

Long Night at the Black Swan

By Andrew Wright

Introduction

‘Long Night at the Black Swan’ is a Dragon Warriors scenario for a party of 4-6 1st Rank characters. It has been designed as an introductory underworld adventure for a group of beginners, and can be run as is. However, experienced gamers will find that there is plenty of scope for additional non-linear strategy and complexity as well. It is recommended that at least one (and preferably more) of the characters is a member of one of the arcane professions (a Sorcerer would be ideal).

Overview of the adventure

The characters are approached by Cynric, innkeeper of the Black Swan, in the Cornumbrian port of Criggen Varras. For a fee he will let them explore a recently discovered underworld beneath the cellars of his tavern. The characters must enter the underworld – actually an ancient Selentine temple – and wrest its treasures from the bony hands of the creatures that lurk there. Complicating the picture are other parties of adventurers who are already exploring the ruins.

GM: Sections of this scenario which may be paraphrased or read out to the players are given in italics. The remaining material, which includes all monster scores and explanatory details, is for your eyes only.

Section I: The Black Swan Tavern

GM: The following is background information that may be told to the characters or used to generate further adventures. Also, it should be noted that although the adventure is nominally set in Criggen Varras, it could in fact be transplanted to any major Elleslandic town with a history of Selentine occupation.

Criggen Varras is the major Cornumbrian port on the shores of the Hadran Sea. Geographically, it occupies a marshy plain on the south bank of a large river, dotted with the occasional low hill. Templerise is one such hill district within the port, and a place with a peculiar reputation. Named for the crumbling Church of Saint Illean at its summit, whose graveyard is haunted by shadowy figures after dusk, Templerise also contains other notable landmarks, such as the Tree of Kloot (where townsfolk leave simple offerings to the imps believed to dwell beneath the hill), and Fanghyr’s Wall (a flaking cliff-face covered in intricate and unreadable inscriptions). At the top of the hill, on a cobblestone square opposite Saint Illean’s Church, stands the Black Swan Tavern. Despite, or because of, the area’s eerie nature, the Black Swan is a popular tavern, particularly with adventurers and their associated hangers-on. Cue the characters...

1. A Beginning.

To be read to the players:

You have all gathered at the Black Swan Tavern in the Cornumbrian port of Criggen Varras in search of adventure. You have barely settled down at a large table amid the bustle of a noon crowd before you are approached by the innkeeper, a tall, middle-aged man whose muscular body is gradually turning to fat.

“Well met, friends, I am Cynric, owner of the Black Swan. I can see from your attire that you are real adventurers, unlike most of the rabble here!” He gestures dismissively at the rest of the tavern’s patrons. A serving girl suddenly appears with tankards of the tavern’s best ale for all the adventurers.
“It’s on the house,” says Cynric, “if you would care to listen to my proposition.”

Assuming the characters indicate their assent, Cynric takes a swig of ale and begins:

“About a week ago, we were making alterations to the cellars. Business is good and we need more space to store wine. My colleague Thodor broke through one of the cellar’s walls with a swing of his mallet, and discovered a tiny hidden room. Within the room was a stone slab covering a trapdoor leading downwards, under the hill. With rope and lanterns, we descended through the trapdoor into a most marvelous chamber of huge size, with enormous pillars supporting the ceiling. Unfortunately, upon reaching the floor, we disturbed a giant rat, which Thodor slew with his mallet. Realizing that this was a job for professionals, not innkeepers, we clambered back up and replaced the slab, although we have left the rope in place. You, good sirs (and ladies) are those professionals. For a small fee, we will let you enter this underworld, slay what beasts you encounter and keep whatever treasure you find. Shall we say 20 Florins per person?”

GM: Characters may take offence at paying a fee to enter a dangerous labyrinth! In fact, 20 Florins represents a starting point, and Cynric can be bargained down to a more acceptable 15 Florins per person, using reasoning along these lines. If the characters do not have the necessary funds, Cynric will take whatever they can offer now, and receive the difference upon their successful return from the underworld (no doubt carrying sacks of loot).

Smart characters may well ask if other adventurers have also made the descent (and returned!). They have, and Cynric will confirm as much:

“Aye,” says Cynric. “Two groups have entered already. A day after our discovery, a party of Erewornians stayed at the Black Swan, and we put the same proposition to them. Although four of them eagerly ventured down into the depths, just the one returned, several hours later. He was in a sorry state, in both body and mind, and is currently recuperating upstairs in one of our private rooms. Free of charge, of course!”

Cynric looks downwards momentarily, a glum expression on his face, before continuing:

“The other group was of five brave adventurers who entered yesterday. We’ve yet to hear back from them. Still, although we know the underworld is dangerous, many of its treasures must surely lie undisturbed.”

GM: If the characters have yet to settle on an exploring fee, they could use this information to successfully bargain Cynric down even further to a final offer of 10 Florins per person. Further details on the underground exploits of the other groups can be found in the Recent Events entry at the start of Section II: The Temple of Mars.

At this point the characters have three choices. They can visit the survivor of the first expedition (see 2 below), they can make further preparations if they do not feel fully equipped (see 3 below), or they can enter the underworld (see 4 below).

2. The Survivor.

If the characters tell Cynric they would like to speak to the survivor of the first expedition, he will lead them up the stairs to the first floor of the tavern, and a room at the far end of a long corridor.

Cynric opens the door revealing a room flooded with sunlight. The gaunt figure of a man in white robes with a shaven skull sits upright in a low bed. Alongside him rests a two-handed sword. The man's eyes are unblinking sunken pits and seem to stare past you at something beyond.

"Sharvan?" Cynric coughs. "Sharvan? These people would like to talk with you about what happened. Can you help them?"

Sharvan looks at you properly for the first time, blinks once, and begins speaking in a slow monotone. It is evident he has told this tale before:

"We found ourselves in a great pillared hall, like a temple of sorts. Aethric reasoned the inner sanctum lay north. There we fought a statue of some pagan god that came to life and attacked us. Destroying it revealed a staircase leading further into the depths, to a series of bone-filled catacombs. It was here we met our doom. They boiled up out of nowhere and overran us – horrible glowing skeletons cloaked in mould and filth. Sir Quend fell in battle protecting us as we fled back to the temple. I was separated from Aethric and Telenore, but made it to the rope. The rest were lost..."

Sharvan trails off and a great shudder wracks his body. Cynric motions for you to leave the room.

"Wait." You turn to see Sharvan struggling out of bed. "If you are entering the underworld, I will accompany you. I need to find out what happened ... to my friends."

