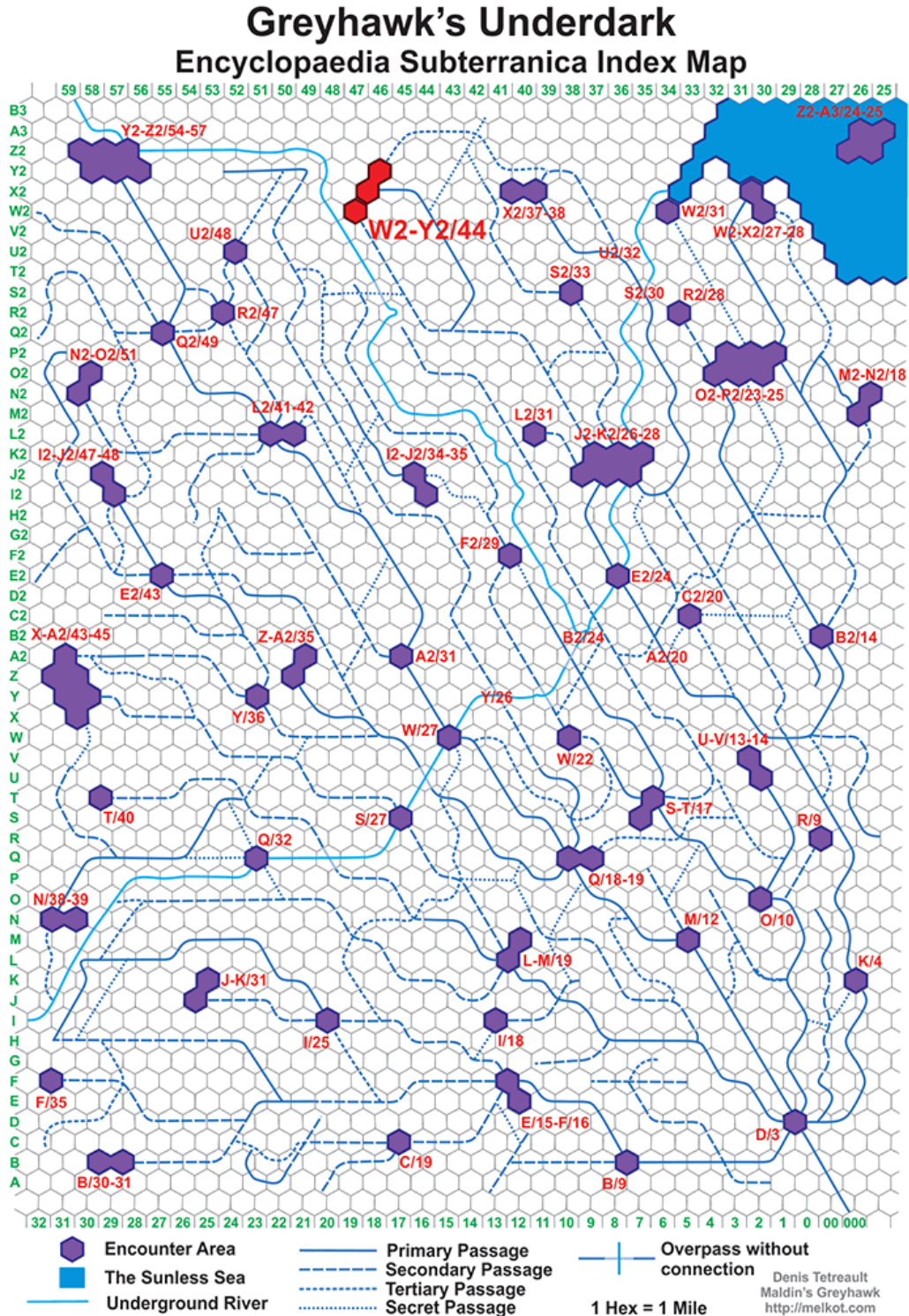


D4: ENCYCLOPÆDIA SUBTERRANICA

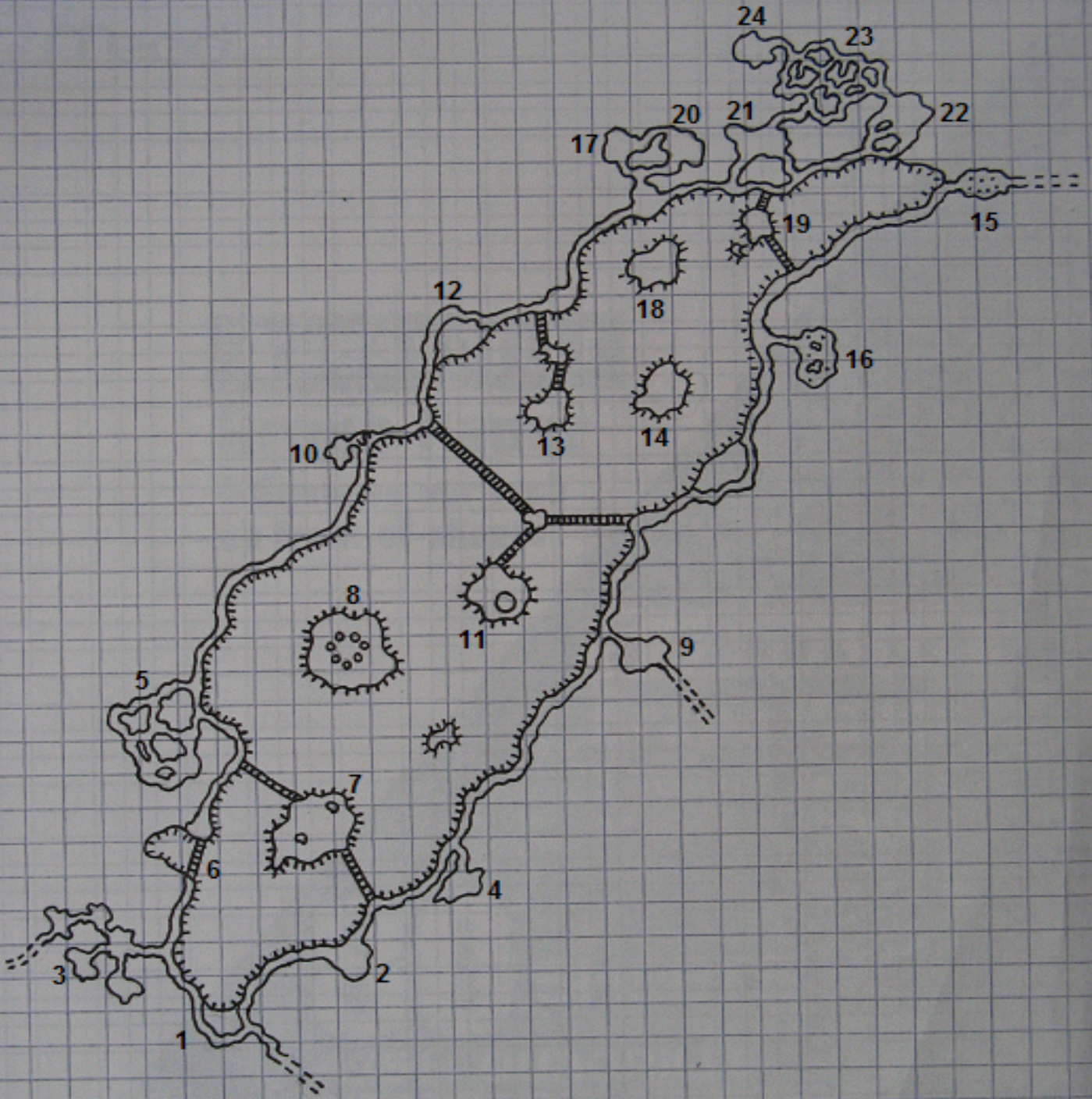
ENCOUNTER AREA W2-Y2/44 The Chasm of Deadly Breath

by eldersphinx



This encounter was developed as part of a collaborative exercise on the Dragonsfoot forums (<http://www.dragonsfoot.org>) to describe the rest of the "Depths of the Earth" from Dungeon Modules D1-3 by E. Gary Gygax, developing those areas illustrated on the map but not detailed in the modules themselves. For more information about D4: Encyclopædia Subterranea and the other encounter areas on the index map, visit **Maldin's Greyhawk - Greyhawk's Underdark** at <http://melkot.com/locations/underdark/underdark.html>

ENCOUNTER AREA W2/44-Y2/44: MAP A



ENCOUNTER AREA W2/44-Y2/44

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Initial Note

As the party approaches within five miles of this encounter area (by ground distance traveled – the tunnels in hex Y2/47 would not qualify, for instance), they will notice an odd breeze beginning to stir in the vicinity. At first, this will be a mere murmur, with a velocity of only a few mph. As they grow closer to the encounter area, however, it will grow to a strength of 15 mph at 4 miles distant, 30 mph at 3 miles, 50 mph at 2 miles, and finally 75 mph speeds at a distance of 1 mile or less.

