

Setting: Taladas, Age of Worms adaptation, start year 352 AC.

Map Placement: Replace Naissus with Diamond Lake (League Map, village in New Styrlia province, amidst Theos hills and east of Kert River), Magepoint is located on the other side of the Luminari lighthouse island. Manzorian is laying the foundation for the first Tower of High Sorcery in these lands. Alhaster is on the western coast of Northern Hosk, at the far end of a north-facing peninsula. The Rift is northeast in the vast wilderness of the lower panak. Kuluth-Mar can be placed anywhere in Neron's jungles.

Background:

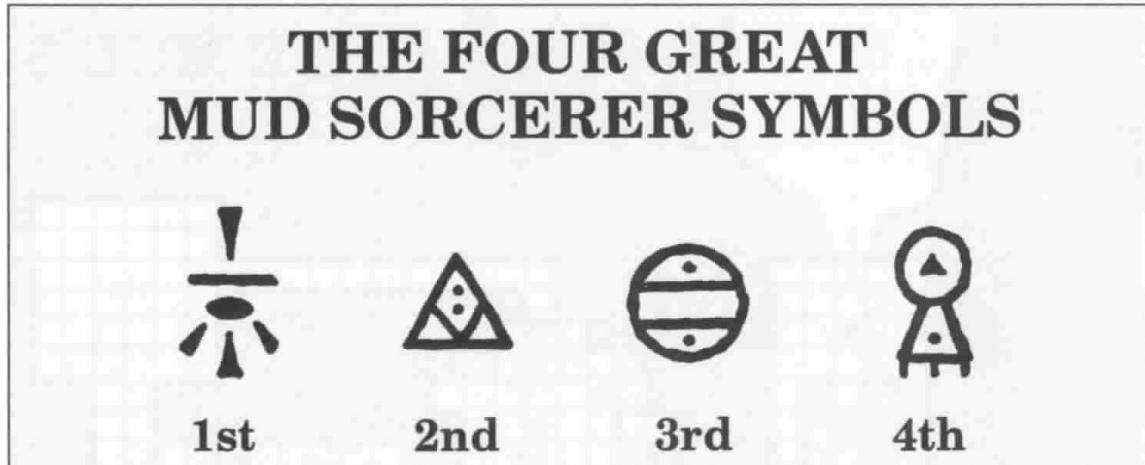
2000 years ago: Kyuss was a mortal priest of Chemosh who, after being banished from the Aurim Empire for experiments on the dead in the mortuary city of Unaagh, took his hundreds of followers into the jungles of modern day Neron. There, he found the Kaia Jezulein, a cult of exiles from Aurim led by elemental wizards that drew their inspiration from the writings of Jezule the Nebbarite, a mad wizard who toyed with abandoning the mortal shell and becoming one with the elements. With tendencies to alter their forms with water and earth, the Kaia Jezulein were also known as "mud sorcerers."

Kyuss delved into the magical arts of transformation, seeking an immortal state, and gained more followers, eventually founding the jungle city of Kuluth-Mar and finding metal plates describing fragments of an apocalypse myth from a culture of six-armed spellweavers. As his followers found more plates, Kyuss became convinced he would be the herald of such Age, ascending to godhood as the prophecies described. One spell-weaver of that ancient civilization remained, an ancient lich named Mak'ar, and it aided Kyuss with in his quest for immortality by providing a single green worm from a distant reality that would become his legacy. The powers of Kyuss grew immense as he created hordes of new undead, all bound to him. Sacrifices of magic and life were made to appease Chemosh, god of undeath. With the urgings of Mak'ar, Kyuss unearthed a basalt monolith from the ruins of one ancient city and hearkened to its thrum of power and whispers of pathways to immortality. Soon, he turned his powers and followers upon the Kaia Jezulein, seizing and sacrificing their power and artifacts to his ascension. In one final move, he sacrificed all his followers before the monolith in a ritual designed to make him the herald of the Age of Worms. However, the ritual failed (Chemosh had a hand as to ascend to godhood Kyuss must depose a god), and Kyuss was trapped in the monolith. Mak'ar, bound to Kyuss, remained tied to the Spire in which Kyuss ruled.

Not all the Kaia Jezulein were destroyed. A group of the most powerful routinely engaged in oracular magic and foresaw their destruction. To escape this fate, the most powerful began constructing elaborate crypts in lands far away, putting themselves and their artifacts in stasis and leaving loyal followers with magical compulsion to restore them when the danger passed using Scrolls of Liberation to bypass deadly wards. Those who scattered their crypts to faraway lands escaped, though over time some tombs have been unearthed, despoiled, or erased by the Cataclysm. However, many followers were slain or fled before Kyuss's sacrifices, and the Scrolls of Liberation were lost over time. Some followers resisted the compulsions; others went to their deaths.

One of the Jezulein's most powerful, Tzolo, divined tools that would be needed to combat the enemy that would destroy them. However, she discovered she would not be able to assemble all the artifacts seen in her vision in time. She secreted away what items she could and crafted her tomb for the day when she would return and be ready if the destructor remained. She scattered a select few items with her most trusted apprentice, Zosiel, a rarer manipulator of air, and kept records on those she was not able to retrieve. Zosiel was given a talisman of the sphere (Tzolo let him use it once) and a circlet that had lost much power since its days of use battling forces of chaos (Tzolo had not the time to discover how it could be repowered). Zosiel unwittingly would put the circlet on before placing himself into stasis; being a powerful artifact it absorbed his life force as he lay in repose and will fully awaken with the death of Dragotha as it

senses a source of ultimate chaos to fight (Kyuss). Zosiel was obsessed with the war between Law and Chaos, and his tomb reflects many aspects of such. The below symbols represent relative power of the entombed (Zosiel has 1st symbol, showing his apprentice status). 1st: Kaia, 2nd: Jezulein, 3rd: Braeu, 4th: Majorum. Kaia is the convergence of earth and water, the second is earth Dominant, the third is Water Dominant, and the fourth is the Harmony of Earth and Water.



1600 years ago: Even trapped, Kyuss had the power of a demi-god within the monolith. When the mighty red dragon Dragotha perched atop the monolith seeking powers hinted by his tempestuous consort Erestem that originated in this region, he came into contact with Kyuss. Drawn to the promise of power and immortality, Dragotha carried the monolith to a remote rift canyon and completed rituals to liberate Kyuss. Dragotha boasted his glory to Erestem but offended her with his hubris by seeking powers she had not commanded him to seek and was slain. Kyuss raised Dragotha as his herald and turned his eyes upon the world.

1500 years ago: Kyuss raised armies of his creations, led by Dragotha, but mortals resisted. A powerful group of druids known as the Order of the Storm forced Dragotha from the battle by taking his phylactery but suffered catastrophic losses. In the battle, Dragotha slew the druid's powerful ally, the silver dragon Lashonna, but when he abandoned the field with the threat against his phylactery, Kyuss was defeated and banished back to his monolith.

Later, Dragotha would raise Lashonna into a vampiric being and exposed to Kyuss's taint over centuries, she became a loyal follower (who has never forgotten Dragotha and seeks to usurp his position to be the bride of Kyuss).

The survivors of Kyuss's forces hunted down the Order over the next several hundred years, eradicating them. Facing annihilation, the Order sacrificed themselves and preserved their knowledge magically while trapping Dragotha's phylactery.