GM: Protests are of little use here and Cynric will just shrug helplessly. Sharvan will accompany the characters! His abilities are as follows:

SHARVAN (Male human 1st Rank Mystic)

ATTACK 13, Two-handed Sword (d10, 5)	AF 0
DEFENCE 7	Movement 10m (20m)
MAGICAL ATTACK 14	EVASION 4
MAGICAL DEFENCE 4	STEALTH 14
Health Points 10	PERCEPTION 6 (normal)
(Strength: 15; Reflexes: 13; Intelligence: 11; Psychic Talent: 12; Looks: 6)	

Sharvan's only possession is his two-handed sword. Being from Ereworn, he is fluent in Visic, as well as Elleslandic. He knows no other languages however, and is illiterate. Sharvan knows about the following areas of the underworld, all of which

will be further described below in Sections II and III: room 1, room 2, and room 20. He can also talk about his former colleagues: Aethric (see room 19), Telenore (see room 15), and Sir Quend (see room 20), though of course he does not know their fate.

3. Preparations.

GM: The characters should already be fully equipped, but if they decide that further gear is required, there are a series of small stalls selling bits and pieces in the square outside the Black Swan (fortunately today is market day!). Prices and availability are as follows:

<i>Item</i>	<i>Price</i>	<i>Availability (Town)</i>
Padded Leather	15F	100%
Bow	30F	50%
Dagger	7F	100%
Sling	2F	100%
Staff	2F	100%
Arrows (six)	3F	60%
Slingshot (ten)	1F	100%
Quiver	4F	50%
Backpack	5F	90%
Lantern	20F	95%
Flask of oil	4F	95%
Torch	1F	100%
Flint & tinder	2F	100%
Rope (10m)	6F	100%
Bedroll	10F	90%
Rations (1 week)	7F	100%
Waterskin	1F	90%

GM: Alternatively, if the characters think that the numbers of their party need strengthening, they can try hiring young hotbloods from the Black Swan tavern itself (whose clientele, let's face it, are all prospective adventurers). They cannot hire any bearers (this not being the countryside) or other adventurers (other than Sharvan the Mystic – see 2 above – all the local adventurers are already in the underworld!). They have a 25% chance of rallying 1-10 hotbloods to the cause, though they do not have to hire all of them. They can increase this chance to 50% by doing something suitably dramatic – the Knight or Barbarian character with the highest Looks score standing on a table in the middle of the Black Swan, enthusiastically banging a sword on shield and launching into an inspired oratory about death or glory should do the trick. Any hotbloods hired by the party will want the full wage of 8 Florins a day – everyone has heard the stories of Sharvan the Mystic by now!

YOUNG HOTBLOODS (same for all) Rank-equivalent: 1st
 ATTACK 11, Cudgel (d3, 3) AF 1 (Padded leather)
 DEFENCE 5 Movement 10m (20m)
 MAGICAL DEFENCE 3 EVASION 3
 Health Points 1d6 +3 STEALTH 12
 Reflexes: 10 or 11 PERCEPTION 4 (normal)

Hotbloods are equipped with a cudgel and padded leather, and carry 2-12 Copper Pennies. Although they may not last long, appropriate Cornumbrian names could include: Bryn, Gwyn, Gregor, Shymus, Kyle, and so on. Likewise, assume an average Reflexes score of 10 or 11, but don't bother rolling up a full set of characteristic scores.

4. Entering the Underworld.

When the players are ready to enter the underworld beneath the Black Swan, read them the following:

Cynric leads you through the kitchen and down some stairs into the cellars, which are full of barrels and cobwebbed racks of bottles. There is a glimmer of torchlight in a far corner. Here, through a hole in the wall, is a small, poorly-lit chamber. On the floor, partially covered by a stone slab, a thick rope leads down through a trapdoor. Sitting on a box in front of the trapdoor is a bearded, broad-shouldered man with a loaded crossbow on his lap and an open case of quarrels at his feet.

Cynric exchanges nods with the man. "Anything?" he asks. The bearded man shakes his head. "This is Thodor," says Cynric. "He or I will wait here for you for when you wish to return to the surface." He sees you looking at Thodor's crossbow. "It's for protection," he says. "Sometimes, things pull on the rope and we have to persuade them not to. Still keen? Good, well, don't forget the fee!"

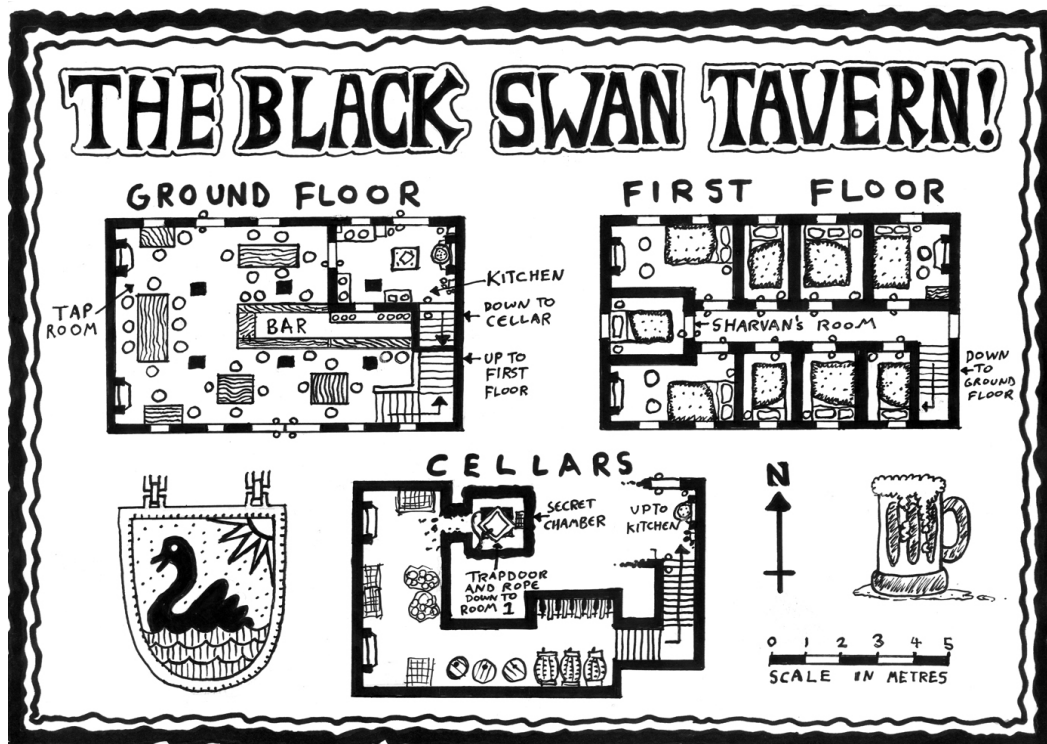
GM: This is where the characters have to pay the agreed fee in Florins per person to Cynric. Remind them that they also have to pay for any hotbloods they have hired as extra muscle, and for Sharvan the Mystic if he is accompanying them. Any renegotiation at this point will be looked on extremely dimly by Cynric and Thodor, and the characters may find themselves denied access to the underworld. If a fight does start, the hotbloods will side with Cynric and Thodor (being locals), as will Sharvan (as he thinks the characters are behaving foolishly), if they are present.

Assuming things go more positively, the characters also need to establish an order for descending the rope, who has what light sources, what the tactical formation will be once they descend, and so on. The climb down the rope is 4 metres and has a difficulty factor of 6, meaning it should not be a problem for most characters. Once everybody is at the bottom (in Room 1), you can begin Section II: The Temple of Mars.

