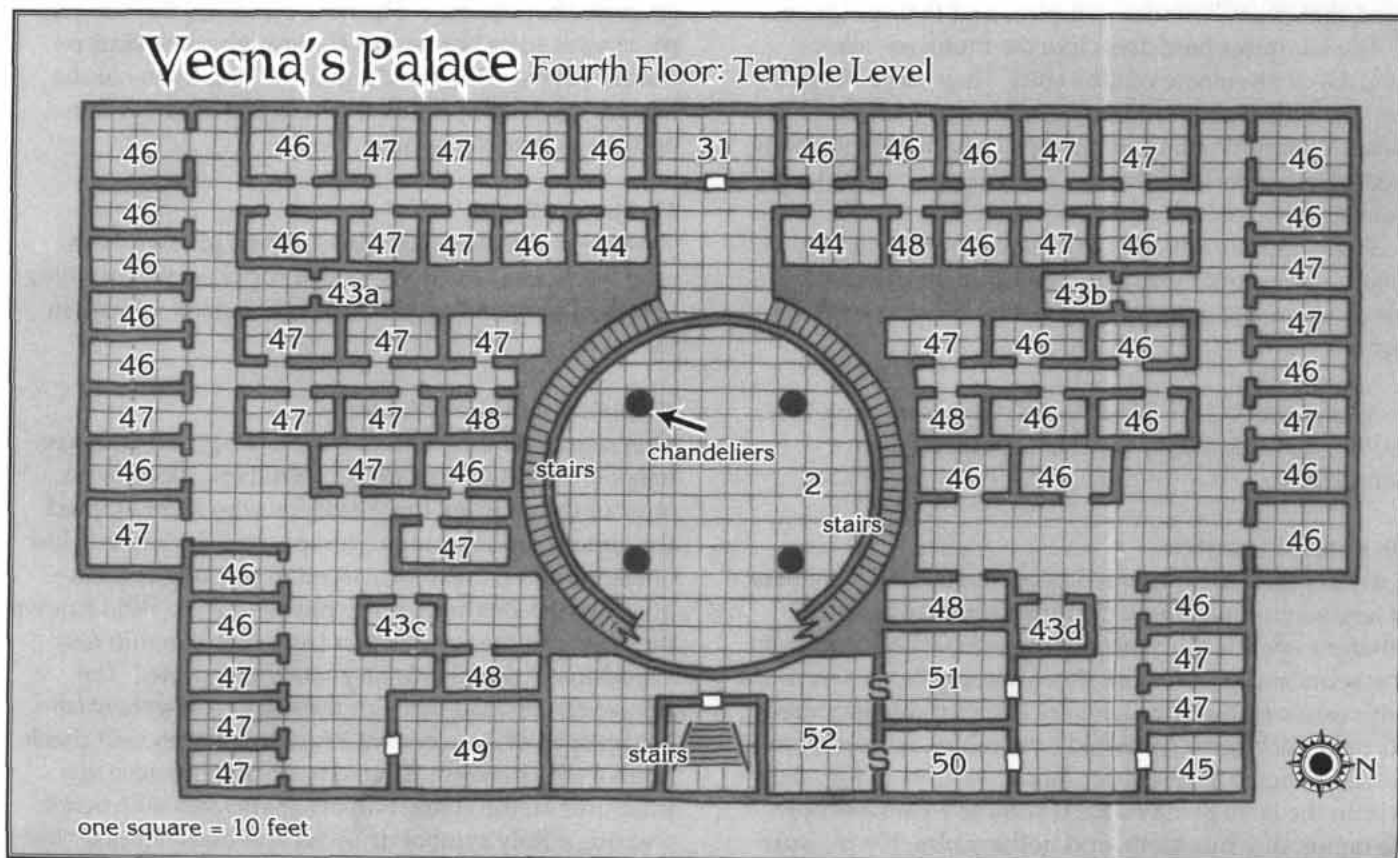
### Fourth Floor: Temple Level

The main temple devoted to the Whispered One is located elsewhere in Citadel Covitius, as described in *Vecna Reborn*. Several chambers on this level also serve as worship areas for those minions of Vecna who are too important or too busy to bother visiting the main temple. In addition to containing three shrines—one devoted to each evil alignment—and a central worship hall, this level also contains living space for several clerics and the private quarters of Vecna's most senior clerics. Servants quarters and kitchens devoted to the needs of the clerics are also found here, making this level all but self-sufficient.

Since the occupants and traffic found here differ from those in the rest of the palace, the general encounter table does not apply here. Instead, the DM should roll 1d10 whenever the party enters any corridor or room lacking a set encounter, then reference the following table. If a result is generated more than once, treat as no encounter. (As always, the DM is encouraged to pick specific encounters from this list rather than roll them randomly, or to dispense with them entirely if he wants to keep the party completely focused on their goals.)

**Vampire pilgrim, W2/P5 of Vecna:** AC 1; MV 12, fly 18 (C) as bat, fly 9 (E) as gas; HD 8+3; hp 50; THAC0 11 (Str bonus); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4 (Str bonus); SA energy drain (two levels), gaze can *charm* (-2 penalty to saving throw), *shapechange* to bat or wolf, *spider climb* at will, slain victims turn into vampires; SD +1 or better weapon to hit, *regenerate* 3 hp/round, immune to *charm*, *sleep*, *hold*, *fear*, *poison*, *paralyzation*, *death magic*, and *telepathic psionics*, cold and electricity inflict half damage, can assume gaseous form at will; SW can be turned, vulnerable to sunlight, wooden stakes, and running water, holy water inflicts 1d6+1 hp per vial; SZ M (6'2" tall); ML champion (16); Int exceptional (16); AL CE; XP 11,000.

*Special Equipment:* rod of terror (16 charges), brooch of shielding (can absorb 59 hp of magic missiles), holy symbol of Vecna.



**1d10 Result**

- 1 A vampire cleric of Vecna (W2/P5) and 1d6 servant vampires are on their way to worship at the chaotic evil shrine (area 51). The vampire uses its *charm* gaze on the hero with the highest Charisma score.
- 2-3 One of Iuz's parties has infiltrated the level and hopes to assassinate a high-level cleric. The Iuzites are themselves disguised as Memories of Vecna, though the ogres with them are a dead giveaway. If they believe they are recognized by the heroes, they fight to kill. This group has attempted to stay away from all conflicts with the undead and with palace guards, and to some extent succeeded with Iuz's assistance. Now, with Iuz gone to the Black Tower, the group is on its own and must defend itself as best it can. Any NPCs here that were slain or captured earlier in town can be removed from the list; the DM can replace them with new NPCs or just reduce the force here. The party consists of Gharan, Khusk, Geral, Kahner, the Kadars, and the ogres.
- 4 2d4 humans (roll 1d6: 1-4, servants (0-level); 5-6, acolytes of Vecna with 4 hp each) are on their way to worship at whichever shrine is closest to the heroes. These people are apprehensive of the heroes unless the latter disguise themselves. They answer 1d4 questions before insisting that they must go to the temple to pray. (They somehow offended either a cleric or Vecna himself, and they wish to atone by meditating before punishment is levied.)
- 5 Twenty skeletons wearing chainmail are making a standard security patrol of the level. If the party has taken a servant captive for use as a guide, the NPC cries out for help. Unless a party member is disguised as a cleric or carrying a holy symbol of Vecna, the skeletons mindlessly attack. The sounds of battle bring other people from nearby rooms in 1d4+4 rounds.
- 6 No encounter.
- 7 A skeleton warrior with ten elite skeletons are carrying booty from the front (treasure types A and Z, Table 84, DMG). This commander is delivering the personal treasures of captured officers in Kas's force to Vecna's highest-level clerics. He brooks no interference by anyone; to underscore this point, the DM might wish to have him angrily crush the skull of a servant who happens to get in his way, as the heroes watch. He gladly gives the heroes similar treatment should they challenge him, even if disguised as clerics of Vecna. (He respects only true clerics, as he can sense their link to his master, the Whispered One.)
- 8 2d4 humans (roll 1d6: 1-4, servants (0-level); 5-6, acolytes of Vecna). These people are on their way to worship at whichever shrine is closest to the heroes. They do not initiate hostilities with the party if approached and are, in fact, as helpful and friendly as they can possibly be. They have the mistaken idea that the heroes are allies.
- 9 No encounter.
- 10 Ju-ju zombie and twelve zombies. These undead creatures shuffle along, droning a hymn to the Whispered One. They all wear heavy cowls, so their decaying features are hidden to all but those who get up close to gaze under the hoods. Anyone who does this must make a Dexterity check in order to not bump into any of the undead. If the check fails, the ju-ju zombie screams, "Blasphemers! How are you interrupt our prayers to the Master of Secrets and Hidden Things!" The undead then attack the heroes, fighting with no morale checks.

*Cleric Spells Memorized* (5/3/1): 1st—*cause fear, command, curse* (x3); 2nd—*hold person* (x2), *withdraw*; 3rd—*dispel magic*.

*Wizard Spells Memorized* (2): 1st—*magic missile, shield*.

*Notes:* This nameless vampire has wandered across many of the domains in the Demiplane of Dread, exploring them as a spy of Vecna. He was once a dual-classed adventurer from the City of Greyhawk.

**Gharan the Slayer, male human P12 of Iuz:** AC 3 (platemail); MV 12; hp 52 (now 19); THAC0 14 (11 with *staff of striking*); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+3 (*staff of striking*);

SA spells; SD spells; SZ M (6'1" tall); ML elite (14); Str 18, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 9, Wis 16, Cha 16; AL CE; XP 10,000.

*Special Equipment:* *staff of striking* (12 charges).

*Cleric Spells Memorized* (8/7/5/3/2/2): 1st—*cure light wounds*; 2nd—*enthrall, hold person, withdraw*; 3rd—*animate dead, prayer*; 4th—*detect lie, imbue with spell ability*; 5th—*atonement, true seeing*; 6th—*blade barrier, heal*. (All other spells were used.)

**Khusk, male human F10:** AC 0 (*platemail* -3); MV 12; hp 100; THAC0 11 (6 with *vorpal bastard sword* +3,

Str bonus, specialization); #AT 2; Dmg 2d4+6 (*vorpals bastard sword* +3, Str bonus, specialization); SZ M (6'1" tall); ML fanatic (18); Str 17, Dex 14, Con 18; Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 6; AL CE; XP 2,000.

*Special Equipment:* ring of vampiric regeneration.

*Notes:* Khusk is the brother of Bear, described earlier in this adventure. The two bear a striking resemblance, although Khusk is not prone to Bear's berserker rages. His personality is even more unpleasant, though.

**Geral Kher, male human M15:** AC 4 (black robe of the archmagi, Dex bonus), MV 12; hp 60; THAC0 16 (15 with staff of withering); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+1 (staff of withering); SZ M (5'4" tall); ML champion (16); Str 14, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 13; AL NE; XP 8,000.

*Special Equipment:* ring of spell turning.

*Wizard Spells Memorized:* (5/5/5/5/5/2): 1st—burning hands, magic missile (x2); 2nd—knock, web (x3); 3rd—fireball, invisibility 10' radius, lightning bolt; 4th—Evard's black tentacles, fear, polymorph other; 5th—Bigby's interposing hand, feeblemind, teleport; 6th—chain lightning, death spell. (All other spells were used.)

**Kahner Hvel, male human F12:** AC 3 (chainmail +1, shield, ring of protection +1); MV 12; hp 112; THAC0 9 (5 with longsword, Str bonus, specialization); #AT 2; Dmg 1d8+8 (longsword, Str bonus, specialization); SZ M (6' tall); ML elite (14); Str 14 (18/00 with gauntlets of ogre power), Dex 14, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 10; AL CE; XP 4,000.

*Special Equipment:* ring of fire resistance.

**Half-ogre Kadars (10):** AC 2; MV 12; hp 48 each; THAC0 12; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d6+6.

**Ogre warriors (30):** AC 5; MV 12; hp 48 each; THAC0 12; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d6+6.

**Acolytes of Vecna:** AC 10; MV 12; hp 5; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4.

**Skeletons (20):** AC 2; MV 12; hp 6 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6.

**Skeleton warrior:** AC 2; MV 12; hp 72; THAC0 8; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10.

**Elite skeletons (10):** AC 5; MV 12; hp 16 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6.

**Ju-ju zombie:** AC 6; MV 9; hp 36; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 3d4.

**Zombies (12):** AC 8; MV 6; hp 16 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8.

#### 44. Watch Room

These small chambers serve as duty stations for living and undead soldiers. They are charged with protecting the shrines devoted to Vecna and preventing intruders from reaching the next floor. The guards challenge anyone they notice passing their post, with the exception of those dressed in the robes of clerics or tabards of the Fingers.

There are 1d4+1 palace guards and their commander, who is either a wight (roll 1d6: 1–5) or a vampire (6), present in the room. In addition, four large zombies stand at attention against the room's far wall. All the undead in these watch rooms wear holy symbols of Vecna that have enchantments to make them immune to turning attempts by enemy clerics. These holy symbols are useless to living beings.

Each watch room contains a horn. If combat erupts between the guards and the party, one guard attempts to reach the horn and sound the alarm. However, the horn is cracked and cannot make a proper sound; no assistance ever arrives.

**Palace guards (1d4+1):** AC 8; MV 12; hp 10 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6.

**Wight:** AC 5; MV 12; hp 32; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4.

**Vampire:** AC 1; MV 12, fly 18 (C) or 9 (E); hp 64; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4.

**Zombies (4):** AC 8; MV 6; hp 16 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+2.

#### 45. Senior Priestess Quarters

This room is home to the priestess who is in charge of the routine activities of the clerics who serve Vecna in the palace. The room is rather austere in appearance, containing a cot with a soft mattress, a small chest, a chair, and a small table. The chest contains simple clothes, a heavy black robe, and a leather-bound book containing all church-sanctioned devotional prayers and hymns to Vecna's glory. The chest also contains 2d20 pp, 2d100 gp, 1d10 sp, and 2d6 cp. In one corner stands a unique shrine to Vecna—a gilded mummified hand with an agate that appears like an eye fastened in its palm. It is a priceless artifact to any worshiper of Vecna, but it would be worth about 150 gp to a collector of bizarre and macabre art objects.

The current Senior Priestess is Mizayana, a life-long resident of Citadel Cavitius. She came to the attention of the Church of Vecna when her mother died in giving birth to her, then arose moments later as a phantom. This was taken as a sign from the Whispered One that Mizayana would soon do great things, so she was raised in the faith and surrounded by undead from her



earliest moments. At the tender age of twenty-three, she is the second most politically powerful priestess in Cavitus, second only to the Heart of Vecna herself.

Growing up as she did, dealing more with undead beings than living ones, left Mizayana cold and distant, unaware of affection and love except as vague philosophical terms. That changed when she met a young cleric named Durraln. Lust quickly evolved into love, as Durraln showed Mizayana how exciting and pleasurable life with the living could be. Unfortunately for Mizayana and Durraln, the Heart of Vecna wanted to possess him, also. When Durraln told the Heart that he loved Mizayana but not her, the high-ranking priestess had him killed.

Mizayana has been a shadow of herself since Durraln died. She wants more than anything to bring him back—even as an undead—but she cannot even locate his body or spirit. As her sorrow has deepened, so has her hatred for the Heart, but she knows that she is not wise enough in the Secret Ways to challenge her and live. (Mizayana is intelligent enough to know her limits, and, in game terms, recognizes that she is not high enough level to take on the Heart.) This realization only makes her depression deeper and her work is beginning to suffer, much to the delight of the Heart, who is hoping to remove this annoying child once and for all.

There is an 80% that Mizayana is present when the party enters her room. She is kneeling in front of her

private shrine, but turns to face them as they enter. Her blue eyes are ringed with dark circles and are shimmering with tears. Her blonde hair is a tangle around her face. She wears ruffled ceremonial robes and clutches her holy symbol in one hand. (If Mizayana is not present when the party enters, she arrives just as they are about to leave, in lieu of a random encounter.)

Mizayana suddenly has a crystal-clear realization for how to get revenge: Perhaps Vecna will even allow Mizayana herself to replace the Heart in the church hierarchy by allowing her to cause the heroes to slay the Heart!

Unless attacked immediately, Mizayana swiftly introduces herself to the party and explains the plans of Vecna and Iuz, as per the beginning of this section. She adds that if Iuz succeeds against all odds, all of the Flanaess and likely Oerth as well will fall under his control. Mizayana offers to bring the party to a secret staircase to Vecna's throne room—thus letting the heroes avoid all the guardians between there and the Maimed God—but only if they help her kill the "foul witch who murdered my true love."

If the heroes accept Mizayana's offer, she takes them along the shortest route to area 66, through several areas that are holy to the followers of Vecna—the neutral evil shrine and the Inner Sanctum's on this level. (See the descriptions of areas 50 and 52, below.) If any

hero fails a saving throw vs. spell at area 50, she uses the more public and longer route.

Mizayana brushes aside any guards who try to question them, using her position of authority on humans and her *ring of undead influence* on particularly insistent undead, who might be enraged by the behavior of heroes elsewhere in the palace. She does not stand for any desecration of any of the temples or the Inner Sanctum, as her desire to be a faithful priestess of Vecna outstrips her need for revenge.

**Mizayana, Senior Priestess of Vecna, female human M9/P10 of Vecna:** AC 10 or 5 (chainmail is worn when battle is certain); MV 12; hp 40; THAC0 14 (12 with *mace* +2); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+3 (*mace* +2); SA command undead; SZ M (5'2" tall); ML average (9); Str 10, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 18, Wis 17, Cha 12; AL NE; XP 6,000.

*Special Equipment:* ring of undead influence (functions as a ring of human influence, except it works on undead).

*Cleric Spells Memorized (5/5/4/3/2):* 1st—*cause fear, cause light wounds* (×2), *command* (×2); 2nd—*aid, flame blade, hold person* (×2), *silence 15' radius*; 3rd—*animate dead, curse, dispel magic, prayer*; 4th—*cause serious wounds* (×2), *protection from good 10' radius*; 5th—*cause critical wounds, cure critical wounds*.

*Wizard Spells Memorized (4/3/3/2/1):* 1st—*comprehend languages, magic missile* (×2), *shield*; 2nd—*improved phantasmal force, knock, summon swarm*; 3rd—*feign death, fireball, lightning bolt*; 4th—*emotion, ice storm*; 5th—*teleport*.

#### 46. Inhabited Quarters

These quarters contain a cot with a soft mattress, a small chest, a stool, and a small table. The chest contains some simple clothes, a heavy black robe, and a few scrolls with devotional prayers to Vecna. Each chest also holds the resident's personal wealth, 2d6 gp, 1d20 sp, 2d10 cp, and 10% of 1d4 gems of 10d100 gp in value.

There is a 20% chance that the resident is here. If so, he is a Memory of Vecna. If present, the cleric is praying (1–3 on 1d6), doing paperwork or reading (4), or preparing to go to bed (5–6). All fight to the death against intruders, but if they fail morale checks, they attempt to surrender and reveal what they know.

**Memory of Vecna:** AC 5; MV 12; hp 20; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+1.

#### 47. Empty Quarters

The heroes find chambers that are currently uninhabited. Any one of them would serve as a place for the party to rest for a while. Each contains a bare cot, a small empty chest, a stool, and a small table. There is a 20% chance that the former resident failed to gather 1d6 tarnished coins (gold, silver, or copper) at the bottom of the chest.

#### 48. Storage Room

The storage room is filled with robes and vestments of Vecna's priesthood. Several holy symbols of the Whispered One hang from pegs, as do some standards, both handheld and designed to be mounted on armor and war machines, featuring both the familiar symbol of Vecna and an image of a snake wrapped around a starburst. (This last standard is only used on the highest of holy days. It represents the Serpent.)

#### 49. The Lawful Evil Shrine

The doors to the lawful evil shrine are made of solid gold, reinforced by magic so they are harder than steel. Their surfaces are highly polished, and heroes approaching them can see themselves reflected in their glittering surfaces.

The doors and the room beyond them are under the influence of a *forbiddance* spell. The spell was cast by a 15th-level undead cleric of Vecna (not currently present in the palace) and is not password locked. (For details, see the description of the 6th-level cleric spell *forbiddance* in the *Player's Handbook*.)

Just approaching the doors is a challenge for many heroes. Lawful evil beings can approach the doors without noticing anything strange. However, chaotic good people feel a strange sense of dread when they come within sight of these doors; they get the sudden impression that someone or something knows they are approaching, and if they pass through the doors they risk imprisonment for all eternity. Beings of other alignments simply feel as though something threatening is waiting beyond the doors.

When the heroes enter, there is a 60% chance the room is empty, and a 40% chance that 2d6+4 acolytes of Vecna are worshipping here. The heroes always surprise the acolytes, who are outraged at the interruption and attack the heroes at the first possible moment, unless they face a clearly superior party.

However, if the heroes previously encountered the cleric Lann, and he was able to escape, he will be found here with an organized force of guards, clerics, and undead. None of this group will be surprised. The DM should structure the defenders' attacks to be as efficient as possible.

**Acolytes of Vecna (2d6+4):** AC 10; MV 12; hp 5 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4.

**Lann:** AC 6; MV 12; hp 52; THAC0 13 or 11 (vs. good beings); #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+3 or 1d4+5 (vs. good beings).

**Memories of Vecna (6):** AC 5; MV 12; hp 26 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+1.

**Palace guards (4):** AC 8; MV 12; hp 10 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6.

**Palace guard officers (4):** AC 5; MV 12; hp 30 each; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8.

**Elite skeletons (21):** AC 5; MV 12; hp 16 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6.

**Skeleton warriors (7):** AC 2; MV 12; hp 72 each; THAC0 8; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10.

The room within features brilliantly white, smooth marble pillars and floor. There are no pews or any other places to sit in this chamber. In fact, it might even be difficult for the uninitiated to recognize it as a temple, as the altar is actually a life-size statue of Vecna as he appeared shortly after he became a lich.

The walls of the room feature marble bas-reliefs that display Vecna and his minions dispensing justice in his ancient, time-lost land. These bas-reliefs also serve as a history of Vecna's rise to power. A character from the GREYHAWK campaign who makes a successful Ancient History proficiency check recognizes the scenes as portraying important elements of the legends surrounding Vecna. The character then knows the information presented in the parentheses at the end of each scene. Most importantly, the character recognizes the sword in Scenes Seven and Eight as the *Sword of Kas*, an artifact which, according to legend, is the only weapon that can slay Vecna.

Should the party be in the company of a lawful worshiper of Vecna, the worshiper says this is the main shrine devoted to Vecna within the palace. He can relate the information provided in parentheses, explaining the scenes to the party. Naturally, the worshiper presents Vecna as the protagonist in all the scenes, bringing order to chaos and bringing power and glory to those who supported his effort. The other gods of Oerth are cursed for conspiring against Vecna. Now that Vecna is the god of secrets and hidden things, his followers believe that Vecna will soon triumph over his countless foes. The follower of Vecna also explains that the empty panel will someday display the final great deed that Vecna must perform in the name of order, an action that Vecna has known about since the time he ascended to demigodhood. The NPC tells the party that there are "lesser shrines" on the level that focus on other, less important aspects of Vecna's life. (The NPC refers to shrines for those of other alignments, whom the NPC considers less worthy in the opinion of Vecna. The NPC's inability to enter those shrines is merely "evidence" that Vecna does not want worthy followers to be spiritually weak.)

Any supporter of Iuz with the heroes arrogantly comments that this shrine is an empty tribute to a weak god. The Iuzite says that the demigod Iuz has by now gained possession of the *Sword of Kas* and should be about to destroy "that rotting corpse of a lich, Vecna."

The Iuzite then enters an excited state of religious ecstasy and reveals all the details given at the beginning of this chapter in the section titled Iuz's Master Plan. The party should now realize that they seem to be in the awkward position of needing to save Vecna from Iuz, if they are to save themselves and possibly the multiverse.

Although the room appears to be unguarded, the seated statue of Vecna (Scene Five) is actually a stone guardian, a type of variant stone golem. If anyone initiates any sort of violence in the chamber, it animates and attacks. In addition, the carved images of Vecna in Scene Two and Scene Six have been treated with a special kind of magic that causes them to discharge a *finger of death* spell at a random character in the room when the golem initiates its attack. The carvings only discharge a single spell each, but the golem pursues the offenders until it or they are destroyed.

**Stone guardian:** AC 2; MV 9; HD 4+4; hp 35; THAC0 15; #AT 2; Dmg 1d8+1; SD immune to non-magical missiles, suffers half damage from edged weapons, quarter damage from cold, fire, or electricity; SW instantly destroyed by a *stone to flesh*, *transmute rock to mud*, *stone shape*, or *dig* spell, with no saving throw allowed; SZ M (6'1" tall); ML fearless (20); Int non- (0); AL N; XP 8,000.

The scenes on the walls are as follows:

**Scene One:** A handsome young wizard wearing robes adorned with snakes casts a spell that causes an elderly man in ornate platemail to writhe in pain before him, as a mixture of soldiers and spellcasters look on in awe. The warrior's skull is starting to split open, revealing his brain. (This scene is Vecna seizing power in his home kingdom on behalf of his long-suffering, oppressed ethnic group.)

**Scene Two:** The same wizard, now wearing a crown and seating on a throne of snakes, looks on with a wistful smile as a hooded executioner prepares to strike a noble woman wearing an elegant dress and jewelry of a fashion that is unknown to the heroes. Corpses litter the ground around the figures. (This scene is Vecna watching the execution of the noble woman he had chosen to be his wife. She refused to wed him, so he killed her family one by one, saving her for last. Vecna never sought another wife after that.)

**Scene Three:** Now in his middle years, the wizard in snake-adorned robes stands on a ragged cliff. On a plain below, armies clash while a city is destroyed by the very earth, which rises up and smashes its walls as meteors streak from the sky into the city's heart. It is clear that the devastation is taking place as a result of a spell being cast by the wizard. The storm clouds overhead resemble misty snakes. (Here, Vecna is leveling a city whose people refused to join his growing empire, then tried to assassinate him.)



**Scene Four:** The wizard in the snake-ropes is now well past his physical prime. He is slaying a half-elf in similar robes; both figures are aglow with magical energies. Around them, other wizards are engaged in magical battles as well, half of them wearing snake robes like those the old wizard possesses. Ghostly snakes writhe through the scene. (As Vecna prepared to become a lich, his chief lieutenant and head apprentice, a half-elf, rose up to oppose him. Vecna decreed that he and all who supported him—even those who merely had friendly dealings with him—were to be slain on sight. Vecna himself and those apprentices who remained loyal to him eventually confronted the traitors personally. Vecna emerged victorious.)

**Scene Five:** This scene is more of a sculpture than a relief. It is a life-size statue of the wizard from the other scenes, except now his features are gaunt and skeletal. His hands are likewise bony talons. His snake-ropes are still of the same styling, but a new crown rests upon his brow, a crown that appears to be formed by snakes wrapping themselves around his skull. He is also seated on a different throne, one that is made from the fused bones of humans. Its back appears to be a large spider web that spreads across the wall behind him. Caught in the web are dozens of tiny human and demihuman figures, their faces and bodies contorted in terrible agony. Alongside Vecna's throne are dying, disemboweled victims, each wearing what appears to be a holy symbol on a burning necklace. (This statue represents Vecna in the many decades after he became a lich and rapidly built a vast empire of evil. It serves as the altar in this room, and those who worship here leave offerings at the statue's feet. The disemboweled victims were clerics of various deities, their symbols easily recognized by a hero from the GREYHAWK campaign with the Religion proficiency. The gods represented by those symbols were known in the ancient world to govern nature and various aspects of truth, justice, and goodness; most were Flan.)

**Scene Six:** Here, the now-undead wizard-king commands a bestial executioner, who seems to have been pieced together from the bodies of many other beings, to behead a muscular human warrior in ornate bronze armor. The warrior has a defiant, hate-filled look on his face. (Vecna here eliminates the last mortal opponent who dared stand against his expanding empire, Burgred of Mara. Soon afterward, Vecna had all of Mara's citizens slaughtered.)

**Scene Seven:** This scene features a giant of a man in ornate platemail—still of ancient and unidentifiable make—who is single-handedly defeating a ragtag army of men and women, led by an armored cleric with a sunburst on her breastplate. The giant man wields a short sword with a serrated blade; his breastplate is adorned with the serpent symbols that appeared on the robes of the wizard in the previous scenes. Over-

head are storm clouds, and in them are subtle representations of the undead wizard-king and serpents. (The warrior is Kas the Bloody-handed, Vecna's most infamous lieutenant.)

**Scene Eight:** In this scene, the warrior from the previous image battles the undead wizard-king, driving his short sword into the wizard's chest. The wizard in turn has unleashed a spell that blasts both of them into oblivion. The warrior is being flung backward into a black pool of darkness hovering in the air, and the wizard's left arm (with the exception of his hand) is already ablaze with all-consuming magic. (This scene portrays the betrayal of Vecna by Kas. This event is what ultimately led to Vecna's ascension to godhood.)

There is one more panel, but it is blank.

## 50. The Neutral Evil Shrine

The doors to this chamber are made of solid steel and polished so their surfaces are as reflective as mirrors.

The doors and the room beyond them are under the influence of a *forbiddance* spell. The spell was cast by a 14th-level cleric of Vecna (currently away at the battlefield in the Burning Peaks) and it is not password locked. (For details, see the description of the 6th-level cleric spell *forbiddance* in the *Player's Handbook*.)

The simple act of approaching the doors is an unpleasant experience for most people. Anyone of neutral evil alignment can approach the doors with no ill effect. A lawful good or chaotic good person feels a sudden chill, while barely audible—but clearly menacing—whispers seem to come from beyond the door. The whispers grow louder as the heroes draw nearer, but the only actual words they can make out are their names, uttered in hateful tones. Persons of other alignments hear nothing, though they feel something is wrong and it might not be safe to approach.

When the heroes enter, there is a 30% chance that 2d6+2 acolytes of Vecna are worshipping here. The heroes have a +1 bonus to surprise the acolytes. Unless clearly outnumbered, the acolytes attack the heroes at the first possible moment, though one of their number attempts to flee to summon the palace guards.

**Acolytes of Vecna (2d6+2):** AC 10; MV 12; hp 5 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4.

Within the room is a chamber with a vaulted ceiling. Two rows of pews are present. The walls are covered in polished steel that is as reflective as the door. The illusion created is that the room and its inhabitants recede into infinity in all directions—except up.

Overhead, an elaborate, chilling painting adorns the ceiling. At its center is a large skeletal hand with fingers splayed, a staring eye resting in its palm. All around the hand, snakes and humans writhe through scenes of depravity and violence. The entire ceiling is covered

with scenes of clever murders, subtle betrayals, and underhanded deeds.

The first pew on the right when the heroes enter is actually a magical teleportation device. Any person who sits in it and utters the phrase, "Vecna is eternal" is teleported to area 52, the Inner Sanctum. (High-ranking clerics of Vecna—including the Senior Priestess—are aware of this effect.)

Aside from the pews and the symbol representing Vecna on the ceiling, there is no other indication that this is a shrine. However, if the party is in the company of a neutral evil worshiper of Vecna, the worshiper informs them that this is the shrine where Vecna's most favored followers worship when within the temple walls. The follower explains that there are other shrines within the palace, but that they are where those who are viewed as lesser worshipers in the eyes of the god go. The follower further explains that the reflections represent the secrets worshipers hold, and that all secrets are revealed before Vecna's all-seeing eye. Those who worship here do not leave trinkets for the god, but instead offer up their secrets, as well as those they have been able to uncover about others, in silent prayer.

Any follower of Iuz with the party mocks this belief, asking, "If Vecna is so all-seeing, why is Iuz about to destroy his bony body once and for all?" The minion of Iuz now reveals that the demonic demigod plans to siphon Vecna's power into himself; Iuz failed at this once, but he learned from his errors. The minion does not intend to reveal Iuz's full plan but does so if pressed. (The NPC must fail a morale check if threatened or attacked, or else becomes defiant.)

Although this room appears to be unguarded, there are in fact several powerful creatures and magical wards that react to any violence perpetrated against inhabitants in the room, or even the chamber itself.

First, a 20d6 *fireball* is unleashed from the eye in the ceiling. Then, even before the smoke has cleared from the explosive attack, each surviving hero must make a saving throw vs. paralyzation. Each hero who fails this saving throw is immediately attacked by 2d6 Ravenloft fetches.

A Ravenloft fetch is a reflection that has broken away from its real world counterpart, and now seeks to steal its double's place. They are visible as ghastly, aberrant reflections of their doubles. They only emerge from the mirror world to attack their double, and they are harmless to anyone other than their duplicate. No one but their double can see, attack, or defend against them; in this encounter, all others simply see the set-upon heroes slashing at wisps of smoke in the room.

A Ravenloft fetch loses 1 hp each round it remains outside a mirror so long as its real-world counterpart exists. For this reason, they are particularly focused and need never make morale checks. While the fetch is outside the mirror world, it is vulnerable to attacks, but can

only be harmed by spells or magic weapons of at least +1 enchantment.

Although a fetch attacks with whatever weapon it is carrying when it was created, it drains one experience level from its double with each successful hit. If a fetch succeeds at completely draining its double, it steals its victim's place in the real world. The victim is essentially unchanged but takes on a chaotic evil alignment. A hero usurped by a fetch does possess a reflection, but close examination shows that this reflection's eyes are always haunted and fearful.

Even so, a fetch's existence can be fleeting. If a fetch is killed, it returns to its rightful place within the reflected world and the real character is restored. (Subconsciously, the fetch knows that death will merely doom it to a boring existence as a reflection again. As such, the replaced character should suddenly become more watchful, cautious, or even cowardly. Dungeon Masters should let the players whose heroes were so replaced in on the secret of what has happened, so they can play their characters accordingly.) Once freed, the real character is fully healed of all injuries and is in possession of whatever items the fetch carried at its moment of destruction. However, the victim does not gain experience points while trapped in the reflected world.

**Fetch, Ravenloft:** AC 4; MV 6; HD \*; hp \*; THAC0 \*; #AT 1; Dmg special; SA level drain; SD cannot be mind-read on this demiplane, never checks for morale while attacking its double; SW special; SZ \*; ML 11 (after switching places with its real-world double); Int \*; AL CE; XP varies.

*Notes:* An asterisk indicates that the characteristic is the same as that of the fetch's real-world double.

## 51. The Chaotic Evil Shrine

The doors to this chamber are made of red and black marble, and they feature bas-reliefs of large serpents twisting through obscuring fog. The carvings represent exceptional workmanship, and it is almost as if the serpents might come to life at any moment.

The doors and the room beyond them are under the influence of a *forbiddance* spell. The spell was cast by a 12th-level cleric of Vecna, and it is not password locked. All people who are not chaotic evil must make saving throws in order to pass through the doors. (For details, see the description of the 6th-level cleric spell *forbiddance* in the *Player's Handbook*.)

Even approaching the doors is difficult for most people. Chaotic evil beings can approach the doors without difficulty, but lawful good people feel a strange sense of dread when they see these doors. The latter have the thought that someone or something of great power (and limitless evil) knows they are approaching. Beings of other alignments simply feel as though something threatening might be waiting beyond the doors.

When the heroes enter, there is a 60% chance of finding 2d6+2 acolytes of Vecna worshipping here. The heroes have normal chances to surprise them. If given a chance, the clerics surrender. If allowed to leave, the acolytes summon the guards.

**Acolytes of Vecna (2d6+2):** AC 10; MV 12; hp 5 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4.

Beyond the doors, the heroes find a chilling room with a black ceiling supported by pillars of red and black marble. The pillars are carved to resemble life-size naked humans writhing in states of passion (or agony—it is difficult to tell) as huge snakes slither over them. The walls and floor are of white marble. The floor is sculpted with more life-size images of humans—some clearly undead—and large snakes, making for uneven footing. The walls are covered with bas-reliefs featuring some of the most important moments of Vecna's history, all dealing with his interaction with his benefactor, the mysterious Serpent.

Like the other shrines, it may be hard to tell that this is actually a holy site as there is no obvious altar. However, if the party is in the company of a chaotic evil follower of Vecna, the follower claims this is the most holy of Vecna's temples in the palace; the other two are for Vecna's less worthy followers. The follower relates the

information provided in parentheses below, explaining the scenes to the party. Naturally, the worshiper presents Vecna as the protagonist in all the scenes, bringing freedom to the faithful to do as they will with their lives. The worshiper rails angrily against heroes and gods who conspired against Vecna, because they feared his power. Vecna's chaotic followers believe that ultimate liberty is soon at hand, and the multiverse will be awash with the blood of the weak who stand in Vecna's way. The follower believes the two empty panels will someday bear the images depicting that great, cataclysmic liberation. The NPC does not want to enter the others shrines for fear of being spiritually weakened.

If there is a minion of Iuz in the party's company as well, the minion mocks the NPC's beliefs, openly revealing Iuz's master plan as it is described at the beginning of this section. Unless the party intervenes, the follower of Vecna flies into a homicidal rage and tries to kill the offending follower of Iuz and anyone who attempts to intervene.

Once blood has been spilled in the temple or if a life is lost through some other violent act, the sculpted floor instantly becomes a living wall. (*Note:* Although the basics of the living wall are summarized below, the DM should read about this monstrosity and become familiar with its odd abilities in the *MONSTROUS MANUAL* tome before running this encounter.)



A stench of rotting flesh fills the room as the floor changes. The sculpted orgy of passion becomes an orgy of death as the idealized figures become living men and women trapped within a slimy green substance. They shriek in pain and horror and reach for the heroes, attempting to pull them down into the gelatinous substance. The snakes also come to life, rising from their prison, as they try to wrap themselves around the heroes. A hero grappled either by the humans or the snakes must make a successful saving throw vs. spell or become absorbed into the floor. If the saving throw is successful, the hero is able to break free.

The Living Wall consists of twenty-three trapped prisoners of war (from *Tovag*) and twelve giant constrictor snakes. Each creature receives one attack against a randomly determined hero each round. Flying heroes must be at least 5 feet above the floor to avoid being struck by the snakes, and 2 feet above the floor to avoid the human attackers.

Persons drawn into the wall turn on their comrades, adding their attacks to that of the wall. Absorbed heroes cannot be recovered through any means short of a *wish*. Any magical defensive bonuses enjoyed by the absorbed heroes improve the wall's Armor Class.

**Living wall:** AC 2 (*bracers of defense* AC 3, *ring of protection* +3); MV nil; HD 85; hp 680; THAC0 by creature attacking; #AT 47; Dmg by creature attacking; SA absorption (successful save vs. spell to avoid if touched; absorption automatic if victim is slain by the living wall, only a *wish* can recover absorbed victims); SD +3 to saving throws (*ring of protection* +3), immune to all planar and temporal spells, any attempt to use magic to communicate with or mind-read this monster results in horror check, attempts to cut through this monster cause all within 30' to make saving throws vs. poison (failure indicates victims pass out from nausea for 1d6 rounds); SW gives off moaning sounds in a 15' radius; MR 20%; SZ G (about 1,960 square feet, filling area 51); ML fearless (20); Int special (by creature absorbed); AL CE; XP 7,000.

*Notes:* The living wall's hit dice rating applies only to its saving throws (as a warrior), not to its attacks. This creature absorbed *bracers of defense*, AC 3 and a *ring of protection* +3 in addition to its live victims. This living wall contains the following creatures, which fight for it.

**Trapped warriors, F4 (23):** THAC0 17; #AT 1 (each); Dmg nil; SA grapple. Each grapple attempt, if successful, holds a victim near the living wall. Two or more grapple successful attempts in a round cause the victim to make a saving throw vs. spell; failure indicates the victim is pulled into the living wall and absorbed in the next round.

**Giant constrictor snakes (12):** THAC0 15; #AT 2 (each); Dmg 1d4 bite and 2d4 constriction. If constriction is successful, no further attack roll need be made for it, and 2d4 points of damage will automatically be made each round thereafter; however, biting attacks must be rolled every round to do damage. Every round that a victim is constricted, the victim must make a saving throw vs. spell; failure indicates the victim is pulled into the living wall and absorbed in the next round.

If anyone witnesses another person absorbed by a living wall, that person must make a horror check (*Domains of Dread*, Chapter Six). If this book is not available, have the witness make a saving throw vs. spell (Wisdom bonuses apply), with failure indicating the victim is struck by a *fear* spell (regardless of the witness's level). The latter mechanic can be used as a substitute for any horror check involving this creature.