1000 years ago: Unable to resist his master's call, Dragotha set about creating a network of agents to bring the prophecies into form and summon his master. Meanwhile, Lashonna founded the Ebon Triad in Alhaster using heretics from a trio of faiths. Letting Kyuss give the heretics powers to convince them their path was sanctioned, she authored the *Way of the Ebon Triad* to serve as holy doctrine and set the Cult loose to spread the word.

The Ebon Triad seeks to unify the gods Morgion (disease), Sargonnas/Sargas (vengeance), and Chemosh (death) into an Overgod, led by apocalyptic scrolls detailing the unification, with the entity Kyuss as its herald. The Ebon Triad sees the worms of Kyuss as signals their plans are working and has set about to do their bit to create the new Age.

352 years ago: The Cataclysm sets plans back; the Ebon Triad loses its connection to Kyuss and can no longer cast spells.

330 years ago: Divine power inexplicably returns to the Ebon Triad followers, only reinforcing their fanaticism to the cause. They recruit from those whose faiths are shattered by the Cataclysm. (Unknown to all parties, the trapped entropic overgod Chaos gains enough influence following the Cataclysm to provide power to the Ebon Triad to raise a god and challenge the gods who imprisoned Chaos. For purposes of this campaign, Chaos is a non-factor.)

60 years ago: Explorer Ulavant from Kristophan enters Diamond Lake bragging about a tomb and the artifacts he would plunder. Like many bravos, the townfolk either adored or ignored him. Ulavant used a map from Cicaeda's predecessor but relied on memory to find his way. He never returned - another victim of the Whispering Cairn. The map he requested has lain buried in the cartographer's office, long forgotten.

30 years ago: In Diamond Lake, the last line of the Land family was killed when Alastor Land was drawn to the Whispering Cairn. Descended from a lineage of Jezulein followers who lost their way and resettled, his line has intermittently been compelled to seek out the lost tombs (and restore their fallen sorcerers). The compulsion led the Land family to settle in this area, and it manifested in Alastor. He didn't know why he was drawn or why certain traps did not claim him, but without the *Scrolls of Liberation* he was slain. His ghost cannot leave between a combination of guilt and unfulfilled task. Once his bones are laid to rest and Zosiel's fate revealed, he will be free. (Alastor will return with understanding of his lineage, and he will be able to reveal more to the party on a much later date in a much later adventure.)

2 years ago: The Faceless One comes to Diamond Lake upon rumor of green worms in the hills, masquerading as a leader of a sect of the Ebon Triad. He uses the *Nethertome of Trask* to find an old laboratory used by Chemosh priests before the Cataclysm to perform experiments. He expands his forces by recruiting Thedrick and followers of the Morgian sect come from the Underdark.

Present day: the party members are looking for a better life than Diamond Lake's mines and taverns. Meanwhile, the prophecy is near, only two steps away...

Changes to NPCs:

Allustan: walks with a limp, legacy of his "Test of High Sorcery." He is a scholar – no adventurer – and committed to observing talent for the Gift for Manzorian's efforts to create a Tower of High Sorcery on Taladas.

Captain Trask-iskis. Has earned honorable title for his service.

League Law: Complaints filed with a Praetor, who rules on the Fitness of the case, and if having merit, sees if it can be resolved. If not, four Conditions of Combat are arranged: victory, weapons, armor, champions. Few situations allow combat to the death. Weapons and armor are arranged based on the nature of the case. Champions may fight by proxy, and it is a thriving business to be a champion.

EXTRAS

Dragon #333, 62-64. The Ruined Mine office. Makes an excellent base of operations if it could be fixed up.

Dragon #334, 66-68. Taggins, other items unique to area.

Dragon #336, 66-69. A few entertainment locales in Kristophan. The Blueberry Theatre in old city, runs satire of political figures; the Checkered Circle, an underground fight-joint where someone could get noticed; Honest Axebeard's House of Dice, gambling hall famous for "Spellbones" (5d6 game, rules provided); Josiel's Bathhouse, place to relax and restore.

Dragon #337, 78-80. City bazaar, NPCs and places to shop. 82-84, magic face paints.

Dragon #338, 70-73. Worm hunter prestige class (consumes Kyuss worms for powers). Unlock at 8th level. Smite ability: do 2 points of STR dmg to undead if crit or sneak attack.

Dragon #339, 70-74, Fountain of Folly. Manzorion owns this, drink and gain fortune and folly. Choice of cup allows one to control which they get (random one, choose other).

Dragon #340, 64-66. Alhaster spots to get fancied up for the party and earn style points.

Dragon #343, p76. Worm spells. Print for the following modules:

- #128 Kyuss cleric worm spells.
- #130, area 5 gets vestige worms, Harbringer gets spells.
- #133, "familiar opponent" has vestige worms in it
- #134, #135, most kyuss creatures should have spells

Campaign Layout:

1st-3rd. Whispering Cairn. Hook: party seeking better life, a lead is obtained on a mythical Mud Sorcerer tomb that has been missed. Below, the bones of a dead boy must be laid to rest (the boy is the ghost from the dreams) before proceeding further, and this takes them into the hands of the necromancer Filge, who has recently been hired by Smerk to research the green worm Smerk brought from Ragnolin Dourstone's mine while supplying him (curious what's going on).

- At the mine entrance is the mud sorcerer symbol 1st (convergence of earth and water)
- Replace Wind Duke with Mud Sorcerers:
- #2: Dead language Taalese, personal glyph of Zosiel. Nadroc crafted the tomb, Zosiel is buried within.
 - Knowledge Sidebar, DC 10, close to Terran symbols
 - Taalese, dead language offshoot of Terran
 - Taalese was used by Mud Sorcerers, a legendary deceased empire of elemental spellcasters that entombed themselves. Any real knowledge may have been lost in the Cataclysm.
- #13. Elemental was compelled to serve at whim of Nadroc, who built tomb to house sorcerer Zosiel until he could be awoken.
 - DM note: Zosiel was an avid scholar of the Rod of Seven Parts and privy as apprentice to Tzolo to her insight. Zosiel was entrusted with some of the items seen in Tzolo's visions.
- #24. Replace A-D with following scenes:
 - A. A tall hairless man wearing a simple cerulean robe stands on a dais below a tall, handsome woman with white hair bound into five braids. She is pointing at a wall where a great city is depicted, made out of tiny chips of colored slate. As the steam fills the area, out of the city arises a great black monolith, and to it are bound dozens of hairless men and long-haired women, their blood leaking down the massive structure.
 - B. An army of living whirlwinds and small humanoids of earth and stone are excavating into the ground. Others stand by holding treasures. The same hairless man is handing scrolls to bowed followers. As the steam plays around the image, the followers disperse in all different directions.
 - C. The hairless man kneels as the white-haired woman is bestowing upon him a circlet and a small loop held on a chain, like a necklace. The steam swirls and she departs with an army of the elementals excavating the earth around her as she slips below, ancient books in her arms.
 - D. Many hairless men and women of the same race are asleep on slabs of stone or within elaborate sarcophagi with their images carved in the lids. A hairless man covered in dust raises his hands into the air. The steams swirls and the dust-covered man becomes dust.
- #25. On the crypt, reverse the scene. Zosiel is destroying a horned figure with the sphere. Inside, only dust remains along with the circlet.
 - These are designed to ensure the party has a fair shot at not disposing of these items later in life as they get better equipment in that they seem to have great significance.