At the closest extent, travel will be difficult (all ground movement is slowed to half normal speed); thrown or fired missiles with a weight of less than 20 coins will veer hopelessly off course, automatically missing their targets; and even attacks with heavier weapons will suffer a –4 penalty to hit, in both missile and melee combat. Any thief who attempts to detect noise or climb walls will suffer a penalty of –50% to checks, due to the force of the winds and the din of the gale. On the upside, all chances to move silently are doubled. Adventurers suffer these penalties both near to and within the encounter area, though most of the monsters resident within are used to the conditions. They suffer no penalties for movement or combat. The druid spell, **call lightning**, may be used throughout the encounter area, with targets suffering a –4 to their saving throw.

If and when the party reaches the Chasm proper, they will discover a remarkable and bizarre sight – a seemingly bottomless chasm, carved out of the depths of the very earth itself! This strange rift extends, both upwards and downwards, to the limits of the characters' vision and light sources, and is filled with fresh, breathable air; a welcome difference from the dry and stagnant vapors of the remainder of the underworld. Several islands of rock seem to rise from the chasm's murky depths, either balanced on precarious stone needles or hovering completely in midair.

Of course, the Chasm is not truly bottomless, though in many cases it comes close. The canyon floor is several hundred feet below the lowest surface shown on the encounter map, resulting in an almost certain 20d6 falling damage to any character who missteps. The sole exception is if a character falling from the edge enters one of several slowly-moving vortices to the Elemental Plane of Air that drift throughout the Chasm. The chance of this happening is 10% and, in this case, the character is instantly transported, undamaged, to a random location in Elemental Air.

Note that magical flight through the Chasm also runs some risk of encountering one of these vortices, though, if the character has control over his own movement, the chance of an encounter is lowered to 5% - check once per full turn the character remains airborne. A character who engages in flight, only to remain close to the ground, may not risk encountering a vortex at all, at the Dungeon Master's discretion. An elemental vortex is not visible to normal sight, but can easily be spotted via use of **detect magic**, **detect invisibility**, **wizard eye** or any similar spell, and avoided with ease once its presence is discerned. Most of the monsters resident in the Chasm are either able to detect the vortices naturally (by dint of long experience and practice), are uncaring as to whether they get sucked into the plane of Air, or both.

Wandering Monsters

Most wandering monsters within the Chasm of Deadly Breath are capable of flight or are undead bound to the service of the Master of the Chasm or his enemies. Encounters occur on a 1 in 6 chance; check each turn, rolling 2d10 if an encounter is realized. If south of the first dotted line shown on the encounter area map, subtract 4 from this roll (treating modified results of 1 or less as a roll of 2, for a range of 02-16). If north of the second dotted line shown on the encounter area map, add 4 to the roll (treating modified results of 21 or more as a roll of 20, for

a range of 06-20).

Roll	Encounter
2	Drow scouting party
3	Demon, type I (1-4)
4	Huge spiders (3-9)
5	Giant slug
6	Air Elementals (8 HD) (1-6)
7	Subterranean Lizards (1-6)
8	Gray Ooze (1 or 2-4)
9	Wind walkers (1-3)
10	Invisible Stalkers (1-4)
11	Air Elementals (12 HD) (1-6)
12	Stirges (4-24)
13	Aerial Servant
14	Skeletal Peryton
15	Shadows (3-18)
16	Air Elementals (8 HD) (1-6)
17	Wraiths (1-8 or 2-12)
18	Gas Spore
19	Ghost (1 or 1-3)
20	Sylph

Unless specific hit point values are listed in the wandering monster description, roll hit points randomly at the beginning of the encounter.

Aerial servant: Brought unwillingly to the Material Plane and driven half-mad by its confinement in the 'normal' plane of existence, any aerial servant who encounter the party will attack on sight, fighting until destroyed. Perhaps fortunately, these beings travel alone within the Chasm, and are not so intelligent as to attempt to grapple with adventurers in most circumstances.

The forceful presentation of a holy symbol (in the same matter that a cleric would turn the undead, or a righteous soul ward off a vampire) gives a 10% chance of staying the wrath of an aerial servant. If successful, the aerial servant considers the bearer a powerful cleric and sees in such a chance to return home. The aerial servant will break off its attacks and refuse to further damage the party. However, it will immediately attempt to seize the character it has identified as a priest and carry that being into the sky! Once airborne, the servant will blindly attempt to seek out an elemental vortex. If it locates one, either through chance or with the assistance of its passenger, it will pass through at top speed carrying its abductee with it to the Elemental Plane of Air. If an elemental vortex is not located within one hour, the aerial servant will drop its abductee (for a probable 20d6 damage) and depart in a rage.

Air Elementals: Present by random happenstance, they barely recognize as living beings any adventurers they encounter. 80% of the time, one of the air elementals will be in whirlwind form and "buzz" the party on initial encounter. If the party attacks the elementals in response to this

provocation they will fight with a will, but if the party does not initially react with hostility the elementals will depart without causing further mischief.

Demons, Type I: The demons are either in service to the drow, or travel the chasm for their own malicious pleasure. In either case, they will likely be cruel, vicious, and inclined to attack party members on sight. A flock of 1-4 of these foul creatures will appear at any one time. They will use their flight abilities to strike at adventurers from behind or above, or their magical abilities to attempt to force enemies off a cliff edge. These demons receive the same penalties to physical attacks and ground movement as the adventurers, though it is very unlikely that they will remain landbound for sufficient time as to suffer the latter penalty. Note that the demons' senses do allow them to detect elemental vortices, and, if the chance permits, they will attempt to goad or trick flying characters through one of these strange gates!

Drow scouting party: House Noquar of the dark city of Erelhei-Cinlu, and more specifically to the priestess Chariness (qv) of that house, has sent this scouting party. They are exploring the more southern reaches of the Chasm as part of their mistress's plots. They will not seek to enter combat with adventurers unless pressed, or unless they have reason to believe the party is already openly hostile to House Noquar or to drow in general.

The drow can provide much detail about life in Erelhei-Cinlu, and even some details of factional politics between the great Houses and merchant clans of the city, but will not do so without the aid of powerful magics. Even then, the target receives a save at +4 to resist speaking of any such matters – this applies both to effects which would compel the will (such as **charm person**) and spells which reveal the target's thoughts (**ESP**, etc).

5-10 male first level fighters appear in the patrol (AC 1 from **drow +1 chain mail**, **drow +1 buckler**, +1 for 15 Dexterity; H.P.: 8 each;) each armed with a **drow +1 short sword**, atlatl and six poisoned javelins (9" range, +1/+2/+3 to hit at short/medium/long range, 2-7 H.P. damage and save vs. poison at -4 or sleep for 3-12 turns; a character affected by venom and within 5' of a cliff edge must save against death ray at +2 or topple over the side) and able to use **dancing lights**, **darkness**, and **faerie fire** each once per day, as a 2nd level caster. The drow are not experienced in fighting within the Chasm, and so suffer the same penalties to hit and movement as does the party. They are commanded by a male fighter/magic user of 4th/3rd level (AC -1 from **drow +2 chain mail**, **drow +1 buckler**, +2 for dexterity of 16; H.P.: 18) armed with a **drow +2 short sword** and **drow +2 dagger**, and the ability to use the following spells:

First Level: **dancing lights; darkness; detect magic; faerie fire; feather fall; magic missile**

Second Level: **know alignment; levitate; web**

If this encounter is rolled more than once, it is to the Dungeon Master's discretion whether the same group is encountered a second time, or whether the party has met a different patrol dispatched by House Noquar. This decision may seem somewhat obvious if the first drow scouting party was utterly destroyed, but consider – the drow have only limited forces (and a limited interest) in this area, and so cannot afford to dispatch many patrols. If three or more patrols have been encountered, or the adventurers have attacked the drow outpost at location 3, any further encounter results of this type should be replaced by Demon (Type I) as listed above, to represent the greater number of fiendish servants summoned by Chariness Noquar to trouble those who interfere with her plans!

Gas spores: Drifted loose from their nest in location 22, they wander aimlessly on the winds until encountered by some other living being (rarely) or impacting against the chasm wall with sufficient force to rupture (often). The effect of the winds of the Chasm upon missile fire

makes these creatures arguably more dangerous. However, if left unmolested for two rounds after the encounter begins, there is a 75% chance that shifting winds will carry any gas spore swiftly away from the party, removing any chance of danger. Only one gas spore will be encountered at a time as a wandering monster.

