

DUNGEONS & LAIRS #35: SPHINX PYRAMID

Sphinx Pyramid is a Fifth Edition plug-in adventure for **four characters with an average party level (APL) of 8, 11, 14, or 17**. This document offers a general guideline on how to scale the adventure for each level. A vast collection of tomes, scrolls, and books has been locked away deep beneath a pyramid and is being guarded by a sphinx. The characters, in need of some knowledge contained in this library, need to brave the traps of the tomb and solve the riddles of the sphinx before they can find an answer to their question.

CREDITS

The following creators made this adventure possible:

Design and Writing. DMDave and Ellie Hogan

Cartography. Tom Cartos

Art. Dean Spencer, Direquest, Ellie Hogan, Matias Lazaro, Shutterstock



PLUG-IN ADVENTURE

As a plug-in adventure, the adventure content serves as drop-in material for game masters who wish to add a dungeon to a preexisting campaign or need a side quest. In this case, the party should have one main goal: find the answer to an important question. They might be looking for the location of a mighty weapon, a powerful villain's weakness, a demon's true name, a way to contact the gods, or any other piece of information that will aid them in their main goals. Alternatively, they might be searching for this ancient library to offer a scholar or mage access to it in exchange for a favor.

Gold Rewards. To further incentivize the party to travel to the sphinx pyramid and brave its traps, the party's patron might offer them a gold reward. If you aren't sure how much to reward the party for completing the adventure, pay them a total of 1,000 gp per level of the adventure so long as their patron is wealthy enough to afford such a price.

Omeria Placement

The Sphinx Pyramid can be located deep in a desert, making travel to it arduous for all but the most experienced of adventurers. In Omeria, it may have been built by ancestors of the Ugashian people in the Desolation of Ditimaya, or it may be a remnant of Karnione in the Wither.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

To run the adventure, you need the three Fifth Edition core rulebooks. If you don't have a copy, you can access a free basic ruleset from the official source.

Text that appears in a box like this is meant to be read aloud or paraphrased for the players when their characters first arrive at a location or under specific circumstances, as described in the text.

When a creature's name appears in **bold** type, that's a visual cue pointing you to its stat block as a way of saying, "Hey, game master, make sure you get this creature's stat block ready—there's going to be an encounter!" If the stat block appears in the Appendix of this adventure, the text tells you so;

otherwise, you can find the stat block in the core rulebook.

Spells and non-magical equipment mentioned in the adventure are described in the core manual for players. *Magic items* are described in the core manual for game masters unless the adventure's text directs you to an item's description in the Appendix.

LEVEL SELECTION

Before play, be sure to know the level at which you wish to run the adventure. Overall, the locations and their descriptions in the adventure remain unchanged throughout the levels. However, most of the encounters, hazards, traps, and treasure scale with each level of the adventure. The keyed locations will present the differences between each level.

Also, the adventure works for more than just the listed levels. If you wish to run this adventure for levels other than 8th, 11th, 14th, or 17th, the chart below shows you which version of the adventure you should select for each level. A given version of the adventure might be easier or harder for a given party. It's not recommended that you run this adventure for characters with an average party level of less than 7 as it may pose too much of a challenge. Similarly, a party with an average party level of 19 or greater might find the adventure too easy.

Scaling the Adventure

Average Party Level	Recommended Version	Relative Difficulty
7	8th-level	Hard
8	8th-level	Medium
9	8th-level	Easy
10	11th-level	Hard
11	11th-level	Medium
12	11th-level	Easy
13	14th-level	Hard
14	14th-level	Medium
15	14th-level	Easy
16	17th-level	Hard
17	17th-level	Medium
18	17th-level	Easy



BACKGROUND

Thousands of years ago, the great scholar Ya'amket amassed a vast collection of books, scrolls, and stone tablets in the most comprehensive library known to the world at that time. As he approached the end of his life, he decided to protect and preserve his repository for the generations to come. To do so, he created a library demiplane guarded by a sphinx and hid the entrance within his tomb. He filled his tomb with deadly traps and puzzles so that only the bravest and most intelligent people would be able to access the only entrance.

Many have passed the trials and accessed Ya'amket's library over the years. Now the party finds themselves in need of knowledge that can only be found within. Exactly what the party is looking for in the library depends on what works best as a plot device for your campaign.

*Ya'amket's tomb (or so they say)
Contains vast knowledge tucked away*

*The strong of mind
and brave of deed
Will pass the trials and succeed*

*While those who search
For gold in vain
Will only find his deep disdain*

A player handout of Ya'amket's poem can be found in Appendix A.

SPHINX PYRAMID

Hidden deep within the inhospitable desert lies the tomb of Ya'amket. It appears to be a relatively small pyramid with a series of rooms protruding from one side, but there is far more to it than meets the eye.

GENERAL FEATURES

Unless stated otherwise, locations in the tomb have the following features:

Architecture. The tomb is built of perfectly hewn limestone bricks with carvings and paintings adorning nearly every inch of exposed walls. Rooms built above-ground have 15-foot-tall ceilings while the majority of the rooms below ground have 8-foot-high ceilings. The tomb is enchanted so that none of the ceilings, floors, or walls can be destroyed or altered in any way. Spells and effects that would normally allow creatures to pass through ceilings, floors, and walls, such as *passwall* and *etherealness*, do not function within the tomb.

Doors. Visible doors fit perfectly in their frames and appear to be made from wood with detailed carvings covering their surface, but like the rest of the tomb, they are enchanted to protect them from damage or the ravages of time. Locked doors in the tomb are further protected by the *arcane lock* spell. An *arcane locked* door requires a successful DC 30 Dexterity check using proficiency in thieves' tools to unlock or a successful DC 30 Strength check to break down.

Hidden Doors. The tomb has a number of hidden doors that blend in seamlessly with the surround-

ing walls. A character can find a hidden door with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Perception) check. A character with proficiency in mason's tools or with the Stone Cunning trait can make this check with advantage.

A character can learn how to open the hidden doors by succeeding on a DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check. Hidden doors have no lock to pick and can't be forced open. Once a character has learned the trick to opening a hidden door, they may use their action on subsequent doors to open them without needing to make the check again.

Hidden doors retract into the walls once they are opened and cannot be closed except by using the lever in area 8.

Illumination. Although many of the rooms in the tomb have torch sconces, the torches within have long since burned out, leaving the tomb in darkness.

Magical Protections. The entire tomb is protected by the spells *private sanctum* and *forbiddance*, granting it the following features:

- ▶ Sensors created by divination spells can't appear inside the tomb or pass through the barrier around its perimeter.
- ▶ Creatures in the area can't be targeted by divination spells.
- ▶ Nothing can teleport into or out of the warded area.
- ▶ Planar travel is blocked within the tomb.
- ▶ When any celestial, elemental, fey, fiend, or undead creature enters the tomb for the first time on a turn or starts its turn there, it takes 22 (5d10) radiant damage. The undead creatures in the tomb are excluded from the effect and have long since forgotten the password.

Rumored Curse. While the tomb contains many treasures of monetary and historical value, it is common knowledge among the scholars of the realm that anyone who steals from Ya'amket will be cursed. Whether or not this rumor is actually true is up to the GM. Due to these rumors, selling any objects to someone who knows their true worth is virtually impossible.