Addendum: The Black Swan Tavern

GM: The Black Swan Tavern is a well-known and prosperous establishment. As a result, the prices charged here are higher than those given in the rulebook (p136):

One night stay, private room	6F
Hot food	2F
Jug of wine	2F
Tankard of ale	2F



As can be seen from the floorplans (see above), the ground floor of the tavern consists of a spacious, pillared taproom, and a small kitchen. The first floor has two rooms used by the tavern staff (one for Cynric and Thodor, and one for the other staff), and six private rooms. The seventh is also usually available but is currently occupied by Sharvan the Mystic. Pious travellers and pilgrims visiting the nearby Church of Saint Illean often use this room (as the church itself is considered too eerie to stay at).

The tavern is owned and run by Cynric and Thodor who are both retired adventurers. Also working at the tavern at any given time are 1-2 cooks, 1-4 serving girls, 1 barman, and 1 potboy. Cynric and Thodor's abilities are given below, while the rest of the staff have stats as per normal humans (rulebook p245 or Bestiary p21) and in a fight would be armed with improvised weapons (as per dagger (d4, 3) or cudgel (d3, 3)).

CYNRIC (Male human 2nd Rank Knight)

ATTACK 15, Shortsword (d8, 3) or
Crossbow (d10, 4)

DEFENCE 7

MAGICAL DEFENCE 5

Health Points 14

(Strength: 14; Reflexes: 8; Intelligence: 11; Psychic Talent: 13; Looks: 13)

AF 0

Movement 10m (20m)

EVASION 3

STEALTH 13

PERCEPTION 5 (normal)

THODOR (Male human 3rd Rank Barbarian)

ATTACK 18, Mallet (d6 +1, 5) or
Crossbow (d10, 4)

DEFENCE 10

MAGICAL DEFENCE 5

Health Points 16

(Strength: 16; Reflexes: 14; Intelligence: 10; Psychic Talent: 9; Looks: 11)

AF 0

Movement 10m (20m)

EVASION 6

STEALTH 14

PERCEPTION 6 (normal)

Normal staff have 2-12 Pennies on them, per person, whilst Cynric and Thodor would have 2-20 Florins each. In their room upstairs is a strongbox (to which both have a key each around their necks) containing the fruits of Cynric's and Thodor's adventuring days and subsequent careers as innkeepers. Assume a poor or moderate treasure hoard (rulebook p131).

Section II: The Temple of Mars

Physical and Historical Aspects

GM: A millennia ago, these lands were occupied by legions of the Selentine Empire, bent on subjecting the barbarian tribes of ancient Ellesland to their will. The underworld was actually constructed as a secret temple to Mars, the Selentine god of war, by modifying a series of natural caverns within the hillside. It was associated with the nearby garrison town of Rigenium (now the site of Criggen Varras' docklands), but with its own complement of legionary guards and attendant priests and acolytes.

After the legions of Selentium withdrew from Ellesland, the temple was abandoned. Its last High Priest hurriedly engineered a cave-in that buried the temple's entrance and entombed several squads of legionaries, who were ensorcelled to arise as undead guards, destined to patrol the dusty corridors for eternity. Since then, the complex has lain undisturbed as the town of Criggen Varras and the district of Templerise has grown up around and over it. Only the occasional burrowing Ghoul or scurrying Giant Rat has broken in, searching for food. That is, until last week...

Recent Events

GM: When Thodor's mallet smacked a hole through the wall of the cellars of the Black Swan, he was gazing into a hidden chamber in the ceiling of the Outer Sanctum (room 2). The first group that Cynric and himself let through this portal comprised of four Erewornians: Sharvan the Mystic, Aethric (a Sorcerer), Sir Quend (a Knight), and Telenore (a 'professional tomb-robber' though actually a renegade Assassin from the Clan of Harbingers). Their adventures were much as Sharvan described (see 2 above); Sir Quend was slain by Fungus Men in room 20 (and now reborn as one), Aethric fled to the secret room 19 (where he succumbed to his wounds and was also reborn as a Fungus Man), and Telenore is currently holed up in room 15.

A week later, Cynric admitted a party of five: Gunthar and Lothis (two Thulander Barbarians), Lady Felien (a Knight from Albion), Krellion (a Cornumbrian Warlock), and Morquillu (an Elementalist from the Pagan Mountains). These adventurers had barely stepped in the underworld before they were set upon by the horde of Fungus Men stirred up by the first expedition. They fled to room 7, where they are currently under siege from the Fungus Men in room 6, and are attempting to formulate a plan of escape against a backdrop of fatigue, injury, poor morale and rapidly fraying camaraderie. This is the state of play as the characters become the third party to enter the underworld.

Wandering Monsters (roll 1d6)

GM: The Wandering Monster chart is purely for the GM to use when they feel the need to liven up the atmosphere or if the players are needlessly wasting time. Roll 1d6 and consult the appropriate entry.

1. 1-3 Fungus Men

FUNGUS MEN

ATTACK 13, Shortsword (d8, 3)

DEFENCE 6

MAGICAL DEFENCE 6*

Health Points 1d6 +8

Reflexes: 7

(*Fungus Men are immune to all mind-controlling spells and devices as they have no mind in the normal sense.)

Rank-equivalent: 2nd

AF 1 (3 vs. stabbing weapons)

Movement 8m (15m)

EVASION 3

STEALTH 3

PERCEPTION 9 (panoptical)

These foul creatures stalk the underworld looking for fresh targets to infect, surprising only on a roll of 1 on a d12. Their appearance is horrifying to the psychically-attuned – everyone must roll equal to or over their Psychic Talent or attack the Fungus Men at -2 ATTACK and -1 DEFENCE. Anyone fighting the Fungus Men has a 10% of being infected with their spores. An infected character must roll under their Strength on a d20 every day. A failure means they lose 1d6 Health Points, and if their Health Points reach -3 they will die and be reborn as a Fungus Man after a week. This process can only be halted by the following spells: *Cure Disease*, *Purification*, and *Miracle Cure*.

2. 1 Mud Monster

MUD MONSTER

ATTACK 16, Claws (d6, 4)

DEFENCE 2

MAGICAL DEFENCE 3

Health Points 2d6 +8

Reflexes: 11

Rank-equivalent: 2nd

AF 0

Movement 5m (12m)

EVASION 1

STEALTH 11

PERCEPTION 5 (panoptical)

The Mud Monster takes the oozing form of an octopoidal mass of ghastly jellified mud, with clawed tendrils of weeds and refuse. It has slithered up through cracks in the underworld to attack the characters.