Ghosts: These undead seek to prevent adventurers and the curious from exploring the northern stretches of the Chasm of Deadly Breath, and will employ their formidable array of powers and abilities towards this end. If outnumbered by their opponents, wandering ghosts will not attempt to force targets affected by their **magic jar** off the sides of cliffs, but will instead simply have their victims hang back, in hopes that their comrades will not seek to advance further. Ghosts encountered as wandering monsters appear singly in the central section of the encounter area, in groups of 1-3 if met north of the second dotted line on the encounter area map.

Giant slugs: These mollusks can both crawl over solid ground and, with difficulty, cling to walls at a movement rate of 3". They thus pose a danger to almost all other creatures within the Chasm. Because of the high winds, the range of their acidic spit is limited to 6", maximum, while in the encounter area and chances to hit are only 70% if the target is within 1", with a -10% penalty for every additional 1" of range. However, if the slug attempts to spit at targets at 4" or greater, the wind will sufficiently spread the acid to spatter all characters within 1" of the intended target, attacking each for 1-8 hit points of damage. Only a single giant slug will be encountered at a time.

Gray ooze: These puddle on the floors of walkways or cling to walls, hoping that prey will step into its clutches. If characters flee from a gray ooze, it will generally not attempt to pursue. There is a 50% chance that any encounter with gray ooze will be with but a single specimen, a 50% chance that two to four oozes will be encountered at any one time.

Huge spiders: These spiders hunt in packs of 3-9 (roll 2d4+1) and either charge openly at their prey or conceal themselves within cracks in the wall until their prey is within striking distance, at the discretion of the Dungeon Master. Characters who boast of their victories over such monsters will likely be viewed with disdain by the drow of House Noquar.

Invisible stalkers: These aerial beings are only 20% likely to be hostile, otherwise viewing the party as an opportunity for harmless mischief – filching loose items from adventurers, yanking on hair or sword scabbards, shoving and jostling, etc. Such pranks will generally not be intended to cause serious harm, however, and if a character does come to a bad end through such mischievous acts the stalkers are likely to flee in remorse.

If the party detects the presence of a group of invisible stalkers looking for fun and responds with hostility, the chance for future groups of stalkers to be hostile increases by +20% (cumulative for each encounter handled in this way). Within the Chasm, invisible stalkers appear in groups of 1-4.

Shadows: Traveling in packs of 3-18, they attack any living being on sight and fight until destroyed. Shadows suffer the same penalties to movement and attacks as the adventurers.

Skeletal perytons: Created by the lich Alphaios (qv), these things soar through the Chasm looking to shed blood and spread destruction. Like skeletons, these foul creatures take only one-half damage from sharp or edged weapons, are immune to **sleep**, **charm**, **hold**, and cold-based spells and effects, and take 2-8 H.P. of damage if struck by a vial of holy water. They are treated as perytons in all other respects. Skeletal perytons may be turned as wights.

Stirges: Stirges move in flocks of 4-24. The high winds of the Chasm, combined with their small size and general fragility, reduces their maximum flight speed to 12".

Subterranean lizards: Packs of 1-6 lizards often seek to attack prey from below, running sideways along the wall of the Chasm beneath its lip until closing to within melee distance. Because of this attack mode, they achieve surprise on a roll of 1-3 on a six-sided die. One encounter in four will be with lizards that possess functional glide-flaps between fore and hind legs, and so can ride the winds of the Chasm at a flight move of 6".

Sylphs: From location 20, they wander the Chasm in search of beings of good heart who can help them deal with the undead masters of this place. They will be encountered singly outside of their lair, remaining constantly **invisible** unless they choose to parley or they are attacked. If the party seems valiant and good at heart, they may be guided to the sylphs' refuge and asked to either confront the lich Alphaios (qv) or the denizens of the Baleful Heart (also qv).

Wind walkers: These creatures appear in groups of 1-3. The force of their blows is somewhat blunted within the Chasm of Deadly Breath, inflicting only 3-8 hit points of damage, but characters affected must, in addition, make saving throws versus death ray or be swept over the edge of the chasm. They will trouble the characters for 2-5 rounds only, departing after that time if not defeated first.

Wraiths: These undead will attack any living being they encounter on sight, fighting until victorious or dead. They suffer the same penalties to movement and attacks as the party. 1-8 will be present in the central section of the encounter area, 2-12 in the northern section.

1. **SHATTERED TUNNEL:** At this location, the passage around the edge of the Chasm cuts away from the edge for a short ways, with solid rock walls on both sides shielding travelers from any sudden drop. The chance to get away from the sheer cliff-face should be welcome for many characters, but complacency is best avoided – this area has been subtly trapped by the drow of Noquar.

Careful work has been done to subtly weaken the cavern floor, and lace it with powerful magics. As a result, whenever any being steps on a section of floor, or places a heavy weight (more than 50#) on its surface, the immediate area explodes into a spray of razor-sharp edges, which are then thrown about by the winds, wreaking great havoc on all present. The unlucky victim, and any other present within the tunnel, suffer 2d6 damage from this trap; anyone within 2" of the tunnel entrance suffers 1d8 damage.

The drow have provided a way for knowledgeable souls to avoid the trap. A few key areas have been marked with chips of stone, seemingly unremarkable to normal vision, but colored a deep, rich blue to those with ultravision (which the drow possess) where it is safe to step. If the characters can identify these locations, or if a thief can make a full dozen Find/Remove Traps checks in succession, the party can travel down the corridor in safety. Otherwise, each 1" of passage traversed explodes in a new shower of shards, inflicting an extra 2d6 damage on those present when entered.

2. **BANEFUL TOTEM:** The passage widens here into a shallow, open-mouthed cave, bare except for a strange statue or effigy made of some tarry, blackish substance. The statue or effigy seems to be the torso, arms, and skull of some bull-headed creature or devil. The thing will be motionless at first glance, and remain that way if the adventurers keep their distance – but if anyone enters the cave, approaches within 2", or attacks it with missiles or magic, it will animate and attempt to retaliate against the intruders.

Despite its infernal appearance, the creature's actual traits are closest to those of a green slime, admittedly one of 8 Hit Dice (and 38 H.P.) that can strike at up to four targets per round, one attack each, targeting any being within 2". If successfully Turned by a cleric (turns as a spectre), the slime-creature will not attack the cleric making the Turn attempt, but will not recoil or retreat. It will continue

to attack other beings. If successfully destroyed and the remains burned, intrepid explorers will find beneath the thing's body an airtight stone seal that protects a cache of eight pieces of jet (valued at 50 g.p. each) and a **scroll of protection -- magic**.

3. **NOQUAR OUTPOST:** This cave complex has been claimed by drow of the noble House Noquar (see module D3, VAULT OF THE DROW) as a base for exploration of the Chasm of Deadly Breath and, if necessary, battle within it. The drow here are present on a mission of some secrecy, and would react with alarm to any thought that an outsider might be able to reveal their presence to others within the city of Erelhei-Cinlu. They are thus not likely to react with goodwill towards any party of adventurers, regardless of the group's exploits or allegiances.

The ultimate leader of these drow is the priestess Chariness Noquar, a high noble of her house who seeks to uncover the secrets of the Chasm of Deadly Breath and bind its powers to the service of her family (and, ultimately, herself). Chariness knows something of the existence of the Baleful Heart (see location 24), and has met with the lich Alphaios (qv). She has convinced this dread being that the threat to his dominion is the work of servants of the Elder Elemental God – though whether such a claim is actually true remains to the Dungeon Master's discretion.

Chariness has, though, promised the lich the aid of her House in ridding the Chasm of the Baleful Heart, in return for the lich's aid against House Eilservs and its mistress, Eclavdra. The plots of Chariness are slow-moving and nowhere near completion, however, and so prompt action by the player characters may disrupt them.

Chariness will not be present at the Noquar outpost when the adventurers first arrive. The Dungeon Master may decide whether she is encountered elsewhere in the Chasm seeking to further her schemes, learns of the adventurers' presence in the encounter area and travels to the outpost after their initial visit, or remains in the city of Erelhei-Cinlu to be encountered later. In any event, if the party breaks the power of the Baleful Heart, they will earn Chariness's eternal enmity, for with its destruction, she loses any influence she once possessed with the lich Alphaios.