1 - ENTRANCE

The entrance to the tomb swings open easily revealing an ornate entrance hallway. Every inch of the walls and pillars within are covered with paintings, carvings, and writing.

The same text, written in an alphabet none of the characters recognize, decorates the four protruding sections of the wall. This text cannot be read by a character using *comprehend languages* or similar magic because it is a code, not a language. A character that succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence check recognizes the code for what it is. A player handout of the hieroglyphs can be found in Appendix A.

This coded message is the same poem as described in the Background and can be used as a cipher to decode the substitution alphabet.

2 - ANTECHAMBER

The large statue of a man reading sits in front of a cool, clean pool of water. The statue's base bears the inscription "Ya'amket the Scholar". Statues and paintings of Ya'amket and other scholars of renown from his era line the walls.

A character that succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (History) check knows that many tombs contain rooms like this where people may pay their respects to the dead and pray for guidance.

3 - EMBALMING ROOM

Stone jars carved to look like animals, bowls, and tools such as tongs, knives, and mallets clutter the surfaces of this room. A character that succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (History) check knows that this room is where bodies were prepared for mummification. The jars in this room are unused.

4 - CRYPT

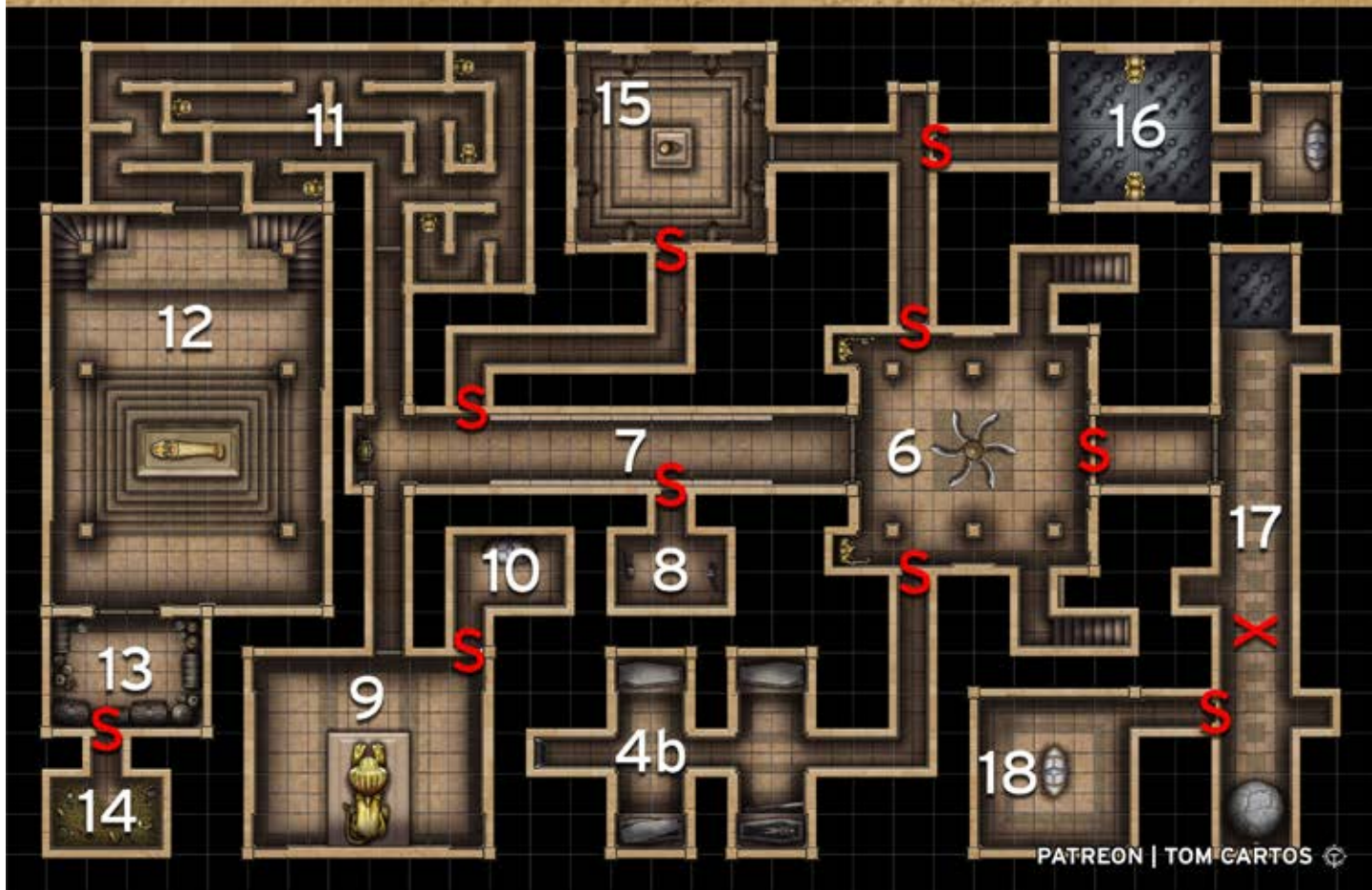
The favored attendants of Ya'amket were laid to rest in the tomb with him. Their coffins are made of heavy polished stone. Opening a coffin lid requires a successful DC 16 Strength check.

Secret Ladder. The easternmost coffin in area 4a is not occupied. It contains a false bottom that a character can detect with a successful DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check. The false bottom opens if more than 20 pounds is placed in the coffin, dropping the contents 10 feet down to area 4b.

Encounter: Unrestful Dead. Some or all of the coffins are occupied by mummies which attack the party if the secret ladder is revealed. The nature of this encounter depends on the level of the adventure, as shown below.

Sphinx Pyramid

1 square = 5 feet



Crypt Encounter

Version	Encounter
8	2 mummies
11 or 14	4 mummies
17	6 mummies

5 - FALSE BURIAL CHAMBER

A sarcophagus with intricate patterns carved into its side and the stone likeness of Ya'amket on top features prominently in this chamber. Historically, those who ask Ya'amket for guidance do so by rubbing the chin of this statue. Over the years, this has given the statue a comically weak jawline.

Stone tablets displayed at the north and south walls of the room show the poem detailed in the Background in the Common script (see Appendix A). Two staircases rise from the hallway leading to the false burial chamber to a balcony over the room with a variety of art objects displayed in a show of wealth (area 5b).

Trick: False Sarcophagus. A character that succeeds on a DC 12 Intelligence (History) check realizes that the statue on this sarcophagus is far too simple for a person of Ya'amket's wealth. Furthermore, a creature that succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check or who tries to open the lid of the sarcophagus realizes that the "lid" doesn't actually open. This is merely a solid chunk of stone in the shape of a sarcophagus.

A character that succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check of the sarcophagus realizes that segments of the patterns carved onto the sides of the sarcophagus push in. A creature can spend 10 minutes trying to figure out the pattern. At the end of the 10 minutes, a character can attempt a DC 15 Intelligence check, opening the secret door that leads to the lower floor of the tomb on a success.