3rd-5th: **Three Faces of Evil.** Allustan can confirm the worm may be a dire threat. Rumors recently have been flying about abominations in the hills with strange green worms in or on them, but there's been no credible report. (He doesn't have "studies" as in the path).

The Garrison is attempting to keep quiet that a trio of its soldiers were killed and a fourth fled, crying out about worms. The poor man later turned up dead in an alley, his throat slit. (Ragnolin can't risk exposure at this time and had the man silenced).

Smenk has been providing illicit goods to Ragnolin at great profit but wants to know why. He sniffed out that Ragnolin was making way too many shipments to the in-town mine and sent a spy in (his "right hand man" Mestal). Later, he was found and killed, though he retrieved a worm for Smenk. Smenk sent for Filge to give him a leg up on the competition. It doesn't take long for him to uncover what happened with Filge, and he figures two birds with one stone: get the party to explore the mine. If there's a threat, they'll clear it or die trying, and he might use either to his advantage to try and take over the mines.

If Smenk cuts a deal, he wants the party to remove all evidence of his shipping goods.

- Hextor = Sargonnas, symbol red condor
- Erythnul = Morgion, symbol hood with two red eyes
- Vecna = Chemosh, symbol yellow skull
- Modify Theldrick and provide for any religious character: *'Despite the different trappings, you recognize the man, from one of the portraits in your chapel. This is Father Theldrick, who you've lit a candle, and said a prayer for, every day of your stay in Diamond Lake. He was believed dead, fallen in battle with goblins in the Cairn Hills...'*. He is a fallen priest of Qu'an who turned to Sargas for vengeance when the garrison did not reinforce his position. He seeks to pay back the town.
- The Disir have arrived with the grimlocks. Replace as follows:

The disir are a race of deep-dwelling subterranean creatures of disgusting appearance. They stand about six to seven feet tall, although they are normally hunched over to a lesser height. Parts of their bodies are covered with a natural armor, while other areas show exposed rubbery flesh. Their skin tone is a pasty green-white. Their pores exude a thick coating of slimy gel. This is normally polluted with dirt, debris, and bits of dead flesh that seem to constantly slough off them. An aura of stench and decay hangs around them.

Disir, LE medium aberration, CR 3. Init +1, Senses: Darkvision 60', Per +6; **HP**: 35 (5d8+10), Mv 30', burrow 10', AC 17 (+1 Dex, +6 natural), Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +4. **Attack**: 2 claws +5 (1d6+2+poison), bite +5 (1d8+2+poison). Poison DC 14, 1d4 Dex/4r, 1 cure. CMB +5, CMD +16. Qualities: daylight sensitivity, Resist Fire 5. Skills: Climb +6, Hide +5. Languages: Dis, Grimlock

#12. 1 Disir, 2 grimlocks (tattooed on foreheads with death cowl of Morgion).

#17. 1 Disir, 2 grimlocks.

#18. 2 Disir.

#19. 2 grimlocks, rest on duty.

#21. 3 grimlocks, 1 disir with maximum hit points (50). Lolth symbol is instead Mislaxa eternal ring, hacked up.

5th to 7th: **Blackwall Keep**. Lead about worm, and Marzena sends word (perhaps to a PC family or lover) about green worms (also sends to Allustan). He wishes to band with the party for this one. When the attack comes, he'll suggest he try to "dimension door" inside and do what he can from there. He's not a combatant. Afterwards, he will volunteer to hasten back to Diamond Lake to get reinforcements.

Upon return to the Keep, run mini-adventure. Give party 5 keep guards and have them investigating the basement (turn off fear ability).

You are the surviving five of the 8 members of first squad; the most experienced phalanx team assigned to the garrison of Blackwall Keep. With the assistance from some civilian adventurers, you have just repelled a deadly attack from a tribe of lizardfolk from the Mist Marsh.

Unfortunately, a lone lizardfolk warrior managed to break its way into the cellars of the keep and its presence threatens your food stores and supplies. Secundo Lucius, the Garrison's second in command, has ordered your squad to enter the cellar area and eliminate the threat"

Hint they can see the shadow of the lizard man, then something grabs it, dragging it back into the basement.

Duncan, Human Peon

Easily angered, your character has a hot temper and is easily provoked. Your character walks with a limp, which is a birth defect your character is very self conscious about.

Init: +1

Senses: Perception +3

AC 16 (+1 Dex, +5 chainmail), touch 11, flat-footed 15

Hp: 10 (1 HD)

Melee: Longsword +3 (1d8+1/19-20)

Ranged: Longbow +2 (1d8/x3)

Possession: Lucky Rabbit's Foot

How he views other characters:

Walton: Bossy although usually right. Pompous in his fancy cloak.

Yerell: Holier than thou attitude. Talks too much.

Hammond: Clumsy and plays with fire... augh.

Santos: Stupid suckup! Is he a foreigner?

Walton, Human Peon First Class

Your character is able to influence people by sheer force of personality. Difficult to Roleplay it takes a lot of effort to be charismatic. Leadership and the ability to engender enthusiasm in others is a must. Your character cannot stand the sight of blood or gore. Joining the Military for a living probably wasn't a good choice.

Init: +1

Senses: Perception +3

AC 16 (+1 Dex, +5 chainmail), touch 11, flat-footed 15

Hp: 10 (1 HD)

Melee: Longsword +3 (1d8+1/19-20)

Ranged: Longbow +2 (1d8/x3)

Possession: Fine Cloak

How he views other characters:

Duncan: Poor chap, bum leg and blames the world for it.

Yerell: I can count on him to volunteer. Very Hororable.

Hammond: A bit clumsy, can I get him to stop starting fires?

Santos: Where is he from?

SECRET INFO (do not disclose to other players): *It was 2 days ago that you were on patrol on the northern fringes of the Mistmarsh when your group encountered a horrible abomination. A walking undead zombie, festering with worms crawling all over its body, attacked your patrol. The group managed to drive the fell creature back into the swamp, but not before it managed to maul yourself and a few fellow soldiers. You've been recovering from the wounds it caused you, but ever since the attack you have been feeling more and more ill as the days pass. When you woke up yesterday you realized that your condition had worsened, but it was quickly put "on the back burner" when the lizard folk of the Mistmarsh attacked the keep. You managed to keep to your post during the attack, but today you are finding it difficult to get out of bed. You have sores all over your body which are slowly oozing puss. Under the circumstances you are doing your best to keep your illness a secret from the rest of the soldiers.*

Yerell, Human Peon

Your character lives by a code of honor, is courteous, generous and valiant. Dreams of one day becoming a Holy Warrior of Qu'an. If one lie will suffice ten are even better. Sometimes your character may lie just for the sake of lying. This does not mean that your character is cruel to others.

Init: +1

Senses: Perception +3

AC 16 (+1 Dex, +5 chainmail), touch 11, flat-footed 15

Hp: 10 (1 HD)

Melee: Longsword +3 (1d8+1/19-20)

Ranged: Longbow +2 (1d8/x3)

Possession: Holy Symbol of Heironious

How he views other characters:

Duncan: I could probably cure his limp when I'm a Paladin.

Walton: I would follow him into combat anytime.

Hammond: He's going to blow up the kingdom with his potions!