Chariness Noquar – 6th level fighter/6th level cleric; AC –7 (**drow chain mail +4, drow buckler +4**, +3 for a 17 dexterity); H.P.: 42; receives a +3 to saves against mental attacks due to high Wisdom; armed with **drow +3 mace**, hand crossbow with 10 poisoned bolts, and **death lance** (as module D3, VAULT OF THE DROW; on a successful attack, discharges for 3-12 hit points of damage in addition to normal spear damage and forces a save vs. poison or else drains 1-4 levels of experience; 6 charges); carries a **wand of magic missiles** (24 charges) and two **potions of flying**. Spells are as follows (those innate to the drow denoted with a *):

First Level: **command; cure light wounds (x2); dancing lights*; darkness*; detect magic*; faerie fire*; protection from good; sanctuary**

Second Level: **augury; find traps; hold person (x2); know alignment*; levitate*; speak with animals**

Third Level: **clairvoyance*; dispel magic*; feign death; locate object; speak with dead**

Fourth Level: **detect lie***

The main cavern, marked 'a', serves as both a guard post and a

resting place for the common warriors. 8 male fighters of 2nd level reside here (AC 1 from **drow chain mail +1, drow buckler +1**, +1 for dexterity of 15; H.P.: 12 each,) and armed with **drow +1 dagger, drow +1 short sword**, atlatl with three javelins tipped with sleep venom. This location, as well as caves deeper within the Noquar outpost, have been magically shielded from the winds of the Chasm – there is no penalty to movement, missile fire or attacks for either drow or player character combatants.

Caves 'b' and 'c' each house 6 female fighters of the 3rd level of ability (AC 0 from **drow chain mail +1, drow buckler +1**, +2 for dexterity of 16; H.P.: 17 each,) and armed with **drow+1 dagger, drow+2 short sword**, hand crossbow with 10 poisoned bolts. Their leader (one per cave) is a female fighter/cleric 3rd/3rd (AC –1 from **drow chain mail +2, drow buckler +2**, +1 for dexterity of 15; 15 H.P.) armed with **drow +1 mace** and hand crossbow with 10 poisoned bolts, carrying a potion of climbing, able to use the following spells (those innate to the drow denoted with a *):

- First Level:** **cure light wounds; dancing lights*;**
darkness*, detect good; faerie fire*
- Second Level:** **silence, 15' radius**
- Third Level:** **clairvoyance*;** **dispel magic***
- Fourth Level:** **detect lie***

Cave 'd' is the home of Kazithess, a capable drow warlock of common blood. He has been recruited to the schemes of Chariness with a promise of membership within House Noquar, and an eventual place as her consort when she achieves rulership over the House. Though Kazithess is too cunning and treacherous to take the lovely Chariness at her bare word, he still considers cooperation with her aims to be more profitable than opposition. He commands the outpost in her name. Kazithess is loyal more to his own skin than his mistress's plots, however, and will not hesitate to abandon the lair if defeat appears certain.

It is possible that Kazithess might be tempted to abandon the Noquars in return for actual, real power – access to spellbooks with high-level spells, for instance, or gifts of powerful magical items. Even if such a deal is struck, however, Kazithess remains loyal solely to himself, and if given the opportunity will most likely betray his newfound friends to Chariness or to others among the drow, executing an elaborate triple-cross.

Kazithess - 4th level fighter/8th level mage; AC –5 (**drow chain mail +1, drow buckler +2, ring of protection +2**, +4 from Dexterity of 18); H.P.: 32; armed with **drow dagger +1, staff of striking** with 18 charges, hand crossbow with 10 poisoned bolts; carries **potions of extra-healing** and **invisibility**; can use the following spells (those innate to the drow denoted with a *):

- First Level:** **burning hands; dancing lights*;**
darkness*; **detect magic*;** **faerie fire*;**
feather fall; magic missile; unseen servant
- Second Level:** **know alignment*;** **levitate*;** **mirror image;** **stinking cloud; wizard lock**
- Third Level:** **haste; protection from normal missiles;**
tongues
- Fourth Level:** **charm monster; polymorph self**

The cave marked as 'e' serves as a storeroom and fallback point for

the drow; it is normally unoccupied, but contains a few items that they may draw upon as needed. Foremost among these is a **folding boat**, collapsed to appear as a small box or chest; a double-strength **fire trap**, inflicting 2d4+16 damage. If triggered, has been inscribed upon the lid. Three small casks of drow sleep poison are also here, each containing sufficient venom to coat fifty crossbow bolts or twenty larger weapons. However, a special ritual known only to the drow clerics is needed to keep these casks sealed and fresh, and if not incanted every twenty four hours the contents of the casks decay into uselessness. Large supplies of mundane goods – foodstuffs, rope, nonmagical cloaks and garb, and similar, which may be of use to the characters, are also kept here. Finally, a delicate bronze bracelet inscribed with the sigil of a nightmare's head may be located here, if the adventurers search carefully – this is a device of House Noquar, and may (if displayed) serve to placate their allies within the city of Erelhei-Cinlu.

4. LAIR OF THE LURKER ABOVE: The floor within this grotto is rarely flat. It shifts into inclines of up to 45 degrees at times and breaks into step-like shelves, with distances of 2' to 3' between each shelf. Observant characters will notice that while small rats, sightless bugs, and similar vermin are present in this location, few larger creatures are present.

The reason for such prudence is the creature that lies in wait for any passerby – a very old, and very large, lurker above with a full 75 hit points. It has been very successful in its predations over the past several years, so successful, in fact, that it can no longer emerge into the main part of the Chasm to hunt (for the high winds would blow its monstrously-sized form away). Instead, it must remain here, consuming what it can trap. If blasted by a **gust of wind** spell or similar effect, this creature is 75% likely to unfold itself from its prey and withdraw from combat for a period of 1-4 rounds; if the party uses this opportunity to retreat from battle, the lurker above will not pursue.

5. SPIDER'S BURROW: This maze of tunnels and cul-de-sacs is lined on all sides with filmy and sticky cobweb, such that any observant adventurer will instantly guess what sorts of creatures await. A total of thirteen giant spiders (H.P.: 28, 26, 25, 23, 23, 22, 21, 19, 19, 18, 18, 16, 14), as well as twenty huge spiders (H.P.: 10 each), lie in wait for any who dare venture here. They will not attack all at once, but instead in groups of 3-8. They cling to ceilings and hide within webbed-over side tunnels whenever possible, until their prey has passed and they can strike from behind with surprise. In such a situation, even giant spiders attack with surprise on a roll of 1-3 on 1d6.

If the entirety of the lair is cleared of foes and the area searched, there is a 1 in 8 chance per turn of uncovering some portion of the spiders' treasure. Five treasures in total are present, but only one may be found with each successful roll to search. The treasures include a total of three matched bracelets, crafted from silver and inlaid with chips of tourmaline, valued at 500 g.p. each (if all three are found and sold as a set, the total value increases to 2,000 g.p.), a small traveling chest of sturdy wood, locked but not trapped, within which is stored 9,200 silver pieces; an airtight ivory scroll case containing a pair of **magic-user scrolls**. One holds the spells **comprehend languages; audible glamor; dimension door; and shatter**; the other **passwall**. If the adventurers take the time to burn out all the webs of the cavern (3 hours' work, requiring much use of torches and lantern oil and sending out a plume of smoke that alerts all intelligent beings within the encounter area to the party's whereabouts), subsequent searches each have a 4 in 8 chance of locating a portion of treasure.

6. BRIDGE OF DEATH: Each of these bridges is alike – rickety, fragile-looking constructions of rope and wood slats, looking barely able to support the weight of a single traveler. For all their seeming

weakness, these bridges are actually quite sturdy, and will not, under normal circumstances, snap or shatter during travel. The manner in which they bounce and sway in the wind, however, does reduce safe movement upon them to a maximum of 3" per turn.

Check for wandering monsters as usual while the party is traversing these bridges, however, only those monsters that may fly will engage the party. Treat any other result on the wandering monster table as 'no encounter'. If forced into battle upon the bridge, adventurers must make a saving throw versus wands (adding their Dexterity bonus to attacks, if any, to the total of their roll) if hit in any combat round for 5 or greater points of damage; failure indicates that the character has lost their footing on the bridge, and fallen over the side! If a character is hit more than once during a combat round, only one save per round need be made. Experience awards for battles fought while trapped on a bridge should be increased by 20%, to reflect this added factor of risk.

7. **GARGOYLE GARDEN:** This craggy island sits in the middle of the Chasm, adorned with many odd outcroppings of rock, bizarre abstract statuary, and strange growths of fungi. Its chief inhabitants are a clan of 28 gargoyles (H.P.: 19 each) who rarely depart the isle, preferring instead to practice petty mischiefs and cruelties on one another. They will take the arrival of any adventurers as an opportunity for rare sport, attacking until destroyed, and as a result are avoided by most other denizens of the Chasm.