Encounter: Silent Watchers The false burial chamber has invisible stalker guards that follow the party through the tomb and attack only if they try to steal treasure or deface anything. The number of these guards depends on the level of the adventure:

False Burial Chamber Encounter

Version	Encounter
8	1 invisible stalker
11 or 14	2 invisible stalkers
17	3 invisible stalkers



6 - BLADES OF DOOM

Wickedly sharp blades rotate on a pillar in the center of the room. Tucked into two alcoves are gold-plated statues of jackal-headed men with glowing purple eyes.

Trap: Statuesque Pull. The statues create an effect that pulls objects towards the spinning blades. Any creature that enters the room for the first time on its turn or starts its turn there must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be pulled into the spinning blades.

This is a 4th-level spell effect that can be suppressed for 1 hour using *dispel magic* or similar spells. A creature that succeeds on a DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check notices that the statues have seams, indicating that parts of them may be able to move. The statues function similarly to a blacksmith's puzzle box and a character that succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check can use its action to twist that statues' components in the correct order to deactivate it. With one statue deactivated, the DC to avoid being pulled into the spinning blades is reduced to 10.

Trap: Spinning Blades. Any creature pulled into the blades for the first time on its turn or that starts its turn there must succeed on a Dexterity saving throw or take slashing damage as shown in the Spinning Blades Damage table. The spinning blades

are protected by the same magic as detailed in the General Features: Architecture section. They can be deactivated by a character that succeeds on a DC 25 Dexterity check using proficiency in thieves' tools.

Spinning Blades Damage

Version	Dexterity Save DC	Slashing Damage
8	15	22 (4d10)
11	16	33 (6d10)
14	17	44 (8d10)
17	19	55 (10d10)

The entire trap can be deactivated by pulling the western lever in area 8.

7 - CRUSHING WALLS

A 35-foot stretch of this hallway is lined with spiked panels that slam together every few seconds. One of the panels appears to be damaged, its spikes broken off. A statue at the far end of the hallway sits as if in meditation, its red gemstone eyes staring emptily ahead.

Trap: Crushing Walls. The walls close once every 3 seconds. Characters act as if they were under the effects of the *slow* spell when navigating the crushing walls without any penalty to their AC. Any creature caught between the crushing walls takes 3 (1d6) piercing damage per 2 levels of the adventure. The crushing walls are protected by the same magic as detailed in the General Features: Architecture section. Each 5-foot section of panels functions independently.

A pair of panels can be wedged open with a sufficiently large object. Additionally, a character can attempt to disable a pair of panels with a DC 20 Dexterity check using proficiency in thieves' tools. On a successful check, a 5-foot section of crushing walls is disabled. If a character fails this check by 10 or more, they are crushed between the panels.

Trap: Scary Statue. The gemstone eyes of the statue glow with red light if any living creature moves within 20 feet of it, shedding bright light for 10 feet and dim light for an additional 10 feet. Any creature that enters the light for the first time on its turn or starts its turn there must succeed on a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened for 1 minute. While frightened this way, the creature must use all of its movement and actions to move away from the statue as quickly as possible. After being frightened this way, the creature is immune to the scary statue for 1 hour.

The crushing walls and scary statue can be deactivated by pulling the western lever in area 8.

8 - CONTROL ROOM

This small, undecorated room has two levers protruding from the floor.

Western Lever. Pulling this lever deactivates the traps in areas 6 and 7. It resets itself after an hour has passed.

Eastern Lever. Pulling this lever closes any secret doors that were previously opened by the party.

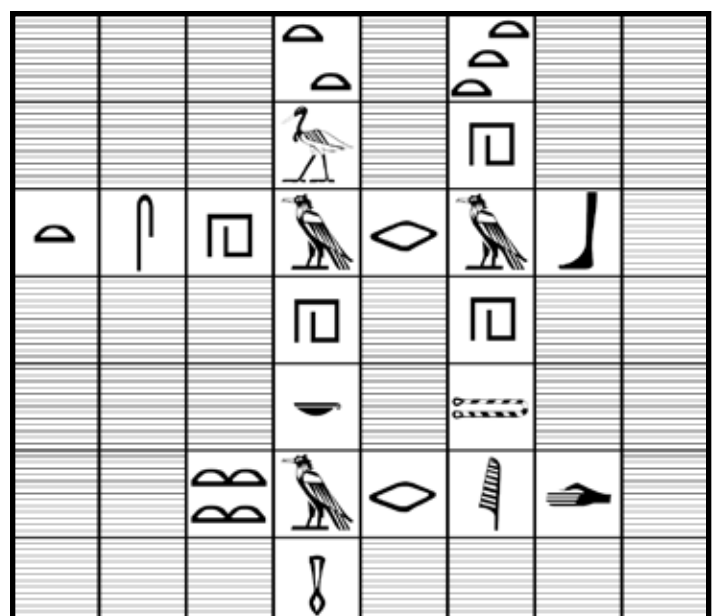
9 - GUARDIAN SPHINX

A huge, golden sphinx statue looms imperially over the room from its perch on a 3-foot-tall platform. The walls are covered with writing, which upon closer inspection is obviously riddles (see Appendix A for player handout).

1. A symbol of protection, I will guard you from a spell. In life I do my job to roll your waste away, as well. (answer: scarab)
2. A kin to dogs, I often have a trickster's reputation. I guard my master's traps with spells to your great agitation. (answer: jackal)
3. We hide a precious liquid under skin that's hard and thick. Should you come knocking, we will stop your plunder with a prick. (answer: cacti)
4. I am a word that oft describes a climate's lack of rain. Where animals and plants both try and fail to live in vain. (answer: arid)

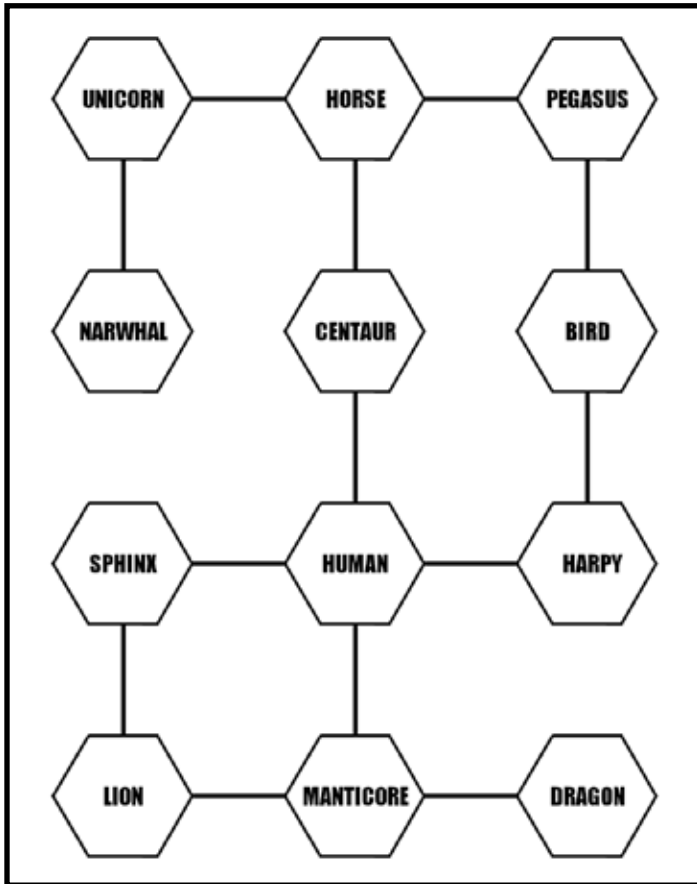
The front of the statue has a grid of shiny black tiles with many missing pieces inlaid in it. Alcoves in the sides of the platform have a number of neatly stacked black tiles with glowing blue symbols matching those in the antechamber (area 2) on them (see Appendix A for player handout).