This living wall can be destroyed only if it catches and slays its creator (Krakkat the Observant, a lich appearing in areas 15, 19, and 27) or if its creator is destroyed in the Palace of Vecna by the heroes.

The scenes on the walls are as follows.

**Scene One:** An old, slightly bent wizard stands on a windblown cliff. He wears a large gem-encrusted crown and black robes with smoky images of serpents embroidered upon them. A palace that looks like Vecna's palace in Cavitius stands in the distance, beyond a plane littered with the remains of what must have been an epic clash of armies. Overhead, the sky boils with lightning-torn storm clouds. A massive serpent-made partially from the clouds and partially from lightning snakes down toward the wizard, wraps around him, and seems to whisper in his ear. The old man's face seems aglow with understanding. Those who study the image closely note the faces of somber men and woman hidden in the clouds. (This scene portrays the Serpent—the ancient source of Vecna's magical might—telling its loyal servant how he might triumph over Death itself and guide his empire to greater glory. The cloud faces are various deities from the world of Oerth, Vecna's place of origin; any person from the GREYHAWK campaign with the Religion proficiency can name several of the gods, who appear to be Flan in nature.)

**Scene Two:** A skeletal figure with glowing eyes stands before the Spider Throne in flowing robes covered with arcane symbols. He offers a short sword with a serrated blade to a kneeling man in ornate platemail and a horned great helm of a design that is unfamiliar. The kneeling figure's gloved hands are covered in blood, presumably that of another armored warrior who lays near by with his head split open and his brains spilling out. (This is Vecna awarding Kas the Bloody-handed with the enchanted sword that is now

known as the *Sword of Kas*. It is widely believed that Vecna came to regret this, though followers of Vecna say that the Whispered One knew full well that Kas would eventually betray him, and that Vecna himself gave Kas the tool needed to do so.)

**Scene Three:** The armored warrior from the previous scene slashes through the skeletal form from the previous scene with the very sword he was given. The skeletal figure seems to explode with magical energy, and only his left eye and left hand untouched by the surging power. The armored warrior is not faring much better, as his armor seems to be melting under the onslaught as he is hurled back into what looks like a black hole or gate in the air. The Spider Throne shatters in the background. (This scene portrays Kas's attempt to overthrow Vecna, the venture that resulted in the end of their existences on the world of Oerth, though they would both be back, eventually. Kas was hurled into Citadel Cavitius, Vecna's prison colony on the quasi-elemental plane of Ash, which later was converted into the city of Cavitius, here on the Demiplane of Dread.)

**Scene Four:** The skeletal figure stands on a pedestal, holding out his left arm, which ends in a burned stump. Within his skull burns his right eye while the left socket is a gaping hole. He wears the elaborate robes of an archmage. (This is a representation of Vecna after he ascended to godhood, which is obvious to any hero from the GREYHAWK campaign with the Religion proficiency.)

Worshippers kneel at Vecna's feet, one of whom raises his left arm; his hand is blackened and clawlike. A massive ghostly Serpent rises behind and wraps around Vecna's form, the same Serpent that whispered in the ear of the ancient wizard in the first relief. (This scene portrays Vecna founding his church upon ascending to the status of demigod of secrets and hidden things. The Serpent's aid was instrumental in his rise, but any follower of Vecna also claims that his desire to be free of manipulating, lying gods and self-aggrandizing mortal lords also fueled his rise to godhood. If a hero gets into a debate with a follower of Vecna about how people in Citadel Cavitius are mistreated, the follower says that everyone here can rise as high as his or her abilities allow, and everyone knows who holds power and how it might be obtained.)

**Scene Five:** In the background are gigantic stone monuments, huge primitive archways resting on curving paths of stone. Light and darkness, fire and lightning, and energies untold seethe from the arches and dance in the sky. Two immense images do magical battle in the foreground: Vecna and a huge, red, bat-winged humanoid with clawed fingers. The ghostly, massive Serpent wraps around the combatants, both in the heavens and on the ground, while boiling storm clouds contain concealed images of many of the good and neutral gods of Oerth. (This image is a some-

what distorted reference to the events in Chapter 11 of the classic AD&D adventure *Vecna Lives!* (TSR #9309). A follower of Vecna explains, with complete conviction, that Vecna attempted to make his vast store of secrets available to all the people of Oerth, and that his faithful followers would be elevated to positions of ultimate power. The other gods of Oerth, in cowardly fashion, manipulated mortals into thwarting the Lord of Secrets' goals, with only Iuz—"demonic bastard though he is"—having the courage to face him personally. The follower thinks it is tragic that Vecna was not able to gift all of Oerth with his wisdom and guidance.)

**Scene Six:** This image echoes that in Scene One. Vecna stands upon a cliff, with Citadel Cavitius in the distance. From the outside, Citadel Cavitius looks vaguely like a giant skull from which the crown has been removed to allow buildings, towers, and spires to rise toward the sky. Vecna appears to be raging toward heavy clouds in the sky, seemingly oblivious to the fact that the immense ghostly Serpent is still wrapped around him, still whispering in his ear. (Following the defeat of his plans for domination of Oerth in *Vecna Lives!*, Vecna was drawn into the Demiplane of Dread and trapped there in physical form. All his most loyal followers and supporters were deposited here as well. Any follower of Vecna who is with the heroes says that the gods of Oerth prostrated themselves to a cabal of otherworldly powers to accomplish this, but that Vecna had foreseen these events long ago. He hopes to escape his confinement and finish what he started. He has already laid the groundwork for that escape, the follower claims, but now his efforts are in danger because of Iuz's interference. If the DM wishes, he can have the follower relate the events of *Vecna Reborn*, unless the heroes partaking in this quest are the same ones who took part in that previous one.)

This panel is also the location of a secret door. It leads to area 52.

**Scene Seven:** As the heroes watch, this image is in the process of being created by invisible artisans. The emerging (and highly disturbing) scene appears to show a grinning Iuz stabbing Vecna with the serrated blade, in a battle reminiscent of the one in Scene Three. Here, Vecna seems to be disintegrating, his bones falling apart and fading away.

Any worshiper of Vecna with the party becomes visibly distressed at this scene. The panel was blank the last time that person visited the temple. The worshiper believes that if the scene is allowed to come to pass, all of Cavitius will be absorbed into Iuz's being. A follower of Iuz, if present, is elated, as this image seems to portray the certain victory of the Old One. The appearance of this scene causes a fight to break out between worshipers of Vecna and Iuz, if both are present.

Any follower of Vecna who is present urges the heroes to rush to Vecna's side, offering to escort them if need be. ("You may hate my lord, but if Iuz triumphs, we will all be destroyed!") The follower also sees to it that the heroes first enter Vecna's fabled personal library, where they might find the "Sword of the Betrayer" before Iuz gains possession of it. The follower explains that the Sword of the Betrayer is the weapon portrayed in Scenes Three and Seven.

The last two panels are blank.

## 52. Inner Sanctum

This holiest of temples in Vecna's palace can be accessed via secret staircases from areas 49 or 51, or by teleporting here from area 50. The evil energies concentrated in this place are so strong that each paladin and cleric of good alignment must make a successful saving throw vs. paralyzation or suffer -2 penalties on attack rolls and saving throws for 1d6 hours after leaving the temple, because of nausea and headaches. The penalties apply while the hero is in the temple, regardless of whether the save is successful.

The chamber is decorated entirely in red-veined black marble, and black pews stand in neat rows. The room is even more dimly lit than the rest of the palace, and it takes one minute for a human character's eyes to adjust and distinguish shapes from shadows. Red and black banners bearing the eye-and-hand symbol stir gently against the wall, moved as if by an imperceptible breeze, filling the room with whispering sounds. Unlike the outer shrines, there is a clearly defined altar at the front of the room. It is a circular platform 20 feet across with a large reddish block of stone at its center.

A circular staircase rises directly through what would be the pupil of a massive representation of the *Eye of Vecna* painted on the ceiling. It is the only access to the next level from this chamber, and it leads to area 55, the chamber that grants access to the Black Tower. Any person not of evil alignment who climbs it must make a saving throw vs. spell while passing through the eye. Anyone failing the saving throw is affected by the 4th-level wizard spell *enervation* at the 12th level of effect and must make a second saving throw, this one vs. death magic. If the second save fails, the victim falls under a *hold person* spell (12th-level effect). The victim must make a saving throw vs. spell each round or suffer another temporary level drain from the heightened *enervation* effect. A successful *dispel magic* frees the victim from the *hold person* effect, but lost levels return only after 1d4+12 hours.

There is an 80% chance that the party chooses to enter the Inner Sanctum when the chamber is empty. The Heart and Voice of Vecna conduct joint daily services here, leading clerics of all three sects in prayers. During the service, the eye painted on the ceiling glows

with a hellish red light, reminding all present that Vecna can perceive all they do and think. All clerics wear their full ceremonial garb, which consists of red and black robes and white skull masks. These extra robes and masks are stored here in compartments under the pews.

As mentioned above, the Inner Sanctum appears to be empty most of the time. In fact, the movement of the banners is actually caused by fifteen shadows, ten slow shadows, and a shadow fiend (named Krandala, trapped and enslaved by Vecna) moving along the walls in the dark. If anyone who is not a worshiper of Vecna steps onto the circular platform containing the altar, 2d6 shadows and 2d4 slow shadows attack at once. For the purposes of this encounter, two slow shadows can attach themselves to a hero at any given time. The remaining creatures attack anyone who comes to the defense of the victim, joining the fray 3 rounds later. (The shadow fiend uses its ranged attacks, including its *magic jar* ability, to turn one of the heroes against the rest before it engages in melee itself.)

The creatures also attack if any form of vandalism or attempt to desecrate the Inner Sanctum is undertaken. They do not interfere with heroes who climb the stairs, however.

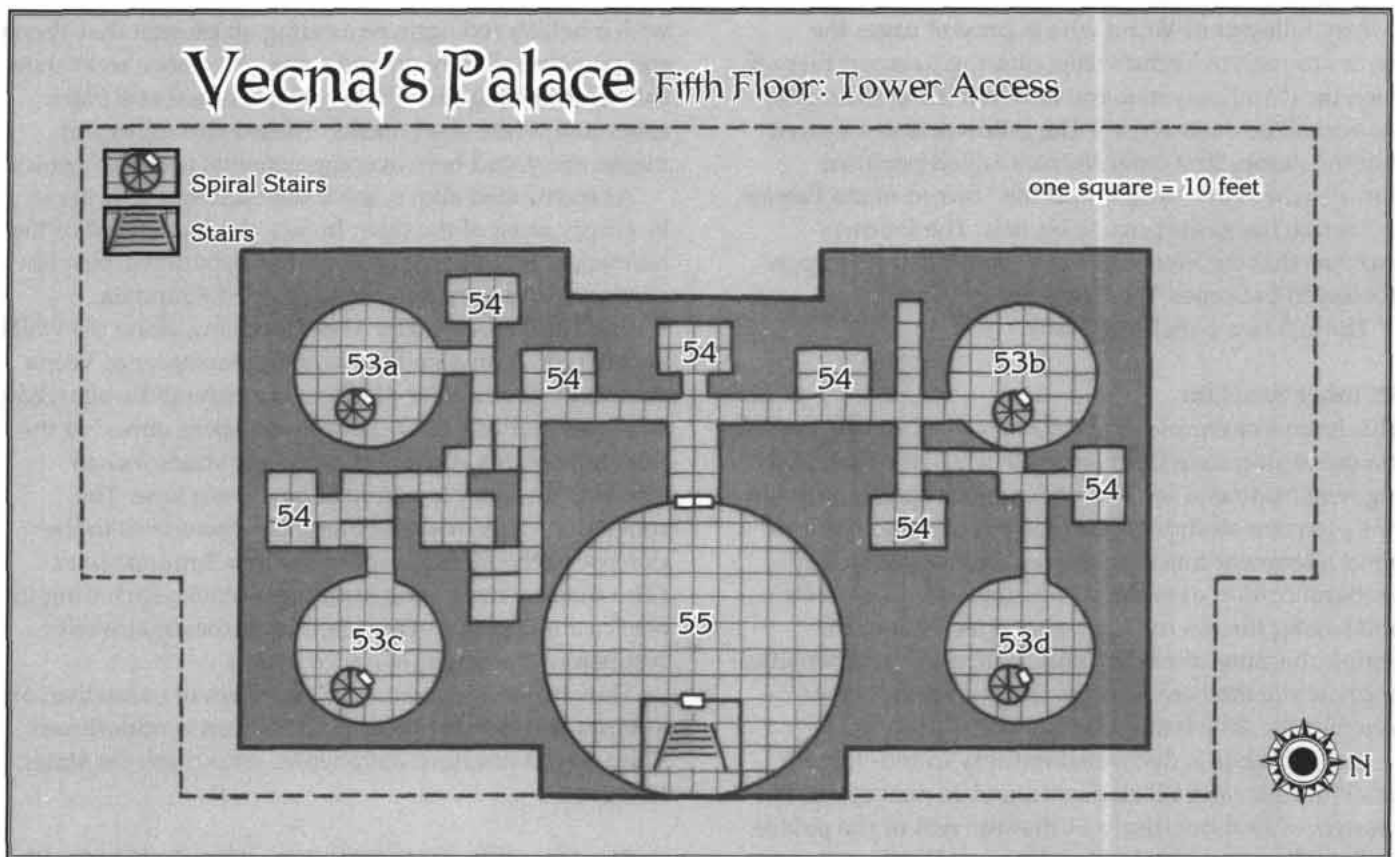
**Shadows (15):** AC 7; MV 12; hp 27 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 and special.

**Slow shadows (10):** AC 8; MV 12; hp 32 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4.

**Shadow fiend:** AC 9 (bright light), 5 (dim light or light spell), or 1 (darkness); MV 12; HD 7+3; hp 48; THAC0 13; #AT 3 (claw/claw/bite); Dmg 1d6/1d6/1d8; SA spells, if it gains surprise it leaps up to 30 feet and makes 4 claw attacks (no bite); SD cannot be mind-read on this demiplane, 90% undetectable in shadows, immune to fire, cold, electricity, and telepathic psionics; SW avoids bright light, *light* spell does 1d6 points of damage, can be turned as "Special"; SZ M (6' tall); ML fearless (20); Int very (12); AL CE; XP 2,000.

*Notes:* In bright light, a shadow fiend suffers double damage from all attacks. In darkness, it suffers only half damage from all attacks. It gains +1 bonus to all of its attack rolls in dim light and a +2 bonus in darkness. Once per day, a shadow fiend may cast *darkness* 15' radius or generate a 30'-radius *fear* spell. Once per week, the creature (with a proper receptacle) can cast *magic jar* at a single victim; if the victim saves, the shadow fiend is stunned for 1d3 rounds.

# Vecna's Palace Fifth Floor: Tower Access



## Fifth Floor: Tower Access

This is a simple level, constructed primarily for defensive purposes. Hallways lead to the bases of the four minor towers that rise above the palace. A warded staircase leads to the private residence of Vecna himself.

This level bears clear evidence of Iuz and his forces having penetrated it. All guard posts between minor tower 53c and the access to the Black Tower have been neutralized. Even if the heroes do not stumble upon this cleared access way, they find resistance fairly light. Vecna has diverted his most skilled guards elsewhere in the city, leaving just enough resistance to avoid making Iuz or the heroes suspicious.

### 53a. Minor Tower Access

The unadorned stone floor and walls of this room are splattered with dried gore. A large sculpture made out of bones from a great number of creatures—cow hooves, horse legs, a hill giant's hips and rib cage, six arms from various apes, and the skull of a small dragon—stands at its center. A doorway leads to stairs going up.

The sculpture is actually a bone golem, a particularly hideous creation placed here by the lich who lives at the top of the tower, to insure his privacy. If any corporeal being enters this chamber without showing a holy symbol of Vecna, the golem animates and attacks. (The vampires who share the tower with the lich pass the

golem in their mist forms, or turn into bats and fly off the balcony in area 59a.)

**Development:** The bone golem's first action is to throw back its head and issue an explosive burst of chilling laughter that seems to reverberate through the very bones of the heroes. It then shuffles toward them, its bones clicking as its odd body sways back and forth on its misshapen legs. (See the monster's description for the results of the golem's magical laughter.)

The golem's laughter alerts nearby guards, and 2d6+2 zombies and 1d6 wights arrive within 1d4 rounds. All attack the heroes, except one wight who immediately moves to the doorway and starts closing a heavy black door. The wight intends to block access to the rest of the tower, and the door closes easily. The wooden bar needed to secure it hangs in brackets just inside. If a hero beats the wight's initiative by 2 or more, the hero can attack the wight and prevent it from closing the door.

**Zombies (2d6+2):** AC 8; MV 6; hp 16 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8.

**Wight (1d6):** AC 5; MV 12; hp 32 each; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4.

**Bone golem:** AC 0; MV 12; HD 14; hp 70; THAC0 7; #AT 1; Dmg 3d8; SA laugh (repeat every three rounds) causes automatic fear and horror checks in all listeners,

such that failing one causes paralysis for 2d6 rounds but failing both causes instant death; SD +2 or better weapon to hit, half damage from piercing or edged weapons, immune to *charm*, *sleep*, *hold*, *fear*, cold, poison, paralysis, death magic, and telepathic psionics; SW if *shatter* is cast upon the golem and it fails a saving throw vs. spell then all weapons capable of harming it cause double damage, *dispel magic* of 18th level causes the creature to collapse for a number of turns equal to the caster's level, *dispel magic* of 19th level or above destroys golem; SZ M (6' tall); ML fearless (20); Int non- (0); AL N; XP 18,000.

*Notes:* If fear and horror checks are not used (as per *Domains of Dread*, Chapter Six), have each listener within 120' make two saving throws vs. spell (Wisdom bonuses applicable), with one failure producing paralysis and failure in both producing immediate death from terror.

#### 53b. Minor Tower Access

Access to the rest of the tower can be blocked with a heavy door. Its hinges are well oiled, and the wooden bar needed to secure the door hangs in brackets just inside.

#### 53c. Minor Tower Access

This is a plain, unadorned chamber. Shattered bones litter one side of the room. A count of split skulls or discarded swords indicates these are the remains of a dozen skeletons. If examined by a spellcaster who knows *animate dead*, it can be determined that the bones show signs of having been treated in the fashion required to properly animate them as skeletal servants. A successful Intelligence check further allows a hero examining the bones to know that they seem to have been flung against the wall and shattered, perhaps all at the same time, with incredible force. No threats are present in this room. (The skeletons were destroyed by Iuz as he made his way to Vecna's throne room.)

Access to the rest of the tower can be blocked with a heavy door. Its silent hinges are oiled, and the wooden bar needed to secure the door hangs on brackets just inside.

#### 53d. Minor Tower Access

Five skeleton warriors stand at attention in this chamber, their massive two-handed swords planted point first on the floor as their bony hands clench the hilts. The skeleton warriors guard an important death knight who resides in the tower ("Kas," in area 60d); they have been given strict orders not to allow anyone who is not a cleric of Vecna to disturb their master. They move to attack any person who does not wear a holy symbol of Vecna.

Access to the rest of the tower can be blocked with a heavy door. Its hinges are well oiled and silent; the

wooden bar needed to secure the door hangs on brackets just inside.

**Skeleton warriors (5):** AC 2; MV 12; hp 72 each; THAC0 8; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10.

#### 54. Watch Rooms

These chambers serve as duty stations for the living and undead soldiers charged with preventing intruders from entering any of the towers. They are simply furnished, containing four wooden chairs and a table. The guards challenge persons they notice passing their post, with the exception of those dressed as Vecna's clerics or in the company of a resident of the towers. The guards have not been informed that Vecna wishes the party to reach his inner sanctum, and they attack the heroes in an attempt to kill them if the heroes do not surrender after being challenged.

**Development:** There are 1d4+1 palace guards and their commander, who is either a palace guard officer (roll 1d6: 1-5) or a wight (6), in the room. If the commander is a wight, four elite skeletons stand at attention against the room's far wall, ready to obey the wight's every command.

Each watch room contains a horn. If combat erupts between the guards and the party, one guard attempts to reach the horn and sound the alarm. If help is summoned, 2d6+2 zombies and 1d6 wights arrive in 1d4 rounds, then 1d3 spectres and 1d6 additional zombies arrive 1 round later.

**Palace guards (1d4+1):** AC 8; MV 12; hp 10 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6.

**Palace guard officer:** AC 5; MV 12; hp 30; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8.

**Wight:** AC 5; MV 12; hp 32; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4.

**Elite skeletons (4):** AC 5; MV 12; hp 16 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6.

**Zombies:** AC 8; MV 6; hp 16; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8.

**Spectres (1d3):** AC 2; MV 15, fly 30 (B); hp 56 each; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8.

#### 55. Black Tower Access

The door to this room is *wizard locked* at 20th level. The password is "Vecna is my eternal master," spoken in any language. All of Vecna's lieutenants, their immediate subordinates (such as the Senior Priestess), and the undead lords who serve Vecna in the city beyond the palace (such as Haroln) know it.



Beyond is a circular chamber, the walls of which are black marble shot through with red veins. The exception is a gigantic, white-stone representation of the *Hand of Vecna*, on the wall across from where the party enters the room. A doorway is on the hand's severed wrist, beyond which a rising flight of stairs can be seen. A similar gigantic image of the *Eye of Vecna* is on the floor, inlaid in white stone.

The room is enchanted with a permanent *sympathy* spell (20th-level effectiveness) that causes lawful good humans to want to stay here at all costs if they fail saving throws vs. spell. If the saving throw is successful, the hero is seemingly unaffected, but must make another successful saving throw vs. spell 1d6 turns later or be overcome by an irresistible compulsion to return to the room. Once there, another successful saving throw must be made, or the hero is forced to stay.

The stairs beyond are not enchanted or trapped.

## The Four Minor Towers

The four minor towers are nearly identical in their general content, with the upper reaches of each tower containing the private chambers of one of Vecna's favored minions or the prison of a hated enemy.

### 56a-d. Receiving Room

These chambers are richly appointed sitting rooms where the residents of the towers can meet with visitors.

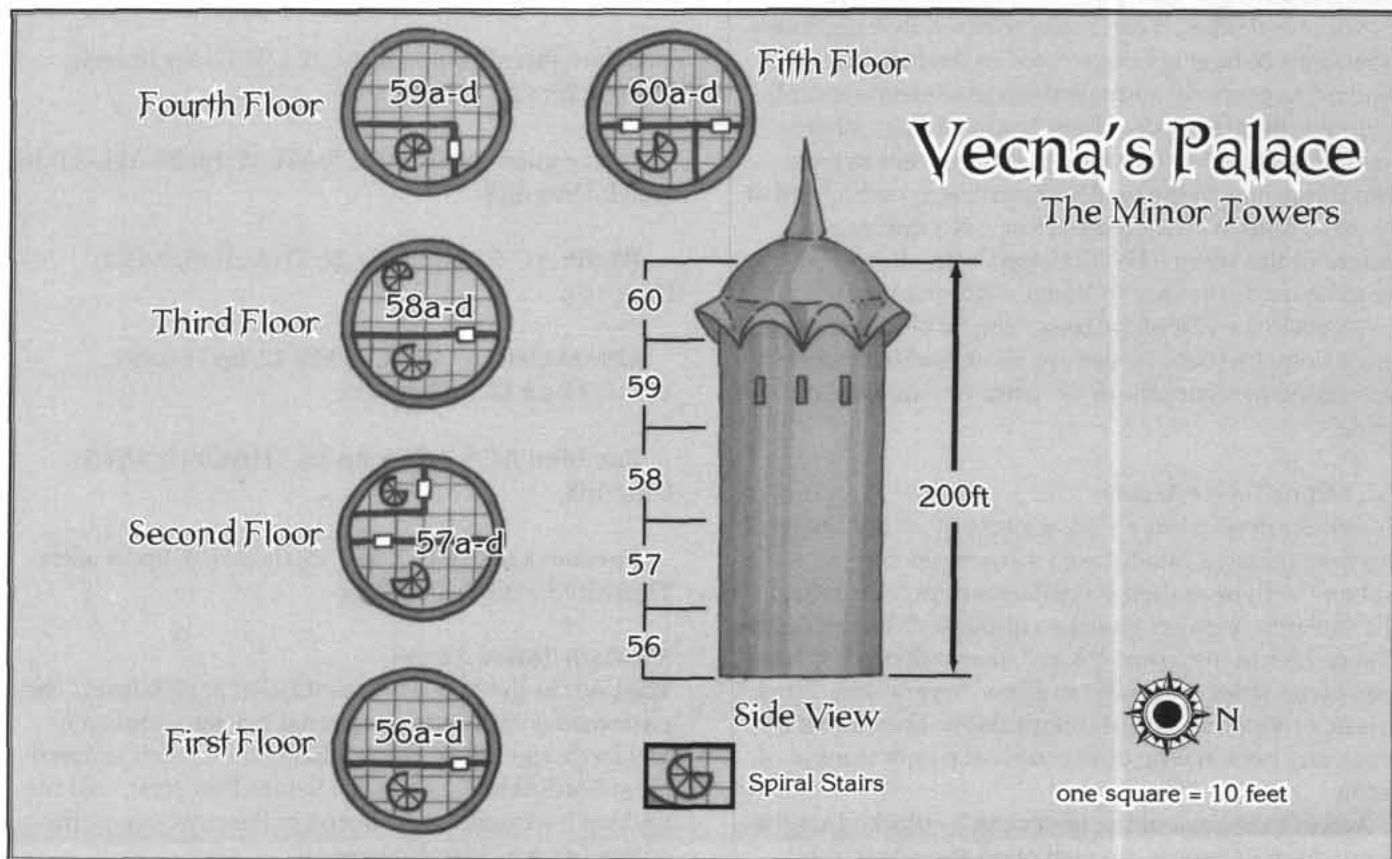
The decor is deep reds and blacks, and a red banner featuring an image of an outstretched skeletal hand with a staring eye in its palm hangs on the wall across from the entrance.

The furnishings in each room consist of comfortable chairs, footstools and small tables. A black chest with elaborate ironwork bearing the symbols of several evil gods, as well as carvings of serpents, stands in one corner. Each room also features a chesslike game board and pieces, all of marble. The white pawns resemble beautiful aasimon, while the black pawns resemble the most hideous of demons. A successful Religion proficiency check for a GREYHAWK campaign hero reveals that the major pieces are carved to resemble common avatars of many gods of Vecna's world of origin, Oerth, divided between the notably good deities (white side) and evil ones (black side). Each game set is so finely made that it is worth 1,100 gp.

In 56a, the chest is actually a killer mimic. It attacks anyone who touches it.

**Killer mimic:** AC 7; MV 3; HD 10; hp 49; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 3d4 (pseudopod); SA glue; SD camouflage, immune to acid, molds, green slimes, and various puddings; SZ L (200 cubic feet); ML elite (13); Int semi (3); AL NE; XP 3,000.

*Notes:* Mimics impose a -4 penalty on their opponent's surprise roll. They are covered in a gluelike substance that causes any creature who touches them to be



held fast. The mimic can cancel the effect any time it desires, but otherwise alcohol weakens the glue in three rounds, or the trapped creature can break free with a successful Open Doors check. Only one attempt may be made to do this, and it is the only action the creature can take during that round. The glue dissolves 5 rounds after the mimic dies.

In areas 56b and 56d (see below), the chests are locked and trapped with *fire traps* cast at 15th level. Within are kept 1d6+1 random magic items, 1d3+1 magic items from Table 97 in the *DMG*, 1d10+5 random gems, 1d20+10 pp, 1d10+40, 1d20+10 ep, 1d100+50 sp, and 1d10+10 cp. Hidden amid the treasure in each chest is a *jewel of flawlessness*.

The chest in 56c is not trapped. It contains 1d20+10 pp, 1d100+100 cp, and a spectre that appears to be a young boy.

**Spectre:** AC 2; MV 15, fly 30 (B); hp 56; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8.

Also in area 56d, a suit of shining black field plate, complete with gauntlets that appear like clawed hands and a helmet that is forged to resemble a terrible monster face, stands in one corner. The gauntlets are wrapped around a large two-handed sword. It appears as though it is part of the decor, but, in truth, the armor contains a guardian skeleton warrior. The skeleton warrior attacks anyone who continues to the next level of this tower without being in the company of a cleric of Vecna. The sound of combat brings 1d6+1 additional skeleton warriors within 1d4 rounds. The master of this tower, a death knight ("Kas"), waits at the top of the stairs leading to area 60d; if he hears the clanking armor of his minions, he lets loose with his *fireball* attack, blasting it down the stairs.

**Skeleton warriors:** AC 2; MV 12; hp 75 each; THAC0 8; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10.

#### 57a–d. Kitchen

These chambers have fallen into disuse in all four towers. The coating of dust and abundance of cobwebs make it clear that no one has been in these rooms for decades.

A 50% chance exists that the large spiders that spun the webs are still here. If so, 2d10 large spiders are present, as well as the dried husks of victims (2d4 of whom were human). There is nothing of value in any of the kitchens.

**Large spiders (2d10):** AC 8; MV 6, web 15; hp 9 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8.

#### 58a–d. Servant Quarters

These rooms once housed the men and women who tended to the needs of the tower's residents. Six souls dwelled here, sleeping on simple mats and eating their meager meals at short tables. These furnishings have long since decayed, however, now remaining merely as piles of debris.

Area 58a is the resting place of Xaven and Kyrie, the Mulan vampires from area 38. The chamber is free of dust and cobwebs and is decorated with beautiful landscape paintings executed in a variety of sizes and styles (15 total, each worth 2d6 × 100 gp). At the center of the chamber is a *wizard locked* sarcophagus. Its lid is carved with the image of two nude lovers in an embrace; anyone who has previously met Xaven and Kyrie and makes a successful Wisdom check recognizes them as the figures portrayed. The *wizard lock* was cast by Xaven and has 2nd-level effectiveness. The password, "For the love of magic," opens the coffin.

If Xaven and Kyrie were defeated earlier, they can be found here, in the process of recovering. With the exception of their spellbooks, their treasures are hidden beneath the layer of soil that serves as their bed. They possess 13,000 sp and 2,300 ep (all of the coins minted and used in their homeland of Hazlan), five gems worth 2d4 × 100 gp each, and a *wand of magic missiles* with 14 charges left.

The vampires' spellbooks are identical, each containing the 1st-level spells *burning hands*, *chill touch*, *identify*, *magic missile*, *read magic*, *light*, *shield*, *shocking grasp*, *sleep*, *unseen servant*, and *wall of fog*; and these 2nd-level spells: *blindness*, *blur*, *continual light*, *darkness 15' radius*, *detect invisibility*, *fog cloud*, *forget*, *Melf's acid arrow*, *mirror image*, *shatter*, *spectral hand*, and *wizard lock*.

Area 58b is the lair of four spectres. They were once an elderly woman and her three teenaged children, two girls and a boy.

Areas 58c and 58d are abandoned and choked with dust and cobwebs. They should be treated as the kitchens above (area 57a–d), but there is a 20% chance that 1d4 large spiders are present in each.

**Xaven:** AC 1; MV 12, fly 18 (C) or (E); hp 50; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4.

**Kyrie:** AC 1; MV 12, fly 18 (C) or 9 (E); hp 50; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4.

**Spectres (4):** AC 2; MV 15, fly 30 (B); hp 56 each; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8.

**Large spiders (1d4):** AC 8; MV 6, web 15; hp 9 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8.

#### 59a–d. Dining Room

Windows in these chambers overlook Citadel Cavius, giving a view of the bewildering tapestry of smoking chimneys and black rooftops. Beyond the confines of the fortress, the gray wastes of Cavitius stretch toward distant mountains. Each chamber features dark wood paneling, red banners displaying the hand-and-eye symbol of Vecna, and a large table set for thirteen people, six on either side and a single person at the end of the table facing the door. The silverware (plates, knives, and serving dishes) features beautiful craftsmanship in abstract patterns and is worth 600 gp per set.

In area 59a, the silverware has been swept from the table and lies in a tarnished, dented heap in one corner. The chamber is scattered with bones of all sorts and a partially assembled bone golem lies on the table.

In area 59b, three spectres appear to polish the silverware while a fourth one dusts the table. They drop what they're doing and attack when the heroes enter, saying, "Good—you have brought our meals!"

Area 59c is abandoned, with cobwebs and dust over all.

Area 59d contains what appear to be long-dead warriors in ornate armor, assembled here for a great feast (though no food is present). Twelve skeletons sit in armor at a table, weapons by their sides and gauntlet-covered fists on the table. The chair at the table's head is empty. The skeletons are, in fact, skeleton warriors who assembled here to discuss the war in the Burning Peaks, and how they might carry the battle into Tovag itself. When the heroes entered, the skeleton warriors fall silent, pretending to be inanimate. The DM should subtract any skeleton warriors destroyed in area 56d from the total here. The skeleton warriors arise swiftly and attack if they are attacked, if the party expresses an interest in attacking Vecna, or if anything in the room is disturbed.

**Spectres (4):** AC 2; MV 15, fly 30 (B); hp 56 each; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8.

**Skeleton warriors (12):** AC 2; MV 12; hp 72 each; THAC0 8; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10.

#### 60a. Lich's Lair

This chamber is a well-equipped wizard and alchemical laboratory. Books and carefully sealed pouches and specimen jars (which contain a variety of more or less disgusting samples and spell components) crowd shelves, while the surface of several workbenches contain elaborate distilleries made from platinum and gold.

On a bier at the center of the room is a withered corpse in black robes. The body is contained in a brownish energy field that pulses slightly as the party approaches. The body appears to be the body of a female, but she seems to have been dead a very long

time. A large, deep blue gem is clutched in the body's bony hands.

This is the true body of Meekali, the lich who is posing as "Innova," the girl who was abducted from the city beyond the palace. Innova's soul is now trapped within the withered corpse while the lich inhabits her living body. The gem in her hands is part of the *magic jar* spell that caused their minds to be switched, and it radiates strong alteration and necromantic magic.

The girl's current is being held in place by a variation of *sepia snake sigil*, cast at 19th level. If the bonds are successfully dispelled, the corpse sits up and starts screaming, the girl having been driven insane by her experience. *Remove fear* will calm her enough to allow her to explain what happened to her: a withered crone stole her body and placed her in this one.

**Development:** Once the heroes search the laboratory or busy themselves with the body on the bier, "Innova" (if with them) decides she has had enough fun. If they have not yet met her, she enters, behaving as described in "The Living and the Dead" in the Special Encounters section at the beginning of the palace description. If she fails to convince the party to leave the laboratory, she takes drastic measures.

**"Innova":** AC 7; MV 12; hp 43; THAC0 9; #AT 1 (fists or kick); Dmg 1 hp.

"Innova" surreptitiously takes a ring from behind one of the specimen jars and slips it on her finger. It is a *ring of spell storing* containing three *teleport without error* spells. She then seizes one of the pouches and rips it open with a sweeping gesture, blanketing the room with *dust of sneezing and choking*. She then *teleports* away.

"Innova" returns one more time at some moment selected by the DM, later during the adventure. She will be under the effects of *stoneskin* (cast at 19th level), wearing a black *robe of the archmagi* and armed with a *staff of the magi*. "Hi, friends," she says cheerfully, starting her attack. "Let's play!"

"Innova" fights without fear or morale checks until her stolen body dies. Her awareness is then transported back to her phylactery, which is contained at her true home (an unassuming third-floor storage room in the jumble of residences within Citadel Cavitius). It is carefully protected with a range of anti-divination spells of the DM's choosing.

Since the lich's lair within Vecna's palace amounts to little more than a workshop, there is not much here by normal lich standards. The books are nonmagical, dealing with various theories on necromantic and summoning magic; none of these books covers the alterations to spells made on the Demiplane of Dread. The remaining pouches contain, respectively, five measured samples of diamond dust (needed in the casting of *stoneskin*), five doses of *dust of appearance*, and a single dose of *dust of*



*disappearance*. An additional three dozen pouches contain a variety of spell components (DM's choice).

The scrolls are apparently nonsensical notes in a shorthand notation that only the lich can understand. A *comprehend languages* spell or the successful use of a thief's Read Languages skill, along with an Intelligence check made by a hero with the Spellcraft proficiency, reveals these to be high-level spell research in progress. (The DM can detail these notes further, as desired.)

The alchemical equipment is worth 10,000 gp, but it is very difficult for the party to carry off something this large and delicate without destroying it.

The most valuable item in the chamber is also the single magical book here: the *Manual of Bone Golem Construction*. This obscure magical guide describes how to build a golem like the one encountered in Area 53a. Additional notes on the end pages describe how to properly enchant the golem so it animates only if the area it stands is visited by individuals who aren't accompanied by the golem's creator. A large supply of bones, two months of labor, and 35,000 gp for additional components and materials are needed to construct a basic bone golem.

The following spells (which must be cast as part of the process of creating a bone golem) are included as part of the book's text: *animate dead*, *symbol of fear*, *binding*, and *wish*. (The *wish* contained in the text is geared toward creating bone golems; if used for other purposes,

there is a 65% chance that the spell fails and that the caster is subjected to a *curse* that imposes a -4 penalty to his or her attack rolls and saving throws, as well as a 20% chance that any curative spells fail when cast upon him or her. The *curse* lasts until the hero is *blessed* by a cleric of 12th level or higher.)

#### **60b. Spectres' Lair**

This room is furnished like the living space of a common farmhouse. There is a rocking chair, a table suitable either for having meals or for doing handicrafts at, a spinning wheel, and a loom. Simple wooden toys are scattered across the floor. A large chest stands against the far wall.

This is the lair of a particularly twisted spectre. He considers himself a family man, and all those he kills become his family. Victims are regularly delivered to him for evaluation for admittance into the family.

When the party enters this chamber, the master spectre is spending time with his family. A small spectre (who was once a child) sits in his lap as he reads a fairy tale to it. Two other small spectres play with toys on the floor, while a pair of spectres who were once young women work the spinner and loom. If not for the shadowy, insubstantial quality of the people in this room, the scene might almost be idyllic. The spectre treats the two females as wife and oldest daughter respectively, while the child spectres are viewed as the young children they

formerly were. Since the master spectre has complete control over the spectres he has created, the other creatures behaves as he wants them to, serving as the perfect family regardless of their true nature.

**Spectre (master):** AC 2; MV 15, fly 30 (B); hp 59; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8.

**Spectres (5):** AC 2; MV 15, fly 30 (B); hp 56 each; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8.

**Development:** The master spectre is not immediately hostile toward the heroes unless they attack first—and turning attempts by clerics are most definitely considered attacks! The master spectre claims to not know anything about whatever topic the party attempts to bring up, except those related to his family (a subject about which he will rattle on for hours). He also discusses the tower in glowing terms, saying that the stately residence was graciously granted to him and his family by Lord Vecna.

If this becomes a roleplaying encounter that doesn't erupt in combat due to player character actions, it can do so because of actions on the part of the master spectre. As soon as the DM starts to grow bored with the encounter, or gets the feeling the players are growing tired of it, the master spectre can decide that the most talkative party member, or the party member with the highest Charisma, should become part of the family. He says that the rest of the party should leave, as he would like to return his focus to his family, but orders the chosen player character to remain behind. He and the other spectres then attack, either the solitary character (in the unlikely event the party obeyed the spectre's commands) or the party at large. Any surviving spectres elsewhere in the tower arrive in 1d3+1 rounds, responding to the psychic call of their master.

If the party decides to investigate the chest in the corner, they find that it contains simple dresses, peasant clothing, child garments, and toys. Underneath these items are some exquisitely crafted toys that the spectre only allowed his children to play with when they had been "extra good." There are several beautifully painted tops, a jack in the box, and a small, highly realistic wooden horse. Dungeon Masters who have access to the RAVENLOFT *Forged of Darkness* accessory (TSR #9510) can use these items as a means to introduce Guiseppe's cursed toys into their campaigns, if they wish. If not, the toys can simply be mundane items with a value of 1d4 gp each, the exception being the wooden horse, which is actually an *obsidian steed* covered by a minor illusion that dispels when touched by living hands. (Note that this magical steed cannot transport itself or its rider from the Demiplane of Dread.)

### 60c. Radiant Spirit's Prison

The door to this room is closed, but not locked. The door frame is engraved with magical runes that characters who possess either the Spellcraft or Religion proficiencies recognize (upon making a successful proficiency check) as being part of a ritual designed to confine undead in their crypts. The runes can be negated by someone scratching them with a dagger or otherwise altering them.