In addition to the gargoyles themselves, each of the three bridges leading to this isle has one shrieker (H.P.: 14 each) rooting close to its near end. The shriekers will react as per the MM description, alerting the gargoyles to any intruders and rendering surprise impossible. The center of the island features a large, shallow dry pit, in which the gargoyles have piled loot and trophies. Mixed in among the trash and old bones are five giant centipedes (H.P.: 1 each), 9,000 copper pieces, and 2,700 electrum pieces.

The gargoyles have some knowledge of the other locations within the Encounter Area, though they know nothing about the drow of House Noquar (location 3), nor the sylphs and their blink dog allies (locations 18 and 20), nor any matters associated with the Baleful Heart (locations 21-24). They may be tricked or compelled into providing information about other encounter areas, but will lie blatantly or twist the truth if given even half a chance. The one being whose whereabouts these foul creatures will volunteer is that of the kenku at location 10, for they despise his cleverness and facile wit – and even in this situation the gargoyles will happily invent the most vile of crimes to ascribe to their adversary. Under no circumstances will the gargoyles ever willingly speak about the lich Palhaios (location 11).

8. **CLOUD CASTLE:** This large island is ringed by oddly motionless billows of white, puffy cloud, so that one cannot see its base. From afar, it seems almost to be floating on the cloud masses. Further observation makes clear that the island indeed is floating on the cloud masses, with no visible physical support. No bridges lead to this isle. All connections were apparently ripped away by some unknown agency, long ago.

Atop the island itself are seven squat, crudely-built towers, each rising some 100' to 150' high. Each is constructed of nothing more than stone bricks shoddily cut and stacked together in a mostly-circular pattern. The towers are sometimes joined by fungal-bloom overhangs woven together, to make 20' high covered walkways', but just as often they are separated from one another.

Each tower is home to one (50%) or two (50%) cloud giants, whose alignment is inclined towards evil. If one cloud giant is resident in a tower, he is a male with 52 hit points; if two cloud giants are present, one is male and the other is a female (of 46 hit points, fights as a fire

giant). Treasure present in each tower consists of 2,000-8,000 silver pieces; 1,000-3,000 gold pieces; 2d6 gems, each worth 100-400 g.p. in value; and three potions, selected at random. The giants of the different towers each complain bitterly about their neighbors, seeking to gain status and prestige among their kindred, but will band together to combat outsiders in the event of any real bloodshed.

Roaming the fungal scrub surrounding the towers are a four packs of spotted lions (H.P.: 27 each), each with 2-5 members. They avoid the edge of the island, to avoid falling over the side, but otherwise will hunt the party. Any giant can call off a lion pride on the prowl, but will do so rarely – instead preferring the sport of watching their pets hunt the 'small folk'.

One more item remains of note on this island – a massive, coal-blackened cauldron (20' in diameter, fully 15' high at the brim, and well over ten tons in weight) set up over a never-lit firepit built between the towers. Twice per day on command, this cauldron will produce sufficient food to feed 50 man-sized individuals (albeit with a mess of greasy, bloody, gristle-strung meat and bones, unappetizing in the extreme to most civilized palates). It serves as the main form of sustenance for the cloud giants, and the party will earn the giants' eternal enmity should they threaten to steal or destroy it. It saves against the effects of a **rod of cancellation** as a relic.

9. **GATE OF BONES:** This entrance to the Chasm of Deadly Breath is barred, floor to ceiling, by what appears, at first glance, to be a long, ragged wall of yellowed ivory. Closer examination will quickly determine its true, grislier nature – a fortification woven together from bones of all types and sizes and many creatures both humanoid and otherwise. A double gate some 15' wide and high stands open when the adventurers first approach – though likely not for long, as detailed shortly. If checked with spells, the wall will radiate strongly of both evil and magic.

In fact, the entire gate and wall is a unique necromantic construct, self-aware and filled with hatred towards the living. It can sense the life force and alignment of beings that approach it. Any being not of evil alignment approaching the gate causes it to close and bar itself! Neither **invisibility**, nor magical **silence**, nor a thief's skills at stealth can serve to prevent this occurrence, though **misdirection** and other effects which mask alignment will suffice. Once closed, the gate will not reopen of its own accord while any non-evil being is within 6" of it, or for one full turn after this interval.

Attempts to force the gate may, of course, be made, but the intelligence behind its operation resists such efforts. Any method used (such as successful application of exceptional strength, a **knock** spell, etc) has a 50% chance of failure unless a cleric has previously succeeded in a turn undead check, as if against a vampire. In addition, any attempt to force this Gate of Bones will result in the other dread powers it possesses being unleashed. It is capable of invoking any of the following effects:

-Animation of 2d6 skeletons (each of 4 H.P.) per round, as an **animate dead** spell; this ability may be used at will, though only a maximum of 12 skeletons may be active at any one time;

-**Ray of enfeeblement**, 7/day, as a magic-user of the 10th level of experience;

-**Bestow curse**, 3/day, usable against any target within 3" (a touch is not necessary);

-**Stinking cloud** 3/day;

-the Gate of Bones may, 1/week, attempt to force the death of all beings within 6", in a manner similar to a **death spell**; however, there is no Hit Dice limit, and all beings of more than 4 Hit Dice receive a saving throw against the effect, with creatures of 12 levels/Hit Dice or greater being immune in any event. This power will not be invoked unless it appears that the

party is very likely to breach the gate.

It is entirely likely that, once attacked, the party will seek to retaliate in kind, striking at the Gate of Bones with weapons and magic. All attacks made against the Gate automatically hit, with no need to make an attack roll. However, the Gate suffers only 1/4th normal damage from edged weapons, and half normal damage from bludgeoning weapons, fire, lightning, and **magic missiles**. It is completely immune to cold, as well as **charm, hold and sleep** effects. The Gate of Bones can receive 90 hit points of damage before being destroyed. Once this occurs, its magic will cease to function, all skeletons animated by it will collapse, and further travel in and out of the Chasm of Deadly Breath by this passage will be unrestricted.

10. **HOLEINTHEWALL:** The entrance to this location has been most cleverly concealed, both by glamour and artifice, such that it will only be uncovered by purposeful observation or the use of divination magics. The elven gift for noticing secret doors by happenstance will not suffice in this instance, and even if they should search for it their chances of finding it are no greater than that of anyone else (e.g., 1 in 6). Directly behind the doorway is a pit trap, 90% likely to catch any being entering for 3d6 falling damage.

Those who press on in the face of such initial unpleasantness will find a bedchamber beyond, small, but sparsely and tastefully appointed with bits of homemade furniture and woodcarving artistry. Within this chamber is the master of this location – a kenku of 5 HD by the name of Corvix. He is unusually friendly and straightforward for a member of his race, and, if parleyed with, will be more than willing to trade gossip and tall tales with the party. He can provide a short summary on several of the major players resident close by to his lair – including locations 7-9, 11, and 12 – though some of his information may be out-of-date or otherwise inaccurate at the Dungeon Master's discretion.

Corvix is a traveler and sometime adventurer, stricken by incurable wanderlust and inclined to visit many strange locations on the Prime Material and Elemental planes alike. He arrived in the Chasm of Deadly Breath some months ago, as the result of passage through an errant vortex during his explorations on the Plane of Air, and has proven quite intrigued by this strange underground empire. Holeinthewall, as he calls it, is a place that he established to serve as lair and home base for his explorations within the Chasm and beyond.

Unfortunately for Corvix's wanderlust, he knows of only one exit from the Chasm – the primary passage due east of his lair, which is blocked by the Gate of Bones. This sentinel has to date proven beyond Corvix's ability to outwit, and so he limits his explorations to the (fairly dangerous) confines of the Chasm itself. He is quite interested in finding some way to bypass or force the Gate.

If the adventurers express any sympathy for Corvix's plight, he will likely make to them the following offer – team up with him to destroy the Gate of Bones, and he will reward them with their choice of either magic or service. If the adventurers choose magic, Corvix will gift to them two **magic-user scrolls** (one of **hold portal**; **audible glamer**; **invisibility, 10' radius**; and **dancing lights**; the other of **ESP** and **wizard eye**) and a **net of entrapment**. If service is chosen, Corvix will accompany them to a single encounter area of their choosing, and fight alongside them as a loyal (though not suicidal) hireling, departing once the danger has been overcome. In either event, Corvix will also allow the party to use Holeinthewall as a base of exploration for their own continuing adventures in the Chasm, which may prove helpful (if the party chooses to rest at this location, the Dungeon Master need not check for random encounters).