The answers to the riddles form a crossword puzzle, using the symbols from the code found in the entrance (area 1) in place of standard letters:



When the grid is successfully filled, the sphinx statue briefly animates and sits up, revealing yet another puzzle on the surface of the platform: a 3-by-4 grid of hexagonal indentations with golden lines connecting them and an inscription reading, "When all the creatures all collected arrange them with their traits connected."

The pieces for this puzzle are hidden in areas 10, 16, and 18 (see Appendix A for player handout). The statues must be placed in the holes so that the connected creatures share physical characteristics:



Once all of the statues are correctly arranged, the sphinx's eyes begin to glow bright blue. A swirling portal of matching blue mist appears on the northern wall of the room that leads to the Sphinx Library.

IT'S TOO PUZZLING!

If your players are struggling with the puzzles, have their characters make a DC 15 Intelligence check. Example hints for each puzzle are given in Appendix A.

10 - PUZZLING TREASURE

The chest in this room contains four small statues of creatures with gold-plated hexagonal bases. The statues depict a centaur, harpy, horse, and narwhal. These are puzzle pieces needed to complete the puzzle in area 9.

11 - MAZE FOR THE DEAD

A miniature maze separates the burial chamber from the rest of the tomb. A character that succeeds on a DC 16 Intelligence (History) check knows that these were included in many tomb designs from this culture and era to keep the spirits of the dead contained. The entire region is under the effect of a *darkness* spell.

Trap: Dead-End Damage. Any time a creature moves within line of sight of one of the dragon statues, it fires a ball of force from its mouth. This attack has +8 to hit and deals 27 (6d8) force damage (level 8 or 11 adventure) or 36 (8d8) force damage (level 14 or 17 adventure).

12 - BURIAL CHAMBER

The door to this room is locked.

The true resting place of the great scholar Ya'amket is a grand room with 20-foot-high ceilings and walls decorated with carvings inlaid with gold and precious stones. His gold-plated sarcophagus rests on a 10-foot-high dais.

As soon as any living creature enters the chamber, the ghostly form of Ya'amket rises from his sarcophagus. "These chambers are not for you," he warns them in a calm, stern voice. He has lost most of his memories from life in his drawn-out afterlife, including his name, but remains protective of his treasury. If the characters are looking for puzzle pieces for the guardian sphinx in area 9, he assures them that there are none in his chambers.

Encounter: Begone. Ya'amket only fights the characters if they refuse to leave the room or have stolen something and refuse to put their treasure back. The nature of this encounter depends on the level of the adventure, as shown below:

Burial Chamber Encounter

Version	Encounter
8	1 wraith and 2 vaettir * attendants
11	1 haugbui *
14	1 haugbui and 1 vaettir attendant
17	1 haugbui and 4 vaettir attendants

*Monster statblock can be found in Appendix B

In adventure levels 11 or higher, Ya'amket uses his Sepulchral Scrying ability to follow the character's progress if they encounter him here and leave without killing him.

13 - FALSE TREASURY

The door to this room is locked.

The chests in this room have 800 gp worth of coins and gems. A character that succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (History) check knows that Ya'amket was known to be quite wealthy, so this amount is surprisingly low. This room was designed to trick any tomb robbers into thinking they had succeeded while protecting the bulk of Ya'amket's treasure.

14 - TREASURY

The true treasure of Ya'amket is hidden behind a secret door. The contents of the treasure depend on the adventure level.

Treasury Contents

Version	Treasure
8	2700 gp, 11000 sp, 900 cp, and a <i>crystal ball</i>
11	1600 pp, 11000 gp, and a +2 <i>breastplate</i>
14	2000 pp, 19000 gp, 3 diamonds worth 1000 gp each, 50 +3 <i>blowgun needles</i> , and 2 <i>potions of speed</i>
17	32000 pp, 40000 gp, 3 diamonds worth 5000 gp each, 20 +3 <i>sling bullets</i> , a <i>spell scroll of animal shapes</i> , and <i>horse-shoes of a Zephyr</i>

Any magic items (excluding consumables) the players find here are cursed. Once per day at dusk, roll a d10. On a result of 1, the creature in possession of a magic item instantly ages 1 year. Additionally, an **invisible stalker** appears in the burial chamber 5 days after a creature takes the item. It uses its Faultless Tracker ability to stalk the character. If the invisible stalker is destroyed, a new one appears after 5 days to take its place.

A creature cannot become rid of the curse by giving or throwing the item away; it must either be subject to a *remove curse* spell or place the item back in Ya'amket's treasury. The aging effect can be reversed via a *greater restoration* spell after the creature returns the item to Ya'amket's treasury. Otherwise, only a *wish* spell can reverse the effect.

15 - POISONOUS PIPES

A creature that succeeds on a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check notices the faintest curl of fog from the near-perfect seal between the floor and the doors into this room. When it is opened, the door on the eastern side of this room locks open with a loud "click." To close the door, a character must succeed on a DC 17 Dexterity check made using proficiency in thieves' tools, or a DC 15 Strength check made using proficiency in mason's tools.



Yellow-green fog pours from the eyes, nose, and mouth of the skull, filling the room with a soupy miasma. Dark figures lurk within the fog, immediately rushing towards the characters as they open the door.

Trap: Creeping Fog. The fog functions as the *cloudkill* spell that slowly fills the entire tomb as it spreads through open doors. The fog continues pouring from the statue indefinitely unless a creature uses its action to shut the valve in the hidden hallway to the south of the room or somehow prevents the fog from exiting the skull with an air-tight barrier.

Encounter: Figures in the Fog. A handful of undead lurk within the fog, waiting to attack any creature that opens the door. The nature of these undead depends on the level of the adventure, as shown below. They fight the party to the death, trying to pin them in the creeping fog to weaken the characters who lack their own poison immunity.

Poisonous Pipes Encounter

Version	Encounter
8	3 wights
11	5 wights
14	3 wraiths
17	5 wraiths

16 - ROARING DRAGON

Two dragon head statues with open mouths preside over a 10-foot-deep pit with glistening spikes lining the bottom. The ceiling of the room is covered with a grid of square holes an inch or so wide.

Trap: DOWNDRAFT. This trap activates any time a living creature enters the room. First, the dragon heads let out a loud roar and their eyes glow purple. They cast *dispel magic* at 5th level, targeting up to two creatures at random in the room. If any of their targets are affected by a spell of 6th level or higher, they have +5 on their spellcasting ability check.

After the dragons roar, a strong gust of wind blasts from the ceiling. Any creature in the room must succeed on a DC 18 Strength saving throw or be forced into the spikes at the bottom of the pit. A creature supported by a structure such as a makeshift bridge makes this saving throw with advantage.

