

GAUNTLET OF THE LICH

THE GREEN MOON POOL

Bursting from the ice cold waters you find yourself in an underground cavern, the walls covered in glistening mineral deposits and lit by a green phosphorescence emanating from the water. Huge dagger-like spikes grow from the walls below the waterline, ready to impale the unwary swimmer.

- The spikes could be poisoned. How this poison takes effect could be anything from a mild stat reduction to something more roleplay heavy like hallucinations or a mounting sense of dread. Giving your players role play hooks can really help bring an encounter like this to life.
- Eels or leeches could swarm the party.
- How about some subterranean octopuses? Make them glow and scream when they surface.

THE CHAMBERS OF THE DEAD

Rusted ancient iron bars stretch out along the corridor's walls. Sturdy gates at each end lead into dark rooms on both sides of the corridor. At the corridors centre point is another solid looking iron gate blocking your way forward. The left room contains four sarcophagi, behind them sit four urns on elaborately carved tables, the urns glow a cold blue. The room to your right contains dozens of ancient looking coffins, many broken or half rotted. Bones, cloth and other grave goods litter the floor. Among the jumble of wood, brass and human remains the same cold blue glow can be seen.

- The central gate is very tough to pick, it may even be magic and more than likely trapped. The party can bypass it by using the gates leading into and out of the side rooms, but obviously the dead protect those routes ;) Make sure the party understands they can enter and exit these rooms to bypass the main gate.
- The left route could have fewer stronger undead, the right more of a horde that keeps coming!

THE CAVE

The corridor opens up into a large cave with stalagmites and stalactites framing the walls like teeth erupting from an overfull mouth. To the northeast of the cave is a large opening, as you watch a flickering light begins to emanate from the entrance, slowly building until it's almost blinding to look upon. A furnace like roaring builds with the light, becoming so loud the rocks in the cave vibrate with the sound waves.

- This could be a simple encounter with some cave dwelling creature like Ropers or Cloakers, but something themed for fire would be cooler taking into account the fiery entrance.
- Have the cave mouth be an entrance to the fire plane, maybe something from that plane now calls the cave home. Try a Fire Elemental, the more obscure Rast, a Devil, or have the cave be infested with Thoquua (spiky fire worms).

THE FLAME ROOM

Moving further on you find a smoke filled room, along the left and right walls are bronze fittings attached to the stone in lines. Each one is cast in the shape of a dragon's head, a light flickers within each mouth, while smoke drifts from their nostrils.

- This could have a bronze golem standing at its centre, maybe it walks around the room slowly triggering floor panels that switch on the different flamethrowers. It becomes red hot as the party watches it.
- Or have the flames go off and on in sequence and use this as a skill challenge.
- The smoke could reduce the range of sight. The flames could cause damage even if the victim isn't directly engulfed by them. Proximity to something that hot can be blistering!

THE MIRROR ROOM

Opening the doors you enter into a room filled with pillars, every surface covered in mirrors. Their reflective surfaces capture light, amplifying it to painful levels. You assume the exit is hidden behind the mirrors on the far wall. As you make your way across the room your sense of direction begins to falter, the multiple images of yourself reflected in every surface look confused and somehow different.

- Each image of the party can be slightly different, maybe someone is missing, or has a horrifying injury. Maybe they all have 'evil' moustaches, or one of their backpacks is actually a nasty looking monster. It's time to really mess with your party!
- Combat could have some interesting mechanics here. Have a monster that only appears in the mirrors and attacks people's reflections. A mob could move in and out of the mirrors to effectively teleport around the room and only be vulnerable during that time. Ranged attacks could travel through the mirrors and appear from the opposite side of the room, or reflect off them. Anything that creates light could blind the party.

THE PORTAL ROOM

Purple light floods the large chamber from tall windows on each wall, beyond them swirl clouds sparking with magical energies. In the centre of the room is a huge stone gate, its opening a void of white light, blinding to look upon. Written around its edges and across the floor glow intricate arcane symbols. Once in a while a symbol peel off and float from a surface, crumbling away into arcane dust, only to be replaced moments later as the spell renews itself.

- This could be a final encounter with your preferred villain, a way to escape the dungeon or a portal to a place the party wishes to get too.
- Arcane energy arcs out from the gate and hits the bars around the room, anyone close to them will be hit by the energy.
- This could be in a demiplane or be situated in the 'Elemental Chaos'.
- Does it hold the key to release an ancient power or the means to lock something away? It's up to you!

VARIANTS

Sign up to my Patreon to get access: patreon.com/afternoonmaps