As a kenku of 5 hit dice, Corvix can cast **magic missile**, **sleep**, and

mirror image each 1/day, as well as become **invisible** at will and **call lightning** 1/day as a druid. He is armed with a **quarterstaff +1**, wears an **amulet of the planes** (which he will readily employ to avoid combat, should he be attacked by the party) and carries with him, in a **pouch holding**, fifteen silver pieces, four platinum pieces, and ten chips of amethyst, each with a value of 50 g.p. Though he has some experience moving about within the Chasm of Deadly Breath, Corvix is not a native and so suffers a –2 penalty on all attacks. Should he survive his adventures with the party in this encounter area, Corvix may show up again elsewhere – within the underworld or beyond it – as the Dungeon Master sees fit, with many more exciting tales to tell.

11. **TOWER OF ALPHAIOS:** This island in the middle of the chasm is grim and forbidding, being stripped completely bare of any kind of life. A viscous black mist seems rise from the very stones themselves, reducing the range of normal vision and infravision to but 6" and also producing mild nausea in those who stay for too long. For each hour spent on the island, characters must save against poison or suffer a –2 penalty to Armor Class and increase the casting time of all spells by 50% (minimum of two segments added to casting times).

The only structure on this island is the tower of the lich Alphaios. Windowless and made of ebon-black marble blocks, seemingly unmarked by hammer or chisel and set together without need for mortar, it is impressively elegant and yet intimidating and dire. The only entrance, an iron slab engraved with alien sigils, is set into the wall without doorknob, hinge or knocker, but will open soundlessly with application of a **knock** spell or invocation of the command phrase ("Death comes to all, whether they will it or no").

The master of this tower, Alphaios, is a lich of great ability, able to cast spells as a 21st level magic-user. His dark interests in magics of elemental wind are what lead to the creation of the Chasm of Deadly Breath and the presence of many of the creatures that dwell within this place. He has spent many decades continuing his studies and toying with the other inhabitants of the area.

Recently, though (as the undead measure time), Alphaios's control over the Chasm has been threatened by other forces, which have created the Baleful Heart to the northwest and bid fair to overturn his dominion, using the magics and creatures of the Chasm to further their own dark ends. The war between these powers is subtle and slow-moving, but no less deadly for all that. Alphaios has begun to build alliances with the drow priestess Chariness Noquars (qv) and other beings of fell portent to support his efforts against his foe.

Though such matters are likely of little direct concern to the adventurers or their travels, knowledge of the struggle in this place might help to guide their actions. To begin with, the situation that Alphaios finds himself in means that he is unlikely to enter as fully into battle with any group of interlopers as he once might have; even should he prove victorious, he cannot afford to spend too much of his strength against an enemy of secondary importance. Likewise, the adventurers might even manage to make some sort of pact with the lich against a common foe. While it is difficult to describe any being as more absolutely evil than the ancient Alphaios, the force behind the Baleful Heart is more likely to pose a threat to goodness and weal in the characters' lifetime, and an alliance against it might be seen as reasonable even to devoted servants of Good.

Alphaios may be encountered between the 3rd and 7th floor of his tower, as the Dungeon Master chooses, but is only 1% likely not to be present in the tower when the player characters arrive (in such an event he returns 1-4 turns after their first entrance). He will generally await visiting adventurers within the tower proper, but may emerge to do battle if their meddling appears truly dangerous (for instance, if they seek to damage the surface of his tower with spells that would deform or destroy rock).

Alphaios (lich) (AC 0; H.P.: 40) carries a **wand of lightning** with 60 charges and wears a **ring of spell storing** able to cast the following cleric spells – **speak with dead**, **detect lie**, **slay living** (x2); able to permanently **fly** (as the magic-user spell); normally prepares the following magic-user spells:

- First Level:** **comprehend languages; detect magic; shield; Tenser's floating disc; unseen servant**
- Second Level:** **detect invisibility; knock; locate object; mirror image; web**
- Third Level:** **dispel magic** (x2); **fireball; protection from normal missiles; slow**
- Fourth Level:** **charm monster; dimension door; fire shield; Rary's mnemonic enhancer; wall of ice**
- Fifth Level:** **cone of cold; conjure elemental; feeblemind; telekinesis; wall of force**
- Sixth Level:** **flesh to stone; geas; invisible stalker; project image**
- Seventh Level:** **Bigby's grasping hand; limited wish; monster summoning V; power word, stun**
- Eighth Level:** **maze; mind blank; symbol; trap the soul**
- Ninth Level:** **monster summoning VII; time stop**

The first level of the tower serves as a deterrent to the unwary. It has been divided into a maze of twisting and turning passages, none wider than 5'. Furthermore, it is filled with a **cloudkill** effect of permanent duration, which will not exit the tower doors, but instead remains bound within. Additionally, eight wights (H.P.: 25, 23, 22, 22, 19, 18, 16) lurk within the maze at various points, and will seek to ambush characters as they explore. Because of the **cloudkill** vapors and the silence of their passage, these creatures surprise on a roll of 1-4 on 1d6. This level of the tower, and all others save the topmost, have been warded against the winds, and so penalties to attacks and thief abilities do not apply. A staircase at the rear leads up to the second level.

The tower's second level is a trap for the greedy and short-sighted. It appears at first glance to be a rich treasure house, filled from floor to ceiling with chests overflowing with silver, gold and jewels; but when removed from the tower, the gold turns to lead, the silver to ash, and the gemstones are revealed to be cheap pebbles. Only four items here are not dross, and three are cursed; they are an **amulet of inescapable location**, a **chime of hunger**, a **jewel of attacks**, and finally a **talisman of pure good** with three charges remaining. (The presence of the last is the lich's warped sense of humor at work; the **talisman** is neither of any use to him nor any direct threat, and he is aware that most beings removing it from this treasury will consider it worthless or cursed when the illusion is revealed, and so discard it as quickly as feasible.)

The stairs leading further up from the second level are masked by a powerful **illusion**, which cannot, without deliberate forethought, be pierced by any being of less than a 24 Intelligence. Even then a saving throw versus spells must be made to see through the **illusion**. Any individual who has attempted to claim treasure from the second floor suffers a –8 penalty on their save, for they are complicit in the **illusion**!

The third and fourth floors of this tower consist of Alphaios's library – many shelves of books, scrolls, and other strange items used to store knowledge, gathered over many centuries and from many planes of existence. Browsing through the collected works can prove hazardous, for many of the subjects of study go beyond mere unpleasantness and several of the stranger artifacts here impart their information in a manner distinctly alien to human thought. As a result, any living creature seeking to peruse the contents of this library has a base 25% per turn spent at the endeavor to be struck dumb, as if by the **feeblemind** spell, unless a saving throw versus spells is made; use all saving throw adjustments as normal except members of the fighter or rogue classes suffer a –2 penalty to saves and any being of good alignment suffers a –4 penalty on top of adjustment for character class. This effect, unlike the spell, is temporary, lasting only 24 hours. It may be cured by application of **heal**, **remove curse**, **restoration**, or **wish**.

Alphaios's laboratory can be found on the tower's fifth floor, lined with tubes and beakers filled with strange gasses, unusual apparatuses, and machinery of uncertain origin and purpose. Some of the substances found here are magical, but many are dangerous. If sampled, roll d% for the result – 01-50 no effect, 51-80 poisonous (as a potion of **poison**), 81-00 acts as a random potion. Substances thus selected cannot be tasted or sampled. Their gaseous nature means that they must be consumed immediately, or else they dissipate and are lost.

The sixth floor of the tower is divided into two separate chambers. The smaller of the two is furnished as 'personal quarters' with a bed, dresser, chest for personal items, etc. It is rarely visited or used, and a fine shroud of dust has slowly built up over the surfaces here. The other chamber is used as a prison, as needed, though there are no dividing walls. Alphaios prefers to use such spells as **wall of force** or **prismatic sphere** to craft individual cells when needed, and likewise will use such effects as **feeblemind** to restrict the actions of captives. At present, only one such cell has been created, and is used to imprison fifteen larvae (H.P.: 3 each) kept here by the lich for sustenance. Should the adventurers prove troublesome, though, more can certainly be created!

The seventh level of the tower is used for the summoning of dark and fiendish beings and is seemingly bare, save for a 4' high, ornate silver mirror (value 5,000 g.p.) set against one wall and an engraved thaumaturgical circle, usable for such spells as **cacodemon**, upon the floor. The circle is just what it seems, and has no inherent traps or special power inherent in it. The mirror, though, has been ensorcelled to serve as a scrying link to the Lower Planes, and, if so much as touched, is 20% likely to attract the attention of one or another beings from those dread lands, who may not be able to affect the characters directly, but will certainly attempt to influence them with threats or blandishments. Hidden by a **permanent illusion** is a large chest of black-wrought iron, **wizard locked** and 75% likely to resist **knock** or **dispel magic** spells. It holds 4,000 electrum pieces, 6,000 gold pieces, and eighteen sapphires, each worth 500 g.p.. This represents the bulk of Alphaios's worldly wealth, kept here for purposes of bargaining with the devils, daemons, and other dark powers with whom he sometimes does business.