A creature that falls into the pit takes 11 (2d10) piercing damage from the spikes at the bottom of the trap, and is affected by a poison determined by the level of the adventure:

Pit Trap Poison

Version	Poison
8	Serpent venom
11 or 14	Wyvern poison
17	Purple worm poison

Treasure: Missing Pieces. The chest in the room adjacent to the roaring dragon trap contains four small statues of creatures with gold-plated hexagonal bases. The statues depict a unicorn, bird, manticores, and dragon. These are puzzle pieces needed to complete the puzzle in area 9.

17 - CRUSHING SPHERE

This room is uncomfortably warm and filled with steam that lightly obscures the area. The entrance door to the room is weighted so that it swings closed if it isn't propped open. The ceiling is only 5 feet high, and through the haze, the characters can just make out a pit at the room's northern end, a dome-like protrusion at its southern end, and three alcoves in the walls just big enough for a single Medium creature to fit into.

The steam is pumped into the room via holes in the walls of the pit at the northern end of the hallway. It can be temporarily dispersed by wind of moderate or greater speed (at least 10 miles per hour) but refills the hallway after 1d4 minutes.

A character with a passive Perception score of 12 or higher notices that the square tiles in the center of the hallway are raised slightly and the protrusion in the southern end of the hallway is a large boulder. A character that succeeds on a DC 10 Intelli-

gence (Investigation) can tell that these are pressure plates. A character that is aware of the pressure plates can choose not to step on them.

Far less obvious than the pressure plates on the floor is the web of razor-thin trip wires strung 15 to 20 feet away from the boulder. These wires can be detected by a creature that succeeds on a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check. A creature aware of the trip wires can cross the wires without activating the trap with a successful DC 25 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check.

Trap: Crushing Boulder. If the pressure plates or wires are triggered, the boulder is launched down the corridor. Each creature in its path takes 22 (4d10) bludgeoning damage and must make a DC 15 Strength saving throw. On a successful saving throw, the creature is able to haul itself into one of the alcoves. On a failed saving throw, the boulder pushes the creature into the pit trap at the northern edge of the room then rolls on top of it, pushing it into the spikes. A creature crushed by the boulder takes additional piercing damage based on the level of the adventure.

Crushing Boulder Pit Trap Damage

Version	Piercing Damage
8	33 (6d10)
11	44 (8d10)
14	55 (10d10)
17	66 (14d10)

18 - MORE PUZZLING TREASURE

The chest in this room contains four small statues of creatures with gold-plated hexagonal bases. The statues depict a human, pegasus, lion, and sphinx. These are puzzle pieces needed to complete the puzzle in area 9.



SPHINX LIBRARY

The portal in area 9 leads to a large library demiplane guarded by a sphinx. The portal back to the tomb will only remain open for a day, after which it will need a month to recharge.

The sphinx has been alone for hundreds of years and is itching for a fight. It makes the party a deal: defeat it (non-lethally), and it will aid their research to the best of its ability. It knows the layout and contents of the library and warns them of the time limit associated with the portal. Any checks made to research and find the knowledge that the party is looking for will be made with disadvantage without its assistance.

Encounter: Pent-Up Energy. Unlike the players, the sphinx has no reason to fight with non-lethal damage. Once the sphinx is reduced to 50 hit points or fewer, it surrenders and grants the party full access to its library.

Version	Encounter
8	1 gynosphinx
11	1 gynosphinx and 1 ghost
14	1 androsphinx
17	1 androsphinx and 1 shield guardian

ADVENTURE CONCLUSION

If the characters fairly defeated the sphinx, it will assist them in their research and cast its spells for their benefit. The sphinx's library is a great place to perform research downtime. At the GM's discretion, the demiplane may contain a teleportation circle or some other way for the party to return.

If the party fails to reach the sphinx's library they must find some other way to find the knowledge they need. Ω

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- ▶ [Dungeons & Lairs #29: Minotaur Maze](#)
- ▶ [Dungeons & Lairs #30: Owlbear Wood](#)
- ▶ [Dungeons & Lairs #31: Mimic Museum](#)
- ▶ [Dungeons & Lairs #32: Oni Palace](#)
- ▶ [Dungeons & Lairs #33: Rust Monster Mine](#)
- ▶ [Dungeons & Lairs #34: Revenant Ghost Ship](#)

- ▶ [Dark Domains I: Lost Reliquary](#)
- ▶ [Dark Domains II: The Haunted Mine](#)



APPENDIX A: HANDOUTS

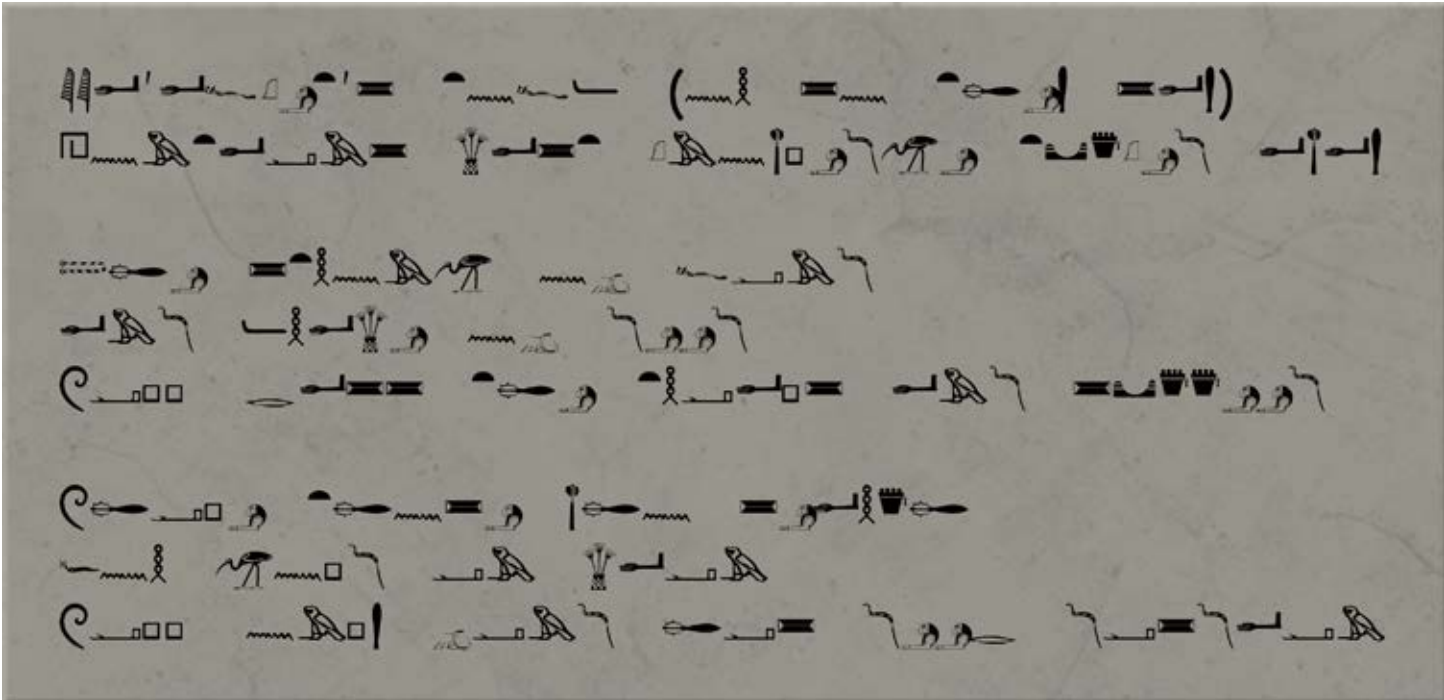
PLAYER HANDOUT POEM (BACKGROUND/AREA 5)