Beyond it is a once-elegant bedchamber that has long since fallen into disrepair. The canopy bed has collapsed under its own weight, and the vanity leans against the wall like a drunken sailor, its mirror cracked. The room is draped in dusty cobwebs. At the center of the room, sitting in a chair so rickety that its weight could support no living being, is an armored man whose form glows so bright it is painful to see.

This is the restless spirit of a paladin, now transformed by his guilt over having failed in his quest into a type of incorporeal undead known as a radiant spirit. Vecna, in what his minions at the time felt was a moment of pique, used powerful wards to trap the paladin's soul here. The truth is that the Lord of Secrets knew the paladin had come in search of the true *Sword of Kas* in the Black Tower. Vecna wanted the paladin and this knowledge kept from all who might seek it.

It has been decades since anyone has disturbed the paladin, and when the party opens the door the spirit does not initially notice their presence, as he is lost in self-pitying thoughts. Characters who look into the room as they open the door must make a successful saving throw vs. spell or be blinded for 1d4 rounds by the brilliant glow. The undead spirit then realizes he has visitors, and immediately discovers they are not servants of Vecna. Although he has long since lost most of his paladin abilities, he is still able to tell good beings from evil ones.

"Don't look at me directly," he cries to the heroes. "The pureness of my soul blazes like a sun against the evil taint of this place!"

The undead will do his best to assist the party. However, the evil influences all around him, the circumstances of this death (see area 61 for details), and his imprisonment here, have all left him a bit unhinged. He no longer remembers his name or even the name of the god he once served. He recalls that he was sent here by Prelate Verlamis. (A successful Ancient History proficiency check permits a hero from the GREYHAWK campaign to recognize that Verlamis was the leader of an ancient lawful good coalition that centuries ago launched crusades against many evil religions.)

The radiant spirit further recalls that he led a force of holy warriors to penetrate Vecna's Black Tower in order to claim the one weapon that is believed to be able to destroy him—the *Sword of Kas*. Prelate Verlamis stated that the person who wielded that unholy weapon using

Vecna's own hand would be able to destroy Vecna, once and for all. The paladin had fully intended to sever his own left hand and attach the *Hand of Vecna* to his wrist once the *Sword of Kas* had been secured, but that moment never came. Vecna's forces were too powerful, and the paladin's entire force, except for himself and his squire, was destroyed even before it crossed the grisly plaza. The only thing that allowed him to prevent total defeat was to send his squire away with the *Hand of Vecna* so it would not fall into the hands of the minions of evil. He himself pressed on, hoping to secretly infiltrate the Black Tower and steal the *Sword of Kas*, so that he might return with another army in time. He fell victim to the powerful magical defenses of the tower.

(It is possible that some players may wonder how their group has managed to get so far, while others, like the paladin's force, were annihilated before reaching the palace. The DM should say nothing about this in response, except perhaps to shrug.)

If the party is in possession of the "Sword of Kas" wielded by the death knight in area 60d, the undead paladin tells them that it is not the true artifact. He reveals that the real *Sword of Kas* has been in Vecna's possession for many centuries. All other weapons that have been reported to be this one have either been misidentified or are fakes—no matter how powerful they might be—created by Vecna's servants to lead his would-be slayers to their doom. (This reveals, of course, that the "Sword of Kas" found in the Kron Hills, in the adventure *Vecna Lives!*, was not the real item, either.)

If the party chooses to believe and trust the radiant spirit, he offers to lead them to Vecna's hidden library, if they destroy the runes on the door. Even if they don't want to free him from his prison, this former paladin tells the party what he remembers of how to get to Vecna's private trophy room where the *Sword of Kas* is being kept. (He describes the most direct route to area 70 in the Black Tower.) He (incorrectly) claims that the door is protected by the "two most powerful of all demonic creatures." He says that he will pray for the party, because if they complete the mission he started so many decades ago, he will finally be released from his tortuous undead state. He offers to give his treasure to the heroes. His treasure is stored in a locked chest completely obscured by cobwebs. It consists of all the valuables gathered from his defeated troops by Vecna's minions: 1,395 gp, 1,302 ep, five gems, three *potions of healing*, two *potions of undead control*, and a *two-handed sword +2* with the special ability to cast *knock* at 18th level, twice per day. The radiant spirit does not have the key to the chest, nor does the key even exist anymore.

If at any time the party threatens or expresses doubt over the radiant spirit's good intentions in anything but an utmost polite manner, the undead being attacks, leading with its blinding light attack. He fights until he is destroyed, or until the party has retreated out of his

reach or until its members are all dead. (If the party retreats, the radiant spirit bellows angry curses, taunts, and challenges at them.)

**Radiant spirit:** AC 8; MV 9; HD 10; hp 53; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10; SA blinding rays; SD +1 or better weapon to hit; SW holy water does 2d4 points of damage, turned as ghost; SZ M (6' tall); ML fearless (20); Int genius (18); AL LE; XP 1,000.

*Notes:* If threatened or enraged, the radiant spirit can use its brilliance as a weapon by focusing its will and blinding all those who look at it. It may use this ability once per round, affecting all living beings within 25 feet who are looking directly at it. A successful save vs. paralyzation means victims are only blinded for 1d4 rounds, but failure means permanent blindness, reversible only by a *heal* or *limited wish*.

### 60d. Death Knight's Lair

An archway covered by a black tapestry displays an image of a large snake spiraling around a skeletal hand with blazing eye in its palm. Within is an austere chamber with soot-streaked walls. A large table stands at its center, and upon it is a map of Cavitius, Tovag, and the volcano-ridden mountain range that separates the two (the Burning Peaks). Markers represent the forces of both sides, and characters skilled in commanding troops recognize that Vecna's forces are preparing for a major offensive.

Standing on either side of the table is a skeleton warrior, both of which are studying the map with empty eye sockets. A death knight sits at the head of

#### False "Sword of Kas"

The false "Sword of Kas" is a *longsword +3, +6 vs. spellcasters*. It casts an *8d8 blade barrier* twice per day, can *dispel magic* at 15th level twice per day, and casts *darkness 15' radius* at will. It acts as a *cursed sword -3* in the hands of an warrior who is not single classed. A person carrying must make a successful saving throw vs. spell every day or gain the delusion that he or she is now Kas the Bloody-handed reborn, as well as being slavishly devoted to the idea of locating and serving Vecna. Each following day, the character must make a successful saving throw vs. death, or instantly be transformed into a death knight. The character can be saved by a *remove curse*, if cast before the final transformation. Otherwise, only a *wish* can restore the character to his or her former life. Both the character and the sword must be subjected to the *remove curse* or the *wish*. After being subjected to *remove curse*, the sword becomes a *longsword +1, +3 vs. spellcasters*, with no additional abilities.  
XP: 3,300 GP: 16,500

the table in a thronelike chair, gesturing at the board. He wears ornate plate armor identical to that seen on the warrior in bas-reliefs in the chaotic evil shrine (area 51). If the death knight has already attacked with his *fireball*, he and the two skeleton warriors stand near the table with their swords already drawn, ready for combat.

The death knight turns his fiery gaze on the hero who looked into the room first and says, "All of you, please enter. It has been many years since Kas the Bloody-handed has enjoyed the sound of a mortal begging for his life."

This death knight is not Kas, Vecna's infamous lieutenant, though he firmly believes he is. He is actually a warrior who came into possession a false "Sword of Kas," which corrupted his mind and body. He eventually made his way to Citadel Cavitius, and, believing that he was atoning for sins against his immortal master, became one of Vecna's premiere generals. While this false "Sword of Kas" can do the job the heroes need it to, it is not as powerful as the real thing.

"Kas" orders the party into the chamber, then commands the heroes get on their knees and give him a reason why he should not kill all of them. He is so arrogant that he will even slay clerics of Vecna who have been audacious enough to climb the tower that is home. "Kas" is also impatient. If the entire party doesn't get on its knees within two rounds, he lets his *fireball* fly, rely-

ing on the magic resistance he and his officers enjoy to protect them. In the confines of the room, the heroes must make their saving throws at a -2 penalty. Once combat breaks out, there is no parlaying with the death knight and his minions, although failed morale checks might save the undead or the heroes from total destruction.

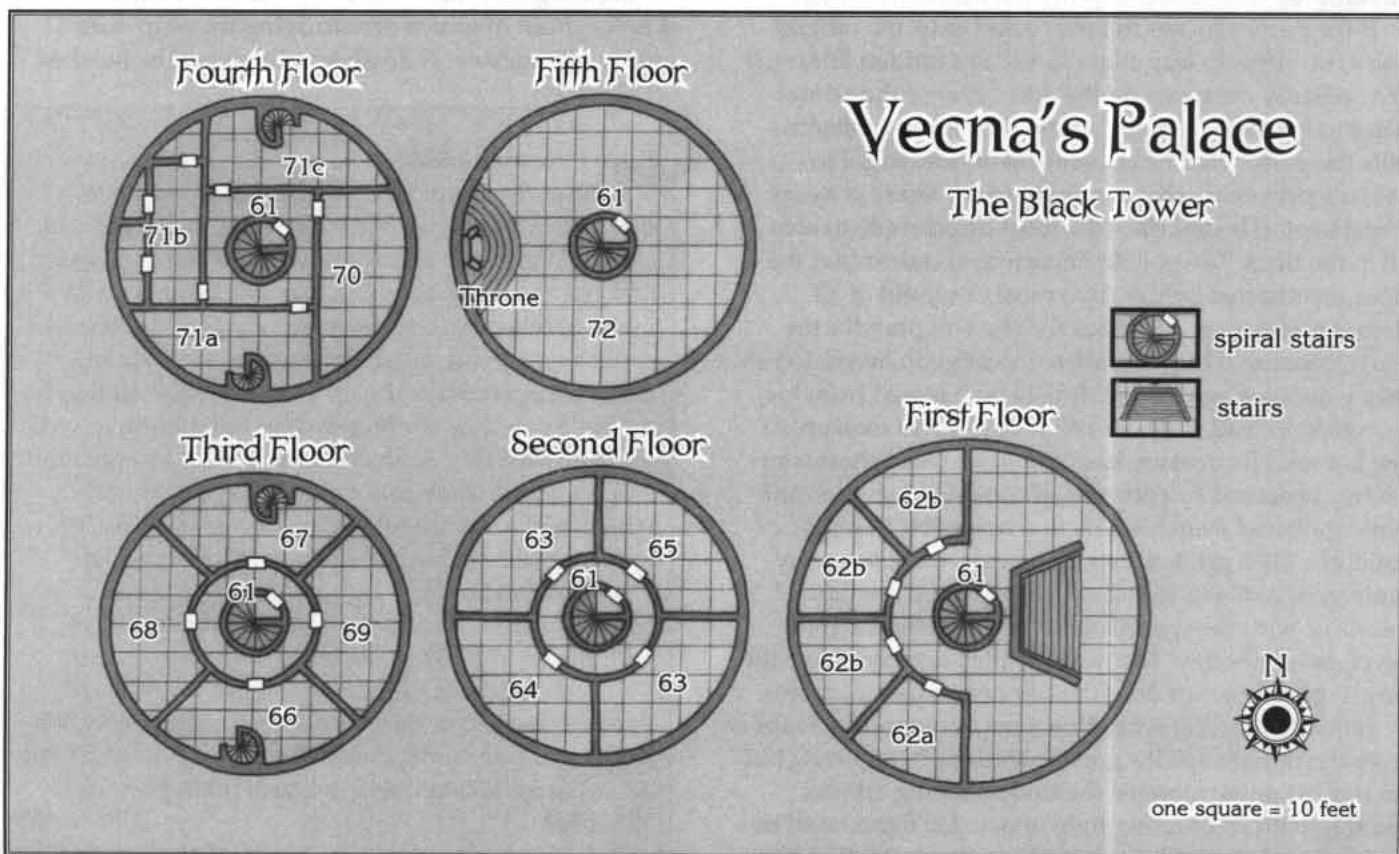
If the party surrenders, "Kas" takes them to an audience with Vecna. He takes the most direct route to Vecna's throne room in the Black Tower (area 72). Once the party arrives there, the events of "The Final Confrontation" unfold.

**Skeleton warriors (2):** AC 2; MV 12; hp 75 each; THAC0 8; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10.

**"Kas the Bloody-handed" (death knight):** AC 0; MV 12; hp 72; THAC0 5 (2 vs. spellcasters); #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+9 (1d8+12 vs. spellcasters).

## The Black Tower

This is the home of Vecna, a perfect replica (from the exterior) of the fabled Black Tower from which he once controlled an empire that spanned much of the Flanaess of Oerth and a number of extraplanar locations. The tower is not set up internally as it was in ancient times, and many of the rooms are not currently in use.



## 61. Staircase

This staircase winds its way through the center of the tower, from the chamber that grants access to the Black Tower (area 55) to the level just below Vecna's throne room. The staircase is completely devoid of light sources, so the party will have to provide one.

Although there are no traps on the staircase, climbing them is not a pleasant experience for good-aligned, or even sane, characters. The steps and walls of the shaft appears to be made from black marble, but it is harder than any marble the heroes have encountered and can be damaged only through magical means. This gives a sensation that one is climbing through a tube of shadow-stuff.

Further, the steps provide uneven footing as each features a life-size carving of a naked human or demi-human who has been run through with arrows, spears, or who still has torture implements attached to his or her bloody body. The walls are similarly adorned with the images of hundreds of men and women being crushed to death by giant snakes. Each image in this stairwell is a representation of a unique individual, and the workmanship is so fine that one might think the victims were turned to stone, then incorporated into the construction of the building. As the party climbs the stairs, the light sources cause shadows to dance across the sculpted images of pain and suffering and creates the illusion of movement out of the corner of the eye.

The truth is that there is nothing to threaten them on the stairs, unless a random encounter happens to be rolled when the party returns to the stairwell after exploring one of the levels off it. (The DM should do his or her best to describe this stairwell as if the sculptures might reach out and grab party members at any moment, like the living wall in area 51 might have done, perhaps going so far as to call for pointless saving throws or attribute checks—but without telling the players the rolls are pointless.)

At irregular intervals, the party comes upon doors leading to the tower proper. These doors are made from the same substance as the citadel walls—fused bones—and their off-white colors stand in sharp contrast to the blackness of the walls. The doors are all *wizard locked* at 15th-level effectiveness, except for the one leading to area 72 at the very top of the stairs, which has been blasted from its hinges by some incredible force.

The other doors can be opened with the password "Vecna is eternal," or through magical means. However, anyone who fails to say the password before crossing the threshold must make a successful saving throw vs. spell or be subject to an effect identical to the 9th level-wizard spell *power word, kill*. (All Vecna's lieutenants, their immediate subordinates, and most of his high-level clerics know about the password and the penalty for not uttering it. If the party has come to an allegiance with any such characters, they will be warned. Prison-

ers serving as guides will not warn the heroes unless they have been *charmed* or fail a morale check. Otherwise, the NPC hopes to escape in the confusion following a hero's death.)

## 62a–b. Waiting Rooms

Once, Vecna would entertain dozens of supplicants, heads of subject states, and commanders bearing status reports from the battlefield. Now, only a fraction of these rooms are in use.

The chambers labeled 62a are clean and well maintained. They are lit by a *continual light* globe at the room's center, even though this light fails to dispel the deepest of shadows in the room's corners. Hard wooden benches run along two walls, and a table containing a decanter of stale water stands against a third wall, with a large red and black banner bearing an image of the outstretched skeletal hand with a lidless eye in its palm.

Here, there are 2d8+2 citizens (0-level), 2d4 Memories of Vecna, and two major undead: a vampire, and a death knight. These characters are waiting to see one of Vecna's top aides or perhaps even the Lord of Secrets himself. They do not initiate conversation, but instead sit quietly, obviously nervous (except for the undead, who just sit quietly). These characters attack anyone who makes blasphemous statements about Vecna, or who otherwise seems to have hostile intent toward their dark lord.

**Development:** In addition to the obvious inhabitants, each of these rooms are watched over by 2d4+1 shadows. The creatures hide in the corners of the room until a fight breaks out in the room. Then, they attack the party while a single shadow flies quickly to the nearest guard chamber to summon help. A total of 1d6 skeleton warriors and 2d6 wights arrive 2d6 rounds later, in the company of the returning shadow. All undead fight until they or the party are destroyed; morale is not checked for them here.

**Memories of Vecna (2d4):** AC 10; MV 12; hp 19 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+1.

**Vampire:** AC 1; MV 12, fly 18 (C) or 9 (E); hp 64; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4.

**Death knight:** AC 0; MV 12; hp 72; THAC0 8; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+6.

**Shadows (2d4+1):** AC 7; MV 12; hp 27 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 and special.

**Skeleton warriors (1d6):** AC 2; MV 12; hp 72 each; THAC0 8; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10.



**Wights (2d6):** AC 5; MV 12; hp 32 each; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4.

Combat in any of these chambers later results in two wights being posted as guards by the door leading to the central staircase, with two more wights being added for each disturbance.

The chambers labeled 62b have fallen into disuse. The heroes can find no sign that anyone has entered the rooms for decades in the dust and cobwebs that covers the room. Sharp-eyed characters (with successful Wisdom checks) notice the glint of discarded coins and the cobweb-draped outline of corpses. If the party decides to explore these abandoned rooms, the DM should roll on the following table to see what can be found within. Any undead that are present are merely waiting here, quite patiently, for a chance to communicate with Vecna or a high-level cleric about various matters in town.

| 1d6 | Result   |
|-----|--|
| 1-2 | 1d6 pp, 2d8 gp, 1d20+2 ep.   |
| 3   | 2d20 pp, <i>wand of fire</i> (4 charges), 1d3 spectres.                        |
| 4   | 2d10 gp, 2d10 large spiders.   |
| 5   | 2d10 pp, 2d20 ep, 2d10 sp, 2d8+2 cp, 1d4 shadows (stats above).                |
| 6   | 2d10 sp, 3d10 cp, jewelry on corpse worth 2d100 gp, 2d4 shadows (stats above). |

**Spectres (1d3):** AC 2; MV 15, fly 30 (B); hp 56 each; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8.

**Large spiders (2d10):** AC 8; MV 6, web 15; hp 9 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8.

### 63. Guard Chamber

Sky-blue banners featuring a red snake wrapped around a golden starburst hang over each door. (These banners display one of the most ancient symbols used by Vecna.) Once, the elite of Vecna's officers and fighters would dwell within these two chambers, ready to leap to his defense should the Black Tower come under assault. Although the furnishings in the rooms have been maintained, those who inhabit them now have no need for rest or comfort, as now the chambers serve as quarters for some of the more powerful undead guardians of Vecna's palace: death knights, skeleton warriors, and wights. No human guards are now in the Black Tower.

In each room are 6d6 chests, each containing the decayed belongings of a long-dead (or undead) soldier, plus 2d100 gp and 1d100 sp in ancient coinage.

In the northwestern chamber, 2d6 death knights, 1d20+3 skeleton warriors, and 1d6 wights are seated or standing around a table, discussing combat strategy in the Burning Peaks war to while away their never-

ending hours. As the party enters, one of the death knights fixes his fiery gaze upon them and says, "If you leave these halls now, you may keep your lives. Otherwise, prepare to meet your patron deity." All the undead await the answer.

In the southeastern chamber dwell 1d6-1 death knights, 2d6 skeleton warriors, and 2d6-1 wights. They attack as soon as the party enters. They do not react to the sounds of combat outside their room, however.

**Death knights:** AC 0; MV 12; hp 72; THAC0 8; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+6.

**Skeleton warriors:** AC 2; MV 12; hp 72; THAC0 8; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10.

**Wights:** AC 5; MV 12; hp 32; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4.

### 64. The Lady's Sitting Room

The door to this room is closed, but not locked. Within is a room that is surprisingly cozy, contrasting sharply to the grisly, undead terrors found in the rest of the palace. The floor is covered by rugs woven in intricate patterns, and two well-padded chairs stand before a fireplace that crackles cheerfully with a blazing fire. Shelves on the walls hold books, scrolls, and a variety of knickknacks. Also on the walls hang paintings ranging in size from time cameos to sprawling landscape paintings. They feature either scenes of knights performing heroic deeds, or singers and dancers.

Leaded-glass windows look out upon the smoking sprawl of Citadel Cavitius, each of them in a cozy little nook containing a padded bench. In the center nook sits a beautiful gypsy woman, at the height of youthful beauty, with supple curves and delicate facial features. She wears colorful, multitiered skirts, and her dark hair is tied back from her face with a blood-red scarf. She is breast-feeding an infant, and her face is aglow with a mother's love as she gazes upon her child and hums softly.

**Development:** The party members who enter the chamber can make Wisdom checks. Those who succeed notice that the woman and baby are translucent, with the window behind them being barely visible. If the party withdraws quietly from the room, the nursing ghost does not notice. If the heroes threaten her, attack her, or enter to stare or examine the room's contents, she looks up, her eyes wide with fear and horror.

"No!" she shrieks. "You will not kill me and my baby again, Loran!"

This cry is treated like a banshee's death wail, and all who hear it must make a successful saving throw vs. death magic or immediately die. After making this attack, the ghostly woman falls to her knees in an attempt to protect the infant in her arms. She sobs, apol-

ogizing to Lorán for not bearing him the son he wanted and begging his forgiveness, also promising that the next child will be a boy.

If the party talks to the spirit instead of attacking her, she explains that she is Lyra, the unworthy wife of Sir Lorán of Trollpyre Keep. She says that she believed the heroes to be servants of her husband. She knows that Sir Lorán is furious because she has not borne him a son as she promised. Somehow, the charms her mother gave her failed to work! She describes her husband (the party might recognize him as the death knight featured in the Special Encounter titled Other Pursuers of Iuz) and begs the heroes to help calm him.

The party has 2d6+4 rounds to interact with Lyra. After this time, her husband—a death knight—arrives. “Stop your caterwauling!” he bellows as he enters the chamber. “And silence that disgraceful creature that you brought forth from your accursed belly!” His sword is already drawn, and he moves instantly to attack Lyra and her phantom baby.

If the heroes destroy Sir Lorán, or if they have already destroyed him and reveal this to Lyra, a look of relief and sadness crosses her face. “Thank you,” she says. “You must have been sent by the powers that watch over all my people. I loved my husband very much, so I will join him again, for the last time.” She and the baby then fade from view.

If there is no roleplaying with Lyra, Sir Lorán appears immediately after the party has destroyed the ghost. As her incorporeal form dissolves for the final time, he bellows her name and launches himself at them, blind with rage. Lorán may have hated his former wife, but he was going to be the one to send her to a final death, not these interlopers!

If the party loots the chamber, they can collect a dozen delicate figurines, each worth 2d100+50 gp to art collectors; a small crystal ball etched with mystical symbols of great significance to Lyra’s people, an oddly shaped *wand of negation* that features a claw at one end that makes it easily mistaken for a backscratcher, and a scroll containing two *knock* spells and a *dispel magic* (all at the 18th level of effectiveness). The books and other scrolls consist mostly of romantic fiction and philosophy texts dating from the age of Vecna’s kingdom. (Lyra and Sir Lorán lived in a much more recent time, but the room became a mixture of Lyra’s and Vecna’s belongings when she and her infant appeared here.)

**Lyra, third-magnitude ghost:** AC -2 (ethereal form)/4 (corporeal form); MV 9; HD 8; hp 40; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; SA *death wail* once per day, *cause despair* over 100’ radius at will; SD immune to *sleep, charm, hold, fear, cold, poison, paralysis, death magic, and telepathic psionics*, use *detect magic* and *detect invisible* at will, use *dispel magic* twice per day, cannot be turned, her body dissolves if destroyed but

reforms in 2d4 days; SW can be turned; MR 75% (if 11% or less is rolled, the spell is reflected back on its caster); SZ M (5’6” tall); ML unsteady (7); Int average (10); AL CN; XP 5,000.

*Notes:* This ghost was customized using rules from *Van Richten’s Monster Hunter’s Compendium, Volume Two* (TSR #11507). It therefore has abilities different from those of the creature described in the *MONSTROUS MANUAL* tome.

Lyra cannot be put to permanent rest until Sir Lorán has been destroyed, and visa versa. Both of them reform in 2d4 days if one or the other still exists. Once she is made aware of Sir Lorán’s passing, she and her baby dissolve into mist.

**Sir Lorán:** AC 0; MV 12; hp 63 (currently 28); THAC0 4; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10+10.

## 65. Meeting Room

Vecna’s high priests and undead lords have policy meetings in this chamber. Like most other areas of the palace, it is dimly lit so that undead who are sensitive to light can work here comfortably. A large round table, the surface of which is carved with the image of the splayed skeletal hand with the lidless eye in its palm, dominates the room. Thirteen high-backed, well-padded chairs with elaborate carvings of various kinds of tortures being visited upon both the living and undead stand around it. Six exits are present in addition to the one the heroes came through. Above each exit hangs a blue banner featuring the snake-and-starburst emblem.

The room is empty when the heroes enter it, but if they search it, they notice ash in three of the chairs and scattered on the table. A successful Spellcraft proficiency check by a wizard capable of casting *disintegrate* allows him or her to recognize these as the remains of someone who has been struck by that deadly spell. (Iuz and his minions came through this room and killed the beings they found here, then exited into area 67.)

## 66. The Chamber of the Heart

This was once an opulent combination of a bedchamber and study, but it has been completely ransacked and trashed by the six ogres who are still present. Its inhabitant, Vecna’s high priestess, the Heart of Vecna, lies on the ruined bed, in no better a state than her living quarters. She is barely conscious and is near death. As the party enters, an ogre is about to deliver the final blow.

The Heart is in no condition to fight or offer the party any information. However, if the Senior Priestess is with the party, she insists that they kill the wounded woman. If they refuse, she flies into a killing rage, attacking the party. (Although the Heart is evil, the party is hopefully moral enough not to kill a severely wounded person against whom they have no particular grudge. If they aren’t moral enough, the DM might consider grabbing a

copy of *Domains of Dread* to read up on what the dark powers might offer such bloodthirsty villains.)

The Senior Priestess, if it comes to a fight, battles until she or the party are dead. She doesn't care that they are here to help her god. She wants revenge for the death of her beloved. If they stand in her way, she will take her wrath out upon them.

The ogre loot consists of a shattered gold and platinum personal shrine devoted to Vecna (worth 1,000 gp in its present state), 230 pp, 500 gp, assorted jewelry worth 11,000 gp, a *pearl of wisdom*, and a *book of vile darkness* that the Heart had been in the process of reading.

The Heart also possesses an extensive set of spellbooks, containing every 1st-5th level necromantic wizard spell in the *Player's Handbook*, along with all 1st-2nd invocation/evocation spells from the same source and a smattering of other spells as the DM sees fit. The set consists of six volumes, and books are guarded by *fire traps*. At the DM's option, there might be a traveling spellbook here also, with a lesser selection of spells that is more easily portable by the party.

**Heart of Vecna, female human W5/C12:** AC 10; MV 12; hp 40 (currently 3); THAC0 19 (16 with *dagger* +3); #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+3 (*dagger* +3); SA command undead; SZ M (5'6" tall); ML steady (11); Str 12, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 18, Wis 17, Cha 16, ; AL NE; XP 10,000.

*Cleric Spells Memorized* (8/7/5/3/2/2): 1st—*cure light wounds*; 2nd—*enthrall, withdraw*; 3rd—*animate dead, prayer*; 4th—*detect lie, imbue with spell ability, reflecting pool*; 5th—*atonement, true seeing*; 6th—*blade barrier, heal*. (All other spells were used.)

*Wizard Spells Memorized* (4/2/1): 1st—*comprehend languages*. (All other spells were used.)

**Ogre warriors (3):** AC 5; MV 12; hp 48 each; THAC0 12; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d6+6.

### 67. The Chamber of the Voice

Like the other chambers belonging to the heads of Vecna's church, this was once an elegant room that reflected the dark sensibilities of the inhabitant. However, it has now been thoroughly trashed. The Voice of Vecna lies dead on his bed while a hulking ogre plunders his body for valuables. Other ogres lay dead on the floor, while two human warriors root through a chest.

The ogre and the two humans are minions of Iuz who were placed here as a rearguard, following the defeat of the Voice. They killed him a short time ago after he attempted to *charm* the ogre into fighting for him.

As soon as the party enters, the three NPCs turn to attack. They all fight to the death.

**Warriors of Iuz, male humans F12 (2):** AC 0 (platemail, shield, *ring of protection* +2); MV 12; HD 10+2; hp 55 each; THAC0 9; #AT 2; Dmg 1d8 (longsword); SZ M (6' tall); ML elite (13-14); Int very (11-12); AL CE; XP 2,000 each.

**Ogre warrior:** AC 5; MV 12; hp 48; THAC0 12; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d6+6.

Treasure in this room is meager, as the Voice (unusual for one of Vecna's clerics) did not crave worldly goods. The loot here amounts to 200 pp, scrolls containing three *cure serious wounds*, two *cause light wounds*, one *raise dead*, and one *restoration*. In addition, there is a *Boccob's blessed book* and a *bag of beans*. The blessed book is cursed, which is why the Voice doesn't use it. There is a 5% chance that a spell inscribed in it will vanish from its pages a day later, with the spell simultaneously vanishing from the mind of the spell-writer as well. The Voice's actual spellbook lies in a corner, a heap of smoldering ashes.

### 68. The Chamber of the Hand

This room is a bare, unlit stone chamber. It is devoid of all furnishings and other content, as its resident has no need for such things. The bizarre flesh golem known as the Hand rests here. If the party has already encountered the Hand, the room is dark and empty.

If the party has not dealt with the Hand previously, the creature is here, battling three ogres. Five other ogres and two humans already lay dead, in various states of dismemberment while their blood is sprayed on the walls and ceiling. As the party enters, the Hand says calmly, "Welcome. If you will assist me in finishing off these animals, we can converse. I'm sure you will discover we share a common interest."

**The Hand:** AC 1; MV 9; hp 66; THAC0 11; #AT 2; Dmg 2d12.

**Ogre warriors (3):** AC 5; MV 12; hp 48 each; THAC0 12; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d6+6.

### 69. The Chamber of the Eye

This room is devoid of all furnishings, as its resident, the terrifying golem known as the Eye, never tires nor feels any need for creature comforts. The ceiling and walls are covered with mirrors of all shapes and sizes, 104 in all. When the Eye is present rather than showing reflections of the chamber, they instead show scenes in Citadel Cavitius and elsewhere in the many planes of reality. The Eye's duty is to watch those beings whom Vecna wishes to help or hinder. The many mirrors function in a fashion similar to *crystal balls* (described in the *DMG*) with the exception that the Eye has a 100% chance of locating targets, unless they are

masked by magic; and those who are being magically spied have only a 1% chance per hour to realize they are being watched, regardless of Intelligence. The Eye can use its baleful stares to inflict curses or use *suggestion* upon those it watches, as a wizard would cast spells through a *crystal ball*, with a 75% chance of success per attempt.

The Eye rarely leaves its chamber, as it is in constant telepathic contact with the Hand. Whenever it sees something that needs direct attention, it sends a message to its counterpart, who then takes care of it. For the most part, the Eye uses the mirrors to address the desires of Vecna in more subtle means.

There is a 5% chance the Eye is not present when the party enters this room. If the Eye is not here, the mirrors have a 25% chance to act as *mirrors of life trapping*. For simplicity's sake, the DM should make four checks for each member of the party who enters the room. If all rolls are 26% or higher, none of the mirrors threaten to draw them in. Use 1d6 to determine the location of a mirror that activates:

| 1d6 | Result                           |
|-----|----------------------------------|
| 1-2 | The mirror is on the ceiling.    |
| 3   | The mirror is on the east wall.  |
| 4   | The mirror is on the south wall. |
| 5   | The mirror is on the west wall.  |
| 6   | The mirror is on the north wall. |

If the Eye is present when the party enters, it moves toward the intruders with a disgusting, slurping sound as the moist eyeballs that make up its feet rise and fall from the floor. In their heads, all the heroes hear a distorted voice saying, "Leave my quarters, or be destroyed. You are not wanted here." (When the Eye speaks and moves, it makes sticky, slurping sounds similar to stepping in deep mud, then pulling one's feet loose.) If the party does not instantly retreat, the Eye attacks and fights until it or the party has been destroyed.

There is no treasure in the room, and the mirrors lose all magical qualities with the death of the Eye.

#### **The Eye, unique flesh golem/servant of Vecna:**

AC 9; MV 6; HD 12; hp 60; THAC0 9; #AT 5; Dmg nil; SA gaze attacks; SD *regeneration*, immune to *sleep*, *charm*, and *hold*, +1 or better weapons to hit; SW *dispel magic*; MR 25%; SZ M (6' tall); ML fanatic (18); Int genius (17); AL LE; XP 11,000.

*Notes:* The Eye can use five of the following spell-like effects as gaze attacks every round: *cause serious wounds*, *confusion*, *death spell*, *dispel magic*, *disintegrate*, *enervation*, *finger of death*, *flesh to stone*, *hold person*, *lightning bolt*, and *sleep*. The Eye is immune to any of these effects if they should somehow rebound upon it. (It is not, however, immune to a wizard's *lightning bolt*.)



If the Eye is subjected to *dispel magic* and fails its Magic Resistance and a saving throw, it collapses into a heap, seeming destroyed. However, 1d6+4 rounds later, it suddenly reanimates and begins to stalk its attackers.

The Eye also possesses self-healing powers, regenerating 3 hit points per round following the first round of injury. It cannot regenerate fire or acid damage, and once it has been reduced to -10 hit points, it is permanently destroyed.

## 70. The Forbidden Library

As the party reaches the hallway leading to area 72, they notice a couple of shattered skeletons in partially melted platemail. They also discover that nearby walls have been scorched by some powerful spell. From around the corner, they can hear two men arguing in Common about who should try to open the door next.

If the party goes to investigate, they encounter three minions of Iuz, standing in front of a door carved with the image of the splayed skeletal hand with a lidless eye in its palm. Unlike other representations, however, the hand-and-eye symbol here is surrounded by a serpent biting its own tail. All three of Iuz's servants are human, with two of them engaged in the argument while the third lies twitching on the floor as the last breath of life leaves his body.

If Geral Kher, Lanner Hvist, and Karhk survived the previous encounter with the party, they are the characters encountered here. If not, then they are simply a 10th-level mage (who has two *magic missile* and one *hold person* spell left memorized), a 12th-level fighter (with 20 hit points remaining) who wears a *girdle of fire giant strength*, and a thief who is dying from poison on the floor. The mage and the fighter are arguing about the best course of action. The mage failed to unlock the door with *knock*, although his *dispel magic* cancelled the wizard lock that was on the door. The fighter refuses to use his strength to bash down the door, fearing that he might suffer the same fate as the thief.

**Geral Kher:** AC 9; MV 12; hp 56; THAC0 9; #AT 2; Dmg 1d10+4.

**Karhk :** AC 5; MV 9; hp 8; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 or 1d8.

**Lanner Hvist:** AC 3, MV 9, hp 120; THAC0 9; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d8.

If given the chance, the two bickering NPCs surrender to the party. They say that Iuz and the rest of their party went onto the throne room to kill Vecna; the original plan called for Iuz to use a magic sword he believed was kept beyond the door they were trying to open, but that sword was found in the possession of a cleric downstairs, so Iuz proceeded to the throne room and

instructed this trio to break into this room and recover whatever items they can. (Iuz fears the palace might be damaged when he absorbs Vecna's essence, but he wants to make sure as many of the treasures within that room are saved. The mage was told to use *plane shift* from a scroll to return home with what seemed to be the most valuable loot at the first sign of tremors in the palace.)

Any minions of Vecna with the party explain that the room beyond the door is Vecna's personal library. All others are forbidden to access it, because the dread lord stores artifacts and dire tomes within that were never meant to be in the hands of mortals.

The heroes now have a choice. They can attempt to break into Vecna's personal library, or they can proceed to the throne room to prevent Iuz from adding Vecna's power to his own.

If the party chooses to break into the library, servants of Vecna that have been *charmed* by the party members refuse to help, while those who aren't under magical coercion might even oppose the party with violence at the cost of their own lives. Needless to say, any minion of Vecna encourages the party to proceed to the throne room to fulfill its destiny. Minions of Iuz, on the other hand, encourage the party to do the bidding of the Old One and loot this hidden cache of magic and knowledge.

Beyond the door (which opens easily) is a room crammed with shelves and display cases. The party cannot identify any particular shelving system for the books, slates, engraved crystals, and scrolls that pack the shelves, nor can they identify more than a fraction of the languages represented.

Many of the texts deal with the history, philosophy, and military tactics of long-dead kingdoms and empires. However, mixed among these texts are spellbooks and scrolls that between them contain every spell included in the *Wizard's Spell Compendium Volumes 1-4* (TSR #2165, #2168, #2175, and #2177). In addition, there is one copy of each magical book on Table 95 in the DMG. It takes 1d2 turns of searching to find each tome, unless a *detect magic* spell is used to locate them. In addition to these mundane texts are many unique magical tomes. The DM should feel free to let the most twisted aspects of his or her imagination run wild when creating tomes that the party can find in this chamber.

The display cases hold a wide range of items, some magical and not. Some are trophies from some of Vecna's greatest triumphs, while others are kept here to remind him that even he can occasionally be defeated. The DM should improvise when describing these items, with grandiosity being the rule. Nothing was immune to Vecna's wrath.

No obvious traps are on the items. However, Vecna treated each object with contact poison (Type M; Dmg

20/5). A successful Find Traps roll with a -25% penalty allows a thief to notice this foreign substance.

There are 1d3 examples of every item on Tables 92 and 96 in the *DMG*, but each item carries a curse. (DMs with access to the RAVENLOFT accessory *Forged of Darkness* should roll on Table C therein to determine what the curse is.) Each is also associated with some famous event or legend, and a bard who makes successful Legend Lore checks will recognize the items as such. (Again, the DM can improve here to create magnificent, legendary items from everywhere imaginable.)

In addition, the racks and display cases hold as many powerful and intelligent magical weapons as the DM cares to include here. (We suggest one of every type of weapon in the *DMG*'s treasure tables.) However, all are coated with the same poison as covers the items above. Each weapon collected by Vecna is intelligent and has a purpose. New types of weapons can be placed here, such as *Oathmaker*, a sword detailed below as an example. Other weapons that the DM places here should exemplify the thought behind the saying, "Power comes at a price—and the more power, the higher the price."

Placed on the floor below the mounted swords in a random spot is a dusty, mahogany wood box sealed with a complex lock (-20% to all Open Locks attempts). The wood has been magically hardened to equal metal +3 (see Table 29 in the *DMG*), so it cannot be chipped or split open. Inside it is a 4-foot-long bundle wrapped in a beautiful blue-and-gold cloth that has a permanent *bless* spell upon it (granting the spell's benefits to anyone who touches it). Inside the cloth is the actual *Sword of Kas*, exactly as detailed in the Appendix.

This chamber is not entirely unguarded. Fifteen slow shadows that assist Vecna when he is present lurk under the ceiling. They creep down and assail would-be looters as stealthily as possible.

**Slow shadows (15):** AC 8; MV 12; hp 32 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4.

### 71. Vecna's Private Rooms

These once opulent chambers of gray and white marble have long since fallen victim to the ravages of time. They are all choked with dust and cobwebs, and the furnishings are so severely rotted that it's impossible to tell sitting rooms from bedchambers or libraries. Area 71a is connected by spiral stairs to area 66, and area 71c is connected to area 67. Ancient shields and banners hang everywhere, their rotting and rusting forms bearing the heraldic symbols of warriors and kingdoms conquered and destroyed by Vecna's empire. Vecna and his empire live on in legend, but nearly all those crushed by him are gone forever, and not even the spirits of the dead remember their names.

Although abandoned by Vecna and his current minions, these halls are not completely devoid of inhabi-

tants and valuables. Should the party decide to explore this area, the DM should roll 2d6 for each chamber entered and compare the result to the following table to determine what items the party finds and what creatures it has to fight. In some cases, an additional 1d6 must be rolled to see which magic items or creatures are present in a room. (The DM should get creative when

#### *Oathmaker*

*Oathmaker* is a bastard sword created long ago in a now-dead, completely forgotten kingdom that was ground into oblivion by Vecna's ancient armies. It is adorned with ancient runes that speak of its power.

*Oathmaker* is an intelligent sword that can safely be touched only by those of lawful good alignment. All others must roll a saving throw vs. spell when they first touch it. Those who fail the saving throw suffer 3d20 points of electrical damage. Those who successfully save must struggle with the sword's awareness to remain in control of their mind and body. *Oathmaker* has an Intelligence of 12 and an Ego 16. The sword will reveal its powers only to lawful good characters, or to those who are under its domination.