The eighth and final floor of Alphaios's tower is arguably better described as an oversized parapet, for while it is quite sizeably walled (to 15' high), its top is open to the sky. Dwelling within is a gorgon of incredible size and strength (12 HD, H.P.: 70, strikes for 2-16 damage with its horns) that will attempt to use its breath weapon against any being that flies overhead. Saving throws against its breath weapon are made at –4, and though the beast can only use its breath attack once per turn, the number of such breaths it can use per day is unlimited. It will fight to the death against any intruders. Access from this level to the one below is through a **wizard locked** trapdoor.

12. GRELL DEN: The wind in this chamber is even stronger and less predictable than in other areas of the Chasm of Deadly Breath, requiring beings who enter to take special care in their movements, lest they be thrown off balance. When combat begins, each character or creature has a base 10% chance per round of being unable to take any action, as they are caught off-balance by a sudden gust or gale. Check for each character separately and only after intentions are declared, for spellcasting may be disrupted and single-use magical items lost!

The one occupant of this area is a vicious and bad-tempered grell (H.P.: 19) who once roamed the Chasm freely. It has recently chosen to hide within its lair following an encounter with drow (see location 3) that it only barely managed to escape from alive. It will attack on sight and fight to the death. If wounded by any weapon of drow manufacture, it will go berserk, attacking at +2 to hit and damage but suffering a -4 penalty on armor class and saves.

13. ENCHANTRESS'S GRAVE: This island is the final resting place of an elven princess, of great beauty and noble heritage, once kidnapped by the lich Alphaios for his foul schemes. The torments that she suffered unhinged her mind and spirit, and, following her death, her spirit returned to this island as a groaning spirit (H.P.: 31), of delicate and ethereal beauty. In addition to its other powers, the spirit's appearance will induce fascination in all males of human or elven heritage (no save), resulting in a -2 penalty to initiative as well as a -1 penalty to attack and damage.

The burial shroud of the elf princess herself is of the finest cloth-of-gold, worth 3,000 g.p., and she wears a signet ring worth 1,500 g.p. due to excellence of craftsmanship. If the groaning spirit is laid to rest, this signet ring will acquire the power to grant a single **limited wish**; but if the ring is somehow taken from its resting place while the groaning spirit remains undestroyed, it inflicts **bestow curse** (no saving throw) on whoever holds it.

14. EYE OF THE STORM: This island floats in midair within the Chasm of Deadly Breath, seeming unsupported from above or below. It appears made, not of stone, but of an odd, grayish crystal as hard as steel. Winds upon this island often increase to 100 mph or more, limiting all ground movement to 3" at best, halving flight movement, and making missile fire of any sort impossible. While on this island, random encounters are reduced - they occur only on a roll of 1 on a d12, and, if occurring, are always against 2-5 air elementals, each of 16 Hit Dice.

At the very center of this island, hidden from direct view by surrounding outcroppings of rock-crystal, is a small magical weaving, a mere 1' in diameter, of blue-white light, formed into intricate, overcrossing knots and ropes. This is the visible manifestation of the great magics that power the winds of the Chasm. It is almost impervious to any single power at the adventurers' command - such forces as a **rod of cancellation**, **wand of negation**, or **antimagic shell** will merely suppress its power for 2d4 rounds, after which it will spring back to full life. Even a **wish** will merely cause it to disappear for no more than 1d3 turns.

Continued invocation of spells and effects that create or control earth, stone, or metal may suffice to weaken it, however. If the total number of spell levels cast on the weaving reaches 25, the winds within the cavern drop significantly (to average speeds of 45-50 mph), allowing movement rates of up to three-quarters normal speed, reducing penalties to hear noise and climb walls to -25% each, and lowering penalties to attack rolls to only -2. Chances to encounter a portal to the Elemental Plane of Air are also halved. If a total of 45 spell levels are cast on the weaving, another drop in average windspeed, to but 25 mph, occurs. This results in full, unpenalized movement and use of thief abilities and unrestricted use of missile weapons, though penalties to attack rolls remain.

Finally, if a full 60 spell levels are unleashed against the magical weaving, all winds within the encounter area cease, all portals to Elemental Air are shut, and an uneasy calm settles over the entirety of the Chasm of Deadly Breath. Naturally, such interference in the magics of the area will alert and anger the lich Alphaios.

15. TENTAMORT GAUNTLET: This narrowing in the corridor is lined by no less than six tentamorts (each of H.P.: 19 for main body, 9 for each tentacle), three on each side of the passage. They will wait to attack any group of travelers until as many victims as possible have passed beneath their clutches, and the first is just about to escape their gauntlet; then they strike, each initially focusing on a single target. A party may notice the tentamorts by a successful surprise check at a -1 penalty.
16. DWELLER IN SHADOW: A shadow demon (H.P.: 37) has taken to dwelling in this cave, spying on any who approach and taking what prey it can find. Though not formally aligned with any of the powers or factions dwelling within the Chasm of Deadly Breath, it is aware of the arrival of the drow. It will not lightly act against their interests, for it fears the wrath of their Lower Planes allies and especially that of the Demon Queen Lolth. If the adventurers can display any insignia or markings of a drow house, the shadow demon is 95% likely to seek to avoid combat with them (fleeing combat, should they attempt to attack in kind) and 50% likely to converse and provide information on other locations within the encounter area, should they ask (it has knowledge of locations 15, 19, and 21-23).

The shadow demon's movement is limited to 9" under most circumstances, and it receives a -2 penalty on attacks, as a result of the Chasm's winds. It possesses a flawed black opal usable as a focus for its magic jar attack; this gemstone is worth 300 g.p..

17. BLINK DOG LAIR: These caves are claimed by a pack of seven blink dogs (H.P.: 30, 23, 21, 19, 18, 18, 16) who have come to the Chasm in order to assist and support the efforts of the sylphs (location 20). They are bad-tempered and irritable due to their long stay beneath the earth, far from the sun. They are still mindful of proprieties, and will not attack unless attacked first. If parleyed with by adventurers of good heart, they will urge visitors to contact the sylphs, in order to begin the work of clearing evil from this place. They can also provide much information about the invisible stalkers (see wandering monster listing and location 18), as they often play and roughhouse with these strange beings.
18. PRIZE ALTAR: This island is very rugged, with slimy fungi and loose pebble-scrub constantly underfoot; movement through here is treated as if bramble or scrub. Near to the northern cliffs is an odd effigy, some 12' high and vaguely humanoid (though with features weathered to absolute inscrutability), draped in an odd assortment of golden chain, silver bracelets, blades and scabbards, and other prizes. The invisible stalkers have liberated these things from passersby and taken to this place as trophies. They are very protective of it, and six stalkers of above average hit points (roll 1d4+4 per HD) are constantly present to observe and protect it.

If adventurers show proper respect and appreciation for the statue and its prizes, the invisible stalkers will likely not object to their presence. They may even be allowed to take some of the items present, if something of reasonably equal value is left in its place (roll 1d6+6, multiplying by 10%, for an overall range of 70% - 120%, to get the value of any exchange that would satisfy the invisible stalkers). If their altar is looted or despoiled, however, the stalkers present will attack, and future encounters with invisible stalkers (as wandering monsters) elsewhere in the Chasm will result in such creatures attacking 80% of the time. The other 20% of the time, the invisible stalkers 'merely' use their **invisibility** and stealth to take back what was once theirs.

When the party first arrives at the prize altar, it holds five fripperies with a value of 50 g.p. each; thirteen bits of jewelry, each worth 200 g.p.; eight prizes with a value of 750 g.p. each; a **drow short sword +2** taken from the Noquars (base value of 2,000 g.p., for purposes of making an exchange that satisfies the invisible stalkers); and a **staff of curing** with 11 charges remaining (considered by the invisible stalkers to have a base value of 5,000 g.p.). Other items lost by the party in earlier encounters may also have been brought to this place, as the Dungeon Master chooses, and should those characters reclaim that which formerly belonged to them the stalkers on 'guard duty' will not object.