**Ya'amket's tomb (or so they say)
Contains vast knowledge tucked away**

**The strong of mind
and brave of deed
Will pass the trials and succeed**

**While those who search
For gold in vain
Will only find his deep disdain**

PLAYER HANDOUT HIEROGLYPHS (AREA 5)



PLAYER HANDOUT HINTS (AREA 9)

D

**A symbol of protection, I will guard you from a spell
In life I do my job to roll your waste away, as well**

D

**A kin to dogs, I often have a trickster's reputation
I guard my master's traps with spells to your great agitation**

D

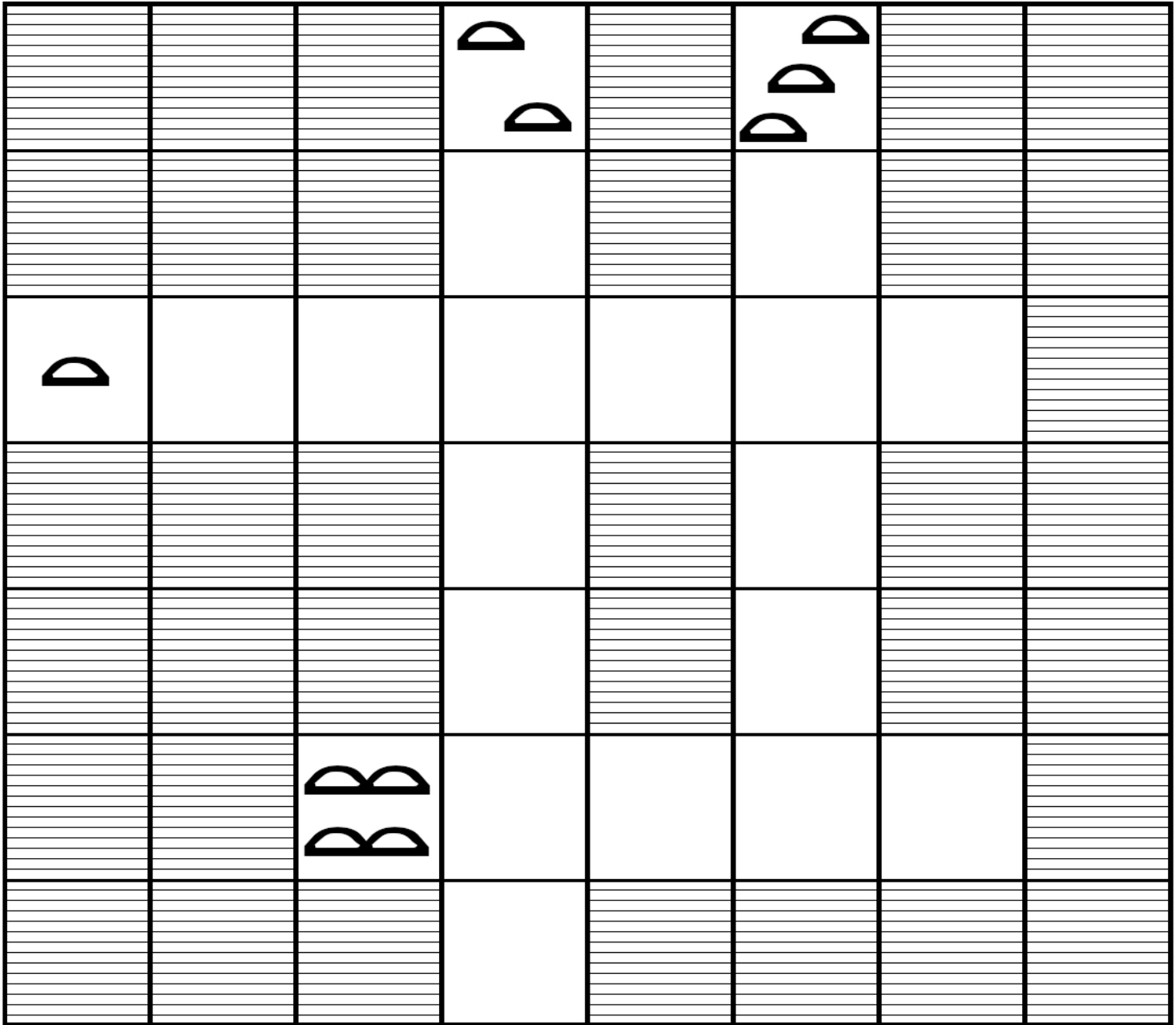
D D D

**We hide a precious liquid under skin that's hard and thick
Should you come knocking, we will stop your plunder with a prick**

B B

**I am a word that oft describes a climate's lack of rain
Where animals and plants both try and fail to live in vain**

PLAYER HANDOUT PUZZLE GRID (AREA 9)



PUZZLE HINTS

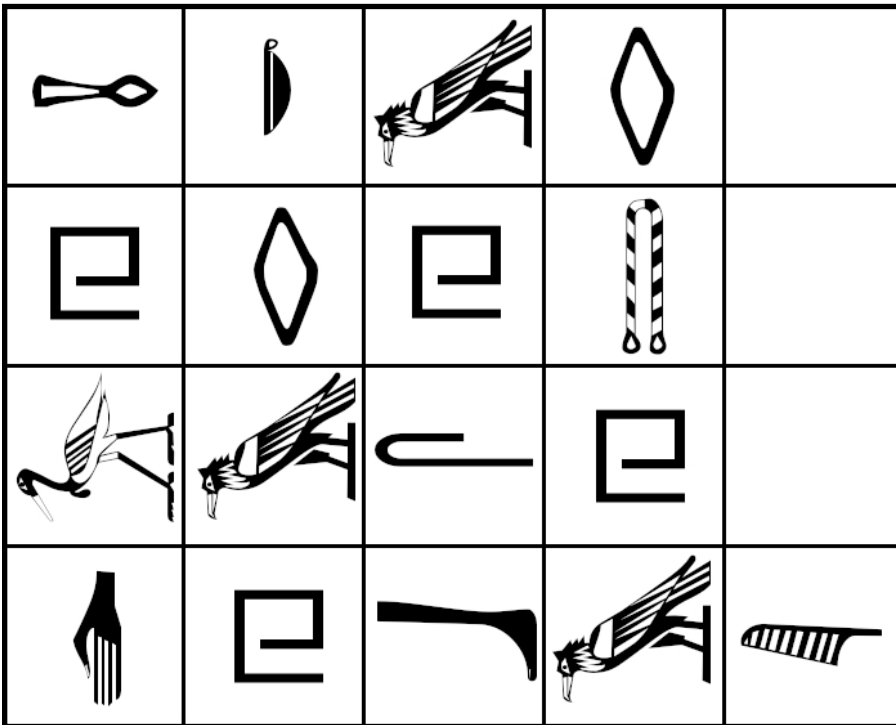
Crossword Puzzle

- ▶ The riddles written on the walls seem to be clues to solve the crossword on the sphinx statue.
- ▶ The symbols on the tiles are the same as those in entrance (location 1).
- ▶ The structure of the repeated section in the entrance (location 1) and the poem in the false burial chamber (location 5) is very similar.
- ▶ The text in the entrance (location 1) and the poem in the false burial chamber (location 5) is identical. It can be used as a cipher to solve the substitution code.