Santos: Nice guy... where is he from?

SECRET INFO (do not disclose to other players until the secret is out through other means):

You have a horrible secret that you've been hiding from the rest of the soldiers in the garrison. About 2 years ago, Kezrung, the battle mage of Blackwall Keep set off on a self-initiated diplomatic mission to visit the lizard folk of the Mistmarsh. When he returned he wasn't quite himself, seemingly struck with an unknown illness that kept him bed ridden. The rest of the garrison went unaware while you tended to your ailing friend. It was after several days of nursing the mage that the unthinkable happened. While down stairs in the basement you discovered Kezrung hiding himself among some supply crates. When you stepped closer to help your friend, he lunged at you in an all out attack. You realized that he was turned into a horrible abomination, an undead zombie. You and several other soldiers managed to lock the creature behind a basement door. Because of your friendship with the battle mage you and the fellow soldiers kept the locked door a secret from the rest of the garrison, hoping that there might be way to save him from his fate. The rest of soldiers who knew of the zombie in the basement died during the last Lizard folk attack leaving you the only one who is aware of its presence. In order to save your friend Kezrung you will do whatever it takes to hide the secret. You think some of the others might be onto your secret and that has put you on edge. So much so you feel a bit jumpy and tend to overreact at any questions being asked of you. With all the stress you've had to deal with paranoia is starting to set in.

Hammond, Human Peon

Your character may be described as accident prone. He will trip over, bump into, and drop things. Almost everyone has a hobby, your character loves alchemy. The mixing of potions and drying of herbs makes him beam with delight.

Init: +1

Senses: Perception +3

AC 16 (+1 Dex, +5 chainmail), touch 11, flat-footed 15

Hp: 10 (1 HD)

Melee: Longsword +3 (1d8+1/19-20)

Ranged: Longbow +2 (1d8/x3)

Possession: Vial of Alchemist's Fire

How he views other characters:

Duncan: Don't stare at his limp, makes him mad.

Walton: I'll let him assign the watches.

Yerell: Smartest man alive.

Santos: Where is that accent from?

Santos, Human Peon

Obsequious - Humbly or excessively attentive, fawning. Your character finds it much more agreeable to be in service to someone who will provide him with all his needs and is not against a bit of groveling to make sure he gets all that he feels he deserves. A bit weasely, but if he plays his cards right, a comfortable weasel.

Accent - Your character has an accent. It is from speaking another language but do not pin it down.

Init: +1

Senses: Perception +3

AC 16 (+1 Dex, +5 chainmail), touch 11, flat-footed 15

Hp: 10 (1 HD)

Melee: Longsword +3 (1d8+1/19-20)

Ranged: Longbow +2 (1d8/x3)

Possession: Mood Ring

How he views other characters:

Duncan: Quick to anger, stay on his good side.

Walton: This man is going places, stay close to him.

Yerell: Wants to be good, but is a filthy liar. Stay clear of him.

Hammond: When he isn't breaking things, he can make potions.

10th: Tomb of Horrors conversion (CR 14 boss). Replaces Icosial's Tomb. Allustan used Dimension Door and entered the portal connecting the Whispering Cairn with the Tomb of Horrors. Though he was planning on exploring these tunnels anyways and had found a dimensional key to open the portal, the dragon attack caused him to flee. Entry transports party to the tomb of horrors, at area #3. The portal back is dark. Allustan is shivering, naked, by himself near the entrance. He relates that he fled the dragon, hoping that this portal led to treasures he could use against the dragon, or at least safety. When he realized where he was, his curiosity got the better of him and he attempted to use his wits to delve deeper and unearth arcane secrets. When he reached an impasse, he cast a dimension door and found himself in a doorway, then a flash before he could register anything more. His non-living items are gone and he was shunted back to the beginning. He knows by reputation this is the famed Tomb of Horrors and has little belief of escape. The tomb's location has been lost to legend since the Age of Dreams, but it was created before the Gods of Magic decreed the laws governing the Art. Over thousands of years, many have sought the tomb...none have legitimately come back with definitive proof they have survived.

Allustan curses himself, for he took what he believed to be a dimensional key from the other side in order to open the portal. The key would prevent anything from this side entering the Whispering Cairn. However, that key is gone along with the rest of his belongings. If it were a trap, it is possible his items still lie within the tomb. If his items are truly lost, then only the riches purported to be in this tomb may provide any hope of escape.

The portal was essential to Tzolo to retrieve a known Sphere of Annihilation, but she kept this knowledge to herself. Escape Keep the portal guardian, and it deposits directly before the Tomb of Horrors.

By the end of this adventure, the increasing power of Kyuss has awakened Zosiel's Circlet further to +4 wisdom, persuasion, and know language Auran. *As a troubleshooting technique, the Talisman will not awaken until the end of the Spire of Shadows.*

In the final chamber, insert metal plates on a ring, ancient form of writing in Old Aurim. Also insert a Ring of 1 Wish that indicates it must be used in the tomb.

Incorporating Mud Sorcerer's Tomb:

The Ruined Mine Office and Dwelling

Located on the outskirts of town, this ruined mine office and dwelling sits unoccupied, without an owner. The previous owner of the building, the mining manager Ulgo Fant, abandoned the place more than fifty years ago when his mine ran dry. When he died over a decade ago, the property was left without an owner.

It's a modest dwelling that sits upon the crown of a hill. While the rough stone walls of the first floor look mostly intact, the second floor has completely collapsed. A half height wall rings the house, but it too is in a state of severe disrepair. Rubble and dense weeds choke the yard.

Made of smooth stone blocks, this building stands in shambles. Thick vines creep up the side and most of the windows are broken. The front door hangs open, barely on its hinges, under a sagging and partially collapsed porch.

Small mounds of debris litter the floor of the building's interior. Loose stones, dead weeds, and grime cover virtually every surface. Paintings must have once adorned the place as indicated by the particular stain patterns marring the walls. The only light comes from thin shafts sneaking in from outside illuminating clouds of dust dancing through the stale air.

One wall of the basement is partially collapsed. An ill kept wine rack sits empty, covered in a thin veil of cobwebs.

Craft 101

Craft skill checks are made at the end of one week's work, the result times the DC equals the amount of work completed in terms of sp. The work is completed when its total value is reached. Multiple characters can contribute to this work.

Values

Structure	Value
Outhouse	20gp
Well	-
Stone Outer Wall	100gp
First floor and porch	200gp
Second floor	300gp
Basement	20gp

There are 15 windows that need to be replaced at 2gp each. All the locks need to be replaced. The chimney in the kitchen needs a cleaning (2 hours) while the living room chimney only needs 1 hour of cleaning.

Interior renovation (painting, replacement floor boards, plaster) to make it comfortable requires 50gp in supplies. The second story requires more raw materials thus requires 150gp in supplies. Stocking with furniture costs 200gp that fully stocks all the rooms including the kitchen. Once this is done, you can get complete bed rest.

Increasing this expenditure to 1,000gp along with repairing the rest of the structure gives all the owners a +2 circumstance bonus on Diplomacy and Intimidate checks made inside against those impressed by wealth (typically the poor and merchant classes).