3. 2-16 Giant Rats

GIANT RATS

ATTACK 9, Bite (d3, 3)

DEFENCE 2

MAGICAL DEFENCE 2

Health Points 1d6 +1

Reflexes: 9

Rank-equivalent: 1st

AF 0

Movement 12m (25m)

EVASION 4

STEALTH 17

PERCEPTION 8 (darksight)

These dog-sized brutes will only attack if they outnumber the characters by at least two-to-one (they could perhaps follow the characters around at a distance and merge

with another pack to achieve this). After any encounter with Giant Rats there is a 2% chance of contracting the Black Death (see rulebook p126 – 5% chance if the character has open wounds).

4. 2-20 Bats

BATS

ATTACK 11, Bite (d3, 1)
DEFENCE 9
MAGICAL DEFENCE 2
Health Points 1
Reflexes: 10

Rank-equivalent: 1st
AF 0
Movement 20m (flying)
EVASION 6
STEALTH 16
PERCEPTION 15 (panoptical)

A flock of these hawk-sized subterranean predators will only attack if they outnumber the characters by at least two-to-one (otherwise they will merely be a flapping, shrieking nuisance). Anyone bitten by a Bat has a 5% chance of contracting a wasting disease that will reduce their Reflexes by 1d4 points within a month unless cured by sorcery (such as the spell *Cure Disease*).

5. 2-7 Skeletal Legionaries

SKELETAL LEGIONARIES

ATTACK 11, Shortsword (d8, 3)
DEFENCE 5
MAGICAL DEFENCE 3
Health Points 1d6 +1
Reflexes: 12

Rank-equivalent: 1st
AF 3 (Bronze breastplate) plus shield
Movement 10m (20m)
EVASION 3
STEALTH 13
PERCEPTION 7 (gloomsight)

These are the wandering undead remnants of the temple's legionary guards. They wield corroded broad-bladed shortswords, and wear verdigris-stained bronze breastplates. They also carry large rectangular shields. Skeletal Legionaries take half damage from fire-based attacks.

6. 1-3 Ghouls

GHOULS

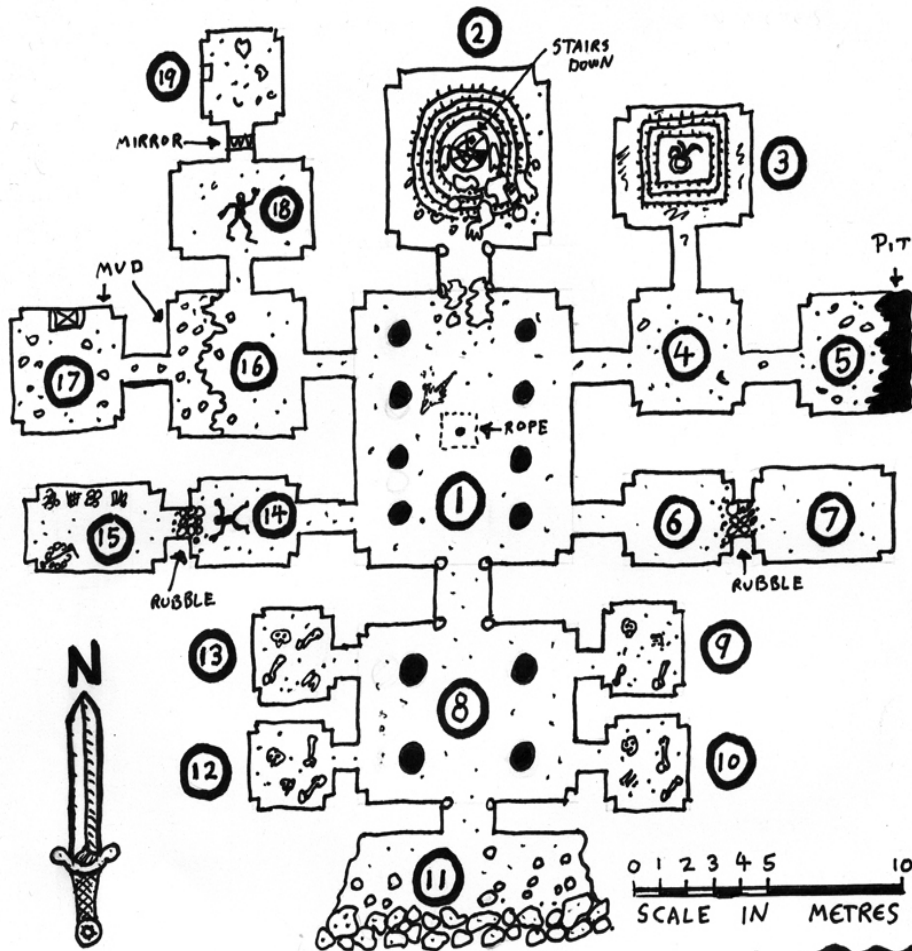
ATTACK 17, Shortsword (d8, 3)
DEFENCE 9
MAGICAL DEFENCE 7
Health Points 1d6 +10
Reflexes: 12

Rank-equivalent: 4th
AF 0
Movement 12m (25m)
EVASION 4
STEALTH 15
PERCEPTION 9 (darksight)

These olive-skinned eaters of the dead will attack with rusty shortswords scavenged from the catacombs. Any NPC below 3rd Rank (such as Sharvan or any hotbloods accompanying the party) must roll their Intelligence or less on 1d20 or flee in panic.

The following map shows the floorplans for the Temple of Mars area of the underworld, immediately below the Black Swan Tavern. Most corridors are either 2 metres or 1 metre wide – see the rulebook (p61) for the combat implications of this.

TEMPLE OF MARS



MAJOR

LOCATIONS

- | | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 OUTER SANCTUM | 7 ACOLYTES' QUARTERS | 13 GUARDS' CHAMBERS |
| 2 INNER SANCTUM | 8 GUARD HALL | 14 PREPARATION CHAMBER |
| 3 DEVOTIONAL CHAMBER | 9 GUARDS' CHAMBERS | 15 STORE ROOM |
| 4 PRIESTS' ROOM | 10 GUARDS' CHAMBERS | 16 FLOODED ROOM |
| 5 COLLAPSED CHAMBER | 11 TEMPLE ENTRANCE | 17 FLOODED ROOM |
| 6 PREPARATION CHAMBER | 12 GUARDS' CHAMBERS | 18 HIGH PRIEST'S CHAMBER |
| | | 19 HIGH PRIEST'S SANCTUARY |

1. Outer Sanctum

You stand in an immense hall. Two rows of thick pillars support an arched ceiling far above your heads. A heavy layer of chalk-white dust covers everything. At north end of the hall is a shattered stone portal while at the south end is a low, open doorway. You glimpse other shadowy openings behind the pillars, leading away to the east and west. Nearby lies the carcass of a giant rat.

GM: The rat was slain by Thodor when he and Cynric first explored the underworld. Brushing dust from the floor will reveal tiled mosaics with inscriptions in Bacchile. These state that this is the sanctuary of Mars, the Selentine god of war. Bear in mind that if the characters make too much noise here, they will attract the attention of the Fungus Men in room 6, who will pour forth into this chamber and attack!