Chimera Puzzle

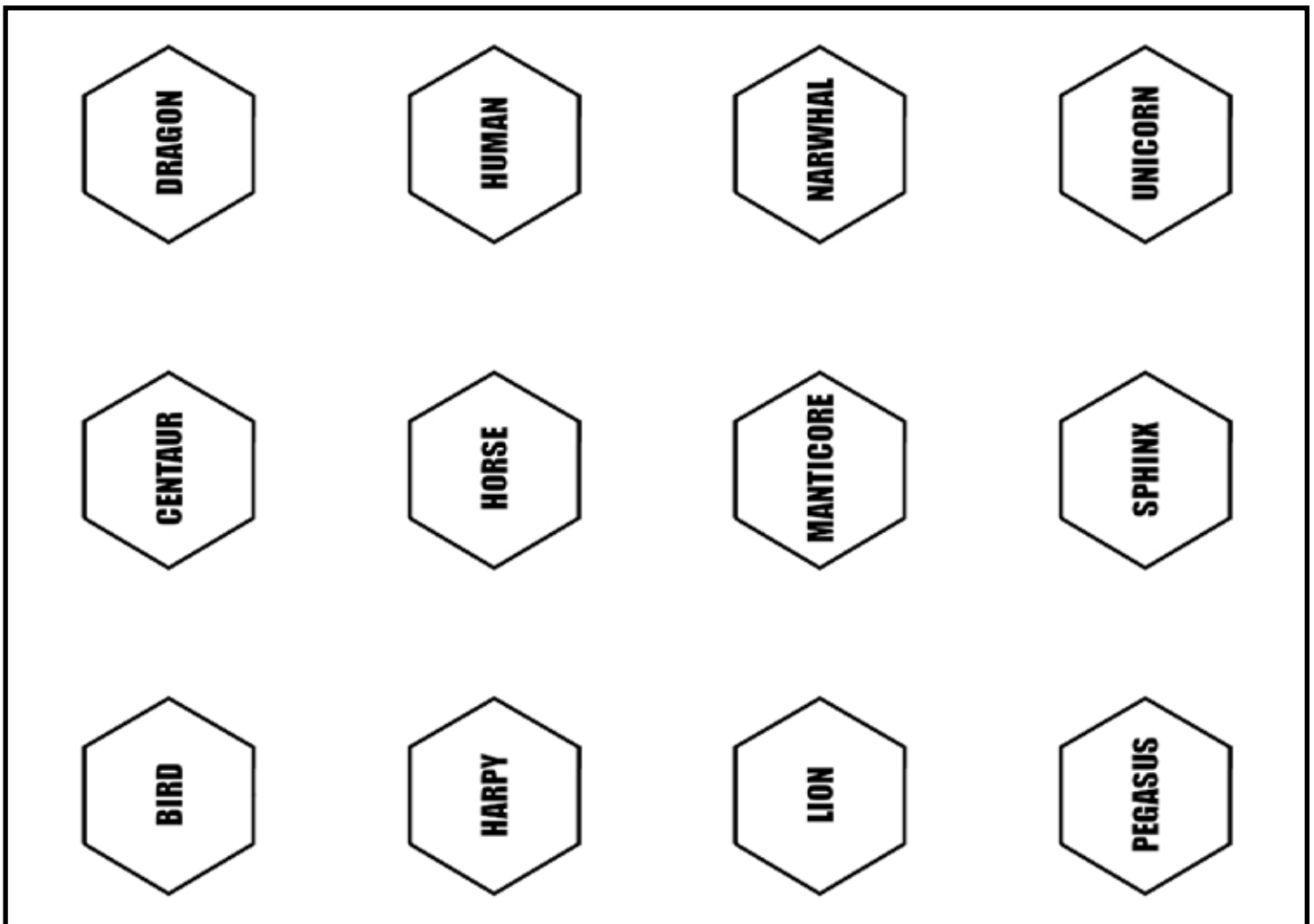
- ▶ The “traits connected” likely refers to the physical traits of the creatures.
- ▶ A harpy and a pegasus both have bird-like aspects and therefore must be in connected hexagons.
- ▶ Four of the creatures (centaur, sphinx, harpy, and mantichore) all have human-like traits, so the human statue must go in the hexagon with four connections.

PLAYER HANDOUT PUZZLE TILES (AREA 9)