Task	Expert	Cost per Day	Amount per day
Cleaning the yard	Laborer	1 sp	8 hours per day
Rebuilding the outhouse	Carpenter (craftperson)	3 sp	18 sp per day
Clear the debris	Laborer	1 sp	8 hours per day
Fixing the first floor	Stone carver (craftperson)	3 sp	27 sp per day
Fixing the second floor	Stone carver (craftperson)	3 sp	27 sp per day
Cleaning the interior	Laborer	1 sp	8 hours per day
Renovating the first floor	Limner	6 sp	8 hours per day
Renovating the second floor	Carpenter (craftperson)	3 sp	27 sp per day

Adding an architect to this process costs an additional 5 sp per day, but increases the amount of work performed each day by stone carvers (to 30 sp per day) and carpenters (to 20 sp for the first floor and 30 sp for the second floor per day).

Generally, no more than six carpenters and eight stone carvers are available at any one time to work on a project of this size. Assuming that the maximum number of craftsmen are hired along with an architect, a limner, and a laborer, the reconstruction requires 21 days worth of work at a cost of 87.5 gp for the experts alone. This is in addition to any costs for raw material (roughly 400 gp depending upon the construction options chosen).

Shopping in Diamond Lake

General Goods: up to 40gp

Arms & Armor: up to 200gp

Rare Items: imported from Kristophan at 15% markup

Taggin's General Store (see Dragon 334)

"Don't forget, Taggin's has the best mining supplies this side of the lake. Why, I carry a little of everything including fine trinkets from Bilo and the Sea of Fire. I gladly provide my goods at a fair price to anyone, regardless of their race or creed."

Breathing mask: to avoid the hacking conclusion of black lung or grinders disease, many miners wear breathing masks - cloth face and nose covers filled with linen strips and thick leaves, tied behind the head with a leather strap. Wearing a breathing mask provides a +1 circumstance bonus on saves made against inhaled poisons. 6stl, ½ lb.

Canaries: an infamous ever-twittering feature of Taggin's general store also affords miners some comfort in their daily labors. An over-packed, 6-foot cube of chicken wire and twigs contains a heavily-ruffled flock of canaries. Taggin maintains a firm policy of charging customers not merely for the birds they intend to purchase, but for every canary they release from the cage. Miners regularly carry canaries in small cages into the mines with them, hoping that any poisons in the air affect their bird first and warn them of danger. 20stl for the cage and 1sp per canary. 1lb.

Mining Helmet: these metal skullcaps have slight brims and tiny lanterns affixed to the fronts. Such helmets provide the wearers with a +1 armor bonus against falling rocks. These helmets only aid a character's armor class in the case of falling rocks and otherwise do not affect AC. The lantern on a miner's helmet sheds bright illumination to a radius of 10 feet, shadowy illumination to a radius of 20 feet, and lasts 8 hours per pint of oil. 1stl, 1 lb.

Mining outfits: miners require sturdy clothing capable of protecting them from the bumps and jostles of their daily labor. These sets of clothing include a padded shirt, thick pants, a leather poncho like over-tunic, a wide brimmed leather hat, and a pair of simple goggles. 3stl, 6 lbs.

Pickaxe: crashing and clapping as they chip away at rock and iron within sweltering mines, pickaxes hardly make useful weapons. Top-heavy and unwieldy, these crude tools are a far cry from the heavy and light picks crafted for military purposes. When used as a weapon, treat a pickaxe as a heavy pick with a -2 penalty on attack rolls. 8stl, 6 lbs.

Rock-hammer: little more than chunks of pig iron affixed to splintering hafts, rock-hammers service miners in breaking apart and molding dense rocks and metals. When put to use on more mobile targets these massive hammers prove incredibly awkward yet provide passing destructive effect to warrant their occasional use as weapons. When used as a weapon, treat a rock-hammer as a war-hammer with a -2 penalty on attack rolls. 6stl, 10 lbs.

Hard-to-Find Items

Diamond water elixir: An herbal remedy made from local vegetation, salts from the mines, and Diamond Lake's tainted water, this concoction is meant to help cure illness. Characters who imbibe a flash of diamond water elixir recover 2 points lost to ability score damage (instead of the usual 1) for that day.

However, the user is sickened for 24 hours after consuming this drought. 40gp if from Allustan, Bronzewood Lodge, and 80gp at Purple Prose.

Smelling salts: usually contained in small pouches or vials, a few pinches of these acrid white crystals aid in rousing the unconscious. When waved under the nose of a character, who has been reduced to negative hit points but is stable, the character may immediately make a 30% roll to become conscious. 20gp from Benazel, or 24gp from any tavern.

Illicit Goods

Diamond Lake Ale: Created and distilled in much the same way as diamond water elixir, this thick, muddy ale has a chokingly hoppy taste (usually riddled with crunchy bits from its imperfect brewing process). Drinking a pint of diamond water ale requires a DC 12 Fortitude save, with those who fail becoming sickened. Sickened drinkers become nauseated, while nauseated drinkers fall unconscious for 1d6 hours. Craft (alchemy) DC: 14. Cost: 8 sp.

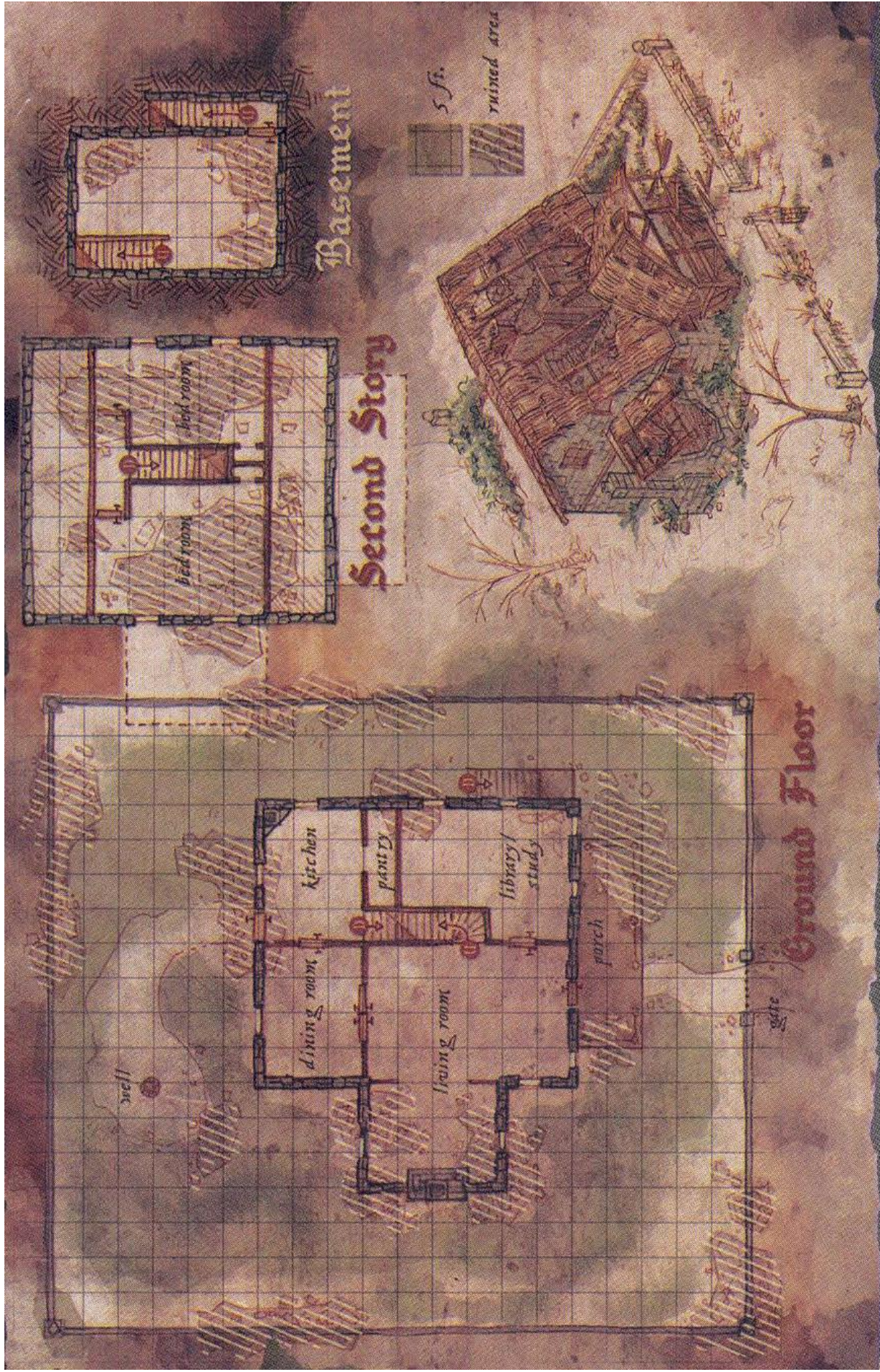
Kalamanthis: a potent narcotic cultivated by the monks of the Twilight Monastery outside of Diamond Lake, parts of the kalamnathis plant can be prepared and used in three separate ways. The raw root can be chewed, the leaf can be dried and smoked, and the sap can be boiled into a concentrated paste and injected.