2. Inner Sanctum

This is a huge square chamber, with no obvious exits other than the broken stone door through which you entered. In the centre of the room is a circular dais covered in the rubble of a toppled statue. Its head, showing a bearded god in a battle helmet, lies amidst the debris.

GM: Sharvan and his colleagues broke into this chamber and destroyed the statue of Mars when it animated and attacked them. The head still has some residual magic – anyone touching it will cause it to briefly come to life and say (in Bacchile): “*Doom! Doom to those who despoil the temple of Mars!*” Smashing the head of the statue with a blunt weapon such as a cudgel or mace will reveal a large ruby worth 100 Florins.

At the top of the dais, partially covered by rubble, is a tight, twisting stairway carved into the rock. A horrible stench emanates from here. The stairway leads down to room 20 in the catacombs – see Section III below for more details.

3. Devotional Chamber

The walls of this room are black with filth and mould. In the center of the room on a square dais, is an ornate stone pedestal around a metre and a half tall. Resting on top of it is the life-like granite bust of a human head.

GM: The ‘bust’ is actually an Obsidiak (whose three tentacles are coiled around the pedestal) which will suddenly open its horrible eyes and launch itself at the nearest character within range. Unless the characters were being especially cautious, they will all be surprised, and the Obsidiak will get a free first attack at its intended victim.

OBSIDIAK

ATTACK 14, Bite (d8, 3)

DEFENCE 6

MAGICAL DEFENCE 6

Health Points 11

Reflexes: 13

Rank-equivalent: 2nd

AF 3

Movement 8m (flying)

EVASION 3

STEALTH 15

PERCEPTION 6 (darksight)

The Obsidiak will either bite (70% chance) or “swoop” with its three tentacles. If the latter, its victim must use their EVASION to dodge the Obsidiak’s attack SPEED of 12. If they fail and are trapped, they must roll their Reflexes or under on a d20, three times (once for each tentacle), to see if their weapon arm is free so they can attack the monster. Failure on any of the three rolls means their weapon arm is trapped. As the Obsidiak’s tentacles tighten their grip, it inflicts steadily increasing damage: 1d4 on the first Combat Round, 1d6 on the second, 1d8 on the third, and so on. Armour offers

no protection from this. Other characters may of course attack the Obsidiak (which will have a Defence of 0) but if they miss, they must roll their Reflexes or under on a d20 to avoid injuring their trapped companion!

If they slay the Obsidiak (which will dissolve into damp and evil-smelling ash), the characters are free to search the chamber. Anyone inspecting the pedestal will see a large square plaque at its rear. Removing this reveals a hollowed-out interior that contains a polished obsidian disc the size of a small plate. The disc itself is not valuable but may prove useful in room 18.

4. Priests' Room

The floor of this large square chamber is covered in dust and rubble. Stone archways lead east, west, and north.

GM: This room and room 5 used to be the living quarters of the priests of Mars. There is nothing of worth under the rubble but do not tell the players that. Sustained searching on the part of the characters may attract the attention of Wandering Monsters!

5. Collapsed Chamber

A short corridor leads to a vile-smelling room strewn with bones and refuse. The entire floor in the eastern half of the room has collapsed, forming a gaping black pit. You become aware that the room is also full of many dark-furred forms, scavenging through the rubbish. As one, they rise up on their hindpaws, regarding you with evil eyes, before launching themselves at your party in a wave of chittering malice!

GM: There are twice as many Giant Rats in the room as there are people in the characters' adventuring party. Once at least half their number have been slain, the rest will flee down the pit and disperse into the catacombs.

GIANT RATS

ATTACK 9, Bite (d3, 3)

DEFENCE 2

MAGICAL DEFENCE 2

Health Points 1d6 +1

Reflexes: 9

Rank-equivalent: 1st

AF 0

Movement 12m (25m)

EVASION 4

STEALTH 17

PERCEPTION 8 (darksight)

After this encounter there is a 2% chance of a character contracting the Black Death (5% chance if the character has open wounds). If any character searches through the refuse, they may find 2-6 Pennies but will also have a 15% chance of contracting the Black Death (rulebook p126).

The pit leads down to room 21 in the catacombs – see Section III below for more details. This four-metre climb has a difficulty factor of 12, which can be reduced to 8, if the characters have a rope and can securely attach it somewhere.

6. Preparation Chamber

If the characters have already encountered the Fungus Men from this room (perhaps by making too much noise in room 1 for example), then it will be empty, save for the rubble-choked doorway leading to room 7. Otherwise, read the following:

This room has been stripped bare, and most of its contents appear to be blocking an archway in the eastern wall. Of more immediate concern are the half a dozen or more

mouldering corpses, all covered in weirdly luminous mould, that pause in their wordless snarling to turn and face your intrusion.

GM: The creatures are Fungus Men and they attack immediately. There is one for every adventurer in the party (including Sharvan or Telenore, but not counting any Hotbloods).

FUNGUS MEN

ATTACK 13, Shortsword (d8, 3)

DEFENCE 6

MAGICAL DEFENCE 6*

Health Points 1d6 +8

Reflexes: 7

(*Fungus Men are immune to all mind-controlling spells and devices as they have no mind in the normal sense.)

Rank-equivalent: 2nd

AF 1 (3 vs. stabbing weapons)

Movement 8m (15m)

EVASION 3

STEALTH 3

PERCEPTION 9 (panoptical)

These foul creatures surprise only on a roll of 1 on a d12. Their appearance is horrifying to the psychically-attuned – everyone must roll equal to or over their Psychic Talent or attack the Fungus Men at -2 ATTACK and -1 DEFENCE. Anyone fighting the Fungus Men has a 10% of being infected with their spores. An infected character must roll under their Strength on a d20 every day. A failure means they lose 1d6 Health Points, and if their Health Points reach -3 they will die and be reborn as a Fungus Man after a week. This process can only be halted by the following spells: *Cure Disease*, *Purification*, and *Miracle Cure*.

There is nothing else in this room other than several dead Fungus Men that have been slain by the adventurers in room 7.

7. Acolytes' Quarters

The doorway to this chamber is blocked by a rubble barricade constructed by the adventurers hiding here. If the characters start dismantling the barricade without yelling a warning first, they will get a third of the doorway clear before Lothis will hurl a javelin and Lady Felien will fire an arrow at whoever is closest to the entrance (Lothis' ATTACK is 16, Felien's ATTACK is 15; allow +3 modifier to the d20 Hit Roll for dim light). If they shout a warning first or try to establish dialogue, the adventurers within will hold their fire. Either way, read the following:

The room beyond the doorway has also been cleared of its contents. A glittering magical candle hovering in the air reveals its occupants to be five wild-eyed adventurers, covered in dirt and dust, and wrapped with torn bandages. One of them – a striking woman in blood-stained plate armour – limps forward and lowers her bow and arrow. "Friend or foe?" she asks in a flat voice.