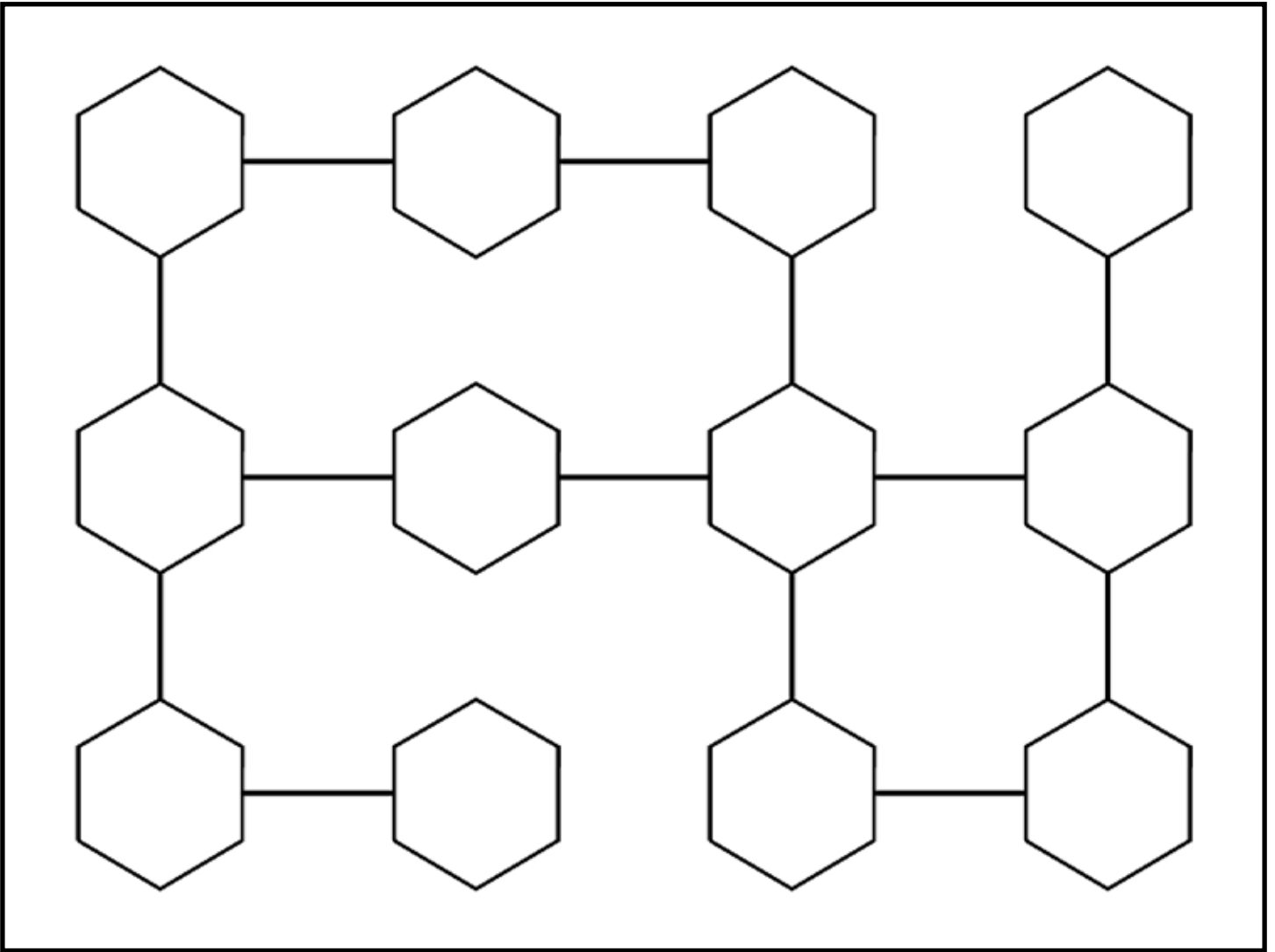


Cut out the individual tiles/statue tokens, so your players can freely arrange them on the puzzle grids.

PLAYER HANDOUT CREATURE STATUES (AREAS 10, 16, 18)



PLAYER HANDOUT HEXAGONS (AREA 9)



APPENDIX B: CREATURES

HAUGBUI

A thick swirl of dust rises, settles, and forms the vague outline of a man—two points of yellow light shine where its eyes should be, staring malevolently.

Mound Haunter. A haugbui is an undead spirit tied to its burial mound or barrow. It serves as a familiar, protective spirit to nearby farmsteads or villages, so long as tribute is regularly paid to the haugbui. Traditional offerings may include pouring the first beer from a barrel, leaving portions of meals out overnight, sacrificing blood or livestock, or burying a portion of any income in the mound. A freshly-woken haugbui devours the remains of creatures it was buried with, such as a hawk, hound, or horse.

Milder Spirits. Haugbuis are related to vaettir, but much older. They are more humble and less prone to taking umbrage, and indeed, a great many haugbui have long since forgotten their own names. They are not quick to spill blood when irritated, and thus are viewed with greater tolerance by the living.

Scrye and Watch. They prefer to watch over their people from within their mound, and only come forth over the most grievous insults or injuries. They can do a great deal from within their mounds thanks to their scrying ability.



Haugbui

Medium undead, lawful neutral

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 136 (16d8 + 64)

Speed 0 ft., fly 40 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	17 (+3)	18 (+4)	15 (+2)	20 (+5)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +8, Con +9, Wis +10

Skills Arcana +7, History +7, Intimidation +8, Perception +10, Religion +12

Damage Immunities poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned

Senses truesight 60 ft., passive Perception 20

Languages the languages it spoke in life; telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 13 (10,000 XP)

Incorporeal Movement. The haugbui can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If the haugbui fails a saving throw it can choose to succeed instead.

Sepulchral Scrying (1/Day). An invisible magical eye is created under the haugbui's control, allowing it to watch its territory without leaving the burial mound. The eye travels at the speed of thought and can be up to 5 miles from the haugbui's location. The haugbui can see and hear as if it were standing at the eye's location, and it can use its innate spellcasting abilities as if it were at the eye's location. The eye can be noticed with a successful DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check and can be dispelled as if it were 3rd-level spell. Spells that block other scrying spells work against Sepulchral Scrying as well. Unless dismissed by its creator or dispelled, lasts for up to 12 hours after its creation; only one can be created per 24-hour period.

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the haugbui has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Turn Resistance. The haugbui has advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead.

Innate Spellcasting. The haugbui's innate spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 18). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

Constant: *detect thoughts, invisibility, mage hand, scrying*
 At will: *dancing lights, druidcraft, mending, spare the dying*
 1/day: *bane, create or destroy water, fog cloud, purify food and drink*
 5/day: *blindness/deafness, gust of wind, locate object, moonbeam, shatter*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The haugbui makes two psychic claw attacks.

Psychic Claw. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +10 to hit, range 40 ft., one target. *Hit:* 32 (6d8 + 5) psychic damage.

Vættir

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 15 (chain shirt)

Hit Points 120 (16d8 + 48)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex +4, Con +5, Wis +3, Cha +4

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, poisoned

Senses truesight 30 ft., darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages the languages it knew in life

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Covetous Bond. Corpse-black vættir can see the face of any creature holding or carrying any item the vættir ever claimed as its own. It also detects the direction and distance to items it ever owned, so long as that item is currently owned by another. If the item changes hands, the new owner becomes the target of the vættir's hunt. Bone-white vættir see individuals who have offended them. Neither time nor distance affects these abilities, so long as both parties are on the same plane.

Deathless. The vættir is destroyed when reduced to 0 hit points, but it returns to unlife where it fell on the next nightfall with full hit points. It can be killed only by removing its head, burning the corpse, and dumping the ashes in the sea, or by returning it to its burial mound, placing an open pair of scissors on its chest, and driving pins through its feet.

Sunlight Sensitivity. Vættir avoid daylight. A vættir in direct sunlight has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks.

Innate Spellcasting. The vættir's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 12). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

2/day each: *gaseous form*, *hunter's mark*

1/day each: *enlarge/reduce*, *phantom steed*

1/week each: *bestow curse*, *geas*, *remove curse*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The vættir makes two greataxe attacks or two longbow attacks.

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (1d12 + 5) slashing damage plus 3 (1d6) necrotic damage.

Longbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

Corpse Breath (Recharge 5-6). The vættir spews forth a 15-foot cone of putrid gas. Those caught in the area must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1d4 rounds.

Maddening Gaze (1/Day). The vættir can lock eyes with a creature and drive it mad. Any creature within 30 feet of a vættir that is the focus of its gaze must make a DC 12 Charisma saving throw or become confused (as the spell) for 1d4 rounds. If the save is successful, the target is immune to the effect for 24 hours.



VÆTTIR

Vættir are ancestral spirits, sometimes protective and helpful but demanding reverence and wrathful when offended.

Servants of the Land. Land vættir dwell in barrows while sea vættir live beneath lakes, rivers, or the sea—both wear ancient mail and carry bronzes axes in withered hands. Servants of the land, they haunt those who disrespect the wild or ancient laws and traditions.

Jealous and Wrathful. A wrathful vættir rises from its mound when its grave goods are stolen (including heirlooms passed on to living descendants) or when they are disrespected (leaving the dragon prow attached to a longship is a common offense, as is failing to make offerings). Vættir jealously guard both honor and treasures, and may be relentless enemies over matters as small as an accidental word or a single coin.

Dangerous Helpers. A vættir's blue-black skin is stretched taut over its bones and sinews and its lips are drawn back in a cruel grimace. A rarer, bone-white variety exists that cares little for material possessions, instead guarding their honor or a particular patch of land. Both varieties will answer a summons by descendants or nearby villages. The summoned vættir will wander into longhouses or taverns and sit down beside those who call them, ready to serve. However, there's always a price and a vættir's help is often more than bargained for.

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