Miner's Milk: a syrupy whiskey brewed in several makeshift stills behind the Thirsty Gar, local workers exaggerate that a drop of miner's milk can crack stone. One shot of miner's milk requires a DC 14 Fortitude save. Those who succeed gain a +2 alchemical bonus on Fortitude saves made against poison for the next hour, while those who fail fall unconscious for 1d6 hours. Craft (alchemy) DC: 20. Cost: 5 gp.

Tidwoad's Jewelry and Gem Shop

"Why are you bothering me? You look too poor to shop here. What? You have gemstones for appraisal? Why didn't you say something? Speak up child. I don't have all day."

Free appraisals on jewelry and gems if you sell it through his store. Otherwise, it costs 1sp per item for appraisals. He sells non-magical gems and jewelry and can get expensive items from Free City but adds a markup.



Dragonchess

Dragonchess is a game popular amongst wizards and the elite where opponents match wits orchestrating the two sides of 42 pieces over three 96-square (12x8) boards representing the Sky, the Earth, and the Underworld. Pieces include the griffon, the sylph, Oliphant, basilisk, hero, thief, and paladin amongst others. Scholars claim the game is a metaphor for the celestial struggles of fundamental law, chaos, good, and evil. While this may be the case in the heady world of the scholarly elite, in Diamond Lake, it's principally another justification for gambling.

A game of Dragonchess takes a full hour to play (longer for "big" games) and is played conversationally. Many casual players prefer the discussions to the game and play accordingly. Others dedicate considerable passion toward memorizing strategies and perfecting surprise traps and feints. It is said that you can learn more about a person in an hour of Dragonchess than you could spending a year otherwise - the game perfectly reflects a player's personality. To resolve a game of Dragonchess, one must gain control of all three boards - Earth, Sky and Underworld. However, the Underworld board is pivotal in achieving this dominance being of greater importance than the Sky board which in turn is greater in influence than the Earth board.

The base skill for Dragonchess is profession (dragonchess) with skill checks based on the player's profession modifier. Unskilled players can still play but are considered to have a +0 check (modified by their wisdom bonus/penalty) with a possible -2 circumstance penalty if they are not basically conversant with the rules - for example if it is their first game or they have not seen a few games being played.

However this base check may be modified by the following circumstances:

maximum +2 from each skill: bluff, diplomacy, intimidate, sense motive, knowledge (arcane)

+2 bonus for masterwork playing pieces (easier to remember)

+2 bonus if the player has levels in wizard (reflects flow of magical rituals)

+2 bonus if the player has control of the Earth board

+4 bonus if the player has control of the Sky board

+6 bonus if the player has control of the Underworld board.

A player with control of the Earth board may add their intelligence modifier to their skill check

A player with control of the Air board may add their wisdom modifier to their skill check

A player with control of the Underworld board may add their charisma modifier to their skill check

Note that it is not essential for a player to include a bonus upon a skill check. In fact, in casual or friendly games, it is normally considered impolite to use skills such as bluff and intimidate. For some though, not using particular bonuses is a key element of sharking an opponent. Any sharking attempt can be discovered by an opponent using the usual bluff/sense motive opposed roll. In a serious game, sharking is considered poor form (particularly if spectators have also placed wagers upon the outcome).

The first opposed checks are made to decide which player gains control of the Earth (starting) board. Opposed rolls are made, best 2/3. This player gains control of the Earth board. The player then chooses the next board to play for (Sky or Underworld).

This continues until a player controls all three boards and is thus the winner.

Hey Mate,

I need you in Diamond Lake. Bastards from the Dourstone mine have decided to try and send me a message. They killed our boy Mestel Fixx, left his flaming head on my bed. I know you two were close back in the day. He snagged a green worm while scouting the mine for me, and I've never seen the like of it. Fixx said one of the bastards said the worms could be used to make "unkillable dead." Sounds like your territory, eh? Come down here and take a good look at it. Tell me what we're dealing with. Mark my words, they've gone too far, and when the time is right I'll see that they get theirs.

I'll put you up at the old observatory. Show this letter to the white half ogre at the Feral Dog. He's got orders to get you settled and provide what you need. You'll find these coins sufficient to cover your travel from the city.

S

The secrets on this page are most holy. Know ye heretics that the eye of Chemosh is upon you. If you read this, Theldrik, you have either slain me and doomed our cause, or the time is nigh for our final victory.

At last the riddle of this place is solved. In the Age of Dreams, a great being named Kyuss rose above the primal races of human, elf, and ogre and challenged the gods. Mighty Kyuss is the herald of the One True Darkness. Soon he will sound the clarion call to the faithful. Three sundered faiths shall be made one and the Overgod will rise.

Our course is clear to us, my dear Theldrik. Bozal Zahol announces that the coming of the Age of Worms and the Merging of the Three is inevitable, but we must not become complacent. More dead bearing the worms of Kyuss must be located and captured. They may hold the final answers to our research. Send agents to the bakali in the swamps. I believe we will find answers amongst them. If the Mistmarsh fails us, we must send agents to the Rift. It may be that Kyuss himself or his agents cannot herald in the Age of Worms - we shall do it ourselves so that the Overgod may rise.

The Ebon Aspet stirs within the pool but is not ready to emerge. The Way of the Ebon Triad speaks that the Aspet will respond to trauma - an invasion to these halls or the presence of heretics - rendering all our work for naught if it emerges in minor form before the rituals are complete. Once Smenk delivers the final shipment of materials, we will raise the Ebon Aspet and our need for covert actions will end. Smenk must die at that point, see it done.