GM: These adventurers have spent a long night trapped in this room and their tempers are fraying. Lady Felien and Krellion wish to stay put and attempt to recuperate, but the other three are arguing for a breakout and a dash to freedom. If the characters are courteous, these adventurers request to be simply escorted back to room 1 and the safety of the Black Swan tavern (though you could throw in a few Wandering Monsters to spice things up on the way, such as a squadron of Skeletal Legionaries). They cannot reward the characters – they have no treasure – but the characters will gain the esteem of a fellow local band of professionals that may pop up in future adventures. This also leaves the underworld free for the characters to loot for themselves.

If the characters are foolish enough to say “Foe!”, then the adventurers immediately attack. Gunthar, Lothis, Lady Felien, and Krellion all use their respective missile weapons at once, concentrating on the wounded characters first. They then switch to hand weapons. Meanwhile, Morquillu will use all of his remaining Magic Points in three separate bursts of Raw Elemental Power to take out any identifiable spell-users among the characters. If Sharvan, Telenore, or any Hotbloods are with the party, they may refuse to fight these adventurers, and try to parley. It could get very messy!

GUNT HAR (Male human 1st Rank Barbarian)

ATTACK 14, Two-handed sword (d10, 5)	AF 4 (Mail armour)
or Sling (d6, 3)	Movement 10m (20m)
DEFENCE 7	EVASION 6
MAGICAL DEFENCE 3	STEALTH 13
Health Points 14 (currently 8)	PERCEPTION 5 (normal)

(Strength: 12; Reflexes: 13; Intelligence: 14; Psychic Talent: 9; Looks: 10)

Gear: Full mail armour, dagger, lantern, flint-and-tinder, backpack, 10 Florins, two-handed sword, sling, slingshot (4 left), rope (10m).

Gunthar is a Barbarian from the Thulish highlands. He is fluent in Visic and Elleslandic, and can speak Old and Latter Mercanian to an intermediate level. Gunthar is illiterate. He is a tall, rangy, fair-haired young man, who is especially self-conscious about his shepherd’s sling, and is looking to ditch it for a bow or crossbow at the first opportunity.

LOTHIS (Male human 1st Rank Barbarian)

ATTACK 16, Battleaxe (d8 +1, 7) or	AF 4 (Mail armour)
Javelin (d8, 4)	Movement 10m (20m)
DEFENCE 7	EVASION 5
MAGICAL DEFENCE 3	STEALTH 13
Health Points 13 (currently 4)	PERCEPTION 5 (normal)

(Strength: 17; Reflexes: 12; Intelligence: 8; Psychic Talent: 11; Looks: 12)

Gear: Full mail armour, dagger, lantern, flint-and-tinder, backpack, 5 Florins, battleaxe, 2 javelins.

Lothis is also a Barbarian from the Thulish highlands. He is fluent in Visic and Elleslandic, and can speak Latter Mercanian to an intermediate level. Lothis is illiterate. He is a broad-shouldered and muscular man with close-cropped dark hair. Lothis is good friends with, but often overshadows his comrade Gunthar. He also throws himself first into the fray, and is currently suffering rather poorly as a result!

LADY FELIEN (Female human 1st Rank Knight)

ATTACK 15, Morning star (d6, 5) or Bow	AF 5 (Plate armour) and shield
(d6, 4)	Movement 10m (20m)
DEFENCE 9	EVASION 5
MAGICAL DEFENCE 4	STEALTH 13
Health Points 12 (currently 3)	PERCEPTION 5 (normal)

(Strength: 13; Reflexes: 13; Intelligence: 17; Psychic Talent: 10; Looks: 11)

Gear: Plate armour, shield, dagger, lantern, flint-and-tinder, backpack, 3 Florins, morning star, bow, quiver (2 arrows left).

Lady Felien is a minor noble from the eastern coast of Albion. She is fluent in Elleslandic and knows Beaulangue to an intermediate level. She is also literate, and

knows Bacchile (fluent), and Ancient Emphidian (intermediate). Knows Classic and Emphidian scripts.

Lady Felien is an imposing woman with brown hair and blue eyes. She is the leader of this band of adventurers, but is now badly wounded, and has also been infected with the spores of the Fungus Men.

KRELLION (Male human 1st Rank Warlock) Magic Points: 2 (currently 0)

ATTACK 13, Sword (d8, 4) or Bow (d6, 4) AF 4 (Mail armour) and shield

DEFENCE 4 Movement 10m (20m)

MAGICAL ATTACK 13 EVASION 2

MAGICAL DEFENCE 5 STEALTH 13

Health Points 11 (currently 5) PERCEPTION 5 (normal)

(Strength: 13; Reflexes: 7; Intelligence: 14; Psychic Talent: 14; Looks: 14)

Gear: Full mail armour, lantern, flint-and-tinder, backpack, bow, quiver (3 arrows left), dagger, 3 Florins, sword and shield, 2 flasks of oil.

Krellion is a Warlock descended from Cornumbrian nobility. He is fluent in Elleslandic and has a basic knowledge of Visic. He is literate, and knows Bacchile (fluent) and Lughwyd (intermediate). Knows Classic and Kell scripts.

Krellion is a tall and striking man with prematurely graying hair. In all decision making he defers to Lady Felien.

MORQUILLU (Male human 1st Rank Elementalist) Magic Points: 3/1/1 (now 1/1/1)

ATTACK 11, Staff (d6, 3) AF 2 (Padded armour)

DEFENCE 5 Movement 10m (20m)

MAGICAL ATTACK 17 EVASION 2

MAGICAL DEFENCE 6 STEALTH 13

Health Points 5 PERCEPTION 6 (normal)

(Strength: 9; Reflexes: 8; Intelligence: 13; Psychic Talent: 16; Looks: 11)

Gear: Padded armour, lantern, flint-and-tinder, backpack, staff, 7 Florins, amulet of volcanic rock, flask of oil.

Morquillu is an Elementalist from the Pagan Mountains. Morquillu's main category is Fire, and his subsidiaries are thus Air and Earth. He is fluent in Elleslandic and Visic, but is illiterate.

Morquillu is a frail youth with wild black hair. Despite his appearance, both Gunthar and Lothis treat him with a great deal of respect.

8. Guard Hall

This is a wide dusty chamber whose low ceiling is supported by four thick pillars. A broad doorway lies in both the middle of the north and south walls, while there are two dark arches each leading both east and west.

GM: There is nothing of interest in this room. However, if the characters make a habit of entering and then fleeing from the occupants of rooms 9, 10, 12, and 13, then things could start to get a little congested here!

9 and 10. Guards' Chambers

The first time the characters enter one of these rooms, or 13 or 14, read the following. *No sooner have you entered a square stone chamber than four skeletal warriors arise from the ground wearing verdigris-stained bronze breastplates and carrying embossed rectangular shields. They wield corrode broad-bladed shortwords and clatter towards you...*

GM: These are the undead remnants of the temple's legionary guards. They are activated by anyone entering their room. Smart characters may realize this, and start peering into the chambers, but the dim light will reveal nothing other than a tangled mass of bones, weapons, and armour. Anyone stepping over the threshold will cause the bones to instantly animate.