*Oathmaker* functions as a *sword* +4 in the hands of lawful good characters, but is +2 in the hands of all others. When drawn, it grants the wearer 15% Magic Resistance to all hostile magic, and the same *protection from evil* effect as enjoyed by paladins. The sword also allows the caster to use the following spell-like effects, twice per day: *knock*, *know alignment*, *dispel magic*, *hold person*, *hold undead*, *true seeing*, and *teleport without error*. Furthermore, the sword functions exactly like a *ring of truth* (as per the *DMG*), even if not drawn and held.

In addition to all the benefits, the sword also has its drawbacks. Whenever its possessor makes a promise, however trivial, he or she is considered to be under the effect of a *geas* (as per the 6th-level wizard spell).

Heroes who fall under the sword's domination are considered to be of lawful good alignment. They behave like paladins in all things, even giving away excess gold and magic items. The heroes go out of their way to challenge liars and cheats to duels, and reject the company of evil beings.

XP Value: 5,000

GP Value: 15,000

*Note:* Any sensible DM reading the above is probably having a fit right now, thinking of the staggering amount of magical treasure that the heroes are about to gather. Don't worry about it. Read area 72, and all will become clear. Let the heroes have some fun before this part of the adventure ends. It won't hurt.

describing the encounters, so that each encounter has a different feel to it, even if it has been generated more than once.)

## 2d6 Result

- 1 Here, 2d10 cp and a (1-2) *short sword* -2 (cursed) or (3-6) *wand of paralyzation* (2d20 charges) lay scattered about the room. Dust swirls coalesce into a fearsome spectre.
- 2-4 Here, 2d4 gems worth 50 gp each are guarded by 2d6 skeleton warriors, which rise from beneath the debris of furnishings and attack.
- 5-7 A locked, battered chest contains 2d100 pp, 5d100 sp, and (1-3) nothing else, (4-5) a *periapt of foul rotting*, (6) a *rod of lordly might*, but it is guarded by a swarm of 2d6+3 spectres.
- 8-9 Here, 2d10 gp and 2d100+15 cp lay scattered about the room. A poltergeist lurks here, hurling coins and debris at anyone who enters, each hit causing 1d4 points of damage.
- 10 Sealed potion vials lay strewn about the room: 1d4 *potions of healing*, 1d4 *potions of youth*, and 2d4 *potions of poison*, all brewed as part of Vecna's quest for lichdom, then forgotten. Here lurk 2d4 shadows, once apprentices of Vecna, who each retain the ability to cast two *hold person*, *magic missile*, and *sleep* spells every day.
- 11 Here, 2d6 gems worth 10 gp each are hidden. Roll 1d6: (1-3) a skeleton warrior rises from the debris, (4-6) no creature is present.
- 12 No treasure is present, but 3d10 skeleton warriors rise from the debris, while 2d8 shadows swoop down from above.

**Spectres:** AC 2; MV 15, fly 30 (B); hp 56; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8.

**Skeleton warriors:** AC 2; MV 12; hp 72; THAC0 8; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10.

**Poltergeist:** AC 10; MV 6; HD ½; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg nil; SA victim struck must successfully save vs. spell or flee in *fear* for 2d12 rounds, with 50% chance of dropping carried items; SD *invisibility*, silver or magical weapons to hit; SW can be turned as ghoul, repelled by holy water; SZ M (6' tall); ML average (10); Int low (6); AL LE; XP 120.

*Notes:* This undead being was an unwise thief slain here less than a year ago, on a failed mission to steal from Vecna's hoard. She is bitter and enraged at the sight of anyone else who might enter here, but she will not attack undead beings or anyone who seems to be a cleric of Vecna.

**Shadows:** AC 7; MV 12; hp 27; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 and special.

## 72. Vecna's Throne Room

A set of double doors set back within an archway that resembles giant snakes lead to this chamber. The doors are, oddly enough, unadorned. As the party approaches, a strange whirring sound that grows ever louder can be heard from within.

Under normal circumstances, this chamber is almost identical to the entry hall into the palace, except that it is somewhat smaller. These are not normal circumstances, however. As soon as the party pushes through the doors, the last battle of this portion of *Die, Vecna, Die!* begins.

## The Final Confrontation

Beyond the doors to area 72 is a swirling vortex of magical energy, a brilliant and nightmarish sea of color and lightning. Every hero who enters must make a saving throw vs. spell with a -4 penalty. Those who fail can do nothing but remain immobile for 2d6 rounds. After that time, these characters receive another saving throw, still with a -4 penalty, but it can be offset by Wisdom bonuses. This continues until the encounter is over, or until all characters have successfully saved.

If a hero is outfitted himself with both the *Hand of Vecna* and the *Sword of Kas*, that hero need not make a saving throw. If the hero carries only one or the other artifact, no penalties are applied to the saving throw.

Heroes who successfully make the saving throw can react immediately in whatever way they wish to the following scene.

A large room lies before you. Scintillating colors seem to engulf the chamber, spinning in wild kaleidoscope patterns, appearing at once like beams of light and sheets of material carrying on an invisible maelstrom.

Nonetheless, you see that the room shares many of the features of the chamber you entered when you first stepped into Vecna's palace. The walls are covered in murals displaying Vecna's armies waging bloody battles against forces of knights and priests.

You see before you a small, high-ceiling chamber with the bodies of ogres and humans scattered across the floor amid piles of shattered skeletons. Ogres and a small group of humans stand transfixed, though some notice your party and seem alert. One of the humans turns to face you, a dark expression on his gore-spattered face, his hand gripping a holy symbol of Iuz around his neck. "Stay out of this," he hisses, "or you will die."

Beyond that man, against the far wall, is the Spider Throne of Vecna. On the steps before the Spider Throne stands a bent, ugly old man dressed in black. Sweat beads on his forehead as he slashes with a short sword at the colors spinning around him. His left eye glows with an intense red light that seems to cut through the waves of color as easily as his sword. The sword he wields appears to be the *Sword of Kas*.

Your eyes now fall upon the spot from which the room-filling colors emanate. Seated upon the Spider Throne is a hideous figure: a robe-clad, decaying skeleton with a single eye that glows with unearthly malevolence. The undead creature traces glowing symbols and patterns in the air, making arcane gestures with his right hand. His left arm, on one arm of the throne, ends in a withered stump.

The party has come upon the supreme battle between Vecna and Iuz, as the Old One struggles to overcome the Lord of Dark Secrets. There are 2d6+10 surviving ogres in the chamber, all loyal to Iuz. They seem transfixed and paralyzed by the scene of the two demigods, but they move to attack the party if the heroes try to approach the Spider Throne, fighting to the death. (The struggle between Iuz and Vecna is literally causing the demiplane to come undone in a localized area.)

**Ogre warriors (2d6+10):** AC 5; MV 12; hp 48 each; THAC0 12; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d6+6.

There are two distinctly different ways this scene can play itself out. The party can either stand by and watch things unfold, or they can intervene on behalf of one god or the other. Many groups might also execute some mixture of these two options. This is a fluid encounter, so these are to a large extent guidelines for how the scene might play out, and sample descriptions to help with the staging. The DM should always be prepared to modify descriptions and NPC actions based on what the player characters do.

If the party doesn't intervene, the two demigods struggle for 10 rounds, and Iuz forces his way through the magical barrier, slowly and with painful effort. He slashes again, dispelling all the waves of color in the room. At the end, the following happens:

A look of disbelief appears on Vecna's withered features, as Iuz raises the sword, brings it down in a dreadful arc—

—only to see its blade shatter against Vecna's chest.





The Old One stands as though transfixed. He can't even muster a surprised gasp as he stares at the bladeless hilt in his hand. Vecna, however, rises to his feet.

"You were always feebleminded and weak, Iuz," Vecna says, his voice sounding not like a single man but rather like a thousand whispering voices speaking in unison. "You inherited your father's brains and scope of vision, and it shows. But now you will pay the price for your arrogance and stupidity."

Vecna places his right hand on Iuz's balding pate, and the other god bursts into flames. He screams. The flames seem to be drawn to Vecna's body, disappearing into his empty eye socket.

Any followers of Iuz with the party, as well as any surviving adventurers and ogres, immediately rush forward to assist their god. As they do, the dead ogres spring back to life and attack their former comrades. They also attack any nontransfixed party members; the one exception being anyone bearing the true *Sword of Kas* or having a part of Vecna's body attached to them or within them. These characters will be ignored by the resurrected ogres, and they are free to do whatever they please.

If the characters seem to be slow on realizing what is happening, they may roll Intelligence checks. Basically, Iuz is being absorbed by Vecna instead of the other way around. Vecna is about to emerge as a far more powerful being than he has ever been before. One of Iuz's supporters, or some other NPC may also call this out, hoping to spur one of the unengaged heroes to action: "For the sake of the universe, you cannot let Vecna become more powerful than he already is! Stop him! Kill him! Use the *Sword of Kas*! Do something!"

If the hero carrying the *Sword of Kas* does not take action, then the artifact compels the hero to attack Vecna. The events described below start to unfold.

If the party intervenes at any time before 10 rounds have passed, or once they move into attack one or both of the gods once Vecna starts to absorb Iuz, Vecna gestures at Iuz (or releases him from his grasp, causing the other demigod to collapse on the floor). Iuz's body continues (or starts) to burn as his mouth opens and closes in a now-silent scream. His essence continues to flow into Vecna's empty eye socket, which is now starting to glow with a hellish light, like his other eye. Vecna then gestures at his attackers, hissing, "Spare me your pitiful attempts at resistance."

With these words, the characters who have bits of Vecna within their bodies must roll saving throws vs. spell at -15 (includes all penalties), with Magical Defense Adjustment bonuses (or penalties) offsetting some of the penalty. If they fail, they turn on one another. If they succeed, they can act as they had intended to.

If they don't have a relic or artifact of Vecna, they must kneel before Vecna's throne.

The exception to this is any character wielding the *Sword of Kas*. That character is free to attack or take whatever action he or she had intended. Nonetheless, it will be too late. As the character attacks Iuz, Vecna, or any other target, the following happens:

Iuz's body dissolves into smoking ash and a final few wisps of flame that spin upward through the air. The ash and flame merge to form a ghostly hand on Vecna's left wrist stump. Nothing remains of the Old One but a small, black gem where he stood.

Within a split second, the decaying, rotting form that had been struggling with Iuz is transformed into a tall, dark-haired man with handsome features. His eyes glow with an unholy red fire, and a cold, humorless grin appears on his face. "You have lost! You have all lost!" he bellows.

The black gem that lies where Iuz once stood is the true *Eye of Vecna*, which Iuz carried with him to this demiplane.

Vecna is on the verge of becoming a full god. The transformed archlich raises his hands in a triumphant gesture, ignoring any attacks leveled against him. The swirling colors cease as the walls of the throne room dissolve into thousands of black birds. Their shrieks are deafening as they are suddenly blown away by hurricane-force winds, tumbling uncontrollably toward storm clouds that fade rapidly into a white mist.

"You, you hidden powers of this hell, you can contain me no longer!" Vecna roars, his voice thundering against the gale. "Your secrets and powers are now mine to command! It will be I who reshapes all of creation—in my own image!"

At this point, nothing can harm Vecna but a hero wielding the *Sword of Kas* in the *Hand of Vecna*. (The *Whispered One* ignores all other attackers.) If any such person lands a blow against Vecna, he gets the demigod's full attention.

Vecna stumbles backward from your mighty blow, his right hand going to the bleeding gash your blade opened. His face grows dark, and he curses you in a language you do not understand, though his very words make your bones tremble. Suddenly, the floor beneath your feet vanishes and you fall into a black pit that goes on forever and ever.

No magic item, spell, or power can stop the hero's plunge. To the eyes of all comrades, the hero vanishes without warning or trace, dropping through the floor itself.

After a moment, Vecna turns to the rest of your party. He is confident and calm, in full command. "I am done here," he says. "The godlings who played at rulership here will trouble me no more, and this little reality is but one of many that will be destroyed in but moments. It has always been my destiny to be the master of all that is, was, or will be. With the aid of the Serpent, I will undo what has been and is now, and I shall master all that will be. You no longer concern me. Farewell, heroes. We will not meet again."

Suddenly, everything around you dissolves into mist. You, along with the survivors of Iuz's strike force, plunge uncontrollably downward into a bottomless abyss.

Vecna has triumphed.

### What of Those Pesky Items from Area 70?

When Vecna ascends to his new form and the heroes find themselves falling, the items that the heroes may have taken from area 70 disappear! When the heroes find themselves in Sigil (Book Three), the DM should roleplay the situation out. If the heroes would notice the absence of an item right away, then point it out to them. Otherwise, let them realize what has happened the first time they think to ask about an item from area 70.

### Now What?

The campaign continues in Book Three, with the party's actions deciding the fate of all reality.

### What of the Demiplane and the Dark Powers?

The reality Vecna referred to was the cluster called the Burning Peaks (the domains of Cavitus and Tovag). Essentially, despite being part of the same demiplane, each domain in Ravenloft is treated as though it is its own separate plane. The rest of the islands and the core domains of the setting have survived the demigod's escape—unless the DM wishes otherwise. Maybe Vecna's escape shatters domain boundaries everywhere in the demiplane, and the great evil beings that were imprisoned by the dark powers in the Mists return to the worlds from whence they came. Even if the party survives to the very end of *Die, Vecna, Die!*, great evils would once more roam the lands of their home world. (The rest of the RAVENLOFT setting is described in *Domains of Dread*.)



# Book Three: City of Doors

Sigil, called the City of Doors, lies well outside the worlds of the Prime Material Plane and its connective tissue of ethereal mist. Sigil is found far beyond the pure planes from which all elements are born, and shares little with the countless demiplanes that float like islands in the ethereal immensity. The City of Doors rises from the interior of a celestial ring that spins in place over the infinite Outer Planes. Home to the Powers of the multiverse, the Outer Planes and their divine populations are difficult if not impossible to comprehend or even summarize. However, despite some philosophies to the contrary, the Outer Planes have a crux, and Sigil is it.

## Getting to Sigil via Ravenloft

Vecna has absorbed the essence of Iuz, and he is on his way to full godly ascension. Drawing on knowledge imparted by the Serpent and energized by his growing divinity, Vecna contorts the misty fabric of Ravenloft itself, using it to bridge the gap between the prison plane and the City of Doors. Bypassing wards set by a power equal to the Serpent, Vecna the Divine arrives in Sigil despite the ban against gods, which has stood for time immemorial.

Player characters and NPCs who possess the *Hand of Vecna* or any minor Vecnan relic are invariably drawn over the collapsing rift in Vecna's wake. The connection



### Breaking the Ban

Vecna can't go to Sigil. Sigil is warded against the entry of gods. But Vecna, incarnating as a true Power, is in Sigil—what gives? It comes down to a confluence of unique circumstances engineered and nurtured by Vecna. His plan (see Adventure Background) took an age to formulate, and another to execute. Informed by the very force of magic itself, Vecna wove a tapestry of detail, arcane props, and raw power that deposited him in the City of Doors, despite its age-long ward enforced by the enigmatic Lady of Pain. In a sense, Vecna cheated.

Though he stole the power of another god, Iuz, to catalyze his own full ascension, Vecna's power waxed over a period of time—at the moment he stepped into Sigil, he wasn't strictly a demigod or a god. Moreover, Vecna didn't use a portal created by Sigil's protector, the Lady of Pain, to enter the city. Instead, he used his unique position as a waxing power in the Demiplane of Dread. Taking advantage of its unique properties, Vecna warped, twisted, and forced the entire plane into a wholly new configuration. That temporary contortion was the funnel that punched a doorway for Vecna into the Sigil. After all, as a student of the Serpent knows, Sigil is the founding stone of the multiverse, upon which the current planar structure is built and buttressed.

stretches space and time like taffy, and no matter how soon the heroes follow after Vecna's departure, they arrive 3d4 days after Vecna himself first puts foot to Sigil. Any heroes who don't possess a bit of Vecna might find themselves separated from those who do. Dungeon Masters should call for Dexterity checks with a -4 penalty *before* beginning this section. Those who succeed at the check can make a grab for another character. Those who don't land 5d10 yards away from those who possess a Vecnan relic or artifact. The Dungeon Master should be prepared to roleplay one-on-one with each separated person until the group can meet up with any lost members.

## First Steps in Sigil

The player characters' arrival in the City of Doors could be disorienting to any who have previously avoided touring the self-proclaimed nexus of the planes. Heroes appear on the Sigil Overview Map at the position marked **PCs' first steps**. The Overview Map shows only a small portion of the overall city.

The heroes' arrival is violent, and involves an explosive exhalation from a space-time rip that was almost healed from Vecna's arrival. Heroes take 2d4 points of



damage from this rocky transition, and must succeed at saving throws vs. paralysis to avoid a fall.

When heroes have the chance, they discover they are standing (or lying) in the street of a large and oddly constructed city. Though the city is passing strange, a nearby path of destruction is also immediately obvious.

Buildings barnacled with ostentatious metallic blades and stone spikes line a wide cobblestone boulevard. Sculpted faces and gargoylike figures perch over every door, pillar, and rainspout. Fanciful iron grillwork covers many windows, and evil-looking vines sporting serrated leaves grow wild in the shadowed side streets. Despite the unique designs, the surrounding buildings are in good condition, save for a swath of utter destruction that has mowed down a 200-foot-wide path through the heart of a block of buildings. The swath still glows with the residue of a massive power release. The path created by the swath leads off into the city, in the direction of a distant braided pillar of smoke and fire.

Though the path of destruction is obviously important, even a few more moments of casual observation reveals other oddities of the city.

Larger and more enigmatic structures are visible here and there in the receding distance, partially cloaked by smoke and fog. In fact, it appears as if the city is built beneath a massive arch, the arms of which reach up on either side from broad and smog-cloaked bases. It almost appears as if buildings are built on the arch's underside, as well as up the side of the narrowing columns. . . .

Heroes unfamiliar with the toruslike structure of Sigil may choose to accept the illusion of the arch; however, scrutiny is sufficient for the DM to confirm any PC's suspicion, if tendered, that they now stand on the interior of a city-size ring. Beyond the ring, from what can be descried through ubiquitous smog, is an open nothingness.

Besides architecture, the heroes also begin to notice a few citizens of the City of Doors. Despite the wide streets suited to heavy traffic, the nearby area is almost deserted. But a few small groups of darkly garbed but heavily ornamented citizens are visible, huddled together, speaking earnestly. Of these groups, no one apparently noticed the heroes' entrance. The most common locals include humans, emaciated humans (really githzerai), elves, centaurlike creatures (called bariaur), and humans who look as if they have a taint of the infernal about them (called tieflings). Though dis-

### Slang in Sigil

Many locals in the City of Doors employ slang (called the cant) that the DM may incorporate during conversations, if desired. Denizens of other planes merely visiting Sigil do not use slang, unless they've *set up kip* (settled). Certainly Vecna, should the heroes get in a few words with the waxing Power, does not. Citizens who have to explain too much to the PCs begin to refer to them as *clueless* (new to the planes).

|                             |                          |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Addle-cove = Idiot          | Garnish = Bribe          |
| Barmy = Insane              | Graybeard = Sage         |
| Basher = Person             | Jink = Money             |
| Berk = Fool                 | Lann = Inform            |
| Blood = Respected Person    | Peel = Swindle           |
| Bub = Alcohol               | Peery = Suspicious       |
| Cage, the = Sigil           | Screed = Annoying tirade |
| Chant, the = News           | Sod = Unfortunate Person |
| Cutter = Resourceful Person | Twig = Take a liking to  |
| Dark = Secret               | Tumble to = Understand   |
| Dead-book = Death           | Wigwag = Talk            |

parate in race, all mingle normally, and heroes who do not wish to call attention to themselves are better off treating these races as normal citizens.

## The Lay of the City

Sigil is a bewildering city for the uninitiated. Luckily, the heroes have a fairly clear lead, in the form of the swath of destruction and the pillar of smoke and fire, allowing them the luxury of bypassing timely and probably confusing research. The swath of destruction leads directly to the Armory, the location from which Vecna has chosen to implement his terrible scheme. Still, the heroes are likely to run into, question, or accost Sigil natives who they come across. In fact, attempting to cross to the Armory via the swath isn't without risk, and heroes may wish to use the surrounding streets to reach their goal (see "The Armory" below).

Information presented here should both aid the DM who desires more background information on the city of Sigil, and answer specific questions heroes might pose to various locals. It may be that one talkative local could provide all the following information; failing that, the heroes might piece the information together by talking to a few different citizens, including Ronnasic or Autochon (NPCs whom the PCs could meet outside the Armory).

### Vecna under Fire

While Vecna cannot view the heroes until they reach area 28, their implied threat immediately appears to the waxing god as he physically senses them for the first

time. Because of their immunity to his direct power and enhanced abilities to affect him, Vecna is concerned. Combine these facts with Vecna's compromised situation, and it's easy to understand though he is a god, Vecna knows real fear at the heroes' arrival.

Vecna is compromised because, though he approaches true godhood, his ability to channel power remains limited by his position in Sigil. He can't summon limitless minions due to the ward against planar travel to and from the city, and most of the constant portals are inoperative. Moreover, he must continue to exert a large portion of his total power to remain in Sigil at all, due to the constant pressure the Lady of Pain applies. (The Lady appropriately bestows this pressure in the form of hideous agony, which Vecna constantly neutralizes with a counterflow of his own power.) Thus, it is difficult for Vecna to create minions out of whole cloth without preparation and concentration. Nor can he maintain more than a single avatar, which is the focus of his power in Sigil. Therefore, the Whispered One relies on those he has already converted. Even if heroes get the upper hand, Vecna can't give up his place in Sigil, lest all his plans go for naught. So, even if forced into melee with the heroes (the only way he can directly affect them), he will not flee.

Heroes may initially choose to give the Armory a wide berth and instead explore the city. The details of Sigil go beyond the scope of this product. Dungeon Masters who are faced with PC initiative must use their discretion. Remember, despite its unique inhabitants and architecture, Sigil is a city and contains the familiar city elements, including inns, taverns, homes, shops, temples, and craft halls. Of course, the longer the heroes ignore the new resident of the Armory, the more agitated and fierce become the disturbances.

## Strange Days

Gods are warded from Sigil for a very important reason. The celestial ring beneath the city is the physical manifestation of the multiverse's fulcrum. The torus's nature is such that it cannot abide coexistence with point-source divine energy. A god in Sigil disrupts the fulcrum, and thus the entire multiverse. Given enough time, it is conceivable that all the planes could be thrown down in wrack and ruin. Such is Vecna's diabolical scheme, and as the perpetrator of the planar ruin, Vecna furthermore proposes to set himself up as the supreme deity of the new multiversal order.

### Checking for Disturbances

Heroes in Sigil directly feel the physical and social disruptions caused by Vecna's presence. During any period where the heroes are active in Sigil, beginning 10 minutes after they arrive, they have the opportunity to note dis-

ruptions first hand. Roll a 1d20 to check for a disturbance; on 1–10, a disturbance affects the heroes (cross-reference the number rolled on the following table).

Even when heroes are inside, the effects noted below continue outside. Heroes can observe or feel these effects indirectly; however, disregard incidences of static encounters (casualties of any type) and reroll the dice.

### Time Is Running Out

Initially, check for disruptions every 3 hours. After 24 hours, check every 2 hours; after 48 hours, check every 1 hour; after 72 hours, check every half hour; and so on. Should the checks occur every minute or less (after 192

hours, or when the DM decrees), time has run out on the heroes. Refer to the Conclusions section for information on dealing with this terrible outcome.

### Sigil Disruption Table

| D20   | Disruption                   |
|-------|------------------------------|
| 1     | Green Hail                   |
| 2     | Frozen Casualties            |
| 3     | Cagequake                    |
| 4     | Sodkiller Gang               |
| 5     | Searing Wind                 |
| 6     | Melted Casualties            |
| 7     | Plague of Ravens             |
| 8     | Mephit Mob                   |
| 9     | Darkblight                   |
| 10    | Rampaging Fiend              |
| 11–20 | No Disruption, for now . . . |

### Testimonials on Vecna's Arrival

- "It looked like a ghostly meteor, shedding mist as it streaked across the black sky. It touched down right over there. Where it touched down, a Power stepped forth! A POWER! I'm not barmy—somehow a real, live GOD walked into Sigil, despite all the wards and the Lady herself!"
- "The graybeards say it's some moldy old lich, called Vecna, whose somehow bootstrapped himself to full godhood! How he got past the Lady and into the Cage is a question for the ages, no doubt."
- "The intruder, 30 feet tall, just waded that-a-way, straight through the homes, temples, and shops of the Lady's Ward. His power was unstoppable, and the buildings crumbled at his touch like sand. He's a god, by god!"
- "That god set himself up in the ruined Armory—the swath of destruction leads right up to it, but only a sod would be fool enough to follow that trail. That Armory was a ruin since a recent shake-up here in Sigil, but I guess it's not too hard for a god to rebuild."
- "The god wasn't even unopposed! High-up bloods, cutters, and bashers from all over the Cage have set up kip right outside the Armory. Even the Lady's there, with a contingent of dabus. But even with all that, there that sodding god still sits!"
- "Since the god's arrival, things haven't been right. The whole ring shakes, more all the time, we've been getting hails of green ice, and I don't doubt there's worse to come. One other thing's clear: Most of the portals have stopped working. This is the City of Doors no longer!"
- "Planar structure is shifting. There have been strange sightings in Sigil. Undead of all types are springing up, which should be impossible so far removed from the Negative Energy Plane. Vecna's going to shatter all the laws of the multiverse!"

**Green Hail:** Frigid hail beats down, originating from beyond the torus, freezing solid upon contact with the brick and stone of the city streets, and doing 1d2 points of damage per turn to exposed creatures. The hail falls for 1d4 hours before slackening.

**Frozen Casualties:** The growing incidence of icy green hail has its victims, which heroes note in passing. Two unmoving bariaur (centaurlike NPCs) huddle unmoving in the lee of a building. The rime of greenish ice that coats both victims enforces their rigid posture.

**Cagequake:** A localized tremor rips the street and nearby buildings in a radius of 50 feet (which includes the heroes). Cobblestones buckle, walls crack, and some roofs fall in, sending up plumes of dust and starting fires. Creatures within the area of effect must succeed at saving throws vs. paralyzation or take 1d4 points of damage from falling debris or a nasty fall.

**Sodkiller Gang:** In the aftermath of an unrelated shake-up, a faction known as the sodkillers formed. Violent and unstable in the best of times, this group is particularly sensitive to change, being so new themselves. During the time of crises, heroes may run into a roving band of sodkillers, who target the heroes as obviously different, and so obviously in need of a good thrashing.

**Sodkiller gang, F4 (10):** AC 2 (platemail, shield); MV 9; hp 35 each; THAC0 17 (15 with specialization and Str bonus); #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d8+3 (longsword specialization, Str bonus); SA *charm person* 1/day each; SZ M (6' tall); ML champion (15); Int average (10); AL CE; XP 270 each.

**Searing Wind:** A fiery wind springs up, visible as thin steamers of pale flame, raising the ambient temperature by at least 50 degrees and burning those unlucky enough to hit directly by a streamer of flame. Those not resistant to high heat take 1d4 points of damage per turn of exposure, while those who are hit by a flame

## Testimonials on Sigil

- "The Lady of Pain rules Sigil. She's all-powerful, but allows us mortals to come and go, mostly as we please. She's the one who wards Sigil against the entry of gods. But somehow one got through, and things will be the worse for it, mark my words!"
- "Portals are the lifeblood of Sigil, connecting to every plane, dimension, or world you can imagine, and most you can't. That makes Sigil the perfect nexus, probably of the whole multiverse. Thing is, most of the portals are closed, probably by the Lady herself, and all commerce has come to a stop! Millions of passerthrough are stranded here, as are millions more who were out of town when the disaster hit stuck out there somewhere. Luckily, looks like the portals that allow outflow of sewage and inflow of air are still working, plus a few others here and there."
- "Most folks are hunkered down, waiting for the portals to open again. If they did, I'm sure there'd be a mass exodus. Still, every hour that passes with the portals closed brings Sigil closer to a massive riot. I hope the Lady clears this up soon, or more and more folks are going to end up in the dead-book!"
- "Sigil's run by the Factions, all beneath the Lady of Pain. You can bet that all those that survive are out in force near the Armory, even those that normally don't see eye to eye!"
- "The Armory used to be where the Faction called the Doomguard set up kip. They had a great forge there, but during the war, the Doomguard were pretty much wiped out and their Faction removed from power. The Armory had its share of squatters, until Vecna arrived."
- "Dabus are the servants of the Lady of Pain; her will is their will. They look like stretched-out githzerai with little horns—but they all float a few feet above the ground, just like the Lady herself. They communicate with the likes of us via glowing glyphs—a rebus, I guess you'd call it. You got to be canny to strain meaning from nonsense when a dabus speaks."

streamer (make one saving throw vs. paralyzation per hour the wind blows to avoid) take 2d8 points of damage. The wind blows for 1d4 hours before dying.

**Melted Casualties:** The growing incidence of searing winds begins to claim the citizens of Sigil, which heroes note in passing. Three cinder piles at a crossroads lie suggestively close to four other dead and badly burned humanoids (two humans and an elf). It appears that they were caught while running toward shelter.

**Plague of Ravens:** The natural ecology of Sigil, what there is of it, is thrown wildly out of whack. Normally sedate insect and vermin populations are agitated, while the truly dangerous predators, such as the so-called executioner's ravens, become a real threat. A plague of ravens descend upon the heroes and those nearby them, out for blood.

**Executioner's Ravens (20):** AC 5; MV 3, fly 33 (C); HD 2; hp 16 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (beak); SA 1 in 10 attacks targeted at victim's eyes—victim who fails save vs. paralyzation against a successful attack are blinded; SZ M (5' wingspan); ML steady (12); Int semi (3); AL N; XP 120 each.

**Mephit Mob:** Mephits are humanoid entities who draw their substance from any one of the elemental planes. Utilized as messengers, mephits of various types are a common sight in the streets of Sigil. Flighty at the best of times, the disturbance has roused some types into aggressive mobs. In this case, a mob of salt mephits is on the move, and the heroes might be their target. Salt mephits look like grainy white humanoids with wings made of cubical white crystals. They have large red eyes and gaping, grinning mouths. Like all mephits, they have a breath attack, though their *gate* abilities are currently inoperative.

**Salt Mephit Mob (8):** AC 5; MV 12, fly 24 (B); HD 3; hp 24 each; THAC0 17; #AT 2; Dmg 1d3/1d3 (claws) + stun; SA successful attacks require save vs. petrification or victim is stunned for 1d2 rounds, salt shower breath against 1 foe within 15' causes 1d4 damage and victim make similar save or be stunned 1d2 rounds, contaminate water by touch, can *taunt* 1/day within 10 yards; SD immune to all fire and heat, regenerate 1 hp/turn if dry; SW takes maximum damage from liquid attacks, normal water does 1 hp/round of contact; SZ M (5' tall); ML average (10); Int average (9); AL N; XP 420 each.

**Darkblight:** Disturbed waves of reality destructively converge to blot out all light in a 1,000-foot radius. The darkness extinguishes the "natural" light of Sigil (an all-pervading glow that waxes and wanes on a 12-hour cycle called "peak" and "antipeak"), as well as all flame, magical, or even mechanical light sources within its area of effect. Furthermore, while the darkblight lasts (3d6 minutes), no one can bring light, from any source, into being within the area of effect. Except for those who have true darkvision, all living creatures are blinded (including those who rely on infravision).

**Rampaging Fiend:** The portals of Sigil open onto many planes, including infernal ones. Though rarer, both demons and devils have passed through the City of Doors, and some few even reside there permanently.

With the current failure of the portals, which are the only way anything can leave or enter Sigil (Vecna's millennia-long plan notwithstanding), many fiends who were just passing through have been slain. However, a few of the more powerful still wander the area in a furious temper, including Musesta of the Abyss. The heroes make a tempting target for her fury.

**Musesta, marilith:** AC -9; MV 15; HD 12; hp 78; THAC0 9; #AT 7; Dmg 4d6/1d4+2/1d8+2/1d8+3/1d4+4/2d4+1/1d6+4 (tail/hammer +2/longsword +2/longsword +3/sickle +3/broadsword +1/trident +3); SA tail constriction, spell-like abilities, 35% chance to *gate* in 2d10 least tanar'ri, 1d6 lesser tanar'ri, 1d4 greater tanar'ri or 1 true tanar'ri 1/hour (*gate* power nonfunctional); SD never surprised, takes half damage from cold, magical fire, gas, immune to weapons of less than +2 enchantment, immune to illusions, electricity, nonmagical fire, poison, and mind-affecting spells; MR 70%; SZ L (7' tall); ML fanatic (17); Int genius (17); AL CE; XP 23,000.

*Notes:* Snakelike body constricts a victim for 4d6 hit points of crushing damage/round, check vs. Constitution each round or lose consciousness (Bend Bars/Lift Gates roll to break free). Marilith have the following spell-like abilities as 12th-level casters available at will: *darkness* 15' radius, *infravision*, *teleport without error* (though it can't be used at this point), *animate dead*, *cause serious wounds*, *cloudkill*, *comprehend languages*, *curse*,

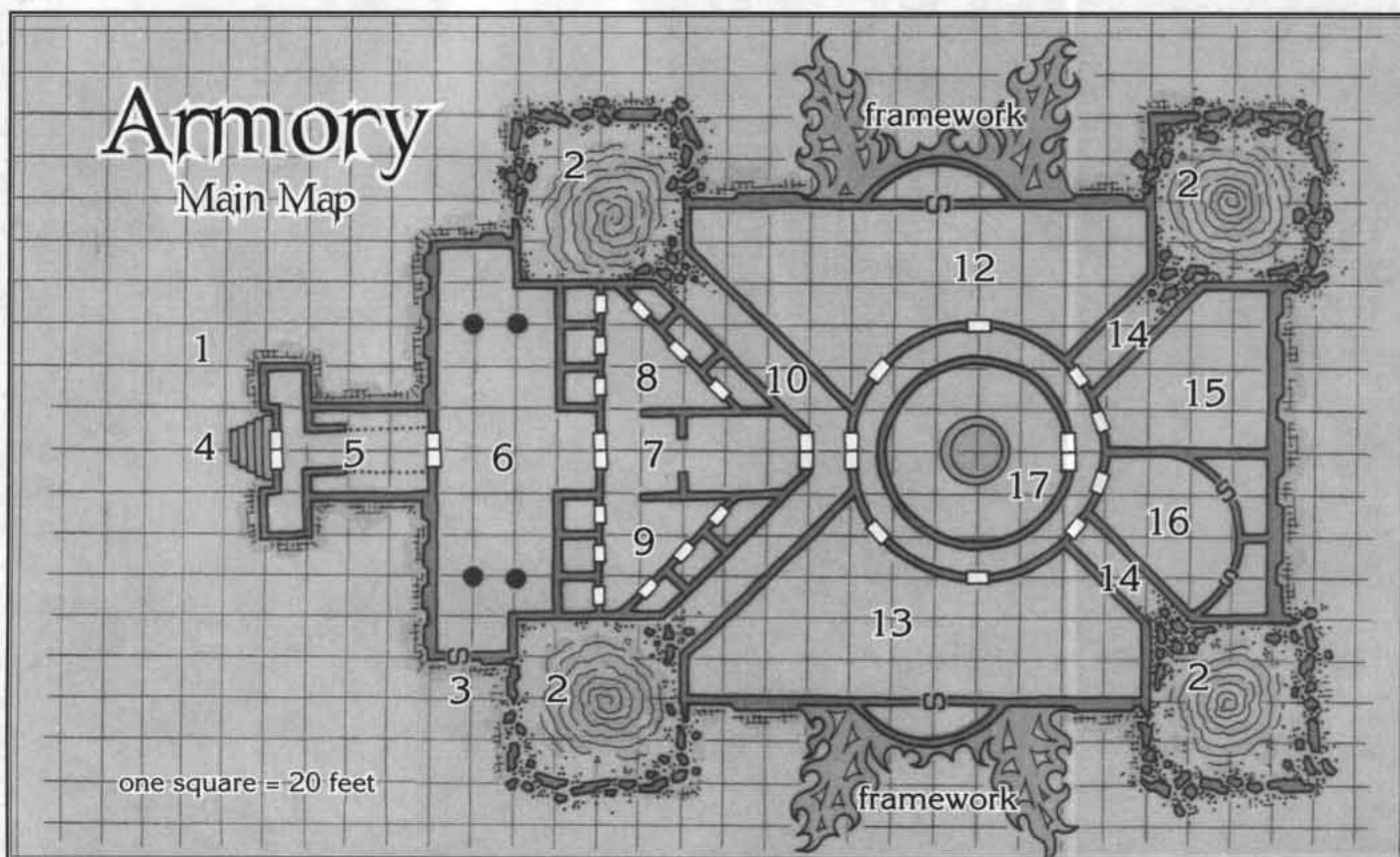
*detect evil*, *detect magic*, *detect invisibility*, *polymorph self* (7/day), *project image*, *pyrotechnics*, and *telekinesis*.

## The Armory

Heroes may approach the Armory directly with flying or similar magic. Otherwise, they can use side streets to wend their way toward Vecna's new stronghold, or follow the trail of destruction directly. Those who set foot to the destruction find it precarious and dangerous. Each 200 feet traveled in this manner requires a successful saving throw vs. paralyzation to avoid taking a nasty fall, jump out of the way of a falling beam, or step back from a yawning pit. A failed saving throw inflicts 2d4 points of damage from any of the aforementioned hazards.

The area immediately around the Armory is different than areas previously visited by the heroes in Sigil:

A massive structure squats in the center of a wide, but nonetheless crowded, field of cobblestone. The fortresslike building stretches some 600 feet long and 400 feet wide. In the ruins of what may have been towers at each corner, massive pillars of smoke and fire burn, reaching miles into the sky. A metallic framework rises all around the building, reaching a height close to 1,000 feet above the center of the fortress. Older, rusted portions of the framework have obviously been recently replaced with mirror-







bright metal near the top, and form the symbol of a hand and eye.

The field of cobblestone barely contains a surging, though motley, army. The army is composed of humans, elves, dwarves, plane-touched humanoids, creatures both divine and infernal, and stranger beasts. Obviously mighty, they still give the central structure wide berth, though the thousands of bodies lying in random heaps closer to the fortress indicate the army continues to test the perimeter, and continues to fail.

The army respects one other perimeter. A wide clearing surrounds a group of six figures, all of which are levitating a few feet above the cobblestones. Five of the figures are gaunt, robed humanoids sporting small horns. A stream of glowing glyphs hangs like a haze near them. The five surround a larger figure in voluminous multicolored robes, who wears an elaborately bladed and spiked headpiece. This is the Lady of Pain.

The Lady of Pain and a coterie of her dabus servants stand before the Armory, staring mutely as many of the most powerful individuals and entities remaining in Sigil attempt the invisible magical ward set up around the fortress by Vecna, and for the most part, fail. Though legend suggests that the Lady of Pain once belonged to the Ancient Brethren, among whom the Serpent also numbers, she still faces a quandary with Vecna's presence. The longer Vecna remains, the more unsteady the celestial ring under Sigil becomes. Should that fulcrum finally collapse, so also will the current shape and order of the multiverse. In fact, permanent damage has already occurred. But, should the Lady loose the wards that prevent other gods entry, so that they might put a stop to Vecna's machinations, their very presence would bring down the multiverse that much sooner. In like manner, should the Lady reveal herself in her true form in all its aching majesty to do battle with the waxing god, the multiverse would come undone like a mobile whose strings are simultaneously severed. So, she waits.

Heroes have many options, including turning around and leaving, approaching the Lady of Pain, intermingling with the army, approaching the Armory directly (which probably includes intermingling with the army first), or just standing and watching for a while.

## Watch and Wait

Heroes who pursue this option observe the continual surge and withdrawal of the army, while the Lady continues to stand unmoving. At irregular intervals, individuals or small companies approach close to the Armory's front portal. Sometimes, they are chased off by featureless ebony balls about the size of a head,

which dart around as if alive. Other groups are lucky enough to avoid the few spherical sentries long enough to attempt some magical spell, ritual, or other powerful effect. Of these, some shake their heads and move back, uncertain of their effect on the invisible, undetectable perimeter. Others, confident that their particular method of putting the death field in abeyance has succeeded, despite any visible confirmation, discover they are wrong, like all the others before them.