The Overgod will rise, but it is up to us to ensure that everything is in place for the merging to happen. Summon more warriors, for our time to strike is nigh. We will bring our army of worms to Kristophan and cleanse it of its heretics and heathens. Kyuss will come forth to announce the Age of Worms, and then the three shall merge into one. The Overgod will reward his faithful and crush the lesser gods. The world will be remade, and we will become its immortal rulers, lording over the masses of faithful and honoring the all mighty Overgod.

Of course, dear Theldrick, if you were so rash as to slay my followers and I, you shall soon join me in the Abyss. Treachery will stir the Aspet and it will hurl you through the Gate of Souls to a fate you cannot imagine.

Theldrick,

May three become one! I trust the financial contributions I have been sending have sufficed to continue your research. I am confident you will find answers that will help to birth the Overgod and know my contributions will be rewarded and the vigor of my youth restored.

Your servant has been most illuminating, and I have a contact, foul and full of hate for those who dwell on the surface, that may find the Scrolls we seek before winter. In the meantime, Bozal has been advising me on the other preparations that must be made ready. There is much to do, but the Overgod willing, everything should be in order by the time of Champion's Games next summer.

I look forward to when our combined efforts may scour this city of its horned filth and mongrel races.

Your faithful patron in Kristophan

Balaḏan 11th, 349 AC

May three become one,

My journey has come to an end for now. I stand in the ancient cathedral. I have met the Faceless One who claims that the god of death's truest followers once worked wonders here. I am inclined to believe him on that account, though how he found this place I do not know. However, Chemosh is of little interest to me. When the three become one, Sargas will be the true face of the Overgod, and the power of the other two will merely serve to give him the strength needed to crush Qu'an and the other gods. Still this place is spectacular, and a pool of abyssal liquid may hold the secret to merging the Three.

I am certain the Faceless One knows a great deal more than he is willing to share, which is typical of a servant of Chemosh. In fact, I am in a way surprised he has revealed as much to me as he has. He has set himself and his apprentices up in a former laboratory, a place concealed behind a labyrinth of secret doors and hidden passages. He protects his sanctum with his loyal birdmen. I have been charged with defending the Dark Cathedral and the pool. I have agreed to this duty on the condition that I build my own fortress and chapel to Sargas abutting this ancient hall. The town above teems with faithless and desperate men skilled at hewing stone. They shall make perfect petitioners and laborers for the work I require. I look forward to putting my architectural gifts to use once more and honoring the Red Condor with a new place of worship.

There is a passage to a series of caverns joining Chemosh's cathedral. We have investigated them, and it seems possible that the caves may access the Underdark. I have recommended that we seal off access to the Underdark, but the Faceless One is insistent that we leave the passage open. He claims that he will only be able to make limited progress in his research until all three faiths are represented here, and he feels that soon the stirring will of the Overgod will send forth a prophet of Morgion, a prophet that may well come from the depths, hence the need for maintaining access to the darklands. I pray that when such a prophet arrives he is a believer in the way of the Ebon Triad, for if he is not we may well be doomed. I also pray that in the mean time we aren't assaulted by some other threat from the Underdark.

Daiduran 7th, 350 AC

Praise be to the Scourge of Battle,

Work on the Chapel of Sargas goes more quickly than I had dared to hope. Our patrons in Kristophan have been generous with their coin. We have gained the aid of one of the local mine managers, the notorious Balabar Smenk. He has been providing us with quality supplies, particularly one required by the Faceless One that isn't so readily available in Diamond Lake, and has helped us recruit a number of petitioners to aid with the work. Several have died from exhaustion, but I have been able to acquire enough onyx to raise those men as skeletons in my service. Skeletons have no minds and can follow only the simplest commands, but they require no nourishment and they work tirelessly until their bones crumble apart. I have given them picks, and they have been hewing through the stone at a pace that a living man cannot match.

The caves that I originally sought to seal have proved useful. They have provided us with a good place to dump the rubble from our excavations. I estimate that at our current pace, the fortress will be finished in a year.

Zendoran 10th, 351 AC

Three will become One,

Today was monumental one. The chapel of Sargas nears completion, and a prophet of Morgion has arrived from the Underdark. The prophet calls himself Grallak Kull. He is a member of a wretched and savage race, and were he not a believer in the way of the Ebon Triad, I would destroy him and his foul kind. He has brought with him several, all kin eager for blood and slaughter, as well as even more loathsome allies. They will have to learn patience, for we are still not near ready to move against our enemies on the surface. When the time does come they can be the rabble to lead the attack, much like the peasant conscripts the League sends. I pray that they will be able to restrain themselves until we give the command to attack. They seem quite loyal to their prophet, so hopefully that will be enough to keep them in line until they are needed.

Kathoran 5th, 352 AC

Praise be to the Scourge of Battle,

The Faceless One becomes increasingly concerned. That addled beast of an oracle Grallak Kul has yet to provide new insights into the Overgod's nature. The crude missives he sends speak of worms, of a slumbering power that must be awoken before the three can become one, but nothing more. I wish he would go back to the black pit that spawned him if he has nothing more to offer.

The Faceless One tells me this ties to an ancient figure, a being of great power. Of course he tells me little else. He enjoys keeping his secrets, but he forgets they will flourish only behind the protection of Sargas. His latest taunt is a scroll that he tells me contains all the answers I seek. Of course, the bastard wrote it in cipher. Were it not for the dictates of the Ebon Triad, I would lead my troops into their damnable lair and kill every last one.

Grallack is the key. Thank the Scourge, he trusts me and not the Faceless One. Otherwise, I doubt the Faceless One would bother imparting anything to us. When the Overgod arises. I think it will be time to settle some old scores.

Gratharan 11th, 352 AC

Under the Herald's Watchful Eye we conquer.

Grallak Kul has finally yielded a useful clue. I personally delivered it to the Faceless One, and he cackled like a hyena when he saw the message. Grallak spoke of the worms again of course. He says that the deep tunnels of these lands are infested with them. All seems well for now, but soon the Age of Worms will begin and they will burst out of the earth and swarm across the world. Still part of his vision troubles me. Grallak spoke of a great power behind the worms, but the Ebon Triad teaches that these worms will awaken the Overgod, who will then reward his faithful servants with immortality. Is there some other power at hand here that we cannot see, and if so, is it friend or foe?

The Faceless One knows more on the matter, but of course he has little to say. Perhaps Grallak has invented everything or perhaps his divine insights are just mad ravings. Sightless caverns or no, if he is imposter he will be routed out of his dark hole.

Daiduran 6th, 352 AC

Curse Balabar Smenk and the Faceless One.

Progress is being made. We have managed to cause something to stir in the pool. Grallak claims it is an aspect of Overgod's will- a sign that we are moving closer and closer to the merging of the three. The Faceless One assures me that we are on the verge of bringing it forth. The Faceless One also assured me that he had sent Smenk a message that would bring him back in line after Smenk's agent infiltrated our base. The Faceless One insists we hold off on any offensive action until the Ebon Aspect emerges from the pool. I can live with that as long as it happens soon. In the meantime we shall ready ourselves in case Smenk is less cowed than believed.

With my experience, it should take little argument to decide that I will escort the Ebon Aspect and lead my troops against the garrison. With the aspect of the Overgod fighting at our side, we will be unstoppable.