4 SKELETAL LEGIONARIES

ATTACK 11, Shortsword (d8, 3)

DEFENCE 5

MAGICAL DEFENCE 3

Health Points 1d6 +1

Reflexes: 12

Rank-equivalent: 1st

AF 3 (Bronze breastplate) plus shield

Movement 10m (20m)

EVASION 3

STEALTH 13

PERCEPTION 7 (gloomsight)

Skeletal Legionaries take half damage from fire-based attacks.

Scattered about each chamber are 8 ancient Selentine Pennies. These were left with the legionaries so they could pay the ferryman's toll to cross the River of Styx (in an example of ancient Emphidian myth later appropriated by the Selentines). Each Penny could be worth 1-6 Florins to a collector of Selentine antiquities. Similarly, the legionaries' weapons and armour, while largely useless to the characters, could also be worth 2-20 Florins to such a curio-dealer, assuming the characters can find one.

11. Temple Entrance

The southern wall of this room looks like a cave-in and is made of rubble, boulders, and jagged slabs of stone. There are no other exits.

GM: This was the old entrance to the whole temple complex, long since collapsed. It is empty, but may serve as a potentially fatal dead end if the characters stumble in here while escaping Skeletal Legionaries. Sustained excavation – beyond the scope of this adventure but possible if the characters use their loot to recruit a chain gang – reveals that the entrance to the temple is in an overgrown patch of waste land at the base of Templerise district, near the holy site of Fanghyr's Wall.

12 and 13. Guards' Chambers

Both of these rooms are identical to rooms 9 and 10. You could vary the descriptions a little if the players are becoming bored! (Or provide a nasty surprise in the form of a few Ghouls from the Wandering Monster chart, gnawing on old bones.)

14. Preparation Chamber

The doorway in the western wall of this small room is completely blocked with rubble and broken slabs of stonework. A rotting corpse, covered in some kind of dimly glowing fungi, lies on the floor in the middle of the room.

GM: Anyone inspecting the corpse (which is a dead Fungus Man) can see it has been torn apart by what look like razors – these are the wounds inflicted by the throwing spikes of the Assassin Telenore who is hiding behind the rubble in room 15. There is nothing else in this chamber. If Sharvan is with the characters he will recognize this type of wound and deduce that Telenore is around here somewhere.

15. Store Room

The doorway to this chamber is blocked by a rubble barrier constructed by Telenore, who is using this area as a hideout. If the characters start dismantling the barricade

without yelling a warning first, they will get a third of the doorway clear before Telenore will hurl three throwing spikes at whoever is closest to the entrance (Telenore's ATTACK is 13; allow +3 modifier to the d20 Hit Roll for dim light). If they shout a warning first or try to establish dialogue, particularly if Sharvan is speaking, she will hold her fire. Either way, read the following:

The room beyond the doorway has been cleared of its contents. A small fire burns in one corner of the room, cooking what looks like a large rat on a spit! Other corners of the room are heaped with neat piles of firewood and rubble. Standing before you is a short, beautiful woman in dark clothes, with a sword held loosely in one hand and a fistful of glittering metal stars in the other. She looks at you questioningly but says nothing.

The characters can either parley or fight Telenore (she will start by throwing stars at the least armoured and most wounded, and then attacking the best fighter). If Sharvan is with the party however, then read the following:

Sharvan cries out: "Telenore!" and rushes forward to hug his colleague, who lowers her sword and awkwardly returns the embrace.

GM: Telenore has spent a week fending for herself quite successfully in the underworld. She has been trapped in here for most of that time by the Fungus Men, but the arrival of the other adventurers, now trapped themselves in room 7, has allowed her the freedom to collect more food (rats!) and enough firewood for 12 torches. She had just been planning for a break and run towards the rope in room 1, having seen no further sign of her comrades. If Sharvan is not with the party, she will request to be escorted back to room 1. If Sharvan is with the party, both Telenore and himself will accompany the characters and search for signs of their other comrades.

TELENORE (Female human 1st Rank Assassin)

ATTACK 13, Sword (d8, 4) or Throwing AF 2 (Padded armour)

Star (d2+1, 2) Movement 10m (20m)

DEFENCE 6 EVASION 6

MAGICAL DEFENCE 3 STEALTH 18

Health Points 9 PERCEPTION 8 (normal)

(Strength: 11; Reflexes: 15; Intelligence: 10; Psychic Talent: 11; Looks: 16)

Gear: Padded armour, backpack, sword, rope (10m), climbing gear, hand lantern, flint-and-tinder, 28 Florins, lock picks, bandolier of throwing spikes (6 left), 12 torches (stored here but not carried).

Telenore is a renegade Erewornian Assassin from the Clan of Harbingers (and has 6 XP). Telenore has the throwing spike combat technique and the Pick Lock skill. She is fluent in Elleslandic and Visic but illiterate.

Telenore is a short, graceful woman with braided black hair. She prefers to describe herself as a professional tomb-robber.

16. Flooded Room

This large room has low archways leading west, north, and east. The floor in the western half of the room is submerged under a rank pool of brown mud.

GM: The mud is harmless. However, if the characters venture onwards to rooms 17 or 18, they will be attacked by a Mud Monster when (or if!) they return through this chamber.

MUD MONSTER

ATTACK 16, Claws (d6, 4)

DEFENCE 2

MAGICAL DEFENCE 3

Health Points 2d6 +8

Reflexes: 11

Rank-equivalent: 2nd

AF 0

Movement 5m (12m)

EVASION 1

STEALTH 11

PERCEPTION 5 (panoptical)

The Mud Monster takes the oozing form of an octopoidal mass of ghastly jellified mud, with clawed tendrils of weeds and refuse. There is only one Mud Monster here, however, others may turn up here again (or in room 17!) as Wandering Monsters.

17. Flooded Room

The floor of this small square chamber is covered in a thick layer of mud and slime. Debris lies everywhere, and against the northern wall you spot a large stone casket.

GM: The lid of the casket is locked and bears a round keyhole. Above this is carved the Bacchile word for 'Fire'. Anyone attempting to open the casket without a key, or by picking the lock, will trigger a *Dragonbreath* spell (SPEED 12, Damage: 1d6 +6 HP, but subtract victim's AF). It can only be opened safely with the verdigris key from room 19. If the characters have the key, or pick the lock, they find the mouldy remnants of priests' robes and accoutrements, plus a small stone idol of Mars (this is inscribed on the bottom of the idol in Bacchile). Once a day, if the idol is held out and the word 'Mars!' is spoken, the idol will have the same effect as a *Hold Off the Dead* spell, as cast by a 4th Rank Sorcerer. It cannot be used by anyone who is a member of the True or Ta'ashim Faiths.

18. High Priest's Chamber

The walls of this chamber are carved with crumbling scenes featuring the life of a bearded war-god. Amidst the rubble on the floor lies a burnt and charred corpse. Embedded into an alcove in the center of the north wall is a smoky pane of black glass, bound by a frame of verdigris-stained bronzework. You can just see a glimpse of your reflections in the murky depths of the glass.