## A Messenger from Vecna

The DM may present the messenger's message as if the proclamation had already been made, allowing the heroes to learn of it from contact with any individual of the army, or the DM could stage the proclamation while heroes stand outside the Armory, for dramatic effect.

The messenger, pressed into Vecna's worship since his arrival, is a supernatural creature shaped like a massive toad (a green slaad, a creature of Limbo). It hops suddenly forth from the obscuring smoke of the pillars, but stands within the clear perimeter. It croaks out in Common:

"Hear the holy prophecy of Vecna, Supreme Deity of All the Infinite Spaces and Every Space Between. Says the Lord: You cannot and will not reach me with malice in your heart; I will not allow it. I know your thoughts as you think them, for I am become a true god. Yet my power now is nothing to that which I am soon to reach, when I reach forth from the very center of multiversal disintegration and reorder the cosmos, according to my whims, from first to last dimension. Those who stand against me will be wiped from existence, as if they had never been. But those who now forswear past allegiance and pledge themselves to the one supreme lord of creation may be brought into the new world. Decide soon, for reality rapidly speeds toward dissolution and my ultimate ascension."

Vecna's toady waits as its words sink into the crowd with visible effect. Murmuring grows to arguments, and from there to a single-throated scream of rage. Still, it is clear that some among the gathering are considering the offer. In fact, the longer Vecna remains ensconced, the more converts he gains. Converts who truly swear themselves to Vecna pass unharmed into the maw of the Armory, while those who make the gesture out of duplicity or with doubt in their heart are stricken dead as they approach the warded perimeter of death.

If they like, the heroes may attack the offending toad-like messenger. Whether they do so or not, another offended soul moves to attack the slaad in jangling gray plate armor. This being is a warrior named Autochon the Bellringer, who is intent on destroying the Limbo-

born horror before it can return to the safety of its new god. No others currently nearby step forward to offer Autochon their aid. The messenger stands its ground, confident in the protection of its new lord. If the heroes become involved, see Autochon's description below in the Approaching the Armory section. A darting ebony sphere or two may reinforce the green slaad, as is also noted under that section.

Finally, it should be mentioned that even before the proclamation of the slaad, many "canny bashers" decided they could see the direction the wind blows and decided to join with Vecna. Several such individuals and small groups have already slipped past the death field under the cover of Vecna's grace, and are already located within the structure. Others found themselves drawn to Vecna even before the death field was raised.

**Green slaad:** AC 0; hp 76; THAC0 11; #AT 3; Dmg 1d6+2/1d6+2/2d8.

## Approaching the Lady

No one stands too close to the Lady of Pain and her escort of five dabus. Since she stands near the edge of the unruly army, the heroes may approach without intermingling, if they so choose.

Aside from their levitating, robed forms, horns, and the spray of glyphs and symbols that swarm about them, dabus are distinguished by a shock of white hair that ascends from their heads like a flame caught in mid-burn. Of the Lady, her awe-inspiring headdress of knives and spikes is impressive up close, all the more so since it becomes apparent that the knives are not a headdress at all, but a natural part of the Lady!

When any hero bearing a relic or artifact of Vecna comes to within 40 feet of the Lady, she moves for the first time since the day Vecna commandeered the Armory. Though she rotates in place to face the heroes, she does not speak, but regards the newcomer for a while.

After a round of inactivity, glowing glyphs and symbols begin to dance and flutter around the dabus—this is how they communicate, using symbols chosen for the sounds made in a language, stringing those sounds together to form words. Heroes who don't know this already can make an Intelligence check to make this connection. But even when the heroes realize the nature of the glyphs, they must make an Intelligence check to decipher each "sentence" spoken by the dabus, who relay the Lady's words. Past sentences hover in the air for several minutes before dispersing in a spray of color. Regardless of the success or failure of the heroes' attempt at deciphering the dabus, the attention given them by the Lady in turn draws the attention of a local sage, one Ronnasic, who offers to translate.

The dabus, speaking for the Lady of Pain, make the following speech by using their unusual form of communication:

"I know the shape of things to come, yet this I did not see. Beyond even the devices of the Whispered One, salvation is offered. The Serpent's protégé may yet be stopped and removed from this place that is profane for any god to tread. You are the first, last, and only hope. Only you may stand against this god, you who have incorporated tangible portions of this god's once-mortal flesh. Vecna's death ward around the Armory will not stop you, nor can his divine energies burn you. If the warp and weft of the cosmos you wish to preserve, make all haste; remove Vecna from this place. It may be that you will succeed."

When the Lady of Pain's words are given and understood by at least one of the heroes, the Lady turns back to regard the Armory. No words or actions on the heroes' part cause her to move again until the issue of Vecna is decided. Should any hero be so foolish as to attack the dabus (8 HD creatures each armed with *two-handed swords* +3) or the Lady of Pain herself (invulnerable to any attack the heroes are capable of mounting), a single glance by the Lady of Pain causes the aggressor to vanish, never to be seen again (at least in the time remaining to the universe). In fact, the aggressor is banished to an extradimensional maze that seems to extend to infinity.

## In the Army

From a distance, the disparate army appears as a uniform mass; however, closer up it is apparent that the congregation is made up unaffiliated individuals and small groups of disparate dress, race, and planar origin. Some few are obviously representatives of higher planes and gods (called aasimar and proxies), while equally concerned infernal agents are also in evidence. Most give these horn-encrusted creatures a wide berth. All are pondering how to break into the Armory and somehow confront Vecna, though no two groups seem to be able to agree on one unifying plan. Likewise, all are obviously powerful, renowned, or both, though the party is unlikely to have heard of their exploits. If desired, the DM can throw in a group or individual of great power whom the heroes are familiar with from their own campaign. In the end, only the heroes with their relics have a chance.

In the midst of the army, the heroes appear as just one more clot of potential soldiers, should ever the Lady of Pain give the word. Heroes interested in joining other bands can find a group or two willing to swell their numbers, while heroes wishing to bolster their own party can find many single NPCs (of any race and

### Ronnasic of Sigil

A much-traveled sage of great renown, Ronnasic has penned tomes on many diverse subjects. As the sage may elaborate when given the opportunity, he wrote the first, but less-famous, essay on illithids (*Mind Kampf*), and in like manner he investigated the habits of the feared beholders (*Observations [etc.]*), and just recently completed a treatise on the ethereal sea (the aptly named *Guide to the Ethereal Plane*). Thus, could anyone really wonder that these great events would draw his ever-eager pen? If Ronnasic notices the hero in discourse with the Lady of Pain, he moves forward at the first opportunity to offer his services as a translator, as an aid, and as a chronicler of the great events unfolding all around. Should the DM ever need to get across a fine point or make a difficult idea clear to the heroes, Ronnasic is the perfect vehicle, while he survives.

Perhaps one of the most important points Ronnasic can make is an observation: Only those with the relics may hope to pass the perimeter and live. It's just possible that if two PCs with relics joined their hands to form a small circle, they might usher one person within their arms through the perimeter, and so protect the individual from the death field. Ronnasic is willing to test this hypothesis with himself.

See the Conclusions section for additional information on the Lady of Pain, specifically concerning actions she may take to bolster heroes who return to ask for her aid after first trying their strength against Vecna, and failing.

#### Ronnasic of Sigil, male human M13

(**Transcendent Order**): AC 0 (*robe of the archmagi, ring of protection +2, Dex bonus*); MV 12; hp 25; THAC0 16 (15 with *staff of withering*); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+1 (*staff of withering*); SA spells, +1 bonus to initiative rolls; MR 5%; SZ M (5'10" tall); ML elite (14); Str 10, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 19, Wis 13, Cha 14; AL N.

*Special Equipment*: *staff of withering* (30 charges), *wand of lightning* (18 charges), *ring of human influence*, 3 *potions of healing*, gem pouch filled with 10,000 gp worth of fine jewels.

*Spells* (5/5/5/4/4/2): 1st—*armor, feather fall, magic missile* (×2), *wizard mark*; 2nd—*invisibility, knock, mirror image, rope trick, wizard lock*; 3rd—*dispel magic, fireball* (×2), *protection from normal missiles, tongues*; 4th—*charm monster, dimension door, ice storm, polymorph self*; 5th—*cone of cold, passwall, teleport, wall of stone*; 6th—*contingency, globe of invulnerability*.

*Notes*: The DM should feel free to use the *contingency* spell in a manner he or she sees fit before introducing Ronnasic.

class the DM might choose to use) willing to join ranks with the heroes.

Should the heroes reveal to a group that they possess relics of Vecna, most are unbelieving and attribute the heroes' claim as just one more "barmy" idea, as likely to fail as all the other foolproof attempts to pass the perimeter that have failed.

Should the heroes present the *Hand of Vecna* in a forceful manner, its obvious power can not be denied, and a cheer goes up—if the player characters are still not clear on the relic's significance, an NPC yells out, "You can get past the death field with the relic! You can penetrate to Vecna's very seat of power!" Player characters who dally (DM's discretion) after revealing the *Hand* draw the attention of several demons (vulture-headed vrocks and dog-headed glabrezu) who push through the press to confront the heroes, demanding the *Hand*, and the relics, so that they may bring the battle to Vecna directly. Heroes may attempt diplomacy or other bribes to dissuade the vrocks, but should conflict threaten (or should the heroes decide to lop off their relics after all), a simple glance from the Lady of Pain across the field destroys every vrock and glabrezu in an instant. The DM has no need to refer to stat blocks. The Lady has chosen her champions, and brooks no tampering with them.

### Approaching the Armory

Heroes who've already gained the attention of the assembled forces through display of authenticated Vecnan artifacts are cheered as they approach the perimeter. Time for the Vecna-busters to shine. Otherwise the heroes can make good progress through the press and reach the perimeter without too much notice. Nearby forces leave off their own plans to watch the latest "berks" test themselves against the invisible death field. As the heroes break into the clear area abutting the perimeter, they can get a clear view of the Armory and what's left of those previously fallen to its peril (see the Area Descriptions section).

Heroes who have not already met Autochon do so now. He approaches the heroes as they begin to head into the clearing. Autochon appears to be a capable warrior, and he is encased head-to-toe in jangling gray platemail (every movement produces delicate bell-like tones). Autochon begs to join the heroes in their attempt to pierce the perimeter. He says he's "Got a canny feeling 'bout you bloods." If the heroes demur, he leaves; otherwise, he joins the group and fights against Vecna's outer defenses to the best of his abilities (note his description and weakness), despite his evil alignment. However, should he win through with the heroes to Vecna's very presence, Autochon offers to join Vecna if he can "stop the Bells!" Though probably meaningless to the heroes, Vecna grants Autochon's desire with a nod, which gains him an instant ally.

**Autochon the Bellringer, male human F12, Free League:** AC 1 (full plate armor); MV 12; hp 88; THAC0 9 (6 with *scimitar of speed*); #AT 5/2; Dmg 1d8+4 (*scimitar of speed*, Str bonus); SD +2 bonus vs. attempts at mind control; SW confined to armor, but weight of armor imposes at -1 cumulative penalty to THAC0 each round of a melee after the 5th; SZ M (6' tall); ML steady (12); Str 16, Dex 10, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8; AL NE; XP 4,000.

*Special equipment:* Gray Waste plate (insulates Autochon's ears from cursed bells only he can hear).

## Area Descriptions

The following numbered entries refer to the Armory Main Map (areas 1–17) and the Armory Lower Map (areas 18–29).

### 1. Perimeter of Death

The press of the surrounding army stands clear of the half-ruined Armory, giving it at least 100 feet of clearance. The stricken bodies of those who moved too close lie in poses of agony, creating an actual perimeter of death marking the invisible energy obviously surrounding the structure. Small motes of blackness patrol this inner perimeter, and wherever they come into contact with a fallen body, they leave behind a gaping hole in flesh, clothing, and equipment.

Though invisible, the perimeter marked by the fallen is real. Any animate creature, be it living, dead, or construct, who moves closer than 80 feet to the Armory (on any side, above, or below) is stricken dead as if subject to a *power word, kill*, regardless of the victim's hit points. No saving throw is allowed, and creatures with magic resistance must check it five times to finally make it past the field (no matter how quickly the victim dashes across the field). The death field also affects those who attempt to *teleport* through (the original construction of the Armory prevents easy *teleportation, passwall*, and similar magic, anyway).

Any creature that is the recipient of a relic of Vecna passes through the invisible death field without harm, though warm flashes and hearts noticeably skipping a beat indicate the field is all too real. Likewise, beings who have truly accepted Vecna as a deity to be loved, cherished, and served may also pass through the death field without harm. Any cultists of Vecna that still accompany the heroes are so immune. Of course, these NPCs are unlikely to continue an alliance with heroes intent on removing Vecna from Sigil. Heroes who "ferry" more than two creatures without relics through the field (by surrounding them with linked hands) excite the magic to greater efficacy. Thereafter, all future attempts to funnel nonbelievers and nonrelic owners through the field end with someone's death.

### Motes of Darkness

The original owners of the Armory (the Doomguard) kept several *spheres of annihilation*. With Vecna's acquisition of the building, the remaining four *spheres* serve Vecna as a handy perimeter guard, as well as a particularly efficient means of cleaning up after the foolhardy. With Vecna's godly status, it is only a trifling matter of concentration for him to control all the *spheres* simultaneously, and at a remote distance to boot. Thus, heroes who attempt to loot the fallen find little of value. Luckily, the 2-foot-diameter *spheres of annihilation*, under Vecna's direct control, are blind to the heroes, and are not drawn to them. Heroes who successfully shepherd one or two others through the field without a relic are also protected from the *spheres'* attention. Détente ends if any wizard PC or NPC attempts to mentally control a *sphere* (see the *sphere's* entry in the DMG). Any such attempt that fails draws the sphere toward the offending wizard at a movement rate of 12 for 1d4 rounds. Furthermore, the other three spheres concentrate their attention near where the attempt at control took place.

### The Limits of Vecna's Knowledge

As has long been established, Vecna cannot know, scry, or divine the presence of his own relics. Though he has retrieved his original Eye through duplicity and deceit reaching back over 1,000 years (and with it, siphoned the power of Iuz), the rest of his original motes of mortal residue elude his power. Thus, despite Vecna's convoluted plan and its success so far, by definition he is unable to factor in the possible effects of his relics in the hands of do-gooders. This is his Achilles' heel.

As heroes test and finally penetrate the Armory, they invariably run across servants of Vecna. The god's servants can interact and attack the heroes, and they are usually capable of alerting Vecna directly on his Celestial Throne in area 29. But even when in receipt of such reports, Vecna does nothing. The waxing god cannot confirm the reports with his godly senses; it is void to him. And he fears this void. In a most ungodlike manner, he attempts to ignore it, and therefore is slow to muster his defenses against a purported invasion. Only in the final extremity, when Vecna can physically apprehend the heroes and their relics with purely mortal senses, can Vecna respond and fight for his continued place in Sigil.

As mentioned in the Lesser Known Vecnan Relics section, the relics affect only those who wear them, not those who merely stand nearby. However, even the absence of knowledge of one such relic-wearer causes Vecna to hesitate. This was not something he had accounted for in his godly avatar, so he isn't quite sure how to deal with it yet.

Though Vecna cannot directly perceive the heroes with relics through his magical senses, he can attempt to regain control of his lost sphere, and set all four on an outward spiral in an attempt to swat out that which interferes with the perimeter guardians. Player characters who are quick on their feet might ignore this blind reaction by blending back into the shrinking army, or gaining entry forthwith into the Armory.

**Development:** Heroes who fly up and over the Armory note that the central circular area of the structure, contrary to possible reports by citizens of Sigil, is closed off. Vecna sealed the ceiling, as if it had never been open. Thus, easy access is no longer possible, though heroes could still attempt to excavate a new opening in the ceiling. Note that except for the central well, now sealed, the upper sections of the Armory actually contain many levels of subsidiary armories and barracks, though all are now vacant.

## 2. Pillars of Smoke and Fire

The four corners of the half-ruined Armory are each the source of a mighty pillar of smoke and flames. The base of each pillar resides within shells of absent structures, possibly towers. As the pillars rise toward the arch high above, they writhe and entwine, forming strange glyphs of uncertain meaning over the entire city.

The four corners of the Armory once held towers that may have actually existed on each of the prime elemental planes. Those towers disappeared when the Armory was sacked in a previous, unrelated altercation. With Vecna's occupation, the shells of the towers ignited with the waxing god's power, creating visual displays of smoke and fire over all the city of Sigil. The pillars burn magically and resist any effort to manipulate them. Attempts to gain entry to the Armory through the pillars inflict 10d6 points of damage per round, as if wading through a continually detonating *fireball* with no saving throws.

## 3. Secret Entrance

The outside of the Armory is decorated with all manner of designs, signs, and logos, indicating past important clients of the arms' manufacturer. Most such logos are inscribed within colorful borders of red, green, and blue squares and rectangles. One such sign, at ground level, serves as a façade for a secret door. The small blue secret door is inscribed with a hand and eye over a symbol of a stylized animal skull (the sign of the Doomguard themselves). The door opens only when pressed with a *channeling knucklebone*, which many high-ranking cultists of Vecna carry. Apparently, the cult of Vecna had secretly spread even to Sigil. The secret door provides access directly to area 6.

## 4. Main Entrance

Half-crumbled and scorched marble stairs mount from a courtyard of shattered stone. The stairs mount toward a metal-lined circular opening some 30 feet in diameter. The crenellated walls of the Armory climb much higher, and high above, some older sign has been blotted out by the inscription of a new sign, which still glows red with the heat of its etching. It is the sign of the hand and eye.

The metallic portals gape wide, allowing easy access into the darkness beyond.

## 5. Entry Hall

Thick steel doors bind each end of this hall, though both currently stand open. A fine layer of ash and soot lies over debris swept into the corners and along walls. Several forms lie huddled against the long walls of the hall, seemingly sleeping, or perhaps dead.

The dotted lines on the map delineate narrow spaces that are still protected as if by an *antimagic shell*. In fact, the antimagic effect persists on anyone or anything passing through it in either direction for 3d6 rounds (cumulative). Thus, no spells or magical effects function within the area, and spellcasters or magic items cannot use spells or magical abilities after passing through the area until the effect wears off.

**Development:** The forms that lie within are a few old Doomguard warriors who were killed during the Faction War that originally turned the Armory into a ruin. Despite the antimagic effect, the soldiers have been reanimated by Vecna, and they rise like puppets on a string should anyone enter the corridor. A halting voice asks for the allegiance of the intruders. Any response that doesn't somehow indicate Vecna invites a swift attack by ranged weapons in the hands of the dead. The undead archers do not leave their posts.

**Skeleton warriors (6):** AC 2; MV 6; hp 84 each; THAC0 11 (8 with bows); #AT 2; Dmg 1d6+3/1d6+3.

## 6. Exhibition Hall

Grand decorations and trophies of war appear burned and looted. Mannequins, racks, and glass cases are shattered and strewn upon the floor. Great hooks hang from the ceiling, though most are empty or hold only burned lumps of grease and charred wood. The layer of ash and soot reveals the destruction occurred some time ago. A small fire burns near a great iron door across from the Entry Hall. Several figures stand or sit around the fire.

The figures around a makeshift campfire include several pilgrims, new converts to Vecna's religion, that have found their way into the Armory. They're taking their time in approaching their new lord, praying and singing off-the-cuff psalms with each new room they enter. Of course, of the pilgrims who've gone on into the next room, none have returned, despite promises to the contrary.

**Development:** The pilgrims are initially inclined to treat the heroes as fellow converts, unless the heroes go out of their way to indicate otherwise. In fact, they may accompany the heroes through a few rooms of the new temple of Vecna, at least until they realize what the heroes are really up to. At the moment that it's clear that the heroes oppose Vecna, these pilgrims, and any others encountered later, turn on the party like a rabid pack of dogs.

**Bariaur pilgrims (5):** AC 4; MV 15; hp 20 each; THAC0 18; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d8+2.

**Lapsed Harmonium Officer, F13:** AC 0 (chainmail, *ring of protection* +2, Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 87; THAC0 8 (6 with *battle-ax* +2); #AT 2; Dmg 1d8+4 (*battle-ax* +2, Str bonus); SZ M (5'4" tall); ML elite (13); Int average (8); AL LE; XP 4,000.

**New Vecnan Specialty Priest:** AC 2; MV 12; hp 38; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4.

## 7. Slaadi Nest

A scorched path leads directly away from the entrance toward another set of large doors. Wide-open spaces to the right and left are filled with an exceptional amount of debris, shrouded in shadows. Fresh bloodstains paint the stone tile immediately in front of the door, but of the victim, there is no sign.

Most of the mess is from a conflict that occurred close to a year ago, but the blood is clearly very real. If any pilgrims accompany the heroes from the previous chamber, they mention that a couple other hopeful apostles ventured into this chamber a few hours ago. The screams were interpreted as ecstatic, but perhaps they were otherwise.

**Development:** Two rounds after the heroes open the door from area 6 into this chamber (or otherwise make an obvious entrance), a polymorphed slaad moves out of the shadows (from area 8) and greets them. The slaad wears the polymorphed guise of another centaurlike bariaur. If allowed, he approaches to within melee distance, and says excitedly in Common, and without any usage of the local slang, "If you're coming through here to offer your allegiance to Vecna, you've got to see this!" The slaad motions toward the shadows (area 8). He's

trying to set up an easy ambush with the slaadi who wait there. If unsuccessful, a sortie of four slaadi launch an attack from area 8, and after 3 rounds of combat, a sortie of three additional slaadi from area 9 join in. Be sure to refer to the Development section under area 9 regarding the actions of one of the slaad (X'moorger).

Note that the doors leading to area 10 are magically trapped with a *delayed blast fireball*.

**Slaad, green:** AC 0; MV 9; hp 76; THAC0 11; #AT 3; Dmg 1d6+2/1d6+2/2d8 (claw/claw/bite).

## 8. Old Buying Offices

The debris of many desks, faux walls of painted lacquer, countless reams of paper, and miscellaneous dirt, rubble, and carrion blend together as a perfect example of shambles. Amid the destruction and decay, small concavities in the refuse almost look like nests, albeit of very large animals.

If being led by the polymorphed slaad, four slaadi-in-hiding attempt to ambush heroes by quickly emerging from a shower of debris, in flanking positions. The slaadi in this area include two blue slaadi and two green slaadi. The false bariaur initially reacts as if just as surprised as the heroes, and attempts to retreat; however, once in a position to act in a particularly treacherous manner, it shifts to slaad form and attacks.

In the event the heroes do not follow the faux bariaur, the four slaadi hidden here launch a standard attack, following the heroes as necessary.

**Development:** If any pilgrims continue to accompany the party, the specialty priestess and one real bariaur stay to help out their supposed fellow PC pilgrims, but the others flee back out to area 6.

A search through the room reveals, by the paperwork that survives, that this chamber once served as a clearinghouse for the purchase of weapons of every type, some of which, if their descriptions can be believed, were clearly quite magical.

**Slaad, green:** AC 0; MV 9; hp 76; THAC0 11; #AT 3; Dmg 1d6+2/1d6+2/2d8 (claw/claw/bite).

**Slaad, blue (2):** AC 2; MV 6; HD 8+4; hp 68 each; THAC0 13; #AT 5; Dmg 2d6/2d6/2d6/2d6/2d8 (claw/claw/claw/claw/bite); SA spell-like abilities, each bite is 10% likely to infect foe with *mummy rot*; SD immune to weapons of less than +1 enchantment; MR 40%; SZ L (10' tall); ML steady (12); Int low (7); AL CN; XP 9,000 each.

**Special Abilities:** Spell-like abilities—Can use the following once per round, at will: *hold person* (1 person only), *passwall*, and *telekinesis*.





## 9. Old Selling Offices

Casual observation reveals this chamber almost indistinguishable from the destroyed medieval office space on the opposite side of the hall (area 8).

Like on the other side, slaadi also nest here, but of a higher caliber of power than those previously noted. The three green slaadi and the gray slaad here are willing to let the ambush go off in area 8 for good or bad; however, should a battle occur in area 7, the slaadi here reinforce the other slaadi 3 rounds after the initiation of hostilities. Player characters or NPCs that enter this area draw an immediate attack from the lounging slaadi.

**Development:** The original leader of the slaadi penetration of Sigil and procurement of the Armory as a hidden base was a death slaad named X'moorger. Like the rest of his brood, X'moorger has sworn allegiance to Vecna. However, the chaotic nature of slaadi finds its greatest expression in the most powerful representatives of the race. Thus, X'moorger's allegiance, though heartfelt, is as changeable as the tide. Should X'moorger at any time note that the heroes are not really pilgrims, but instead intent on bringing Vecna low, X'moorger recants his allegiance, and attempts to break off combat with the heroes. Should any other slaad survive, he'll even fight his former followers. If the heroes will have this monster, he'll join them in their quest to destroy Vecna. Of course, without a relic to aid him, X'moorger's great powers will avail him but little against Vecna's avatar.

**Slaad, green:** AC 0; MV 9; hp 76; THAC0 11; #AT 3; Dmg 1d6+2/1d6+2/2d8 (claw/claw/bite).

**Slaad, gray:** AC -2; MV 12; HD 10+6; hp 86; THAC0 11; #AT 3; Dmg 2d4+2/2d4+2/2d8 (claw/claw/bite); SA spell-like abilities; SD immune to weapons of less than +1 enchantment; MR 60%; SZ M (6' tall); ML champion (16); Int high (13); AL CN; XP 15,000.

**Special Abilities:** Spell-like abilities—can use the following once per round, at will: *shapechange*, *flame strike*, *infravision*, *invisibility*, *know alignment*, *lightning bolt*, *advanced illusion*, *fear*, *darkness 15' radius*, and *wind walk*. Can use *symbol of pain* and *power word blind* 1/day.

**X'moorger (death slaad):** AC -4; MV 12; HD 15+7; hp 127; THAC0 5; #AT 3; Dmg 3d6/3d6/2d10 (claw/claw/bite); SA spell-like abilities, on successful strike, victim must make a Con check or stand stunned for 1d6 rounds; SD immune to weapons of less than +2 enchantment; MR 70%; SZ M (6' tall); ML fanatic (17); Int genius (17); AL CN; XP 22,000.

**Special Abilities:** Spell like abilities—can use the following once per round at will: *shapechange*, *advanced illusion*, *astral spell*, *cloudkill*, *darkness 15' radius*, *detect invisibility*, *detect magic*, *ESP*, *fear*, *fireball* (1/day), *flame strike*, *invisibility*, *locate object*, *phantasmal killer*, *symbol* (any 1/day), *unholy word* (1/day), and *wind walk*.

## Slaadi in the Armory

This hallway is part of an extended territory claimed by several refugee slaadi. In the aftermath of the Armory's destruction and the displacement of the Faction that owned it (known as the Doomguard), the empty yet still-defensible shell was a tempting location for those in need of shelter. In fact, when an enterprising band of slaadi secretly infiltrated the ruin, they found many previously ensconced tenants. To the slaadi, they were only food. Slaadi appear as monstrous upright frogs crossed with some strain of hell-born devil or demon. Most also possess tattoos on their foreheads signifying past achievements, kills, conquests, duels, and other significant endeavors.

The nature of the slaadi's diabolical plan involving the ruined Armory is uncertain, but now it is only academic. With the coming of Vecna, all bets are off. The Whispered One dispatched with little effort the few slaadi who resisted his coming. Those slaadi who remained quickly swore new allegiance to the Power who had done what no other Power had ever done: penetrate Sigil.

Now, the slaadi nest mostly in the areas 8 and 9. When pilgrims move through, the slaad try to eat them. Some pilgrims are fast enough to get by, while others are powerful enough to stand off the monsters. The slaadi feel they are performing a holy winnowing, allowing only the most worthy of new converts to seek Vecna at the center, in his newly excavated Church. Apparently, Vecna feels the same way, and the casual dining on prospective pilgrims continues.

## 10. Tower Hallways

The double doors connecting this hallway with area 7 are locked, barred from within. Just recently, one of the slaadi trapped them with a special version *delayed blast fireball* (unlike the standard spell, this spell can delay up to 24 hours, as well as be triggered by a contingent action). Any hero who opens the door, after removing traps and bursting the bar, sets off the *delayed blast fireball* that inflicts 10d6+10 points of damage on all creatures in the 20-foot radius area of effect.

Two hallways lead off in diagonally separate directions, but rubble chokes off both accessways at their far ends. Directly across from the entry double doors, two additional double doors of golden bronze stand closed. Except for nicks, scorch marks, and torched paintings, this bifurcated hallway appears empty.

Each of these hallways once led to a special forge. These forges were housed in special towers; however, each tower resided mostly on an Inner Plane. When the

Armory was ransacked, the connections were cut, and the towers went away. The rubble-strewn hallways are impossible to pass, but should enterprising heroes still manage the feat, they come face to face with the burning pillars of smoke and fire described under area 2.

### 11. Ringed Hall

The convex bulge of the hall swings out of view to the right and left. Burnt tapestries, singed doors, and hundreds of nicks and cuts in the tile and wooden doors are evidence of a battle long past. A thick haze of stale smoke still hangs in the hall, making vision vague and uncertain.

This accessway is haunted by two spectres of those slain here in the battle. The undead, as are most creatures within the Armory, fall under Vecna's command. Unlike the slaadi, are commanded to ignore any creature that loudly proclaims its allegiance to Vecna.

The spectres are not immediately visible in the corridor, but instead they are gathered near the door leading to area 16. Four rounds following the round in which any hero first enters this ringed hall, the spectres quietly arrive from around the bend, one on either side.

Because of the haze, the spectres are not visible until they are within 10 feet of a target. If surprise is rolled for, heroes are at a -3 penalty.

**Spectre (2):** AC 2; MV 15, fly 30 (B); hp 59 each; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8.

### 12. Unenchanted Weapon Stores

The doors leading to this chamber from area 11 are broken and hanging off their hinges.

Racks jam this chamber, filling it from wall to wall. Though many racks are toppled and almost completely empty, it is obvious that these racks once held weapons both mundane and exotic.

Two githzerai pilgrims currently reside in this chamber, scavenging. The sound of a fight in the outer corridor doesn't bring them running; instead, they hunker down to hide, though they eventually reveal themselves to heroes who also begin to scavenge. Though of differing race, these pilgrims react much as the pilgrims encountered in area 6. Even if diplomacy wins out, neither of these pilgrims joins the heroes on false pretenses. If X'moorger accompanies the party, his vote is simple: "Let's eat!"

A concerted search of the chamber could turn up various strange weapons, if the heroes are willing to put in time lifting racks and clearing debris. Each turn of searching by at least two heroes is 20% likely to turn up

a weapon off the following list. Each additional hero who searches adds 10% to the check each turn. The number in parentheses on the lists indicates the total number of the weapons of the given type that the heroes can find—once the number reaches 0, cross that weapon type off the list. Superior quality weapons are all capable of easily taking a magical enchantment.

#### 1d10 Result

- 1 Superior quality bastard sword (3)
- 2 Superior quality khopesh (1)
- 3 Superior quality flail (2)
- 4 Superior quality glaive (3)
- 5 Unbreakable bowstring (1)
- 6 Clockwork crossbow (2)\*
- 7 Superior quality longsword, miniature (3)
- 8 Superior quality two-handed sword, giant-size (1)
- 9 Superior quality nephelium short sword (1)\*\*
- 10 Baatorian green steel longsword (2)\*\*\*

\* Clockwork crossbow automatically reloads itself from magazine of 6 bolts. The magazine must be reloaded when emptied.

\*\* Nephelium is transparent iron.

\*\*\* Baatorian green steel is lighter than normal steel, but can be honed to sharper and longer-lasting edges. A baatorian green steel longsword does 1d10 damage vs. size Medium and 1d12+1 vs. size Large.

**Githzerai pilgrims (2):** AC 3; MV 12; hp 20 each; THAC0 18; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d8+2.

### 13. Engines of War

The doors leading to this chamber from area 11 are broken and hanging off their hinges.

Though fallen masonry and vandalism has ruined many of the mechanisms, this wide and tall chamber currently holds several light, medium, and heavy siege engines, including ballistae, catapults, a siege tower, and other less readily identifiable structures. Amid the larger structures, smaller cauldrons and rams are also visible.

Every one of the engines in this chamber is at least partially damaged, from simple neglect or outright vandalism. However, heroes who want to take the time (1d4 turns) can attempt a proficiency check (Blacksmithing or Carpentry) to repair a particular machine. However, only the light ballista will actually fit out of the door (the Doomguard used portals to get their goods in and out of here; those portals are currently nonfunctioning).

**Light Ballista:** THAC0 12, 2d6 damage, ROF 1/9, Crew 1

#### 14. Blocked Corridors

The hallway's far end is completely choked off with broken masonry and stony rubble.

The hallways keyed to this entry once led to special forges and associated towers, which are gone now (see area 10). The rubble-strewn hallways are impossible to pass, but should enterprising heroes still manage the feat, they come face to face with the burning pillars of smoke and fire described under area 2.

#### 15. Defective Weapon Stores

The door to this chamber contains three 2-foot-diameter holes, perfectly smooth.

Weapon-filled racks cover this chamber, though all are in a terrible state of disrepair. In fact, 2-foot-diameter holes wend through racks and weapons alike, and have gouged out both shallow and deep concave tracks on every surface.

Hundreds of broken and defective weapons were and are still stored here. However, the real purpose of the chamber has to do with the store of *spheres of annihilation* the old Doomguard owners of the Armory had secreted here. By the look of the chamber, those *spheres* got out. In fact, Vecna used all the remaining *spheres* as part of his perimeter defense (see area 1).



A search through the remaining broken weapons reveals nothing of value. If any salvageable weapons remained here, the loose *spheres* have consumed them.

#### 16. Enchanted Weapon Stores

The door to this chamber, though impressive like a steel bank vault, stands open. The locking mechanism, while devious, is melted open.

##### *Crossbow of Cold*

This superbly crafted weapon appears as a crossbow with an inlay of pale blue decorative tracings. It is also noticeably cold to the touch. The crossbow can fire normal or magical bolts as a *crossbow of accuracy* (+3 attack bonus).

If commanded, the crossbow can also fire bolts of ice that resemble short icicles. The bolts can be fired 1 per round with a +3 attack bonus. Bolts that hit inflict 1d4+3 points of damage to normal creatures, double damage to creatures susceptible to cold, and only 1 point to creatures immune to cold (from the force of impact). If the wielder rolls a natural 20 to hit a target with an ice bolt, treat the target as if it were just subject to a *cone of cold* cast at the 10th level of ability (10d4+10 points of cold damage).

XP Value: 3,000

GP Value: 6,000

##### *Spear of the Inferno*

The wooden shaft of this spear is engraved with pictograms of leaping flame, while the head appears almost like a flame frozen in place. Scrutiny of the spearhead reveals it is forged of red-tinted iron, cunningly tempered. Though scrutiny alone will not reveal this, the head contains a small compartment that contains the monatomic ashes of an efreet burned to death by immersion in the Positive Material Plane. The ashes empower the spear, and if ever emptied, the spear loses its enchantment.

The *spear of the inferno* grants a +3 attack and damage bonus. When firmly grasped in both hands, the wielder is immune to normal and magical fire. If the wielder rolls a natural 20 to hit the target, that target becomes the ground center for an instantaneous *fireball*. The *fireball* affects all creatures within a 20-foot radius of the center of effect, inflicting 10d6 hit points of damage (saving throw for half damage). Though the wielder is immune, his or her companions, if any, may not be.

Furthermore, the wielder can use each one of the following powers once per day: *produce flame*, *pyrotechnics*, and *wall of fire*.

XP Value: 4,500

GP Value: 8,000

Runes and glyphs paint the interior of this wide chamber. The arcane signs are clustered around singular weapon mounts, over glass weapon cases, and on fixed sheaths. Unfortunately, it appears that every weapon that once was stored here is long gone.

During the conflict that brought the Doomguard low, most of the magical weapons stored here were handed out to stem the invasion. When the Armory was ruined, it didn't take too long for canny bloods to find and loot the remaining weapons still in this chamber.

No one has yet found the two secret vaults associated with this chamber. The vaults themselves are hidden in secret compartments in the floor of the two secret guard alcoves shown on the map.

The two secret alcoves still contain a remnant of the force that once staffed them, in the form of haunted spectres, one to each alcove. Opening an outer secret door draws its associated spectre into combat, though the spectres make their initial attacks right through the opening door, in hopes of gaining surprise level drains.

Both secret vaults are trapped with poison needles of particularly virulent Abyssal variety (successful saving throw or die in a fiery explosion of bony shrapnel, which also inflicts 3d6 points of damage on all creatures within 10 feet of the victim).

**Spectres (2):** AC 2; MV 15, fly 30 (B); hp 59 each; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8.

### 17. Forge Locus

The doors to this chamber are crafted of adamantine-strong enchanted alabaster. Now, they're blasted off

their hinges. In fact, the space around the door is cut out and missing as if by a cookie-cutter press—a cookie-cutter press of a humanoid 30 feet tall! Vecna's passage caused this particular feature.

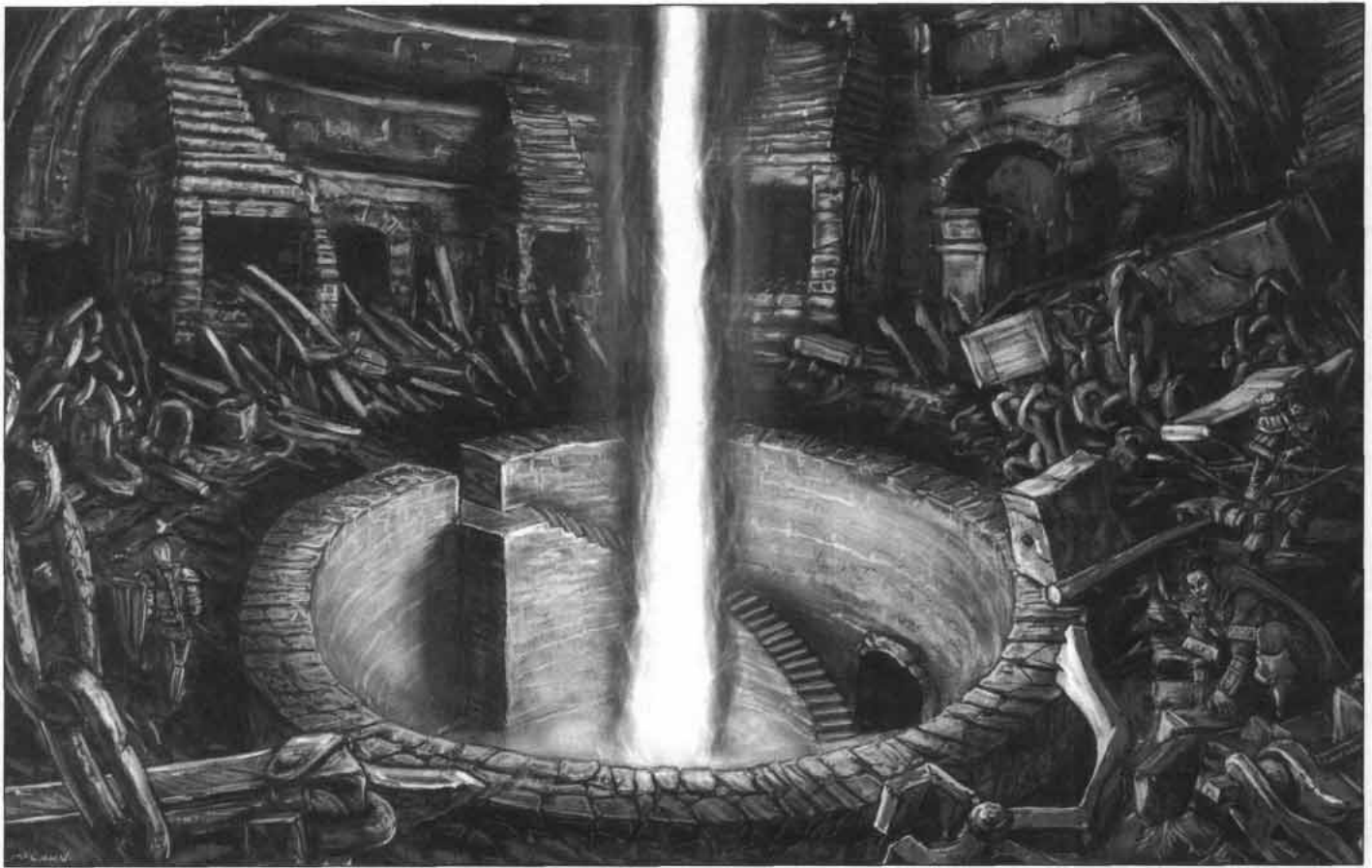
Gargantuan forges and associated equipment lies in a shattered ring around the room's periphery. Furnaces, metal workbenches, hammers, tongs, and smaller equipment are equally bent, mangled, and melded together by some recent blast. The blast apparently originated in the circular pit at the chamber's center. A spectral fire still continually burns there, lighting the entire chamber.

