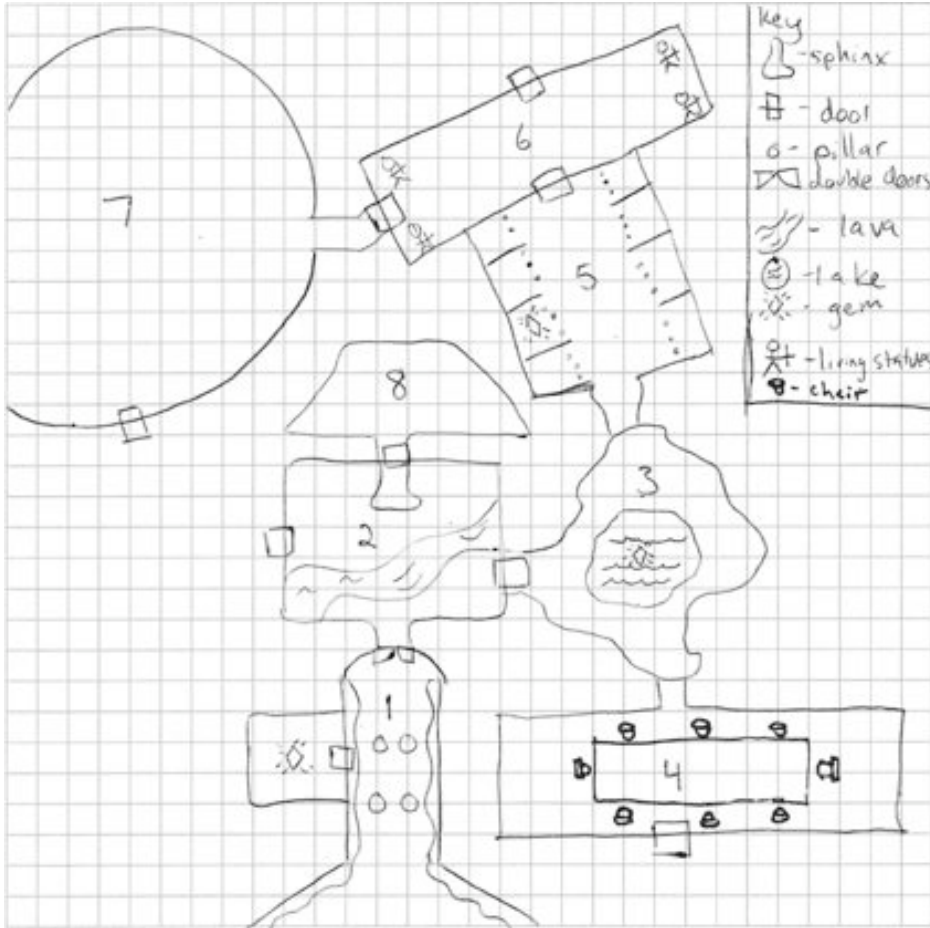


Into the Abyss

By Aaron Broder



Background Info

This dungeon, formerly the headquarters of one of the largest kingdoms in the land, is currently under siege by the Primordials, tearing it apart and melding it with the Elemental Chaos. For the best experience, don't let your players know that this is anything more than a normal dungeon where dark things are happening..

Special Rules

Every time your players exit a room, roll a d8 to determine what room they enter. There are two exceptions to this rule; the players will always enter in Room E (Entrance Hall), and the first time they leave the Entrance Hall they will always enter Room 1 (The Lava Pit). Once they leave Room E, it is impossible for them to return. The only way out is through room X (Ritual Room).

If the room that the players are currently in is the same as the number you roll, then your players re-enter the room that they just left. You can use this to your advantage to confuse your players.

Many of the rooms are drawn with doors that lead to nowhere so your players have a choice of which door they want to leave through.

Aether Gem

If your players have collected an aether gem, then once they have visited two or more rooms, they can choose which room that they have previously visited they want to return to. Don't let them know this, however hint at it by saying that the gem glows whenever they enter a room.

Alternatively, they can use the aether gem as a wild card when appeasing the sphinx.

Room Key

- 1. ENTRANCE HALL:** Formerly the grand entrance to an old castle, it still holds some of its former splendor; the tall columns still stand, but most of the gold paint has been scraped off by former visitors. If the players look closely enough, they can salvage some of it to use for money (minor). Behind one of the moth-eaten curtains is a small room that hides a gem of *aether*. This gem gives the player's a bonus in solving the puzzle of the dungeon, but is not required to escape. The small room is guarded by two aberrant beings (difficulty: easy), and there are no visible walls: they are just a swirling mass of color.
- 2. (1 on d6) THE LAVA PIT:** Formerly the throne room, this suffered the worst of all rooms when it was besieged by the Elemental Chaos. It has now been consumed by lava, which can be jumped over with moderate difficulty. On blocking the main exit is a sphinx, who demands tribute in the form of the elemental gems that are scattered across the castle grounds. After three gems, it becomes possible for the players to fight the sphinx. With each gem they feed it, it becomes weaker and weaker. Should they manage to feed it all six gems, they can pass without any combat.
- 3. (2 on d6) THE CAVERN:** This part of the castle has been entirely replaced by a natural cavern. The elemental gem hidden in the lake can be retrieved by a strong swimmer, or if they manage to convince one of the water spirits that live in the cave to retrieve it for them (difficulty: hard), then they can have it collected for them. If they annoy the spirits, however, they will be forced to fend them off.
- 4. (3 on d6) THE ICE HALL:** This was the dining hall, and the inhabitants of the castle were in the middle of supper when the Chaos took over. Now, their corpses are frozen in blocks of ice, as is the food. One of the diners is wearing the elemental gem on a pendant, and the players must take the utmost care while shattering the ice, or the spirits of the inhabitants will come alive and attack (difficulty: medium).
- 5. (4 on d6) THE DUNGEONS:** Imprisoned in the dungeons are four prisoners, three of whom are telling the truth, and one of whom is lying. Only one of them has the crystal, but all of them want to help the players so they can get out of the dungeon. They will try to outwit the players so they can escape. If the one who really has the gem is freed, then they will hand over the gem with no conflict; if one of the others manages to trick they players into thinking that they have the gem, then they will attack (difficulty: medium).
- 6. (5 on d6) THE ARMORY:** The players will find in the Armory plenty of non-magical weapons for them to loot, in addition two four living sets of armor. Three of them are illusions, that can be killed with a single blow, but the last one (identified by the elemental gem engraved on it's shield (difficulty: easy).
- 7. (6 on d6) THE BALLROOM:** This was one of the finest rooms in the entire castle before the Chaos took over, and the wealth that used to fill the room still shows. The pillars glint with gold, the curtains are still as fine as they were the day it was at its height of power, and a beautiful crystal chandelier hangs from the ceiling. The players, however, are more likely to notice the huge black dragon in the center of the chamber (difficulty: very hard), and the elemental crystal that it hordes.
- 8. THE RITUAL ROOM:** Inside the ritual room are three aberrant underlings (difficulty: easy), one ritual master (difficulty: medium), and a portal that leads to the Chaos (difficulty: hard). If they manage to destroy the portal, then the castle will return to normal; otherwise, underlings will continue to spawn and the castle will stay the same. Once the players have defeated the ritual master, the magic that was holding the castle together will weaken, and it will begin to collapse. They must make it out of the castle before it is completely destroyed (difficulty: medium).