GM: The corpse is that of a Fungus Man that was pursuing Aethric (see room 19) before being slain by a *Dragonbreath* spell.

The pane of glass is an obsidian mirror that acts as a magical doorway. There is an inscription on the frame in Bacchile that states: "Show me as I show you". Anyone holding up the obsidian disc from room 3 in front of the mirror will cause it to swing slowly outward, revealing the passageway to room 19.

However, anyone standing in front of the mirror without the disc (including someone trying to decipher the instructions), will be horrified as a smoky black reflection of themselves will instantly step out from the mirror and attack!

MIRROR SPAWN

ATTACK as character, melee weapon as character (includes missile weapons)

DEFENCE as character

MAGICAL DEFENCE 3

Health Points as character

Reflexes: as character

Rank-equivalent: as character

AF as character (includes shield)

Movement 10m (20m)

EVASION as character

STEALTH 13

PERCEPTION 5 (gloomsight)

There will be one Mirror Spawn for every character standing directly in front of the alcove. The Mirror Spawn will only have the character's basic physical accoutrements – their weapon, or missile weapon, and their armour – not any special abilities such as spells. Defeating the Mirror Spawn (which will dissipate into black vapour) will have no effect on the mirror – it can only be opened with the obsidian disc.

Additionally, anyone attacking the mirror with missile weapons or spells will find their attack immediately rebounds on them!

The wall carvings depict scenes from the legends of Mars, the Selentine god of war.

19. High Priest's Sanctuary

A short passage opens into a tiny chamber littered with decaying religious paraphernalia. Of more immediate concern is the mouldy corpse – bizarrely clad in fine but tattered robes – that hurls itself towards you, gibbering horribly!

GM: This is the corpse of Aethric, the Sorcerer from Sharvan's party, who has died here and been reborn as a Fungus Man. If Sharvan and/or Telenore are with the characters they will be unable to join the battle to slay their former friend (but will thank the characters afterwards for relieving Aethric of his horrific undead existence).

FUNGUS MAN

ATTACK 13, Shortsword (d8, 3)

DEFENCE 6

MAGICAL DEFENCE 6*

Health Points 1d6 +8

Reflexes: 7

(*Fungus Men are immune to all mind-controlling spells and devices as they have no mind in the normal sense.)

Rank-equivalent: 2nd

AF 1 (3 vs. stabbing weapons)

Movement 8m (15m)

EVASION 3

STEALTH 3

PERCEPTION 9 (panoptical)

These foul creatures surprise only on a roll of 1 on a d12. Their appearance is horrifying to the psychically-attuned – everyone must roll equal to or over their Psychic Talent or attack the Fungus Men at -2 ATTACK and -1 DEFENCE. Anyone fighting the Fungus Men has a 10% of being infected with their spores. An infected character must roll under their Strength on a d20 every day. A failure means they lose 1d6 Health Points, and if their Health Points reach -3 they will die and be reborn as a Fungus Man after a week. This process can only be halted by the following spells: *Cure Disease*, *Purification*, and *Miracle Cure*.

Much of the room's clutter is worthless rubbish, except for Aethric's backpack (which is torn and shredded but contains a dagger, 20 Florins, a Potion of Occult Acuity, and a Replenishment Potion (both labeled)). There is also a small rotten wooden box on the floor. This contains three items – a verdigris-stained bronze key that opens the casket in room 17, a golden torc studded with red gems (worth 150 Florins), and a Blue Scarab (rulebook p142). Another obsidian disc also lies on the floor – this was originally in room 18 but Aethric used to gain entrance to this chamber.

Section III. The Catacombs

This is an underworld level beneath the temple of Mars that was used to store the bodies of the priests and legionary worshippers. It has deliberately been left unmapped so that you can design and stock it as you see fit. It is a region of winding bone-strewn tunnels and damp slimy caverns. Undead are found here, and not just Fungus Men and Skeletons, but also the lairs of Ghouls who have warrens burrowing

upwards into the graveyard of Saint Illean's Church. Perhaps there are links to the flooded underworld city of Rigenium, beneath the docklands of Criggen Varras, where yet more horrible monsters lurk – a Nargut (Bestiary p42), or maybe a Man-Slug (see *Sleeping Gods* p61-62). It's all up to you, but remember you do need to include the following two rooms:

20. Lair of the Fungus Men

This lies at the bottom of a winding stairway beneath room 2. It should contain the plate armoured corpse of Sir Quend, reborn as a Fungus Man, and the Fungus Men's accumulated treasure hoard.

21. Pit of Slime

This lies at the bottom of the pit in room 5. It may contain a horde of Giant Rats, or worse!

Section IV. Leaving the Underworld

When the characters wish to return to the surface (or escort others, such as Telenore or Lady Felien and her party), they simply have to return to room 2 and tug on the rope to alert Thodor or Cynric that they want to ascend. It's up to the individual GM how straightforward to play this. If the characters have backpacks bulging with loot (even if it is scavenged antique armour), Cynric and Thodor may demand another 10/15/20 Florins each to let the characters out. They might even want a cut of the treasure themselves. Characters who refuse could find themselves forced back down the rope on the wrong end of a crossbow, and the trapdoor slammed after them! They would then have to enter the catacombs and find another way out...

Any characters who survive their initial foray into the underworld beneath the Black Swan tavern should receive 4 experience points, in addition to any points awarded for overcoming monsters during the adventure. A further bonus experience point could be added for each of the following:

- Clearing the temple of Undead (Fungus Men and Skeletal Legionaries in the main, but also the odd Ghoul as a Wandering Monster).
- Reuniting Sharvan the Mystic with Telenore.
- Leading Lady Felien and her band of adventurers back to the surface.

Achieving all of these objectives would reward each character with 7 experience points for this adventure.

Lastly, anyone infected with the spores of the Fungus Men (such as Lady Felien) will need to find a magical cure, and fast! As finding and convincing a 9th-rank Sorcerer to cast one or several *Miracle Cures* may prove difficult (or an adventure in its own right!), you may wish to rule (as we have already done in the Fungus Men descriptions within this adventure), that the *Cure Disease* spell is equally effective, and that the infected adventurers have the marginally easier task of locating a 6th-rank Sorcerer instead!

Section V. Further Complexity

If you find that simply expanding the catacombs is not enough (see Section III above), there are plenty of other ways to increase the difficulty and challenges faced by the characters. Perhaps the local militia or town guards of Criggen Varras have heard the rumours of what lies beneath the Black Swan, and now want their cut of the takings.

It's unlikely they would venture into the underworld themselves, but if they did, it may prove to be an amusing and interesting diversion for the characters.

Alternatively, after the characters return from their first underground sortie, other bands of adventurers (possibly backed by sages or scholars with an interest in all things Selentine) may wish to enter and claim treasures for their own. Priests or academics might claim the area is now the property of the church and crown and now off limits. Adventuring beneath the port of Criggen Varras would thus become an altogether more clandestine affair! As with anything in the lands of Legend, the only limit to what could happen is your own imagination...