This chamber was always open to the sky, but Vecna sealed it when he arrived. Moreover, the central pit once contained a cauldron of seething energy used by the Doomguard to temper their most powerful weapons, though it had been destroyed before Vecna's arrival. When the new god arrived, he was drawn to the residual energy of the forge. Vecna rekindled the forge with a streamer of his own power, and used the resultant energy flow to hollow out a level below the Armory. This level is the first temple dedicated to Vecna as a full god. To aid new converts, Vecna carved narrow spiraling steps into the outer wall of the well, leading down to his temple in a steep spiral.

Vision doesn't extend through the spectral fire further than 10 feet due to the phantom glare. Magical perceptions might allow heroes to make out that the cylindrical well that holds the surging power descends 100 feet. The spiral stairs end at an alcove at the bottom of the well (area 18).

|              |   |    |   |
|--------------|---|----|---|
| <b>1d20*</b> | <b>Forge Exposure Effect</b>  | 15 | Spellcaster loses one spell per level for 24 hours, if applicable; DMs should randomly choose a PC's memorized spell for each level and tell the player that he or she has lost it from memory. |
| 1-4          | No effect.  | 16 | Subject's Strength increases by 6 points (to a maximum of 24) for 24 hours.   |
| 5-8          | Affected by a <i>dispel magic</i> cast at 13th level.   | 17 | Subject's Strength reduced 3 points for 24 hours.   |
| 8            | Random magical item in subject's possession gains 2d20 charges, if applicable.  | 18 | Subject's Dexterity increased by 6 points (to a maximum of 24) for 24 hours.  |
| 9            | Random magical item in subject's possession loses 2d20 charges, if applicable.  | 19 | Subject's Dexterity reduced by 3 points for 24 hours.   |
| 10           | Random potion in subject's inventory is enhanced tenfold, if applicable.  | 20 | Subject overexposed to energy; on successful saving throw vs. death magic takes 2d10 points of damage; on failed saving throw the subject implodes.   |
| 11           | Random potion in subject's inventory is rendered powerless, if applicable.  |    |   |
| 12           | Random enchanted weapon in subject's inventory granted extra +3 bonus for 24 hours.   |    |   |
| 13           | Random enchanted weapon in subject's inventory inflicted with -3 penalty for 24 hours.  |    |   |
| 14           | Spellcaster gains one extra spell per level for 24 hours, if applicable; DMs should randomly choose a PC's memorized spell for each level and tell the player that he or she has an additional one available for casting. |    |   |

\* Every two rolls on this table adds a cumulative +1 modifier to the following dice rolls (on 3rd roll, PC rolls 1d20+1, on 5th roll, 1d20+2, etc.)



**Focus Exposure:** Those who subject themselves and their items to the effects of the magical fire find it possibly beneficial, and possibly quite dangerous. Each round an individual is exposed to the spectral fire, roll on the above table. Someone who carefully treads the stairs to ensure no mishap requires 4 rounds of exposure to make the descent. However, someone running down the stairs requires 2 rounds to make the descent, but must make a saving throw vs. paralysis to avoid falling off the stairs at a height of 50 feet. Flyers also take 2 rounds of exposure, while someone who simply jumps down can get away with 1 round of exposure. Returning requires the same sort of exposure. Of course, a wizard could simply *teleport* without risk of exposure, assuming he or she could find the end-point safely.

### 18. Gallery of Triumph

The spiral staircase connects area 17 and this room.

The long hall is immaculately clean and peaceful, though it is backlit by residual light from the Forge shaft. Smooth marble pillars run the length of the hall, two by two. Marble relief sculptures on the walls reveal various scenes. Several living figures stand within the chamber, studying the images on the wall.

The marble relief sculptures are exact duplicates of Vecna's shrine back in Citadel Cavitius. Apparently, Vecna felt that the story was worth a second, exact reincarnation here in his new temple. Refer to Book Two, The Lawful Evil Shrine (area 49) for specifics of each scene, if necessary.

The figures gathered in this chamber are would-be disciples. Having recently braved the effects of the Forge locus, they stand here, admiring the feats of their new deity and his rise to power. Unless given reason to think otherwise, these pilgrims assume the heroes are of a like mind (though X'moorger, should he accompany the party, ends this charade at the first possible opportunity).

**Tiefling pilgrims (5):** AC 4; MV 12; hp 56 each; THAC0 12; #AT 2; Dmg 1d10+3/1d10+3.

### 19. Satellite Shrines

Exquisitely carved marble tiles cover the entire chamber, save for one dark alcove. Within the alcove, a silver pedestal holds a fused, lamplike container, from which bright light streams.

The two rooms keyed to this entry possess small shrines that look remarkably similar to the reliquaries found in Tovag Baragu. The reliquary adjoining area 20 contains

an all-gold duplicate of the *Eye of Vecna*, while the reliquary adjoining area 25 contains an all-gold duplicate of the *Hand of Vecna*. In all other ways, the satellite shrines and the duplicate relics are exactly alike.

**Physical Blessings:** The duplicate relics are holy items devised by Vecna as physical blessings to his would-be disciples. Any creature that touches one of the reliquaries, or the duplicate within, must make a saving throw vs. spell (pilgrims usually willingly forgo this saving throw). On a failed saving throw, the victim loses either his hand or eye (depending on the actual reliquary touched), only to have it replaced by a hand or eye of pure gold. The transition takes place over the course of 1 round, during which the victim's hand or eye is eaten away for 1d6 points of damage, as a golden replacement simultaneously weaves itself into existence. The new hand or eye functions just as did the old, save that the gold eye allows the recipient to see through three illusions per day, and the hand grants the user the ability a +1 attack bonus to all melee attacks.

The duplicate reliquary is particularly dangerous for heroes with real relics of Vecna. On any failed saving throw after contact, the hero gains the respective golden eye or hand, but loses his or her relic, if any, via a painful spontaneous rejection. The rejected relic inflicts the appropriate amount of damage of its type on the hero as it is rejected (see the Lesser Known Vecnan Relics sidebar in Book One—this could potentially kill the victim). In addition, the gold hand or eye is not considered a "suitable replacement" for a newly removed relic. Furthermore, that hero loses his or her protection from Vecna's power.

**Race against Perception:** The rejected relic lies bloody and unmoving on the floor before the recipient who just lost it. Because of the release of magic used to reject the relic and add the new gold eye or hand, there is a chance that Vecna snaps out of his current lethargic behavior toward the heroes and does something about them. Beginning the next round, the hero must make one saving throw vs. spell per round to avoid coming to the near-omniscient attention of Vecna. If the hero fails a saving throw before he or she can reattach the lost relic, that hero disappears in a flash. The poor hero has just been magically summoned into Vecna's direct and inquisitive presence, sans all protection. The victim is probably not long for this world, as Vecna puts the victim to the question. Unable to corroborate the heroes' story (if the truth is told), Vecna transmutes the victim to just one more gargoyle ornament in his elaborate temple in area 29.

Reattaching a lost relic is a process that first requires removing the golden hand or eye (even if a Vecnan tooth or digit was rejected), a painful process that inflicts 2d6 for the eye and 10d10 for the hand). Only then can the rejected relic be reapplied to its rightful place.

## 20. Art Chamber

Lush carpet woven of selkie-fur complements beautiful scenes painted on the most delicate of pale leather tapestries. Figures carved of unicorn horns are arranged on small pedestals. The gentle susurrus of a red-flowing miniature waterfall fills the chamber.

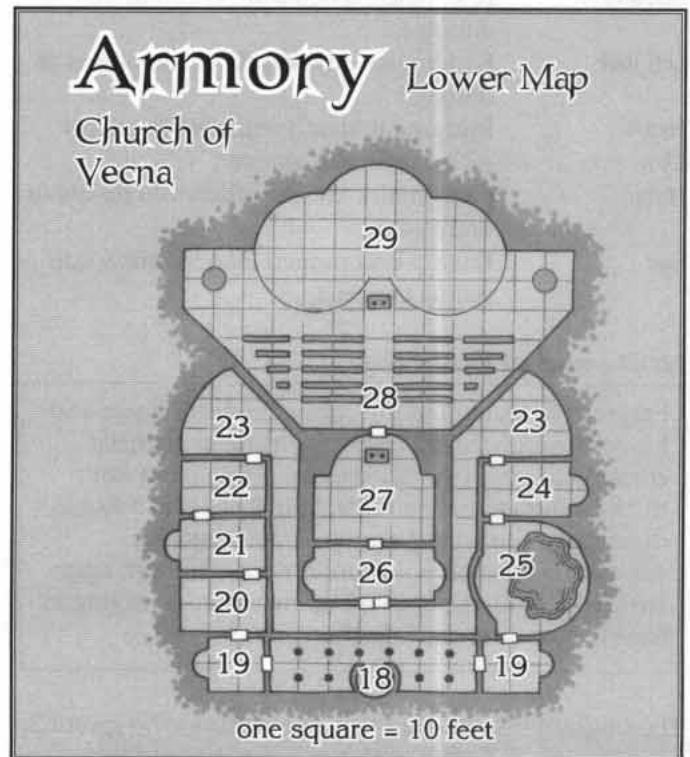
This chamber reveals many cunning works of art, which Vecna's pilgrims have brought to him. Unfortunately, each art piece consists of the skin, hide, blood, or bones of innocent creatures. Thus, the art evokes only horror in most good-aligned viewers. The pieces have value only among the most depraved of art connoisseurs.

## 21. Chamber of Visions

Green and orange pillows cover the floor of this chamber, on which slumber three humanoid figures in robes. Porphyry squares tile the wall, and the ceiling is covered in a net of softly glowing points. A niche holds a glowing ornate silver chalice, on which a delicate rime of moisture is visible.

The chalice contains specially distilled, condensed, and blessed water collected from the unholy font (area 25). The liquid glows pearly white, and it has the aroma of caramel. Twelve doses remain within the chalice, though if the chalice is removed from this chamber, both water and chalice lose all special qualities.

The figures sprawled on the floor are disciples who have partaken of the holy chalice. The enchantment of the liquid has vaulted each into visionscape, possibly



bringing the dreamer closer to Vecna's all-powerful glory. They possess nothing of significant value, except that each has a golden hand and eye.

**Effects of Chalice Distillate:** For anyone without a relic, a dose of the liquid sends the imbiber into an instant coma that lasts for 1d4 hours, during which time nothing is capable of waking the sleeper. Dreams of ethereal expanses, colliding worlds, and anthropophag-ic gods bludgeon the imbiber's mind. Upon waking, the dreamer has some dim understanding of the new multiverse that Vecna intends to craft following the dis-solution of the current reality. Depending on the moral code of the imbiber, reaction ranges from exultation to horror (good-aligned imbibers generally feel horror).

Those with a Vecnan relic who drink from the chalice react differently. The holy power of the divine liquid temporarily invigorates one quality of the relic in ques-tion, though repeated drinks do not enhance the initial effect. The effects vary by the particular relic that the imbiber has grafted. If an imbiber has multiple relic grafts, the relic enchantment is determined randomly. The enhancement lasts 24+3d6 hours.

| Relic         | Enhancement  |
|---------------|--|
| Scalp         | Immune to mind-affecting spells                            |
| Thumb         | Unbreakable grip   |
| Index finger  | Poke melee attack inflicts 2d6 points of damage            |
| Medial finger | Enrage any enemy with gesture                              |
| Right eye     | X-ray vision (as ring) 2/hour                              |
| Molar         | Temporarily gain 3 points of damage per magical item eaten |
| Incisors      | Bite melee attack inflicts 2d6 points of damage            |
| Left foot     | Kick melee attack inflicts 2d6 points of damage            |
| Heart         | Immune to death and similar effects                        |
| Skin          | +7% Magic Resistance                                       |
| Hand          | Claw melee attack inflicts 4d6 points of damage            |
| Eye           | Energy bolt ranged attack inflicts 4d6 points of damage    |

## 22. Chamber of Purification

Fragrant haze, akin to the odor of cedar, billows and blows through this chamber, swirling in artificial currents of warm air. The smoke is thick, but not thick enough to hide a central pit. The pit is 5 feet in diameter, and it is the source of the billowing vapors. Low benches surround the central pit, upon which a few disciples in robes are seated, swaying in time to some unheard rhythm.

The fragrant heat and smoke affects those who spend 3 or more rounds in this chamber—simply passing

through is sufficient to completely avoid coming under the influence of the incense. Four humanoid disciples, each with a golden hand and eye, sit on the benches circling the fire pit. Their eyes are closed as they sway in time to only music that they can hear (obviously not in time with each other). Sweat streams off them from the heat of the flames. If physically shaken or attacked, the disciples require 2 full rounds to come out of their torpor. Even after coming out of a trance, these particu-lar disciples have been so "purified" that they can only stare vacantly and mutter "Vecna!" over and over again. A little drooling is also in evidence.

**Effects of Purification:** On the third contiguous round a hero spends in the room without holding his or her breath, and every contiguous round thereafter, the hero must make a saving throw vs. spell. On a failed saving throw, the hero enters a light trance and sits on one of the benches. If allowed, the hero will not rise for another hour, at which time she or he can attempt another saving throw vs. spell to see if she or he can shake free of the trance and leave the chamber. Concerned friends can carry an affected hero out, if they themselves are not affected. In open air (any-where outside this room), those in a trance awake in 1d4 rounds.

For each 20 minutes someone spends in trance in the chamber, the "purifying" incense cleanses the victim's mind of one memory, spell, skill, or other important mental faculty that does not directly glorify Vecna. Unless the potential disciple is already a brainwashed priest of Vecna, virtually any memory, spell, or skill is on the chopping block. Heroes lose spells first, from highest to lowest, then proficiencies, then memories of their past. The DM chooses what is actually removed, and in what order, if the situation warrants.

Spells can be regained through memorization, but proficiencies and actual memories are harder to come by. For each memory or proficiency cleansed, the poten-tial disciple loses one level. When level reaches 0, the disciple is ready to embark on a new life as an empty vessel, ready to be filled only with ideologies and pur-poses sacred to Vecna.

## 23. Vecna's Templars

Wall-covering tapestries sewn from massive black scale-hide drapes this odd-shaped chamber. It's easy to see that the creature from which the tapes-tries were sewn was gargantuan. Three figures stand in the chamber, near the open corridor access. One figure appears as a burly humanoid form, pro-protected from head to toe in rusted platemail. The other two figures stand back from the first, and appear as skeletal humanoids in rotted finery. Instead of eyes, the skeletal forms have only points of glaring light.

The two rooms keyed to this entry are checkpoints, designed to keep out riffraff who might otherwise penetrate too far. Vecna may not foresee the heroes directly, but he can set up defenses, or at the very least, honor guards.

Should any being enter either chamber, the templars (as Vecna calls them) call for the vocal affirmation of Vecna's supremacy. Those who chime in with snappy responses such as "Vecna rules!" or similar sentiments are allowed to pass if Vecna's symbol is prominently displayed. Those who prominently display the symbol of a rival deity are questioned and eventually attacked if a reasonable explanation is not forthcoming. Those who defame Vecna in any way are automatically attacked.

**Development:** The figure in platemail is a skeletal warrior, who seeks to engage the heroes in melee. The other two figures are liches, who seek to hold back and engage the heroes with spells, should a conflict occur. Both liches immediately cast *mirror image* on themselves at their first opportunity. All three undead bear special runestones of baked clay, on which Vecna's sign is inscribed. These runes allow undead a saving throw vs. spell against any turning attempts. Even when an undead creature fails its saving throw, those wearing this seal are never destroyed, and they can be commanded or turned only for 1d4 rounds. Each of these liches keeps a phylactery in the form of a small statuette in area 29. Thus, even if killed, these particular liches may potentially reform (in three days), unless the heroes find and destroy their particular phylacteries. If allowed time to regroup, the undead bathe in the unholy font in area 25 to heal themselves of physical damage.

**Skeleton warrior:** AC 2; hp 84; THAC0 8; #AT 2; Dmg 1d8+6.

**Lich templars (2):** AC 0; MV 6; HD 11; hp 88 each; THAC0 9; #AT 1 (touch); Dmg 1d10 + special; SA foes must save vs. paralyzation or stand motionless until paralysis dispelled, cause *fear* in those of 5 HD or less, cast spells as 16th-level mage; SD hit only by +1 or better weapons, immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, *fear*, *polymorph*, *poison*, *paralysis*, *death magic*, and *cold-based attacks*; SZ M (6' tall); ML fanatic (18); Int supra-genius (19); AL NE; XP 10,000 each.

**Special Equipment:** clay seal of Vecna.

**Spells (5/5/5/5/5/3/2/1):** 1st—*charm person*, *magic missile* (x4); 2nd—*invisibility*, *Melf's acid arrow*, *mirror image*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *wizard lock*; 3rd—*dispel magic*, *fireball*, *fly*, *lightning bolt* (x2); 4th—*dimension door*, *fire trap*, *ice storm*, *minor globe of invulnerability*, *stoneskin*; 5th—*cone of cold*, *Mordenkainen's faithful hound*, *shadow door*, *teleport*, *transmute rock to mud*; 6th—*chain lightning*, *death spell*, *disintegrate*; 7th—*finger of death*, *prismatic spray*; 8th—*monster summoning VI*.

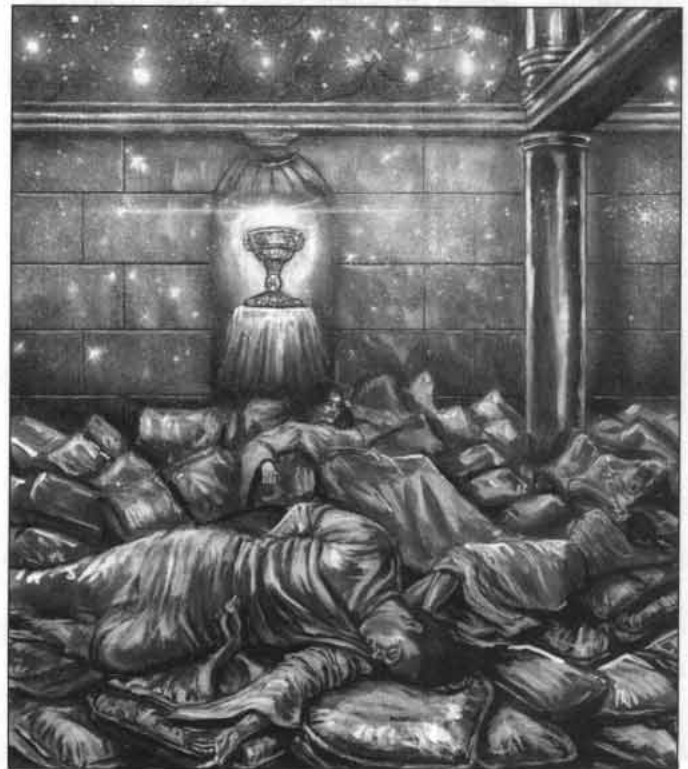
## 24. Chamber of Test

Green and orange pillows cover the floor of this chamber. Porphyry squares tile the wall and a net of softly glowing points covers the ceiling. A niche holds a glowing ornate silver chalice, on which a delicate rime of moisture is visible.

At first glance, this room appears identical to area 21. There is a very important difference, in that the chalice here contains a distillate of unholy water with an altogether different effect than that of the chalice in area 21.

The liquid in this chalice glows pearly white, and it has the aroma of offal. Eight doses remain within the chalice, though if the chalice is removed from this chamber, both water and chalice lose all special qualities.

**Effects of Chalice Distillate:** The distillate affects those with and without Vecnan relics alike. The imbiber must make a saving throw vs. poison to throw off the effect (though the imbiber may willingly forgo the saving throw). On a failed saving throw, the imbiber is faced with a choice: swear to become an immediate worshiper of Vecna, or die. If the imbiber chooses to become a disciple of Vecna, death is avoided, but former loyalties may be strained (the DM must keep close tabs on a hero who chooses this route, in order to be certain that the hero really begins to act like a devotee of Vecna).





Those who choose to remain apart from Vecna's glory die immediately, falling prey to the virulent poison. Likewise, those who choose to worship Vecna at the outset yet recant die the moment they turn from Vecna.

## 25. Unholy Font

This circular chamber smells of the sea. The floor of the chamber is uneven, creating a shallow declivity filled with still water. The slope of the floor meets the edge of the water evenly. The faint sound of trickling water betrays the presence of a small crack in the wall leaking dark liquid into the pool; however, the ripples from the spring disappear in just a few feet.

Vecna grazed the wall with one finger, and where he touched, a magical font of unholy water was born. The water serves as a special place for disciples to bathe and be baptized into their new faith, should any desire to partake in such a ceremony. Good-aligned creatures that bathe in the pool take 1 point of damage per round. Evil creatures feel refreshed, and undead heal 2d4 points of damage each round while immersed.

Heroes who trail a Vecnan relic in the water feel an electrical jolt, and they are flung back as if struck. Afterward, their relic glows with an evil red light until a *dispel evil* is cast upon them. Beyond the physical jolt and visible glow, the relics do not react with the unholy water.

Though the water is still and dark, scrutiny reveals that the basin of the pool is filled with coins, gems, and other treasure. These items are cast into the pool by disciples as they pass by, to honor Vecna. The pool holds a total of 2,000 gp, 20 gems each worth 100 gp, a *ring of water walking*, and a *belt of inconstant strength*.

## 26. Psalmatory

The sound of voices raised in song is faintly audible beyond the doors leading to this chamber. The lyrics remain incomprehensible until the heroes open the door (or a PC otherwise gains access).

The long hall is immaculately clean, and it echoes with psalms sung by a duet of two tonally pure voices. Red light glares up through cracks in the marble tile on the floor. The walls are blank, and the ceiling appears as dark basalt. An alcove at either end of the long hall contains a carved marble figure. One looks like a humanoid with only a hand for its head; the other is a humanoid with an eye where its head should be. The music emanates from these carvings.

Vecna enchanted the statues to sing psalms of his glory, predominance, wisdom, and other supreme attributes.

No matter the native tongue of the listener, the psalms remain comprehensible. Those who listen do not fall prey to any negative effects.

Those who attempt to shield themselves from the songs (such as holding ears, through the application of earplugs, or via a *silence 15' radius*) put themselves in danger. The two competing voices create a perfect harmony with each other, the shape of the room, and special enchantments that suffuse the room. In the absence of the auditory component of the total harmony, living creatures are subject to destabilizing vibrations.

Each round a living creature blocks himself or herself from the music, he or she must succeed at a saving throw vs. spell. On a failed saving throw, a destructive vibration begins to propagate through her body, inflicting 1d4 points of damage per round. Even if the victim leaves this chamber, the destructive vibration remains, inflicting 1d4 points of damage each round. The only way to drown out the vibration is to listen to the psalms for 1 full round.

Heroes who enter the room and spend multiple rounds not listening to the music set up even stronger destructive vibrations in their bodies, inflicting 2d4, 3d4, and 4d4 points of damage each round, respectively. The only way to drown out these vibrations is to listen to the psalms unhindered for a number of rounds equal to the time spent not listening.

**Development:** If the heroes destroy the statues, destructive vibrations die out after 6 rounds. Destroying a statue requires the application of 200 points of damage delivered against each AC 10 shape (despite their immobility, heroes must hit AC 10 or better to inflict damage with a blow).

### Belt of Inconstant Strength

The *belt of inconstant strength* appears as a strip of finely tooled pale leather. The buckle is carved of red-veined marble, and shows the sign of skeletal hand inset with an eye in its palm.

When worn, the wearer's Strength waxes and wanes according to a 24-hour cycle. After wearing the belt a full 24 hours, the wearer's Strength increases by 1 point every 2 hours for a total of 6 hours (increasing Strength by 3 points, to a maximum of 24). Once the wearer achieves the maximum result, his or her Strength drops by 1 point every 2 hours over 12 hours (decreasing the wearer's original Strength by a total of 3 points, to a minimum of 3). Once the cycle is established, the wearer's Strength continues to wax and wane +/- 3 points. If the wearer removes the belt, the cycle continues to affect its most recent wearer for a full 24 hours before the waxing and waning subside.

XP Value: 1,200

GP Value: 800

## 27. Gospel of Vecna

The doors between area 26 and this room are locked. Anyone with a golden eye or hand, courtesy of area 19, can open the door with a touch. Otherwise, the lock must be picked (-40% penalty to Open Locks checks).

This chamber is a beautifully appointed chapel. Its domed heights create a peaceful gulf of space above the empty floor, and a dark altar dominates the far side of the room. Hanging censers constantly burn in every corner, filling the chamber with a sweet, soothing odor. Several sealed scrolls lie upon the altar. Behind the altar, a 10-foot-wide and 30-foot-tall gilt door stands closed. The symbol of the hand and eye is inscribed in the center of the door.

This chapel precedes the real temple area of area 28. It serves to compose the mind of the disciple before entry into that most sacred of places. In addition, the altar has become the repository of spell scrolls. The scrolls are devout gifts that Vecna's followers make to show their faith in their god. The followers steal these spells from distant worlds and spellbooks that high-level disciples of Vecna have pilfered in recent days. Most of the scrolls contain lore too alien for the heroes to understand. However, at least one of the ten scrolls contains a spell that can be used by wizards (or priests, if the DM desires) of the appropriate level. However, because of the hellish world from which it was stolen, the spell, called *homunculus*, requires a neutral or evil alignment to cast. If the DM desires and has appropriate material, he or she may place a few additional scrolls of decipherable lore for the heroes to discover here.

## 28. Behold Vecna's Temple

The double doors, forged of solid light, slide open for any who desire entry or exit.

Tiles of pure light pave the floor and walls of this heavenly chapel. Pews of silver march toward the front of the chapel, where stands an altar of rose-hued crystal. Several figures sit in pews, and behind the altar, a large man in robes ministers to the assembled. Statuelike figures stand to the far left and right of the altar, resembling giant humanoids in robes. One has only an eye for its head, and the other has a hand for its head.

The figures seated in the pews are those pilgrims judged worthy by Vecna to stand as his first new disciples. All possess a golden hand and eye, which is a physical sign of their devotion gained from area 19. The figures include two tiefling fighters, four githzerai fighters, one slaad, and a bariaur specialty priest of Vecna.

The two strange figures on either side of the altar are actually old servitors, who were once powerful in their own right. Vecna reincarnated them out of a desire for continuity with the past. The eye-headed figure in robes is here referred to as the Eye Servitor, and the hand-headed figure in robes, the other is the Hand Servitor.

The man giving the sermon is not a man at all. He is a cambion (half human, half demon). His name is Ely Cromlich, and he once served as a leader of the Doomguard Faction in Sigil. Though slain in the Faction War, Cromlich was raised back to life by Vecna because of his secret devotion to the Whispered One. He, too, possesses a golden left hand and eye, but he also has an entire golden right arm and right leg.

If left interrupted, Ely sermonizes hour after hour in a Stalinesque manner, expounding on Vecna's plans for the rearrangement of the multiverse, where even Ao will hold a subordinate position to the one true god.

Should heroes with relics physically enter this chamber or make themselves visible, Vecna immediately sees the heroes with his purely physical senses. When Vecna finally does sense the heroes, either by sight, or in the aftermath of attack on Ely and his flock, Vecna also reveals himself.

The convex bulges of the wall behind the altar fades from opacity to transparency, revealing a massive cavity lined with hundreds of small statuettes. Within the cavity is a titanic humanoid, limned in brilliance. Its left eye is far, far too small for its godly frame, and its left hand is entirely missing, but despite its deformities, it is clear that this being has achieved godhood!

The moment the heroes make their presence known is the moment things get interesting. Vecna screams in hate as he spies the thieves of his mortal relics. The scream transcends sound, and it is easily loud enough to shatter the crystalline barrier separating area 29 from area 28.

**Vecna's Tactics:** Vecna understands that with the relics, the heroes might actually get the drop on him, god or no god. His first utterance to his assembled minions is, "Get their relics! Tear my holy relics from their profane bodies!" Because he fears the heroes, he will not listen to any hero who is so brazen as to claim to want to join Vecna, at least until after he has harvested his relics.

When initiative allows, Ely first casts *mirror image* on himself, then physically engages the heroes. The Hand Servitor wades right into melee, as do all the disciples who are fighters, including the slaad. The bariaur priest hangs back to cast spells. The Eye Servitor also hangs back to use its terrible gaze abilities on heroes (though the heroes with relics gain a +4 saving throw bonus against its dire allure). The spells of the disciples affect the heroes normally.

### *Homunculus*

#### (Necromancy, Conjunction)

Level: Wizard 4

Range: 0

Components: V, S, M

Duration: Special

Casting Time: 1 hour

Area of Effect: Special

Saving Throw: None

This spell requires 1 hour to cast and the sacrifice of 1d4 hit points (the caster's own blood and life force). At the end of casting, the fusion of blood and magic births a sinister miniature of the caster. The homunculus stands only 18 inches tall, sports tiny wings allowing it to fly (MV fly 18, B), has 6 HD and 20 hp, and does not heal naturally. The homunculus follows the caster about, and it is never willingly separated from her or him. If something ever separates the caster and homunculus by more than one mile, the homunculus dissipates. A caster may never possess more than one homunculus.

The caster cannot magically or naturally heal the 1d4 points imparted to the homunculus while it exists (even if using the transfer method explained below). However, the caster can choose to draw on the hit points of the homunculus for healing. A caster taking no other action in a round can take up to 5 points per round, in effect healing himself at the expense of the homunculus's health, physical well-being, and appearance. If the caster transfers 20 points of damage from herself or himself to the homunculus, the creature dissipates immediately. Indulgent casters may choose to provide magical healing to the homunculus to extend its borrowed life, but other casters simply replace a drained homunculus with a fresh creation.

Meanwhile, Vecna attempts a devastating spell or two, in spite of his knowledge of the heroes' invulnerability to magic, in his attempt to stamp out the heroes. He can sense heroes who do not possess one of his relics, so he goes after those PCs first. After 3 rounds attempting to kill off the heroes by godly decree and a combination of spells, Vecna wades into physical melee with the heroes. With his large size, he has considerable reach (20 feet). However, every time one of his servitors, or Ely, is slain by the heroes, Vecna *resurrects* the body, if in a position to do so. In this way, the Maimed Lord hopes to wear the heroes down. Unfortunately, damage received by Vecna from heroes with relics is impossible for Vecna to heal in the short term. Thus, the avatar can be worn down. If finally killed, he is ejected from Sigil. See "Conclusions" for more information on Vecna's final fate, or if he succeeds in his mad plan.

**Development:** If the heroes slay Vecna, the god disappears as if pulled out of sight by a miniature black

hole. Read the following aloud when the heroes strike the killing blow:

A look of astonishment mixed with pure rage settles on the avatar's face. "You will pay, you puny—"

Vecna never gets a chance to finish his vituperative words, for a swirling void consisting of deep black and darkest gray opens up behind him and abruptly sucks him in. You hear a roar of fury and see a flare of light deep within the vortex just before the strange portal disappears with an ear-popping wrench and a burst of blinding multicolored lights. An acrid odor settles around you as your sight slowly returns.

If any of his disciples remain, the servitors attack until the heroes slay them. Ely, however, will try his damndest to escape. Vecna remains a true god; however, he is banished from Sigil as all gods are. If Ely survives, they've gained a great enemy. Fortunately for the heroes, they're immune to Vecna's direct revenge, even if they journey to Oerth (see "Conclusions").

With Vecna's ejection from Sigil, many of his works in the City of Doors begin to melt away, as directed by the Lady of Pain's will. Heroes quickly notice that walls begin to slump and ceilings sag in the lower level carved out by Vecna. After just 10 minutes, the entire lower level has sealed itself into nonexistence. Likewise, many of the additions Vecna made above (in the Armory itself) also fade, including the ceiling over the forge locus, the pillars of smoke and flame, and the patrolling *spheres of annihilation*. However, the forge loci itself continues to burn with a new spectral fire, which shall burn as long as Vecna remains a true god. Finally, only 10% of all the golden tokens Vecna bestowed upon his followers survive dissolution, leaving many without their left eye and hand. Fortunately, Ely's golden right arm and leg are better made, and they endure past Vecna's leave-taking.

If the heroes don't vanquish Vecna, go to "Vecna Triumphant?"

#### **Ely Cromlich, male marquis cambion, F18/M6:**

AC -3 (*platemail* +2, Dex bonus); MV 15; hp 112; THAC0 3 (1 with *Ashblade*, Str bonus); #AT 5/2; Dmg 1d8+12/1d8+12 (*Ashblade*, specialization, Str bonus); SA atropic blow, cambion abilities; SW must fail saving throw vs. spell to be magically healed; MR 30%; SZ M (6' tall); ML elite (14); Str 20, Dex 18, Con 15, Int 18, Wis 13, Cha 12; AL CE; XP 20,000.

*Special Equipment:* *Ashblade* (*bastard sword* +2, +4 vs. lawful good opponents, acts as *ring of fire resistance*, casts *chilling touch* 3/day), *golden arm* (right arm acts as normal arm that allows recipient to reach through solid objects 2/day, grab what is found on other side, and

pull it forth), *golden leg* (right leg acts as normal leg that allows recipient to move  $\times 10$  normal movement rate 1/day for a duration of 10 minutes).

**Special Abilities:** Entropic blow—while engaged in melee with a lawful good foe, a roll of 5 or more points higher than the number needed to hit automatically drains foe to half its current hit points, usable 1/week; cambion abilities—casts *darkness 15' radius* and *infravision* at will; suffers half damage from cold, magical fire, and gas; immune to electricity, normal fire, and poison; can *detect magic* by touch and can *polymorph self* 3/day; Climb Walls 95%, Hide in Shadows 80%, Move Silently 80%.

**Spells (4/2/2):** 1st—*charm person* ( $\times 2$ ), *feather fall*, *hold portal*; 2nd—*invisibility*, *mirror image*; 3rd—*dispel magic*, *wraithform*.

**Hand Servitor:** AC 0; MV 12; HD 13; hp 104; THAC0 7 (6 with *longsword +1*, 5 with *longsword +2*); #AT 3; Dmg 1d8+8/1d8+9/1d10+7 (*longsword +1/longsword +2/grasp*); SA grasp, Strength drain; SZ M (4'6" tall); ML champion (16); Int low (7); AL CE; XP 8,000.

**Special Abilities:** Grasp—a successful attack by third hand allows the Hand Servitor to retain its hold, automatically doing 1d10+7 hit points/round in crushing damage, unless victim can break free with successful Bend Bars/Lift Gates roll. Each round the grasp does damage, it also automatically drains 1d6 Strength points from victim, killing victim if Strength reaches 0; otherwise lost Strength returns at 1 point/day.

**Eye Servitor:** AC 2; MV 12; HD 12; hp 96; THAC0 9 (7 with *two-handed sword +2*); #AT 1; Dmg 1d10+2 (*two-handed sword +2*); SA death gaze, cast *clairvoyance*, *detect magic*, and *find traps* at will; SD immune to surprise, -1 bonus to initiative rolls, immune to all illusions; SZ M (5'7" tall); ML champion (15); Int exceptional (15); AL CE; XP 9,000.

**Special Abilities:** Death gaze—once per round, the Eye Servitor can use its gaze attack on 1 target. Unless explicitly attempting to avoid the gaze, the target must succeed at a saving throw vs. death magic. The Eye claims those who fail by visibly drawing their life force into it, leaving the body inert. If the body is destroyed, the Eye consumes its stolen life force, but until then, the life force remains viable, though displaced. If the Eye is slain, the life force rejoins its inert body (the Eye may voluntarily release the life force, but it is unlikely to do so). The Eye gains all the memories of each life force it holds.

**Tiefling pilgrims (2):** AC 4; MV 12; hp 56 each; THAC0 12; #AT 2; Dmg 1d10+3/1d10+3.

**Githzerai pilgrims (4):** AC 3; MV 12; hp 20 each; THAC0 18; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d8+2.

**Slaad, green:** AC 0; MV 9; hp 76; THAC0 11; #AT 3 (claw/claw/bite); Dmg 1d6+2/1d6+2/2d8.

**New Vecnan Specialty Priestess (Bariaur):** AC 2; MV 12; hp 38; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4.

**Vecna's avatar, male human C30, F30, M36, T20:** AC -6; MV 36, fly 36 (A); hp 223; THAC0 -10; #AT 2 (touch); Dmg 2d10+14/2d10+14 (Str bonus); SA greater powers, paralysis, aura of evil; SD +3 or better weapon to hit, may make saving throw against any adverse affect, immune to *symbols* and *glyphs*, immune to psionics of any lesser god or mortal; MR 100%; SZ G (30' tall); ML fearless (20); Str 25, Dex 20, Con 23, Int 25, Wis 25, Cha 23; AL NE; XP See "The Heroes Prevail."

**Special Equipment:** *Eye of Vecna* (while Vecna has it, cannot directly affect foes with other incorporated relics).

**Special Abilities:** Greater powers—many powers are simply unavailable to Vecna's avatar because of his need to channel a large portion of said power against the pressure levied by the Lady of Pain while the avatar remains in Sigil. Those powers still available for his use are also tempered by this situation. Vecna's available powers allow him to *shapeshift* into any animate or inanimate object up to 100 feet in diameter or as small as 1 inch in diameter, automatically make all saving throws (except those initiated by foes with incorporated relics), *teleport without error* (except to and from Sigil, and nowhere in the Prime Material other than Oerth), omniscient except when blocked by other deities of equal standing and in the vicinity of foes with incorporated relics, perform two tasks simultaneously (such as cast two spells, or make full attacks and cast one spell), and channel spells to his followers; paralysis—foes without incorporated relics must save vs. paralysis each time he or she is successfully struck in melee or be held in place indefinitely, or until a *dispel evil* is cast upon them; aura of evil—foes without incorporated relics in Vecna's presence must save vs. spell every other round or check morale.

**Spells:** All wizard and cleric spells (cannot directly affect foes with incorporated relics).

## 29. God Cache

Thousands of tiny niches hold 1-foot-tall statuettes. The statuettes completely cover every curved wall of the space. Many of the statues glow in alternating colors, while others are dark. Over time, patterns of color shift among the statuettes, creating complex patterns of shifting light and darkness that run like waves.



## Vecna

(The Maimed Lord, the Whispered One, Master of the Spider Throne, the Chained God, God of Secrets, and the Failed God)

Greater Power of Oerth, NE

PORTFOLIO: Evil, Knowledge, Magic

ALIASES: None

DOMAIN NAME: None

SUPERIOR: None

ALLIES: None

FOES: Iuz, Lady of Pain

SYMBOL: Eye in palm of skeletal hand

WORSHIPER ALIGNMENT: Any evil

The statuettes resemble crude versions of races both known and unknown to the heroes. Each exudes a residue of magic, but to anyone else save a greater power, the assemblage of the statuettes and their use is incomprehensible. To Vecna, this chamber served as a springboard for his plans to remodel the new multiverse in his image. Each subtle color and shift was part of an ongoing calculation that only a greater god could manipulate, but with Vecna's departure, the statuettes are little more than souvenirs of Vecna's time in Sigil. All statuettes that are not removed before Vecna's ejection from Sigil are buried when the entire under-level seals over.

If the heroes lost one of their number in area 19 (due to Vecna's summons), the group can find the lost PC here. Only a *wish* spell can restore the statuette of the lost PC to life. Luckily for them, the heroes can probably request the aid of the Lady of Pain, who then orders one of the nearby wizards to aid them. Until then, the statuette glows in a series of colors that seem entirely random. If the heroes experiment (or run into problems later), they discover that the statuette is impervious to all types of damage, including breakage, fire, acid, and so on. The glow from the statue shines brightly enough to illuminate a 10-foot area.

## Conclusions

The heroes of this adventure may have succeeded in ejecting Vecna from Sigil, or they may have found themselves lacking the power to do so.

### Vecna Triumphant?

If the heroes cannot overcome Vecna in the final conflict below the Armory, several options remain. Surviving heroes may retreat, heal their wounds, and modify their tactics. If they retreat to the Armory's exterior, the Lady commands citizens of Sigil to heal or even resurrect heroes, allowing them to try again. If only a subset of heroes retreats to the Lady of Pain, she may consent to

magically retrieving their bodies and then command one of the nearby clerics to resurrect those successfully summoned.