19. ISLE OF THE BATS: This 'island' is a massive stalactite, hanging from the ceiling of the cavern some 200' above. It has no surface, though a few tunnels wind through its center and several walkways are affixed to the outside by craftsmen now long-departed and forgotten. Its primary dwellers these days are giant bats – some twenty flocks (each with 10-15 members – 1/2 HD each, 3 H.P.) that nest in shallow caves on its outside – and sixteen doombats (H.P.: 27 each; these creatures nest and hunt alone). Though they rarely depart from their 'isle', here the bats are master; few other creatures dare approach.
20. REFUGE OF THE SYLPHS: These caverns are inhabited by a group of six sylphs (H.P.: 19, 17, 16, 15, 12, 11) who consider the existence of the Chasm of Deadly Breath a real danger to the inhabitants of Elemental Air and the balance between good and evil. They have explored much of the Chasm while protected by their invisibility, but lack sufficient power to act against the threats they have discovered. They will likely request that the adventurers attempt to deal with any of the following encounters – the lich Alphaios at location 11; the groaning spirit at location 13; the spell matrix at encounter 14; the shadow demon at location 16; the ghosts at location 21, and the unknown power in the chambers beyond. The sylphs can offer little recompense for such endeavors, though they do possess a **clerical scroll (cure disease; remove curse; and raise dead)** and a **scroll of protection from elementals** that they will offer to any heroes promising to aid them, in furtherance of the cause of good.

If the adventurers should seek to melee against the sylphs, they will unleash battle spells against their tormentors, then turn invisible and flee. All further encounters with air elementals and invisible stalkers will be 100% hostile, unless and until the adventurers find some way to make amends. Each sylph may use 4 first level, 3 second level, 2 third level, and 1 fourth level spell. The spells used by the sylphs should be selected from the following lists:

First Level: **comprehend languages; detect magic; friends; light; magic missile; message; Nystul's magic aura; shield; Tenser's floating disc; ventriloquism**

Second Level: **detect evil; forget; locate object; magic mouth; pyrotechnics; rope trick; scare; shatter**

Third Level: **clairaudience; dispel magic; lightning bolt; phantasmal force; slow**

Fourth Level: **dimension door; ice storm; polymorph other**

21. GHOSTLY WATCH: The entrance to this cave is raised slightly above the main body of the chasm, and so commands an excellent view of its surroundings. Attempts to enter unobserved by using thievery hide in shadows or other non-magical means of concealment will fail. Only a **cloak of elvenkind, invisibility**, or similar will suffice.

Within dwell no less than five ghosts (H.P.: 56, 50, 48, 42, 37) that are the principal caretakers and guardians of the Baleful Heart. While within this chamber, their attacks deal 2-12 hit points damage in addition to aging effects, and they will not be harmed by any form of attack or spell that inflicts fire damage. Normally they will not pursue enemies from this room (though see encounter notes for location 23, below).

A secret niche in the western wall hides the ghosts' treasure – sacks holding 3,600 silver pieces, 4,000 gold pieces, and nine rubies, each valued at 500 g.p.; a **sword +4, defender**; six **arrows of slaying undead**; a **wand of enemy detection** (fully charged); a treasure map (scroll) showing the location of one treasure located elsewhere in the underworld, or elsewhere in the campaign setting at the Dungeon Master's discretion. This location is so cleverly hidden that it can only be found on a roll of 1 on a d12, even for elves. However, if the Baleful Heart is destroyed, the entrance will open of its own accord, revealing the prize within.

22. SPORE NEST: No less than eighteen gas spores (H.P.: 3 each) float here, mostly unaffected by the cavern's winds. A 10% chance per hour exists that one is blown free into the larger area of the Chasm, never to return; however, an additional 1-4 new spores sprout from loose rhizomes spread around this lair, meaning that total numbers remain fairly constant over the long term.

In addition to the gas spores, other threats await the unwary. The floor of this area is coated in yellow mold (which, despite its size, is not intelligent) that will react in its usual manner to any intruder. Many gas spore rhizomes have found their way into cracks and niches in the cave walls and ceilings over the years, and have a 10% per touch to infect the body of a person touching any stone surface in this area, besides the floor. Such infection is fortunately obvious, being manifested as a sudden sharp pain and rapidly spreading rash, but must be cured with magic or result in the same effects as a successful attack from a gas spore.

23. MISTS OF MADNESS: This series of tunnels is filled with a strange, violet, faintly luminescent, mist that smells faintly of rotting meat. It is distasteful, but not dangerous, to breathe – at least not immediately. Any character who spends two or more rounds within the mist must make a saving throw against petrification or else be affected by **confusion**, as the spell, for the duration of the time spent in this area and an additional 2-7 rounds thereafter. There is a base 75% chance that a ghost from location 21 will enter this area to attack interlopers, if that area has not been cleared in an earlier encounter.

24. BALEFUL HEART: Within this place lies a force for great evil – the Baleful Heart, a blackened and misshapen lump of stone. Though its power is subtle and, at the moment, quiescent, it has the potential to summon many foul monsters to this location and slowly corrupt those beings and magics already present in this place, eventually unleashing them in an irresistible wave against the surface world! Dungeon Masters are free to determine the details of any such invasion to suit their own campaigns, if the adventurers choose not to deal with this threat.

In spite of all its dark might, the Baleful Heart is more an engine of greater corruption than a power in its own right, and so has few direct defenses of its own. Heroes who have won past the dangers outside to reach this place may remain here as needed, and even strike at the Baleful Heart with weapons and spells, without fear of being attacked first. However, some impressive defenses and malefic effects do apply:

-The entirety of this cavern has been shrouded in **darkness** of unparalleled potency, blocking all forms of normal vision, infravision and ultravision. Even **continual light** will only serve to counter the darkness, not banish it completely, though once this is done other light sources will serve to brighten the area

normally. Furthermore, any form of magical **light** created or brought within this chamber will be **dispelled** within a period of 1-4 hours.

-All edible foodstuffs and liquids brought within this chamber are spoiled, as if affected by a **putrefy food and water** spell.

-All hirelings, henchmen, and pack beasts of 4 levels/HD or less absolutely refuse to enter the chamber under any circumstances, and will, in fact, attack any being that attempts to force them! Henchmen and hirelings of 5 levels or more can overcome this urge, but must check against morale, once per turn, or flee the area.

-Any character with the ability to cast spells must make a saving throw versus Death Ray on each turn spent within the cave, or lose one spell from memory as if cast (lost to no effect, can be regained normally at next rest). Clerics, druids and paladins save at -4 to the roll.

It is entirely likely that the characters will attempt to destroy the Baleful Heart. Treat it as a monster of A.C. 0 and 120 H.P.; it has no direct means to attack or act (though see below) and is immune to fire, lightning, **disintegration**, and all effects which harm only living creatures. Turn Undead will not affect it, though **dispel magic** will cause 3-18 damage per casting, **anti-magic shell** 3-30 damage for a single round, after which the shell collapses. **Stone to flesh** will make the Heart's effective A.C. 6 for 2d4 rounds, but other spells which affect earth and stone will not harm the Heart, but instead heal it 1 H.P. per spell level! The following effects may be invoked if the adventurers vigorously attack the Baleful Heart:

-If any single attack or spell inflicts 12 hit points or more of damage on the Heart in a single round, an **unholy word** is immediately unleashed, targeting all within 3" (which likely affects all within this location). Furthermore, for each additional 6 points of damage done by the attack beyond the 12-point minimum, increase all effective level/HD ranges on the effects table by 1 (so that an attack or spell causing 18 points of damage result in death for all beings of less than 5 levels/HD, paralyze all beings of 5 to 8+ levels/HD, stun all with 9 to 12+ levels/HD, and deafen beings of 13 levels or greater, for instance). Such effects can potentially be unleashed multiple times in a single round!

-If the Baleful Heart is destroyed (takes more than 120 hit points in damage), an **earthquake** immediately strikes, affecting all within the area equally and beginning a slow collapse of much of the cave complex. The tunnel between locations 22 and 23 immediately fills with tons of fallen rock, becoming impassable. The cavern of the Baleful Heart will itself collapse within 1-3 turns, with the tunnels of the Mists of Madness following some 2-5 turns later. Excavation and further exploration will be next to impossible.

The destruction of the Baleful Heart does permanently banishes any ghosts still present at location 21, as well as all other ghosts, shadows and wraiths elsewhere in the Chasm (treat further wandering monster rolls for creatures of those types as 'no encounter'). All aging inflicted by ghosts within location 21 is undone with the destruction of the Heart, as long as the victim remains alive when the Heart is destroyed. The treasure within location 21 will also be revealed and free to claim, and the adventurers' bravery may win them renown among other heroes or potentates of the campaign setting, if the Dungeon Master wishes such.

THUS CONCLUDES THE WONDERS AND PERILS OF THE CHASM OF DEADLY BREATH WHAT OTHER MARVELS AWAIT WITHIN THE DEPTHS REMAINS YET TO BE TOLD