There is a disagreement between Grallak and the Faceless One about what should be done after the razing of Diamond Lake. They agree that the worms must be spread, so that we have a horde of spawn ready to serve the Overgod. Grallak wishes to begin the march towards Kristophan, growing the horde as we go. The Faceless One is more cautious. He thinks that we must first travel to the Mist Marsh. He believes that somewhere in that trackless swamp is the source of the spawn that have started to plague the southern hills. He believes that finding that source might be the final key to our holy quest. I am caught in the middle, and I doubt the correct course of action will be revealed to me until after Diamond Lake has fallen.

May the hours until the rise of the Ebon Aspect pass quickly.

Daiduran 7th, 352 AC

Sargas give me strength.

The Faceless One has made the sacrifices, but to seemingly no effect. I ask for guidance. What have we done wrong? What more must we do to bring forth the aspect? I should have known better than to trust a wizard and a crazed oracle. They are probably both charlatans. Kendra and I have decided to turn to Kristophan. We will reconnect with brethren there, and bide our time. Perhaps, I will contact Bozal and seek his advice, but I am starting to suspect that he may also be a charlatan. After all, it was he who introduced me to the Faceless One, and that alliance has accomplished nothing. Still, I maintain faith that the Overgod will one day rise, but in the meantime, I have heard Smenk may be soliciting help in assaulting our holy grounds. The blood of heretics will flow.

Praise to the Overgod.

I awake to power in this pit today. This chronicles the beginning of my ascent to immortality. The Master's Voice taught me my place in this world, and spoke of my role in the accomplishment of the Ninth Prophecy. I must forget the world of wind and sun, and I give my face willingly to take on the face of his Servant in flesh. Toiling on the Master's Great Work paves my way to eternal power. I prove my devotion by succeeding where the Ebon Triad project failed.

My ascent began as the Master's Voice foretold with the arrival of the Ebon Triad outcasts, trickling down by small groups from the mine. They seemed pleased by the rooms prepared for them, and began at once the consecration of their temple. In accordance with the Master's plans, they mistook me for a servitor of the Lord of Bones and don't suspect my true allegiance. The Ebon Triad may be a falsehood, but it serves my purposes so perfectly that I must someday discover its origins.

As foretold by the Master's Voice next, the grimlocks and even disir came by the caverns. I presented myself as an emissary to their prophet and was welcomed as a divine messenger. Apparently, their complete collaboration was mine even before I spoke, as I appeared in the prophetic dreams that led Grallak Kur and his tribe to this place. This fanatic has even burned his return home by provoking a cave-in. I have to laud the Master for the clever manipulation of those sinister beasts.

All necessary attendants being here, we proceeded to the first infusion of divine energy, under the cover of fake and uselessly complex rituals. At first, Theldrick was reluctant to lend hand in what he called "blasphemous seeker rituals." I had to remind him of what he owed to our timely help, and of what he risked by rejecting our demands. The thought of the future destruction of Diamond Lake, and most notably of the Qu'an followers dwelling there, also seemed to help him stifle his scruples.

The preparatory rituals are done. The stars have shifted, and the pretender gods that abandoned this world are afraid. Their fear feeds the Aspect. Although the embryonic growth is slow, the Master's Voice has given me the name of the necrotic agents to optimize the infusion of divine energy.

Behold my next step to becoming a sorcerer king. As instructed, I transmitted the Master's Voice's orders to Ragnolin. He will contact this Belabar Smenk for the delivery to Dourstone mine of the raw materials needed for the distillation of the necrotic reagents. With the arguments given by the Master, his full cooperation is ours.

One of Smenk's minions penetrated our grounds, but his presence did not awaken the Aspect prematurely. However, he escaped with a piece of the Tenth Prophecy. As I expected, the Master's Voice anticipates all things and was not greatly displeased with me. I ensured Smenk received a little reminder of where he stands. Alas, the sample was not recovered, but even if Smenk has hidden it, his life will be forfeit long before he realizes what his lackey took.

The cultist fools are impatient as a kender to see the birth of the Threfold Spawn. When their lifeforces feed the infusion rituals, the womb shall burst and the Aspect shall arise. I shall lead it and my role in hastening the coming Age of Worms will be above the accomplishments of all others. I must be vigilant. The Aspect must not be raised early or it will be weakened, and all my work undone.

ASSIGNMENT: SLAY YOUNGLINGS FROM DIAMOND LAKE

CONTRACTOR: RAKNIAN, LORIS

MATERIALS PROVIDED: DESCRIPTIONS, NAMES

PAYMENT: 2,000 STEEL PIECES EACH + 5,000 BONUS FOR ALL

COMPLETION: PENDING

ASSIGNMENT: OBTAIN APOSTOLIC SCROLLS

CONTRACTOR: RAKNIAN, LORIS

MATERIALS PROVIDED: NONE

PAYMENT: ROD, RING

COMPLETION: DONE

The exterior walls surrounding the inner ward of the Necropolis of Unaagh display some of the finest relief sculptures depicting the Age of Worms. The reliefs have deteriorated over the centuries, but the quality of their craftsmanship and the ghastly yet highly imaginative details displayed within their scenes of writhing death are still mostly intact and are unparalleled anywhere else in the known world.

When considering the nature of the Age of Worms, one cannot fail to associate this prophesized apocalypse with the entity known as Kyuss. Details regarding this being are limited, but he has been referred to as the "Worm that Walks" and the "Harbinger of the Age of Worms." Scholars agree that Kyuss walked the earth as a mortal long before the rise of any of the modern civilizations that exist today and Kyuss was either a necromancer or a priest of the undeath god Chemosh. It is also widely accepted that he was shunned by his own people and forced into exile for practicing dark magic and speaking blasphemous prophecies of death and doom, presumably regarding the so called Age of Worms.

Rather than languish as an outcast, he became a prophet and drew to him demented followers who wished to hear his grim words. They saw him as a servant of the gods, and some even worshipped him as a living god. His followers believed that if they curried his favor he would protect them from the impending age of writhing doom that he prophesized.

In their exile, they fled to the southern jungles where Kyuss joined the Jezulein, eventually becoming their ruler and destroyer. There it is said that Kyuss and his followers discovered the ruins of a city built not by men that was already ancient in their time. He was drawn to the place and commanded that his followers rebuild the city. It became the base of his temporal power, and he ruled for many years as a god king. Kyuss was obsessed with attaining divinity and he built a profane altar at the heart of the city. The altar was centered around a black monolith, which he used to channel his power. There he made countless blood sacrifices to his death god, and in a final vile rite he attempted to elevate himself to godhood by sacrificing his entire flock of followers. With their deaths he stepped into the monolith...

Discs from Tomb of Horrors

*Despite the passage of time, these shiny metal discs on a silver ring have not eroded.
Each disk contains writing in Taalese.*

Disc 1: This is an account of Tzolo, who laid herself to sleep until her minions awaken her. Beware the being known as Kyuss, for he will destroy the Jezulein.

Disc 2: Tzolo prophesized tools that would be needed to combat Kyuss, for his might has exceeded that of mortals. Such secrets will be kept with her until her awakening.

Disc 3: Scrolls of Liberation have been prepared for servants to safely navigate her refuge. In the event these scrolls are lost, riddles known to her trusted followers can bypass some threats.

Disc 4: *Damaged.* Someone has defaced the runes and scratched in forcibly “unable to retrieve sphere. Will die here.”