Dungeon Masters who feel their heroes are not up to the task of ejecting Vecna alone should allow the heroes to recruit powerful allies from among those gathered outside the Armory. However, to recruit a truly significant ally, the heroes must transfer a relic to the potential reinforcement, lest Vecna merely blast that foe from existence. The Lady of Pain, by her very nature, cannot directly take part in the conflict or incorporate a Vecnan relic.

If every single PC falls in battle somewhere within the Armory or with Vecna himself, fewer options exist. The Lady of Pain is reluctant to allow any beings as powerful as demigods into Sigil, lest their very presence hasten Vecna's plan. However, minutes before Vecna's total victory, she gambles it all and sends in a sortie of four to five demigods (who wait eagerly outside Sigil in the Outlands for just such an opportunity). Can the demigods take down Vecna before their own presence, combined with Vecna's, dissolves Sigil? They have 2d6+30 rounds before the current multiversal order irretrievably fails. The demigods likely do not have the protections of relics and must face Vecna's raw powers; however, they have close-to-deity powers of their own. Dungeon Masters who are interested in playing this out could select demigods of his or her own choosing and allow the players to play them for the duration of the battle with Vecna. If successful, the demigods, or the Lady herself, can easily resurrect the players' original characters. Dungeon Masters who don't wish to play out this scenario, or who do not possess the resources to conduct this final gambit, should decide how it plays out. He or she can base the outcome on his or her own desire to preserve or demolish the current multiversal order. Those who opt for demolition can allow Vecna to take the position of supreme architect of the new order, or DMs can decide that even with his position, this next level of ascension remains beyond Vecna. In this case, Vecna has to deal with the new multiversal order on the same footing as every other god and mortal, even though he precipitated the change.

### The heroes Prevail

If the heroes bring Vecna's avatar to 0 hit points or less, he is ejected from Sigil. The ejection evokes a mighty pyrotechnics display, turns day into night then back again, and destroys Vecna's single foothold in the City of Doors by sucking his avatar down a whirlpool-like conduit. Vecna will never regain his foothold in Sigil. As noted earlier, with Vecna's removal from Sigil, most of his works begin to fade away, due to the Lady of Pain's power over her own realm.

### What of Iuz?

Iuz is a demigod. His near-godly power, shackled to the *Eye of Vecna* and a mistakenly chanted ritual in the Language Primeval, served as the catalyst for Vecna's ascension to a Greater Power. Still, can a demigod be so easily extinguished? If under the thumb of a Greater Power, then yes; however, Iuz's absorption by Vecna is a special case and has special repercussions.

Iuz was absorbed totally and completely into Vecna; he was not extinguished, nor was his mentality eradicated. Through all of Book Three, Iuz's spirit lives on, a personality fragment abiding in the mind of Vecna. In this fashion, Iuz clings to existence, unable to effect any change in the mind of the god who holds him captive. Yet Iuz remains, and he seeks any opportunity to free his mind and a portion of Vecna's power. That opportunity comes with Vecna's ejection from Sigil!

As a bodiless Power, stunned and unfeeling, Vecna falls to Oerth, the plane of his birth. Before the Whispered One can draw new raiment about him and manifest even a single avatar, Iuz makes his move. Drawing on the force of will that only a demigod can realize, Iuz burst his bonds, escaping Vecna. An exploding solar flare to Vecna's star, Iuz flees with his mentality and a portion of Vecna's power. In time, Iuz materializes, a demigod once more, but with a renewed and burning hate for Vecna.

On the other hand, Vecna does little. His crushing defeat is a blow to his godly ego. It is almost as if the remnants of his mortal body, his relics, conspired to defeat him. In a temper, Vecna plucks his recovered Eye from his essence and sends back out into the world, free to instigate evil.

Though mentally wounded, it is only a matter of time before Vecna recovers his equilibrium and attends to the threads of other plots left untended. He's free of the prison plane that held him, and despite the liberation of Iuz, still a god.

Triumphant heroes have accomplished a mighty feat. Award each contributing player 100,000 XP.

### The Aftermath

Though the changes are potentially far-reaching, they are also for the most part beyond the ken of normal mortals. Except where modifications are catastrophic, life in the multiverse goes on much as it ever has. If anything, more possibilities and variety are introduced by the shakeup.

In Sigil, a short-lived festival kicks off, after which it is pretty much business as usual, now that the portals are functioning again. (Dungeon Masters should read

Repercussions for an overview of the Lady of Pain's activities after Vecna's fall.)

Should the heroes spend any time at all in Sigil, a contingent of dabus acting at the Lady of Pain's behest track them down. Using their unique method communication via a rebus, they relay a message to the heroes.

The DM should review the rewards being offered by the Lady and modify them according to how he or she would like the campaign to unfold. If the DM would rather see the heroes lose easy access to Sigil, omit the second reward of which the dabus speak, and instead offer to send the heroes to the location of their choice. Dungeon Masters can also omit the third part of the reward offered by the dabus. Instead, he or she can grant the party as a whole a powerful servant, such as a subdued green slaad (see slaad stats presented earlier in this adventure).

The dabus say the following in rebus-speak:

Life is in your debt, as is Sigil. No reward could ever be sufficient. But Sigil does not forget its friends. Thus, accept these gifts. The first is a promise from the Lady of Pain that Vecna, the Failed God, will be denied his vengeance on you, even should you dispose of his protective relics. The second is a *Key to the City of Doors*, which will turn any bounded space into a portal to Sigil, though it will do so only three times. The last is the deed for permanent accommodations in Sigil, which you may use whenever you find yourself in the city. In your absence, these accommodations will be maintained for you.

Though the heroes may not realize it, recognition alone by the Lady of Pain is an incredible honor (though some would say it's the ultimate horror). The fact that she actually would provide rewards to the party shows more concern for mere individuals than any would have previously thought possible. But, the Lady of Pain is truly grateful. Though she may later ignore the party should they see her on the street, it cannot be denied that she showed concern for their welfare at one time in the past.

The promise of protection against Vecna is something the heroes should be most grateful for. If not for the special circumstances surrounding the heroes' fight with the Whispered One, they would have been overcome, relics or no relics, by wave after wave of minions and summoned defenders. The protection holds so long as the heroes do not go out of their way to bring themselves to Vecna's attention (such as by desecrating a major temple dedicated to him, or by seeking him out in whatever celestial realm over Oerth he finally settles in). While the protection holds, Vecna ignores the heroes.

The permanent accommodations in Sigil are located in an upscale portion of the city known as the Lady's

Ward. They take the form of a four-story building on the corner of Palace Street and Lord's Row, near the bustling edge of the Market Ward. The building is the vacated home of a long-missing merchant, and it comes complete with accommodations for ten. It also includes servants quarters, a kitchen, a kennel, a few studies, a solarium, living areas, a library, storage cellars, a wine cellar, a vault, a gallery, and a central plaza at the building's center, which is open to Sigil's sky. If desired, the DM and players may take the time to design its actual layout and assign permanent staff (no more than five

staffers whose combined levels total 10 or less, selected by the heroes). If the players request them, reasonable modifications to the security and design of the building can be made, but the players will have to pay for any special modifications. Of the original merchant, there is no sign, and he can assume to be lost, with all hands, on some distant nether plane.

## Repercussions

With Vecna's defeat, the reverberations of a dissolving multiverse cease. The Lady of Pain reopens Sigil's portals. The City of Doors launches into a week-long festival, sure to be reenacted on a regular basis.

Unfortunately, Vecna has successfully tested Sigil's wards, showing a way for other power-mad deities to find entry. Thus, the Lady of Pain, a confidant or perhaps even peer to the Serpent, speaks in the Language Primeval (the language of the Serpent and its Ancient Brethren, in which the three words of *Creation Once Spoken* were uttered). Uttering her words, while standing in the crux of the multiverse known as Sigil, she reorders reality. Uttering her words, the only words spoken by her in the last several millennia, she shores up Sigil's wards against entry by deities who attempt to "cheat" as Vecna did. Uttering her words, she attempts to shore up the sum of all creation, also called superspace.

Even with Vecna's removal, his time in the crux effected change in superspace. Though the Lady of Pain attempts to heal the damage, the turmoil spawned by Vecna's time in Sigil cannot be entirely erased.

Some Outer Planes drift off and are forever lost, others collide and merge, while at least one Inner Plane runs "aground" on a distant world of the Prime. Moreover, the very nature of the Prime Material Plane itself is altered. Half-worlds like those attached to Tovag Baragu multiply a millionfold, taking on parallel realism in what was before a unified Prime Material Plane. The concept of alternate dimensions rears its metaphorical head, but doesn't yet solidify, and perhaps it never will. New realms, both near and far, are revealed, and realms never previously imagined make themselves known. Entities long thought lost emerge once more, while other creatures, both great and small, are inexplicably eradicated. Some common spells begin to work differently. The changes do not occur immediately, but instead are revealed during the subsequent months. However, one thing remains clear: Nothing will ever be the same again.

### *Key to the City of Doors*

The *Key to the City of Doors* has the form of an oversized skeleton key branded with the Lady of Pain's face, complete with spiked headdress. When held by a user in a specific type of location, the user can create a permanent two-way portal to or from Sigil. The location must fit the following description: a two-dimensionally bounded space no more than 20 feet to a side or 25 feet in diameter, such as within a cave mouth or inside a normal door lintel. The portal continues to operate as long as both endpoints remain in existence.

If the user attempts to create a portal while in Sigil, the near endpoint corresponds to the bounded space chosen, and the far endpoint corresponds to a point in any other dimension previously visited by the user. If the user has never visited the plane or place chosen, the endpoint forms in a randomly selected bounded space in the chosen plane (selected by the DM). If in a plane other than Sigil, the near endpoint corresponds to the endpoint chosen, and the far endpoint corresponds to a point in Sigil previously visited. If no far endpoint is chosen, the far endpoint forms in a randomly selected bounded space in Sigil.

The portal formed with the *Key* operates according to the intent of the user. It can either be always operating, or only transport those who utilize the proper sign, password, item, or other requirement (called a key) chosen by the user at the time of the portal's creation. Once the conditions are set, they do not vary.

If the bearer of the *Key* forms a portal over a previously existing portal, that portal is wiped out if the new portal is an "always-on" portal. If the new portal requires a key of some sort to activate it, then a bounded space can hold both portals, sending travelers to the primary location, unless they have the proper key. In this latter instance, it sends travelers to the secondary location.

XP Value: 5,000

GP Value: 10,000



# Appendix: Descriptions

The following descriptions have been broken into four different categories: generic beings (Lesser Villains), named beings (Intermediate Villains), godly beings (Greater Villains), and important artifacts (Artifacts).

## Lesser Villains

**Acolyte of Vecna, male or female human M1/P1:** AC 10; MV 12; THAC0 20; #AT 1 (dagger); Dmg 1d4; SZ M (5'-6'); ML fanatic (18); Int exceptional (15-16); AL LE (60%), NE (30%), CE (10%); XP 120.

*Special Equipment:* holy symbol of Vecna, dagger (10% are +1) *Wizard Spells Memorized* (1): *magic missile*.

*Cleric Spells Memorized* (2): *command, light*.

*Notes:* Acolytes are minor clerics, the lowest rung of Vecna's priesthood; the above statistics are typical of the group. Usually too poor to afford bodyguards, acolytes are intensely competitive and rightfully watch out for their peers, who are likely to plant daggers in the backs of their most hated rivals. Acolytes wear white tunics, knee-length black kilts, varied footwear, and Vecna's holy symbols on iron necklaces. They usually ignore strangers in Cavitius unless they themselves are accosted. Acolytes are generally more fanatical and daring than their superiors, who learn caution with experience. (See Memory of Vecna.)

**Bariaur pilgrim, F2:** AC 4 (chainmail barding and shield); MV 15; hp 20; THAC0 18 (specialization); #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d8+2 (longsword, specialization); SA 60' infravision, butt for 1d8 damage (x3 after charge of 30+ feet); SZ M (6' tall); ML elite (13); Int high (14); AL NE; XP 65.

**Bodyguard, male or female human F5:** AC 5 (chainmail); MV 12; THAC0 16; #AT 1 (battle-ax or throwing dagger); Dmg 1d8 or 1d4; SZ M (5'-6' tall); ML elite (13-14); Int average (8-10); AL N or NE; XP 270.

*Notes:* The bodyguard for a Memory of Vecna is immune to bribery or pleas to abandon his charge, for the simple reason that an untrustworthy bodyguard will never be used again by any being in Cavitius. A disloyal bodyguard will certainly become the target of revenge attacks by allies of the (presumably deceased) cleric who was being guarded, and the persons offering the bribe might even dispose of the traitorous bodyguard themselves. As a result, bodyguards are highly loyal to their charges, as their own fortunes rise or fall with their clerics' careers.

If a bodyguard's charge is slain despite the guard's best efforts, the guard has a low chance of being rehired unless he or she swiftly brings about the destruction or undoing of whoever was responsible (a terribly risky business in itself). Other clerics respect and admire this sort of thing, as having such guards will further discourage assassination.

**Citizen of Cavitius, male or female human 0-level:** AC 10; MV 12; hp 1d6, THAC0 20; #AT 0 (unarmed) or 1 (dagger or random object); Dmg none (unarmed) or 1d4; SZ S-M (4'6"-6' tall); ML unsteady (5-7); Int average (8-10); AL any (60% evil, 30% neutral, 10% good; 30% lawful, 40% neutral, 30% chaotic).

*Notes:* Experience points are not awarded for slaying any 0-level human, even if the person was evil. Detailed statistics are not given for most 0-level citizens in this adventure; they can be found everywhere as citizens, pages, prisoners, servants, and the like. The DM is free to adjust the above information to fit the circumstances of an encounter.

**Death knight:** AC 0; MV 12; HD 9; THAC0 8 (Str bonus, magical bonus possible); #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+6 (longsword, magical bonus possible); SA 18/00 Strength, *power word blind, power word kill, or power word stun* once per day, *symbol of fear* or *symbol of pain* once per day, 20 HD *fireball* once per day, SD cannot be mind-read on this demiplane, constantly radiates *fear* in 5-foot radius, can cast *detect magic, detect invisible, and wall of ice* at will, immune to *charm, sleep, hold, fear, cold, poison, paralysis, death*

*magic, and telepathic psionics, can cast dispel magic* twice per day, cannot be turned; MR 75% (if 11% or less is rolled, the spell is reflected back on its caster); SZ M (6' tall); ML fanatic (17-18); Int genius (17-18); AL CE; XP 6,000.

*Notes:* Nearly all death knights in Vecna's domain were once lawful good warriors, generals, and knights who fought against Vecna in life. However, they were corrupted by a constant and devastating campaign in which Vecna offered them a variety of dreadful secrets, with a promise of more knowledge and power if they would cease to resist his empire or even join his forces. Their reward was to be cast into Citadel Cavitius when it was a prison on the quasi-elemental plane of Ash, where they eventually became death knights. As their former realms no longer exist, they are now forced to serve Vecna on this demiplane, though they hate him as much as they hate all living things—and themselves as well. Most death knights now command armies in battle against Tovag, though some are personal bodyguards of the Maimed God. Many use magic swords (added at the DM's option).

**Finger commander/magistrate, male or female human F5:** AC 5 (chainmail); MV 12; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (battle-ax) or 1d4 (throwing dagger); SZ M (5'-6' tall); ML champion (15-16); Int high (13-14); AL LE; XP 270.

*Notes:* The Fingers of Vecna form the police force of Citadel Cavitius. The rank-and-file members are all humans who were inducted into the ranks after sitting upon the Spider Throne in Vecna's palace. The top commanders of the force are either skeleton warriors or aging mages on the verge of lichdom. The supreme commander is a vampire (Lord Haroln), more reliable than his undead kin, who is numbered among the most powerful of the city's undead lords.

Aside from being a visible manifestation of Vecna's control in Cavitius, the Fingers also serve as the judges (called "magistrates") in what passes for a legal system. Sometimes another authority acts as judge, usually a powerful undead.

It should be noted the Fingers of Vecna deal primarily with the living population of Citadel Cavitius, excluding members of Vecna's clergy. Clerics of Vecna and the undead have their own codes of conduct and are beyond the reach of the Fingers. (They must answer to the Reavers or even the Whispered One himself should they break any of his laws.)

**Finger sergeant, male or female humans F3:** AC 5 (chainmail); MV 12; THAC0 18; #AT 1 (longsword or throwing dagger); Dmg 1d8 or 1d4; SZ M (5'-6' tall); ML elite (13-14); Int very (11-12); AL LE; XP 120.

**Finger soldier, male or female human F1:** AC 5 (chainmail); MV 12; THAC0 20; #AT 1 (shortsword or whip); Dmg 1d6 or 1d3; SZ M (5'-6' tall); ML steady (11-12); Int average (8-10); AL N, LN, LE, or NE; XP 15.

**Fingers of Vecna, male and female humans T5:** AC 4 (leather, Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 30; THAC0 18 (14 with backstab attempt, 16 with crossbow); #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 or 1d4 (dagger or light crossbow); SA poisoned daggers and quarrels, thief abilities; SZ M (6' tall); ML steady (11); Int high (13); AL LE; XP 1,400 each.

*Special Equipment:* Thieves tools, 1d6x10 gp each.

*Special Abilities:* poison—injection; onset immediate; strength 2d10/1d4.

*Thief Abilities:* PP 26%, OL 34%, F/RT 12%, MS 76%, HS 59%, DN 38%, CW 76%, RL 29%.

**Githzerai pilgrim, F2:** AC 3 (banded mail, shield); MV 12; hp 20; THAC0 19 (18 specialization); #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d8+2 (longsword, specialization); SA 60' infravision, *plane shift* 1/round but not in Sigil; MR 10%; SZ M (6' tall); ML elite (13); Int very (12); AL NE; XP 65.

**Guise-of-Vecna stone golem:** AC -3; MV 12; HD 18; hp 120; THAC0 3; #AT 2; Dmg 4d8/4d8 (fists); SA casts *slow* spell on any opponent within 10 feet every other round (appears as a burst of darkness from its gouged eye); SD affected only by +2

or better weapons, immune to all spells save those spells affecting earth; SW *rock to mud* slows a golem for 2d6 rounds (reverse heals golem completely), *flesh to stone* makes golem vulnerable to normal attacks for 1 round including spells that cause direct damage; SZ L (9' tall); ML fearless (20); Int non- (0); AL N; XP 17,000.

**Half-ogre Kadars:** AC 2 (*banded mail* +2); MV 12; HD 6; hp 48 each; THAC0 15 (12 with Str bonus); #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d6+6 (spear, Str bonus); SZ L (8' tall); Int average (9); ML steady (12); AL CE; XP 1,400.

*Special Equipment:* pouch with 125 gp and several bone chits.

**Invoker, male or female human Inv12:** AC 7 (Dex bonus, *ring of protection* +2); MV 12; hp 48; THAC0 17 (16 with *dagger* +1); #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+1 (*dagger* +1); SA spells; SZ M (5'-6' tall); ML steady (11-12); Int genius (17-18); AL NE; XP 6,000.

*Special Equipment:* Each carries either a *wand of fire* (roll 1d6: 1-4) or a *wand of paralyzation* (5-6), each with 2d8 charges.

**Wizard Spells Memorized (5/5/5/5/5/2):** 1st—*burning hands, color spray, detect magic, magic missile* (x2); 2nd—*flaming sphere, invisibility* (x2), *irritation, web*; 3rd—*dispel magic, hold person* (x3), *slow*; 4th—*ice storm* (x2), *phantasmal killer* (x2), *wall of fire*; 5th—*Bigby's interposing hand, cone of cold* (x4); 6th—*disintegrate, Otiluke's freezing sphere*.

*Notes:* These characters are protected by *stoneskin* spells. The first seven melee and missile attacks against them do no damage.

**Lich:** AC 0; MV 6; HD 11+; THAC0 9; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10 (freezing touch); SA spells, touch causes saving throw vs. paralysis (permanent duration); SD spells, hit only by +1 or better weapons or monsters with 6+ HD, cannot be mind-read on this demiplane, *fear* aura causes anyone with 5 HD or less to flee for 5d4 rounds, high Intelligence grants immunity to low-level Illusion/Phantasm spells, immune to *sleep, charm, hold, cold, poison, paralysis, death magic, electricity, enfeeblement, polymorph, insanity*, and telepathic psionics; SW can be turned, vulnerable if phylactery is located; SZ M (5'-6' tall); ML fanatic (17-18); Int supra-genius (19-20); AL LE (50%), NE (30%), CE (20%); XP 8,000 (9,000 with magic items).

*Notes:* Some liches in this domain were once live mages in Vecna's ancient empire on Oerth, but were cast into the prison of Citadel Cavitius when they failed their master. They were changed into liches over time by the prison's magical nature. Most, however, deliberately turned themselves into liches to become immortal and gain additional magical knowledge.

The liches in this adventure are given individual assortments of special equipment and spells. If the DM plans to introduce additional liches as encounters, possessions and a spell list should be generated for each; assume each lich is of level 17+1d4. All liches have prepared themselves with spells and magic items in case they confront Iuz, his followers, or the heroes (all of whom the liches try to avoid slaying, as per the wishes of Vecna, unless directly attacked).

**Mage (minor), male or female human M2:** AC 10; MV 12; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (dagger); SZ M (5'-6' tall); ML unsteady (5-7); Int exceptional (15-16); AL any evil; XP 65.

*Wizard Spells Memorized (2):* 1st—*magic missile, shield*.

**Mage (novice), male or female human M1:** AC 10; MV 12; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (dagger); SZ M (5'-6' tall); ML unsteady (5-7); Int exceptional (15-16); AL any evil; XP 35.

*Wizard Spells Memorized (1):* 1st—either *chill touch, shield, magic missile*, or *shocking grasp*, at the DM's discretion.

**Memory of Vecna, male or female human M2/P5:** AC 10 or 5 (chainmail); MV 12; THAC0 18 (17 with *dagger* +1); #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+1 (*dagger* +1); SA command undead; SZ M (5'-6' tall); ML elite (13-14); Int exceptional (15-16); AL LE; XP 975.

*Special Equipment:* as determined by the DM.

*Cleric Spells Memorized (5/3/1):* 1st—*cause fear* (x2), *command* (x2), *cure light wounds*; 2nd—*aid, hold person, flame blade*; 3rd—*prayer*.

*Wizard Spells Memorized (2):* 1st—*comprehend languages, magic missile*.

*Notes:* This sort of cleric is fairly typical in Cavitius. The spells are usually combat oriented, since the clerics often punish citizens who have stepped out of line. They must also fend off attacks by other clerics seeking advancement. Vecna, however, recently directed his clerics to prepare themselves for the arrival of "outsiders," so spells such as *hold person* and *comprehend languages* are in wide use.

Each Memory of Vecna (the general title for a mid-level cleric/mage) has a holy symbol (a skeletal, outstretched hand with an eye in the palm) to signify authority over Vecna's undead. Powerful undead can disregard a cleric's commands, but they will usually cooperate with clerics against a common foe.

The priesthood is a dangerous occupation, for the main method of advancement lies in slaying one's superiors. (One might wonder if Vecna was surprised at all at Kas's historic betrayal, considering the environment Vecna fosters among his servants.) Clerics who reside outside the Palace of Vecna each have at least one armed bodyguard. These guards do not belong to or take orders from the hierarchy of Vecna's church; rather, they are paid mercenaries who defend their charges from all attackers, particularly other clerics of Vecna.

**Minor death:** AC -4; MV 16, fly 24 (B); HD 4+1; THAC0 automatically hits; #AT 1 (scythe); Dmg 2d8; SA gain initiative in every round, automatically strike chosen victim once each round, cannot be mind-read, slain victims are forever dead and cannot be revived even with a *wish*; SD cannot be turned or controlled, immune to *charm, sleep, hold, fear, cold, poison, paralysis, death magic, fire, electricity, and telepathic psionics*; SZ M (6' tall); ML fearless (20); Int high (14); AL LE; XP 2,000.

**Necromancer (novice), male or female human M1:** AC 10; MV 12; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (dagger); SZ M (5'-6' tall); ML average (8-10); Int exceptional (15-16); AL any evil; XP 65.

*Wizard Spells Memorized (2):* *chill touch, magic missile*.

**Necromancer, male or female human Nec12:** AC 8 (Dex bonus, *ring of protection* +1); MV 12; hp 48; THAC0 17 (16 *dagger* +1); #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+1 (*dagger* +1); SZ M (5'-6' tall); ML steady (11-12); Int genius (17-18); AL NE; XP 6,000.

*Special Equipment:* Each carries either a *ring of vampiric regeneration* (1-4) or an *amulet of life protection* (5-6).

**Wizard Spells Memorized (5/5/5/5/5/2):** 1st—*burning hands, chill touch* (x2), *magic missile* (x2); 2nd—*blindness, blur, spectral hand, Tasha's uncontrollable hideous laughter, web*; 3rd—*blink, dispel magic, hold person, vampiric touch* (x2); 4th—*bestow curse, enervation, ice storm, minor globe of invulnerability, polymorph other*; 5th—*animate dead* (x3), *cone of cold* (x2); 6th—*death spell* (x2).

**New Vecnan Specialty Priests, male and female human and bariar P7:** AC 2 (chainmail, shield, Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 38; THAC0 16 (13 with *mace* +3); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4 (*mace* +3); SZ M (6'1" tall); ML champion (16); Int very (12); AL LG; XP 2,000.

*Special Equipment:* *ring of infravision*.

*Spells (5/5/3/2):* 1st—*command, cure light wounds* (x2), *detect good, sanctuary*; 2nd—*aid, augury, barkskin, hold person, know alignment*; 3rd—*cure deafness, prayer, remove curse*; 4th—*cure serious wounds, neutralize poison*.

**Ogre warriors:** AC 5; MV 12; HD 6; hp 48 each; THAC0 15 (12 with Str bonus); #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d6+6 (spear, Str bonus); SZ L (8' tall); Int average (9); ML steady (12); AL CE; XP 975.

*Special Equipment:* Pouch with 15 gp and several bone chits.

*Notes:* These ogres are elite troops, so their statistics differ from the traditional ogre a bit.

**Palace guard, male or female human F1:** AC 8 (leather armor); MV 12; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (short sword); SZ M (5'-6'); ML elite (13-14); Int average (8-10); AL N, LN, NE, or LE; XP 15.

*Notes:* The black leather armor worn by these guards features a gold-embroidered symbol of Vecna over the chest.

**Palace guard officer, male or female human F3:** AC 5 (chainmail); MV 12; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (longsword); SZ M (5'-6'); ML champion (15-16); Int high (13-14); AL LN or LE; XP 15.

**Notes:** Officers wear black tabards over their chainmail, with Vecna's symbol embroidered in gold upon them.

**Reaver:** AC 2 (field plate armor); MV 9; HD 7+3; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+1 (scythe); SD +1 or better weapons to hit, immune to *charm, sleep, hold, fear, cold, poison, paralysis, death magic, and telepathic psionics*, cannot be turned or controlled; SZ M (6' tall); ML fearless (20); Int high (13-14); AL LE; XP 1,400.

**Notes:** A reaver is a skeletal undead in armor and robes that serves as Vecna's law-enforcement arm over less powerful undead. If a reaver comes upon the site of a battle that occurred within the last 6 hours, it stops and examines the area. After 1d4 minutes, it can track the combatants to attack those it deems to have violated Vecna's will. Battles between living creatures do not interest the reaver, although it seeks to stop battles between undead beings in order to maintain a semblance of order. Thus, intelligent undead of Citadel Cavitius keep their battles secret whenever possible. The reaver also protects Vecna's living clerics.

Do not confuse this creature with the aquatic reaver from the first *RAVENLOFT MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM*® Appendix.

**Skeletal steed:** AC 7; MV 18; HD 3+1; THAC0 17; #AT 3; Dmg 1d6/1d6/1d4 (hoof/hoof/bite); SA breathes a noxious gas that immobilizes all living beings within 5 feet if a saving throw vs. breath weapon is failed; SD immune to *charm, sleep, hold, fear, cold, fire, poison, paralysis, death magic, telepathic psionics, and piercing weapons*, but edged weapons inflict half damage; SW can be returned as wraiths; SZ L (8' tall); ML fearless (20); Int non- (0); AL N; XP 270.

**Shadow:** AC 7; MV 12; HD 3+3; THAC0 1; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+1 + special; SA Strength drain, slain victims turn into shadows; SD cannot be mind-read on this demiplane, +1 or better weapon to hit, 90% undetectable in shadows, immune to *charm, sleep, hold, fear, cold, poison, paralysis, death magic, and telepathic psionics*; SW can be turned, avoids bright light; SZ M (6' tall); ML fanatic (17-18); Int low (5-7); AL CE; XP 420.

**Notes:** For every successful attack by a shadow, the target loses 1 point of Strength. Lost Strength points return 2d4 turns later. If a human or demihuman is reduced to 0 points of Strength, the victim's body dissolves into shadow-stuff and the victim is immediately "reborn" as a shadow, attacking all former comrades. Only a *wish* followed by a *heal* spell can return the person to life. (The new shadow must fail a saving throw vs. spell twice in order for this to work.)

**Slow shadow:** AC 8; MV 12; HD 4; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4; SA -6 penalty to opponent's surprise roll, *slow* (no saving throw) by touch, continual damage after touch, slain victims turn into slow shadows; SD cannot be mind-read on this demiplane, +2 or better magical weapon to hit, 90% undetectable in shadows, immune to *sleep, charm, hold, fear, cold, poison, paralysis, lightning, death magic, and telepathic psionics*; SW can be turned, avoids bright light, *haste* drives away 2d10 slow shadows; SZ M (4'-6' tall); ML champion (15-16); Int low (5-7); AL CE; XP 650.

**Notes:** Slow shadows typically attack by surprise, maneuvering behind their intended prey. They attach themselves to the unsuspecting victims upon making a successful attack roll, inflicting 1d4 points of cold damage and immediately causes the victim to be *slowed*, as the 3rd-level wizard spell, with no saving throw. Further, for every round a slow shadow is attached, the victim takes an additional 1d4 points of cold damage, with no attack roll required on the part of the creature. A *haste* spell directed at slow shadows drives 2d10 away, but the spell has no effect once they have attached themselves to a victim. Only a *remove curse* cast upon a victim at the time of death prevents the victim from arising as a slow shadow later on; otherwise, there is no recovery.

**Skeleton:** AC 7; MV 12; HD 1; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (short sword); SD immune to *sleep, charm, hold, fear, cold, poison, paralysis, death magic, and telepathic psionics*, edged and piercing weapons do half damage; SW can be turned, holy water inflicts 2d4 points of damage per vial; SZ M (5'-6' tall); ML fearless (20); Int non- (0); AL N; XP 65.

**Notes:** Animated skeletons are created from the bodies of dead human citizens of Cavitius, as well as executed criminals or unwanted prisoners. They serve as laborers, guards, servants, targets, experimental subjects, and warriors in the field against Tovag. Some clerics of Vecna use them as statuary. Once broken, skeletons are thrown away. They wear nothing, not even insignia, since they are of so little value.

**Skeleton, elite:** AC 5 (chainmail); MV 12; HD 2; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (short sword or throwing ax); SD immune to *sleep, charm, hold, fear, cold, poison, paralysis, death magic, and telepathic psionics*, edged and piercing weapons do half damage; SW can be turned as zombie, holy water inflicts 2d4 points of damage per vial; SZ M (5'-6' tall); ML fearless (20); Int low (5-7); AL N; XP 120.

**Notes:** An elite skeleton is a slightly uprated skeleton capable of limited self-direction and very basic tactics. It carries two throwing axes (hurling one per round) and a short sword, and it uses armor. Given a chance, an elite skeleton hurls one or both axes before entering combat. Elite skeletons in Cavitius are created by a lich from the bodies of common soldiers, using the *animate dead* spell in a special ceremony.

**Skeleton warrior:** AC 2; MV 12 (special); HD 9+2 to 9+12; THAC0 11 (8 with two-handed sword); #AT 1; Dmg 1d10 (two-handed sword); SA causes *fear* in characters with less than 5 Hit Dice; SD cannot be mind-read on this demiplane, cannot be turned or controlled, immune to *sleep, charm, hold, fear, cold, poison, paralysis, death magic, and telepathic psionics*; MR 90%; SZ M (6' tall); ML champion (15-16); Int exceptional (15-16); AL NE; XP 4,000.

**Notes:** Skeleton warriors within Vecna's domain have no circlets or other devices to control them. All such items were absorbed into Vecna's being, making him the absolute master of these powerful warrior undead. Skeleton warriors have their own intelligence and will, but by necessity they are absolutely loyal to Vecna and never act against his interests.

In life, the skeleton warriors of Citadel Cavitius were great fighters in Vecna's ancient armies who were punished for failing their leader in any number of critical ways, from losing major battles to committing high treason. Most skeleton warriors now serve under death knights as unit commanders in the endless war against Tovag, or as important guards and undead officers in Citadel Cavitius.

All skeleton warriors under Vecna wear ornate field plate armor with full helmets, gloss black in color but dented and scratched from combat. On each chest plate is painted the eye-and-hand symbol of Vecna in white, set within a green-gray circle. The circle, on close inspection, is actually a serpent biting its own tail. All use two-handed swords (+3 attack bonus), which they wield so well that they can fight even in relatively narrow spaces. They may use any other weapons, but only at normal attack odds.

Note that skeleton warriors have a movement rate of 12, not 6 as is usual for this type of undead monster.

**Slaad, green:** AC 0; MV 9; HD 9+5; hp 76; THAC0 11; #AT 3 (claw/claw/bite); Dmg 1d6+2/1d6+2/2d8; SA spell-like abilities; SD immune to weapons of less than +1 enchantment; MR 50%; SZ L (7'5" tall); ML elite (14); Int average (9); AL CN; XP 11,000.

**Special Abilities:** Spell-like abilities—can use the following once per round at will: *polymorph* (into a single humanoid or centaur race), *darkness 15' radius, detect invisibility, detect magic, ESP, fear, locate object, produce flame, telekinesis*; can use *delayed blast fireball* once per day (slaad version allows contingent blast within 24 hours of casting).

**Spectre:** AC 2; MV 15, fly 30 (B); HD 7+3; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; SA energy drain (two levels), slain victims turn into

spectres; SD cannot be mind-read on this demiplane, +1 or better weapon to hit, immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, *fear*, cold, poison, paralysis, death magic, and telepathic psionics; SW can be turned, holy water does 2d4 points of damage per vial, *raise dead* destroys the spectre if a saving throw vs. spell fails, avoids bright light; SZ M (5'-6' tall); ML champion (15-16); Int high (13-14); AL LE; XP 3,000.

**Notes:** Anyone slain by a spectre becomes a full-strength spectre under the control of its slayer. The transition to unlife takes place in only 2d4 rounds.

**Spider, large:** AC 8; MV 6, web 15; HD 1+1; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1; SA type A poison, with a 15 minute onset time, successful saving throw vs. poison negates; SZ S (2' diameter); ML unsteady (5-7); Int non- (0); AL N; XP 175.

**Notes:** For each point of Strength less than 19, it takes 1 round to break free from webs spun by large spiders (it takes 4 rounds for a hero with 15 Strength to break free, for example). Entangled persons can be attacked with a +4 bonus, and lose all Armor Class adjustments due to Dexterity. As many spiders as possible attack entangled heroes.

**Stone guardians, in Vecna's image:** AC 2; MV 9; HD 4+4; hp 35; THAC0 15; #AT 2; Dmg 1d8+1; SD immune to nonmagical missiles, suffers half damage from edged weapons, quarter damage from all cold-, fire-, or electrical-based attacks; SW instantly destroyed by a *stone to flesh*, *transmute rock to mud*, *stone shape*, or *dig* spell, with no saving throw allowed; SZ M (6' 1" tall); ML fearless (20); Int non- (0); AL N; XP 1,400.

**Teeth of Vecna, male and female humans W5 (transmuters):** AC 8 (Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 20; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (staff); SZ M (6' tall); ML elite (14); Int exceptional (16); AL NG; XP 975 each.

**Spells (5/3/2):** 1st—*armor*, *magic missile* (x3), *charm person*; 2nd—*invisibility*, *web*, *Melf's acid arrow*; 3rd—*dispel magic*, *fireball*.

**Tiefling pilgrims, F7:** AC 4 (banded mail); MV 12; hp 56; THAC0 14 (12 with specialization, Str bonus); #AT 2; Dmg 1d10+3/1d10+3 (two-handed sword, specialization, Str bonus); SA tiefling abilities; SD +2 saving throw bonus vs. fire, electricity, and poison; SZ M (4'-6' tall); ML average (10); Int average (9); AL CE; XP 1,400.

**Notes:** Tieflings appear as humans or demihumans with a strange physical attribute, such as horns, a tail, a mane, glowing eyes, or some other taint of outer-planar parentage. Tieflings possess infravision to 60 feet, suffer half damage from cold, and can create *darkness* 15' radius and either *chill touch*, *mirror image*, or *charm person* 1/day.

**Torturers, female human T1:** AC 8 (Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 4 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1 (dagger); Dmg 1d4; SA backstab (x2 damage); SD thief skills; SZ M (5'-5'6" tall); ML steady (11-12); Int average (8-10); AL NE; XP 65.

**Thief Abilities:** PP 15%, OL 25%, F/RT 15%, MS 20%, HS 25%, DN 25%, CW 60%, RL 0%.

**True ghouls:** AC 3; MV 12; HD 4+4; hp 36 each; THAC0 15; #AT 3 or 1; Dmg 1d6/1d6/1d8 (claw/claw/bite) or by weapon; SA touch paralyzes foe 2d6+6 rounds, grave-rot; SD immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, *fear*, poison, paralysis, death magic, and cold-based attacks; SW can be turned as wights; SZ M (6' tall); ML fearless (19); Int low to average (7-10); AL NE; XP 2,000.

**Special Abilities:** SA—Grave-rot: The claws and fangs of true ghouls are covered with filth and carrion. Creatures wounded by the ghouls must make a saving throw vs. poison or succumb to grave-rot at the end of combat (multiple wounds require only a single saving throw). Victims who fail lose 1d6 hit points each day until the disease is cured. Every three days, afflicted victims can attempt a Constitution check with a -4 penalty to spontaneously throw off the rot. Paladins are immune to grave-rot, and they can use their *cure disease* ability to remove the affliction from others.

**Vampire:** AC 1; MV 12, fly 18 (C) as bat, fly 9 (E) as gas; HD 8+3; THAC0 11 (Str bonus); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4 (Str bonus); SA energy drain (two levels), gaze can *charm* (-2 penalty to saving throw), *shapechange* to bat or wolf, *spider climb* at will, slain victims turn into vampires; SD +1 or better weapon to hit, regenerate 3 hp/round, immune to *charm*, *sleep*, *hold*, *fear*, poison, paralyzation, death magic, and telepathic psionics, cold and electricity inflict half damage, can assume gaseous form at will; SW can be turned, vulnerable to sunlight, wooden stakes, and running water, holy water inflicts 1d6+1 hp per vial; SZ M 5'6"-6'6" tall); ML champion (15-16); Int exceptional (15-16); AL CE; XP 9,000.

**Notes:** The oldest vampires in this ghastly domain were once powerful adventurers who ran afoul of Vecna at some point in his career, then were cast into Citadel Cavitius when it was an extraplanar prison. There they were attacked and slain by the sole vampire in that prison, Kas the Destroyer himself. These vampires became free-willed when Kas escaped with the help of adventurers some years ago (as per *Vecna Lives!*). Most current vampires are recent additions, adventurers killed here after Citadel Cavitius was drawn into the Demiplane of Dread. They take secret pride in being the "offspring" of the traitorous Kas, particularly since all vampires here are now under the nominal control of Vecna, whom they hate and fear without end. Vampires are unreliable as soldiers or commanders, being too selfish and unconcerned about authority (unless their orders come from Vecna directly).

Because Vecna is less fond of vampires than more lawful sorts of undead, he has standing orders to have the victims of vampires destroyed completely whenever possible, to prevent having his domain be overrun with them. Vampires go along with these orders, though once in a while they will bring a new member into their family by accident or design (in the latter case, the usually unwilling recruit is someone much favored by a particular vampire). The victim is given a quick burial, and one day later arises as a full-strength vampire enslaved to its creator. As Vecna sometimes destroys particularly obnoxious vampires (thus freeing their slaves), there are quite a few free-willed vampires about, each with its own collection of vampiric followers.

**War wizard, male or female human F4/M9:** AC 9 (Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 29; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d10 (longsword); SA spells; SD spells; SZ M (5'-6' tall); ML fanatic (17-18); Int genius (17-18); AL LE; XP 7,000.

**Special Equipment:** *wand of paralyzation*, *rod of terror*, or *ring of the ram* (determine randomly).

**Special Abilities:** War wizards are expert commanders, highly skilled in small unit and battlefield tactics, and the application of magic in combat. They each possess the Spellcraft proficiency and receive a +1 bonus to all checks involving strategy and planning for battle. Further, all war wizards are able to cast their spells using only one hand if their sword is drawn; doing so adds 1 to the casting time.

**Wizard Spells Memorized (4/3/3/2/1):** 1st—*detect magic*, *magic missile* (x2), *phantasmal force*; 2nd—*fog cloud*, *improved phantasmal force*, *scare*; 3rd—*dispel magic*, *fireball*, *lightning bolt*; 4th—*Evard's black tentacles*, *fear*; 5th—*cloudkill*.

**Wight:** AC 5; MV 12; HD 4+3; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4; SA energy drain (one life level per touch), slain victims turn into wights; SD cannot be mind-read, hit only by silver or +1 or better magical weapons, immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, *fear*, cold, poison, paralysis, death magic, and telepathic psionics; SW can be turned, holy water does 2d4 points of damage per vial, *raise dead* destroys wight instantly, avoids bright light; SZ M (5'-6' tall); ML elite (13-14); Int average (8-10); AL LE; XP 1,400.

**Notes:** The wights of Citadel Cavitius were formerly warriors or minor adventurers who were imprisoned within the Citadel when it was an extraplanar jail. These experienced prisoners, having run afoul of Vecna at some point, gradually turned into wights from the effects of the Negative Material Plane in their environment. When the prison turned into a Demiplane of Dread domain (and prison for Vecna), Vecna gained command over his former enemies, who saw that becoming the Maimed Lord's soldiers was the only option left to them. Whatever their

alignment and attitudes in life, wights now support Vecna wholeheartedly. Many retain the spellcasting abilities they had in life. Wights now serve as low-level commanders in the war against Tovag, or as guard commanders in Citadel Cavitus and Vecna's palace.

Wights in Cavitus do not wear armor or use weapons, but they do wear military-style black tunics and kilts. Over this is worn a black tabard with the eye-and-hand symbol of Vecna marked over the chest. Palace guard officers have the symbol embroidered in gold thread; commanders in the Burning Peaks have it in silver thread; and city commanders and guards have it in white thread.

**Wight, half-strength:** AC 5; MV 12; HD 2+1; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4; SA energy drain (one life level per touch), slain victims turn into wights; SD cannot be mind-read, hit only by silver or +1 or better magical weapons, immune to *sleep, charm, hold, fear, cold, poison, paralysis, death magic, and telepathic psionics*; SW can be turned, holy water does 2d4 points of damage per vial, *raise dead* destroys wight instantly, avoids bright light; SZ M (5'-6' tall); ML elite (13-14); Int average (8-10); AL LE; XP 650.

*Notes:* All heroes and NPCs slain by a wight fall into this category. The transition to unlife takes place quickly, in only 2d8 rounds. A half-strength wight becomes the servant of its creator wight until its master is destroyed, at which time the minor wight gains full strength and free will. Anyone slain by a half-strength wight and turned into another half-strength wight becomes a servant of the original, full-strength creator wight.

**Wight mage, M3:** as per wight, except: ML fanatic (17-18); Int genius (17-18); XP 2,000.

*Notes:* These corporeal undead share the same background as other wights here, but they were wizards, not warriors. They now willingly assist their lord, Vecna, and also assist other powerful undead spellcasters. Wight mages can use most magic items meant for wizards; their spells and special equipment are given in the text, where encountered. Victims slain by wight mages turn into half-strength (non-spellcasting) wights, serving their slayer as noted earlier.

**Wraith:** AC 4; MV 12, fly 24; HD 5+3; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; SA energy drain (one life level per touch), slain victims turn into wraiths; SD cannot be mind-read, hit only by silver (half damage) or +1 or better magical weapons, recovers 1 lost hit point every 8 hours, immune to *charm, sleep, hold, fear, cold, poison, paralysis, death magic, and telepathic psionics*; SW can be turned, holy water does 2d4 points of damage per vial, *raise dead* destroys wraith instantly if it fails a saving throw vs. spell, avoids bright light; SZ M (5'-6' tall); ML champion (15-16); Int very (11-12); AL LE; XP 2,000.

*Notes:* The wraiths of Cavitus have origins much like the wights, but their corporeal forms were destroyed, leaving only their corrupted spirits. For ages they did not communicate with any being but each other. When Cavitus was brought into the Demiplane of Dread, Vecna took command over all wraiths and now uses them as special enforcers and spies. Wraiths have a society separate from all others in this domain, and they communicate with no one but Vecna himself or a cleric of Vecna using *speaking with dead*. They make no use of clothing, as they are incorporeal.

**Wraith, half-strength:** AC 4; MV 12, fly 24; HD 2+1; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; SA energy drain (one life level per touch), slain victims turn into wraiths; SD cannot be mind-read, hit only by silver (half damage) or +1 or better magical weapons, recovers 1 lost hit point every 8 hours, immune to *charm, sleep, hold, fear, cold, poison, paralysis, death magic, and telepathic psionics*; SW can be turned, holy water does 2d4 points of damage per vial, *raise dead* destroys wraith instantly if it fails a saving throw vs. spell, avoids bright light; SZ M (5'-6' tall); ML champion (15-16); Int very (11-12); AL LE; XP 975.

*Notes:* All heroes and NPCs slain by a wraith fall into this category. The transition to unlife takes place quickly, in only 2d6 rounds. A half-strength wraith becomes the servant of its creator

wraith until its master is destroyed, at which time the minor wraith gains full strength and free will. Anyone slain by a half-strength wraith and turned into another half-strength wraith becomes a servant of the original, full-strength creator wraith.

**Zombie:** AC 8; MV 6; HD 2; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; SD immune to *sleep, charm, hold, fear, cold, poison, paralysis, electricity, death magic, and telepathic psionics*; SW can be turned, holy water does 2d4 points of damage per vial; SZ M (5'-6' tall); ML fearless (20); Int non- (0); AL N; XP 65.

*Notes:* Like skeletons, zombies of Citadel Cavitus were created from dead human citizens, criminals, and prisoners of little worth to the rulers of the city. They serve as heavy laborers, guards, targets, and scapegoats until they rot (becoming skeletons) or until they are battered to pieces and thrown away. Zombies are given nothing more than a cloth kilt to wear, if that.

**Zombie, ju-ju:** AC 6; MV 9; HD 3+12; THAC0 15 (attacks as 6 HD monster); #AT 1; Dmg 3d4 (fists); SD +1 or better magical weapon to hit, half damage from fire and blunt or piercing weapons, Climb Walls 92%, immune to *charm, sleep, hold, fear, death magic, magic missile, illusions, poison, paralysis, cold, electricity, and telepathic psionics*; SW can be turned as spectre, holy water inflicts 2d4 points of damage per vial; SZ M (5'-6' tall); ML average (8-10); Int low (5-7); AL NE; XP 975.

*Notes:* Ju-ju zombies are among the rarest of undead in Cavitus. In life, they were prisoners or criminals of exceptional note, hideously executed by *energy drain* spells cast by an archmage or lich, or by *finger of death* spells after prolonged torture. Ju-ju zombies now serve as special couriers in Citadel Cavitus, working for Vecna's clerics, death knights, and skeleton warriors. They are encouraged to sing hymns to Vecna on their routes, highlighting the lesson that it would be unfortunate if anyone were to anger Vecna or his underlings.

## Intermediate Villains

**Geral Kher, male half-elf F8/M8:** AC 9 (Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 56; THAC0 13 (9 with *longsword +4, defender*); #AT 3/2 or 2; Dmg 1d10+4 (*longsword +4, defender*) or 1d6/1d6 (*shortbow*); SA spells; SD spells, standard half-elf immunities; SZ M (5'4" tall); ML champion (16); Str 14, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 13; AL NE; XP 2,000.

*Special Equipment:* ring of shooting stars; ring of spell turning. Wizard Spells Memorized (4/3/3/2): 1st—*burning hands, knock*; 2nd—*magic missile* (x2); 2nd—*web* (x3); 3rd—*invisibility, lightning bolt*. (All other spells were used.)

**The Hand, unique flesh golem and loyal servant of Vecna:** AC 1; MV 9; HD 10; hp 66; THAC0 11; #AT 2; Dmg 2d12 (huge fists); SA *greater mummy rot* (saving throw vs. spell if struck; failure infects victim with disease like that inflicted by greater mummy, as per the *MONSTER MANUAL*), *energy drain* (1 level per hit); SD +1 or better weapons to hit; SW *dispel magic*; SZ M (6' tall); ML fanatic (18); Int high (14); AL LE; XP 6,000.

*Notes:* The Hand is made entirely of severed hands stitched together by magic. When it uses telepathy or moves, it makes continual clicking and snapping sounds.

**"Innova," female lich possessing human body W19:** AC 7 (Dex bonus, *caul of protection* +1); MV 12; HD 11+8; hp 43; THAC0 9; #AT 1; Dmg 1 hp (fists or kick); SA spells; SD spells, cannot be mind-read on this demiplane, immune to *sleep, charm, hold, cold, poison, paralysis, death magic, electricity, enfeeblement, polymorph, insanity, and telepathic psionics*; SW can be turned, vulnerable if phylactery is located, successful *dispel magic* forces lich's spirit into the phylactery; SZ M (5'4" tall); ML champion (15); Str 7, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 18 (lich), Wis 11 (lich), Cha 14 (combined); AL CE; XP 7,000.

*Wizard Spells Memorized* (5/5/5/5/3/3/3/1): 1st—*burning hands* (x2), *charm person, magic missile* (x2); 2nd—*blur, detect invisibility, ESP, ray of enfeeblement, mirror image*; 3rd—*dispel magic, fireball, hold person, infravision, protection from normal missiles*; 4th—*dimension door, improved invisibility, polymorph other, slow, stonewalk*; 5th—*cone of cold, demi-shadow monsters* (x2), *telekinesis*,

*wall of force*; 6th—*death spell, disintegrate, project image*; 7th—*delayed blast fireball, limited wish, spell turning*; 8th—*Bigby's clenched fist, monster summoning VI (1d3 wraiths), symbol*; 9th—*monster summoning VII (1d2 flesh golems)*.

**Notes:** The lich who has stolen Innova's body was in life an evil human mage named Meekali, from the realm of Sunndi. When the natural end of her life was only a few years away, she made plans to prevent it from arriving. Her first attempt involved casting *magic jar* on an elf maiden, but elven adventurers foiled her scheme. She then went through the steps to become a lich. During this process, she came to the attention of Vecna, who recruited her as one of his servants. Now, she occasionally uses *magic jar* to steal the body of a young human female from the unfortunate citizens of Citadel Cavitus. She revels for a few years in her stolen life and youth, often leaving trails of broken hearts and mutilated bodies in her wake. Eventually, vengeful citizens kill the stolen body, and she returns to her undead form for a few years. The cycle then starts over again with another stolen body.

**Karhk of the Elf-Splitters, orc leader:** AC 5 (studded leather, shield +1); MV 9; HD 1; hp 8; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (cross-bow) or 1d8 (battle-axe); SD thief skills; SZ M (6'3" tall); ML average (9); Int average (9); AL LE; XP 35.

**Special Equipment:** shield +1 (has tribal symbol on it: an elf skull with a spike driven between its eyes).

**Thief Abilities:** Karhk learned a few thieving tricks from a human captive: OL 60%, F/RT 45%.

**Krakkat the Observant, lich M18:** AC -4 (ring of protection +4); MV 6; HD 18; hp 72; THAC0 9; #AT 1 (freezing touch); Dmg 1d10; SA spells, touch causes saving throw vs. paralysis (permanent duration); SD spells, hit only by +1 or better weapons or monsters with 6+ HD, cannot be mind-read on this demiplane, *fear* aura causes anyone with 5 HD or less to flee for 5d4 rounds, high Intelligence grants immunity to low-level Illusion/Phantasm spells, immune to *sleep, charm, hold, cold, poison, paralysis, death magic, electricity, enfeeblement, polymorph, insanity, and telepathic psionics*; SW can be turned, vulnerable if phylactery is located; SZ M (6' tall); ML fanatic (17-18); Int supra-genius (20); AL CE; XP 9,000.

**Special Equipment:** staff of power (20 charges), wand of lightning (39 charges).

**Wizard Spells Memorized (5/5/5/5/5/3/3/2/1):** 1st—*hold portal, identify* (x4); 2nd—*blur, darkness 15' radius, ESP, mirror image, stinking cloud*; 3rd—*blink, dispel magic, hold person* (x2), *hold undead*; 4th—*dimension door, enervation, ice storm, improved invisibility, polymorph other*; 5th—*animate dead, summon shadow* (x2), *telekinesis, wall of force*; 6th—*death spell, disintegrate, geas*; 7th—*forcecage, reverse gravity, spell turning*; 8th—*mass charm, power word blind*; 9th—*succor* (to hidden lair in city of Cavitus).

**Notes:** Krakkat is patient, for a lich, and seems to enjoy working with low-level necromancers. He created the elite skeletons that populate Cavitus. He ignores live humans otherwise, unless attacked. He has the permanent abilities to *read magic* and *detect magic*.

**Kyrie, female vampire M2:** AC 1; MV 12, fly 18 (C) as bat, fly 9 (E) as gas; HD 8+3; hp 50; THAC0 11 (Str bonus); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4 (Str bonus); SA energy drain (two levels), gaze can *charm* (-2 penalty to saving throw), *shapechange* to bat or wolf, *spider climb* at will, slain victims turn into vampires; SD +1 or better weapon to hit, *regenerate* 3 hp/round, immune to *charm, sleep, hold, fear, poison, paralyzation, death magic, and telepathic psionics*, cold and electricity inflict half damage, can assume gaseous form at will; SW can be turned, vulnerable to sunlight, wooden stakes, and running water, holy water inflicts 1d6+1 hp per vial; SZ M (5'8" tall); ML elite (13); Int high (14); AL CE; XP 11,000.

**Wizard Spells Memorized (2):** 1st—*magic missile, shocking grasp*.

**Lann, Great Thought of Vecna, male human W4/P8 of Vecna:** AC 6 (Dex bonus, ring of protection +3); MV 12; hp 52; THAC0 16 (13 Str bonus, Deva's Bane: dagger +2, +4 vs. good-aligned creatures) or 11 (as before, but vs. good beings); #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+3 or 1d4+5 (Deva's Bane, Str bonus); SA spells, com-

mand undead; SD spells; SZ M (5'6" tall); ML champion (16); Str 18, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 16; AL LE; XP 3,000.

**Special Equipment:** brooch of shielding.

**Cleric Spells Memorized (5/5/4/3):** 1st—*command, cure light wounds* (x2), *light* (x2); 2nd—*charm person or mammal* (x2), *hold person* (x2), *flame blade*; 3rd—*dispel magic* (x2), *prayer, protection from fire*; 4th—*cause serious wounds, poison* (x2)

**Wizard Spells Memorized (3/2):** 1st—*comprehend languages, magic missile* (x2); 2nd—*Melf's acid arrow, invisibility*.

**Notes:** This extraordinary cleric is fiercely devoted to Vecna. Lann is by nature a cautious commander and seeks to avoid confrontation until he can muster sufficient forces to make a decent battle against his foes. At that point, he fights to the death.

**Lanner Hvist, male human F12:** AC 3 (chainmail, shield, ring of protection +1); MV 9 (slowed by armor); hp 120; THAC0 9; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d8 (longsword); SZ M (6' tall); ML elite (14); Str 14, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 10; AL NE; XP 2,000.

**Special Equipment:** ring of fire resistance, ring of the ram.

**Lord Haroln, the Arm of Vecna, male vampire W3/P10 of Vecna:** as per vampire, except: AC -2 (ring of protection +3); hp 66; SA spells; SD spells, XP 13,000.

**Special Equipment:** wand of lightning (16 charges).

**Cleric Spells Memorized (6/6/4/4/2):** 1st—*cause fear, command, curse, detect magic, invisibility to undead, protection from good*; 2nd—*hold person* (x2), *flame blade, heat metal, silence 15' radius, withdraw*; 3rd—*animate dead, cause blindness or deafness, dispel magic, flame walk*; 4th—*cloak of fear, free action, protection from good 10' radius, tongues*; 5th—*insect plague, slay living*.

**Wizard Spells Memorized (2/1):** 1st—*magic missile, shield*; 2nd—*web*.

**Notes:** One of the most powerful among Cavitus's undead lords is Lord Haroln, a vampire-cleric of Vecna. In recent months, he has become deeply entrenched within the power structure of the Citadel; he was awarded the title of the Arm of Vecna, the commander of the Fingers. Although he enjoys his position of power, Haroln worries that other lords will undermine his authority among the undead through hidden maneuverings. Having to bother with legal proceedings involving live people distracts him from uncovering the damaging plots of his peers. If there's anyone among the lords who is completely frustrated with both the living and the undead, it's Haroln.

**Nine, lich M20:** AC -2 (cloak of displacement); MV 6; HD 20; hp 65; THAC0 11; #AT 1 (freezing touch or staff of striking); Dmg 1d10 or 1d6+3; SA spells, touch causes saving throw vs. paralysis (permanent duration); SD spells, hit only by +1 or better weapons or monsters with 6+ HD, cannot be mind-read on this demiplane, *fear* aura causes anyone with 5 HD or less to flee for 5d4 rounds, high Intelligence grants immunity to low-level illusion/phantasm spells, immune to *sleep, charm, hold, cold, poison, paralysis, death magic, electricity, enfeeblement, polymorph, insanity, and telepathic psionics*; SW can be turned, vulnerable if phylactery is located; SZ M (6' tall); ML fanatic (18); Int supra-genius (20); AL LE; XP 11,000.

**Special Equipment:** eyes of the basilisk.

**Wizard Spells Memorized (5/5/5/5/5/4/3/3/2):** 1st—*charm person, hold portal, magic missile* (x3); 2nd—*detect invisibility, Melf's acid arrow* (x3), *web*; 3rd—*haste, hold person, lightning bolt, slow, writhform*; 4th—*charm monster, ice storm* (x2), *phantasmal killer, stoneskin*; 5th—*animate dead* (x2), *chaos* (x2), *telekinesis*; 6th—*anti-magic shell, chain lightning* (x2) *disintegrate*; 7th—*delayed blast fireball, limited wish* (x2); 8th—*maze, prismatic wall, symbol*; 9th—*imprisonment, time stop*.

**Notes:** This strange lich, named Nine (like the number) seems to enjoy watching humans dance, though it kills poor or mediocre performers. Nine is entirely white in color (robes, wrappings, and bones). Nine wears a white gauze veil over its skull face, hiding the eyes of the basilisk it wears (see eyes of petrification in the DMG). If Nine removes the veil, the magic eyes become effective out to 50 feet (victims must make a successful save vs. petrification to avoid being turned to stone). Nine's original sex is unknown. It is currently a general of the undead in the Burning Peaks conflict.

**Sir Loran of Trollpyre Keep, death knight:** AC 0; MV 12; HD 9; hp 63; THAC0 11 (6 with *two-handed sword* +4, +6 vs. *amphibious creatures*, Str bonus); #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+10 or 1d8+12 (*two-handed sword* +4, +6 vs. *amphibious creatures*, Str bonus); SA 18/00 Strength, *power word blind*, *power word kill*, or *power word stun* once per day, *symbol of fear* or *symbol of pain* once per day, 20-HD *fireball* once per day; SD cannot be mind-read on this demiplane, constantly radiates *fear* 5 in a 5-foot radius; can cast *detect magic*, *detect invisible*, and *wall of ice* at will, immune to *charm*, *sleep*, *hold*, *fear*, *cold*, *poison*, *paralysis*, *death magic*, and telepathic psionics, can cast *dispel magic* twice per day, cannot be turned; MR 75% (if 11% or less is rolled, the spell is reflected back on its caster); SZ M (6'6" tall); ML fanatic (18); Int genius (17); AL CE; XP 7,000.

*Notes:* Sir Loran was the final master of Trollpyre Keep, a minor estate bordering the Vast Swamp on Oerth. Unlike his noble ancestors in Sunndi, he was an evil and twisted man who hid his true nature behind a veneer of stoicism and honor. He took a beautiful dancer as his wife, but when she bore him a daughter instead of a son, he slew them and their midwife moments after the birth with Trollpyre's Defender, his magic sword. The dancer's mother, a priestess, cursed Sir Loran to die painfully in battle, then rise as an undead, with the spirits of his slain family haunting him for eternity. Undeath denied him his deepest wish, to be known as the founder of a great house of warriors; now he has no descendants at all.

Sir Loran was drawn into the misty Demiplane of Dread after luring a wandering troupe of performers to Trollpyre Keep, then slowly torturing them to death. He eventually found his way to Cavitius, where he entered the service of Vecna. Unfortunately for Loran, the spirits of his wife and child are also present here in Vecna's palace, torturing him at every opportunity with the knowledge that his family line died out forever with him.

**Xaven, male vampire M3:** AC 1; MV 12, fly 18 (C) as bat, fly 9 (E) as gas; HD 8+3; hp 50; THAC0 11 (Str bonus); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4 (Str bonus); SA energy drain (two levels), gaze can *charm* (-2 penalty to saving throw), *shapechange* to bat or wolf, *spider climb* at will, slain victims turn into vampires; SD +1 or better weapon to hit, *regenerate* 3 hp/round, immune to *charm*, *sleep*, *hold*, *fear*, *poison*, *paralyzation*, *death magic*, and telepathic psionics, cold and electricity inflict half damage, can assume gaseous form at will; SW can be turned, vulnerable to sunlight, wooden stakes, and running water, holy water inflicts 1d6+1 hp per vial; SZ M (6'2" tall); ML champion (16); Int exceptional (16); AL CE; XP 11,000.

*Wizard Spells Memorized* (2/1): 1st—*magic missile*, *shield*; 2nd—*Melf's acid arrow*.

## Greater Villains

### Iuz the Old One

Patron of Wickedness

Demigod (Cambion), Chaotic Evil

|                  |   |     |    |
|------------------|---|-----|----|
| Armor Class      | -8  | Str | 21 |
| Movement         | 12  | Dex | 18 |
| Level/Hit Dice   | 36  | Con | 18 |
| Hit Points       | 165   | Int | 18 |
| THAC0            | 2   | Wis | 20 |
| No. of Attacks   | 2   | Cha | 18 |
| Damage/Attack    | 1d10+12   |     |    |
| Special Attacks  | Multitasking, others which are not relevant to this adventure     |     |    |
| Special Defenses | +1 weapons or better to hit, paralysis, immortality, regeneration |     |    |
| Magic Resistance | 45%   |     |    |
| Thief Abilities: | PP 95, OL 100, F/RT 95, MS 110, HS 115, DN 95, CW 95, RL 105      |     |    |

Iuz's Portfolio: Oppression, deceit, pain

Iuz cannot *plane shift* because of the influence of the dark powers on the Demiplane of Dread. He can perform any two actions per round without suffering penalties.

### Vecna the Maimed God

Lord of Cavitius

Demigod (Lich), Lawful Evil

|                    |   |     |    |
|--------------------|---|-----|----|
| Armor Class        | -10   | Str | 25 |
| Movement           | 12  | Dex | 20 |
| Level/Hit Dice     | 30  | Con | 23 |
| Hit Points         | 150   | Int | 25 |
| THAC0              | 2   | Wis | 25 |
| No. of Attacks     | 2   | Cha | 23 |
| Damage/Attack      | 2d10+14   |     |    |
| Special Attacks    | Paralysis, aura of evil, multi-tasking, spells                    |     |    |
| Special Defenses   | +5 weapons or better to hit, paralysis, immortality, regeneration |     |    |
| Magic Resistance   | See below   |     |    |
| Vecna's Portfolio: | Secrets   |     |    |

The statistics provided reflect the fact that Vecna's powers are being restrained by the mysterious powers that exist within the Demiplane of Dread. He is trapped in a single physical manifestation and cannot take on incorporeal or avatar forms.

Vecna's close relationship with magic makes it very difficult to affect him with spells. He has a natural 70% resistance to all spells cast by mortal creatures, a 40% resistance to spells cast by other demigods, and a 20% resistance to those cast by gods of greater stature. In addition, he is immune to all spells from the schools of Enchantment/Charm, Illusion/Phantasm, and Necromancy, as well as cleric spells from the Charm, Healing, and Chaos spheres. No form-altering magic (such as polymorph spells) can affect him. Vecna has a saving throw of 4 at all times; no act of a mortal can reduce his chances for success.

Vecna cannot *plane shift* until he absorbs Iuz's essence, because of the influence of the dark powers. Once Vecna absorbs Iuz's essence, he immediately gains 100% resistance to spells cast by mortals, while his other resistances double in value. He can also once again *plane shift* at will and assume other avatar forms—and he is free of the dark powers!

## Artifacts of Note

This section describes several artifacts the heroes will encounter in the course of this adventure, items with which long-time AD&D game players will be very familiar. DMs with well-stocked selections of older AD&D material will notice subtle differences between the way the *Eye* and *Hand of Vecna* (and major differences in the way the *Sword of Kas*) are described in this section when compared to the versions in the *Book of Artifacts* (TSR #2138) and other sources. These differences were created so that players could not predict the exact functions of these famous items, and also to provide a single correct source for them.

### The Artifacts of Vecna

The *Eye* and *Hand of Vecna* are the physical remains of the lich-lord Vecna. Although long since elevated to a higher plane, the ancient lich-lord continues to project his will directly into the lives of mortals through these artifacts born of evil. They permit Vecna to circumvent the pact among Oerth's gods that limits their direct intervention in the affairs of mortals.

One great secret of these artifacts is that if they are used by the same person, they grant additional powers. This has only occurred once or twice in all the centuries they have plagued humankind, so very few beings realize this. These additional resonating powers are described later.

As with virtually any artifact, the great power contained within them brings negative effects to mortals who attempt to harness their might. The *Eye* and *Hand* share the same curse, so it is described under the entry for the *Hand* only.

## The Eye of Vecna

The *Eye of Vecna* appears to be a black, uncut gem. It radiates powerful, unidentifiable magic. No indication of what type of magic this is can be discerned by any means.

To be used, the *Eye* must be pushed into the empty eye socket of a humanoid being, living or undead, of any type. It immediately grafts itself in place and starts glowing with a red, sinister light. Once so inserted, the *Eye* cannot be removed through magical means or by anyone but its user, who must gouge it out with his bare hands. (Alternatively, the power of a god can free the wearer.)

As soon as the *Eye* is placed in the user, it begins to assert its influence, possibly causing the user to believe that he or she is actually Vecna, reborn in living form. This curse is described later.

Iuz the Old One acquires the *Eye of Vecna* during this adventure; see Book One for details.

### Powers

The *Eye* possesses several powers. The constant powers reveal themselves when any situation arises in which they would have an effect. The *Eye's* user does not have to command these powers to operate. All powers function at 20th-level effectiveness.

**Constant:** *true seeing* and *foresight* (as per the spells).

**Invoked Abilities:** The following spell-like effects can be cast with but a thought by the wearer of the *Eye*. No verbal or material components are necessary, only the gaze and the will of the user. Thus, all uses of the *Eye* represent only a +1 modifier to initiative, as if they had a casting time of 1.

- *Clairvoyance*, at will.
- *Eyebite*, 3/day.
- *Domination*, 1/week.
- *Vision*, 1/week.

## The Hand of Vecna

The *Hand of Vecna* appears to be a dried, shriveled and blackened left hand, such as could have been caused by having been burned. Its fingernails are clawlike and sharp, and it radiates powerful, unidentifiable magic. No indication of what type of magic this is can be discerned by any means.

To be used, the hand must be placed against the stump of a left arm from which the hand has been severed. It instantly grafts into place and thereafter cannot be removed by any means short of severing the entire arm, or the aid of a god. Once attached, the hand functions normally, although it always remains black and withered. It can be concealed by a glove or gauntlet, of course, but within the talons always tear through the covering, no matter how sturdy it is.

The heroes acquire the *Hand of Vecna* during this adventure.

### Powers

As with the *Eye*, the powers of the *Hand* must be discovered through trial and error. Each use runs the risk of domination. If this happens, the *Hand* reveals its full powers, but the user is now under the control of the artifact (as per its curse). All powers function at 20th-level effectiveness.

**Constant:** The wearer is immune to *magic missiles* and inflicts 2d6 points of damage to plants and plant-based creatures when touching them with the *Hand*. The user's left arm (only) gains a Strength of 19 (+3 bonus to attack rolls, +7 bonus to damage).

**Invoked:** These are spell effects that are activated by gesturing with the *Hand*; no verbal or material components are necessary, only the gesture and the will of the user. Thus, all uses of the *Hand* present only a +1 modifier to initiative, as if they each had a casting time of 1.

- Point index finger: *light*, at will.
- Point two fingers: *hypnotic pattern*, 3/day.
- Point three fingers: *color spray*, 5/day.
- Point four fingers: *cone of cold*, 3/day.
- Point five fingers: *disintegrate*, 1/day.
- Touch with one finger: *cause light wounds*, at will.

- Touch with two fingers: *cause serious wounds*, 5/day.
- Touch with three fingers: *remove fear*, at will.
- Touch with four fingers: *animate dead* (touch only), 3/day.
- Touch with whole hand: instant death, no possible saving throw (to anyone but the user), at will.
- Fist: extinguishes all fire, normal and magical, at will, in a 15' radius.
- Palm out: *time stop*, 1/day.
- Thumb down: *darkness*, 15' radius, at will.
- Snap fingers: *monster summoning IV*, 3/day (summons 1d3 ghosts in Cavitius, but they will obey Vecna over the summoner!).
- Wiggle fingers: *audible glamer*, 5/day.
- Wave hand: *animate object*, 3/day.

### Resonating Powers of the Eye and Hand of Vecna

When the same person has both the *Eye* and the *Hand* in place, the following powers are gained. They all function at 20th-level effectiveness.

**Constant:** *Detect magic*, *comprehend languages*, *nondetection*, *protection from good*, and 70% magic resistance.

**Invoked:** These are spell-like effects activated with but a thought by the user; no verbal, somatic, or material components are needed. Thus, no initiative modifiers exist when activating these powers.

- *ESP*, at will.
- *Control temperature*, 10' radius (cold only), 3/day.

### Curse of the Eye and Hand of Vecna

Users of the *Eye* and *Hand of Vecna* open themselves to domination both by the artifacts and by the evil demigod himself. The domination shines through in personality changes in the user, so the DM and the player of the character must cooperate to bring the negative effects of the artifacts into play in the campaign. Initially, however, the dangers associated with using the items are represented by secret saving throws made by the DM on the user's behalf. As soon as the described effects take place, the player of the character should be notified so that he or she can play the character accordingly.

As soon as the *Eye* is placed in the empty socket of its would-be user, the DM should roll a saving throw vs. spell for the user with a -1 penalty. If the saving throw fails, the *Eye* begins to assert its influence over the character, whose alignment shifts to chaotic.

As soon as the *Hand* is placed on the stump of the would-be user, the DM should roll a saving throw vs. spell for the user with a -1 penalty. If the saving throw fails, the *Hand* begins to assert its influence over the character, whose alignment shifts to evil.

Each time one of the invoked powers of either artifact is used, the DM must roll a successful saving throw on the character's behalf (with a -2 penalty, or a -6 penalty if both artifacts are used by the same being) to resist domination. Even elves and half-elves are subject to this attack, and no saving throw bonuses of any sort apply.

If the domination is successful, the artifact or artifacts assume control of the user. The artifacts are intensely evil, and they do all they can to further the cause of destruction, wickedness, and self-aggrandizement, especially at the expense of others. The character is unlikely to be aware he or she is being dominated by the artifacts. Most likely, the user will feel that he or she has finally come to understand how to properly get ahead in the world, or finally discovered natural or true goals to follow in life.

While dominated by the artifacts, the character increasingly takes on the habits, attitudes, and even mannerisms of the ancient lich Vecna. The user begins to engage in intense scholarly research—and shows a violent temper if anyone disagrees with a theory he or she posits. The user avoids sunlight (although it has no adverse effect), devises and sets into motion the most arcane cruelties in the name of magical investigation, and actively seeks out and destroys any potential threat or competition to the user's own power. The character also becomes obsessed with locating the real Vecna; the *Eye* and *Hand* can sense their master still exists and wish to rejoin him. The *Eye*



and *Hand* will force a dominated character to side with Vecna if and when a confrontation against the demigod occurs.

Once every two game days, the player should roll a Wisdom check for the hero. If the check is successful, the hero breaks free of the artifacts' domination and knows that he or she was controlled by them. However, the mental exertion causes the hero's effective Wisdom score to be reduced by 2 each time the hero breaks free. Once the hero's effective Wisdom score reaches 0, the hero irrevocably believes that he or she is the true Vecna. Should this occur, the hero eagerly assists in the destruction of the true Vecna, believing that the latter is a disrespectful impostor.

#### **Suggested Means of Destruction of the Eye and Hand of Vecna:**

- Vecna must be permanently and irrevocably destroyed.
- Both artifacts must be shattered on the Golden Forge at the Heart of the Sun.
- The *Eye* and *Hand* must be willingly accepted and worn by the purest person in the distant land of Blackmoor, in the northern Flanaess of Oerth.

## The *Sword of Kas*

The *Sword of Kas* is a short sword with an unusually long hilt. The blade is just over 2 feet long, while the hilt adds another 2 feet to the overall length. It can be wielded one or two-handed.

The sword's blade is in the flame or water style, its edge blade rippled with iridescent undulations. A vein of magically hardened gold forms the center spine. The hilt is wrapped in red leather flecked with gold. The guards are of unicorn horn, and the basket is a leering, bearded face from pommel to guard. (When first obtained by the party, the *Sword* is wrapped in blessed cloth and contained in a mahogany case, so they will not be able to see its appearance immediately.) The *Sword* radiates magic, although the school of magic involved changes each time it is checked. It does not radiate good or evil, although the *Sword* is intelligent and quite evil. Nonetheless, the *Sword* is completely focused on the final destruction of Vecna.

The *Sword of Kas* was created by Vecna at the height of his power in unlife. Seeing that his empire was growing too vast to manage alone, he chose one of his faithful, Kas, to serve as his right hand. The *Sword* was created to be Kas's symbol of office, but Vecna made it too well. Part of the lich-lord's own consciousness had entered the weapon—the lich's ambition to dominate the world. The *Sword* whispered in Kas's dreams, and eventually caused the faithful lieutenant to turn on his master. The ensuing battle claimed the mortal existence of both men.

Over the many centuries since the *Sword of Kas* was first created, several powerful magical swords have been mistaken for it, and some swords were created as near-exact replicas of the original. (The sword in *Vecna Lives!* was one of the latter, though Kas found it perfectly suitable for use in escaping Citadel Cavi-tius.)

The true *Sword of Kas* was acquired by the Cult of Vecna before the start of this adventure. It now rests in a library and magic arsenal (area 70) in Vecna's palace, where Vecna's servants placed it to keep it out of the hands of those who would harm their master.

### **Powers**

The *Sword of Kas* has both constant and invoked abilities. When it is unwrapped from the cloth that hides it and is held by a suitable wielder (any character who is of a warrior class, or who otherwise can be proficient with swords), it reveals two of its powers telepathically to the person holding it. This knowledge does not come without a price, however (the curse). The *Sword* does not care about the alignment of the wielder.

**Constant:** This blade acts as a +6 *defender* (as per the sword +4 *defender*, described in the *DMG*), grants *foresight*, and defiles all holy water within a 30-foot radius. In addition, the *Sword* grants complete immunity to *fear*, *charm*, *hold*, and *magic missile* spells.

**Invoked:** The *Sword* grants *shield*, three times per day, and causes paralyzation by touch (-4 penalty to the victim's saving throw) three times day. Both of these spell-like effects require

only that the wielder hold the *Sword* and wish the effects into being. There is no initiative modifier placed on their activation.

### **Resonating Powers of the *Sword of Kas***

Unknown to all but Vecna himself (as he is the Lord of Secrets and Hidden Things), the *Sword of Kas* has a suite of resonant powers. These powers activate only when the *Sword* is wielded by a being who has grafted the *Eye* or *Hand* of Vecna (or both) onto his body and is in melee combat with Vecna himself. These powers are in addition to all those gained from the *Eye* or *Hand*. However, just as the *Sword* is unaware that its other powers cease to function in the proximity of Vecna (see later), it does not know that it has these additional powers if used by a person possessing either the *Eye* or *Hand* of Vecna.

**Constant:** The *Sword* acts as a *sword* +6, *defender* and grants complete immunity to all *fear* and paralyzation attacks.

**Invoked:** The wielder gains fire giant Strength (+4 bonus to attack rolls, +10 bonus to damage) for 3 combat rounds, three times per day. This power is invoked by the *Sword* itself, if the wielder ever faces Vecna or an opponent the *Sword* judges to be equally deadly.

### **Curse of the *Sword of Kas***

When a suitable wielder (a character whose class is in the warrior group) first picks up the *Sword*, he suffers 2d10 points of damage. If the would-be wielder is not slain, the *Sword* telepathically informs the wearer that it believes he is a fit wielder for it, then reveals all of its constant powers to the user. It promises to aid the wielder in whatever quests he or she chooses to undertake. Until the character dies or voluntarily gives the *Sword* to another potential wielder, the *Sword* states that it considers itself and the character a team, both of them devoted to the same goals.

In truth, while the *Sword* keeps its promises, it also subtly influences the thoughts of the wielder to make the wielder consider Vecna's existence a personal threat. The DM can accomplish this by dropping hints to the player about Vecna, perhaps even providing the player with notes about dreams the character has featuring visions of a lich slaying everyone the hero has ever cared about. Should the hero ever become enraged against Vecna, the *Sword* works to turn that rage into hatred and encourages the character to seek out Vecna and slay him before it is too late.

Unfortunately for its possessor, the *Sword* cannot use any of its normal powers, constant or invoked, within 30 feet of Vecna or the *Eye* and *Hand*. Even though it has led many brave warriors against the Whispered One (only to see each of them destroyed), the *Sword* does not realize that its powers cease to work. If its wielder tries to back out of the final confrontation with Vecna, the *Sword* attempts to dominate the wielder and force the final confrontation. The *Sword* has an Intelligence of 19 and an Ego of 18, but it does not reveal this to the wielder or attempt domination until a confrontation with Vecna is at hand; any other developments are too petty for it to consider.

As noted earlier, the *Sword* does possess resonant powers of which it is unaware, should the wielder also have an artifact of Vecna. No one has managed this prior to this adventure, so Vecna has never been seriously threatened by the *Sword*—until now.

#### **Suggested Means of Destruction of the *Sword of Kas*:**

- The *Sword of Kas* must be cast over the Waterfall of the Moon to shatter on the rocks below.
- The *Sword* must be hammered into a plowshare by the Mace of St. Cuthbert, another artifact of terrific power.
- All memory of Kas must be wiped from Oerth, the world on which he and Vecna were born, so that there is no evidence or knowledge he ever existed.

# Advanced Dungeons & Dragons®

Adventure

## DIE VECNA DIE!

*Bruce R. Cordell and Steve Miller*

### The End of the World Is at Hand

A hideous death cult has seized control of an ancient artifact-monument known as Tovag Baragu. The power behind the cult is the Old One himself, Iuz the Evil, demonic master of an empire. He's on an all-or-nothing quest for supremacy over the world—and the heavens beyond.

To stop him, heroes must face horrors never dreamed of, journeying to a shadowed city where Death rules and the living cower. Here, Iuz will achieve his mad dream by destroying the imprisoned master of that alien citadel—Vecna, the mightiest lich, an immortal demigod.

Two items exist with the power to stop Iuz—the *Eye* and the *Hand of Vecna*—but using them carries fantastic risks. Not even the gods know what will be unleashed when these items are fully activated.

*Die Vecna Die!* takes the heroes from the GREYHAWK® campaign to the demiplane of RAVENLOFT® and then to the PLANESCAPE® city of Sigil. However, none of the material from those settings is required for play.

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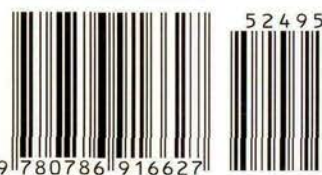


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