



Vekkoru, God of the Ghostly Pathways

Vekkoru was a legendary hero of a people now lost from memory. When at last he was slain, his Gods were heartbroken. Rather than allowing him to pass into the Heavens, they bestowed upon him a place in death - to guide and protect the spirits of the dead on their long journey to the afterlife. His tomb became a shrine, and his killer - the Night Hag, Grevia - was sentenced to guard over his remains for all time.

Now, his people have vanished, and their Gods have faded. Only Vekkoru remains. As the pantheon died, so did the pathways to its afterlife. The spirits of the last of Vekkoru's people gathered around his barrow, but he could deliver them no longer. He remained trapped in this plane, tied to his tomb by the same magic which had bound his killer.

The hill above his shrine became a haunted place, its rocky crags thick with the ghosts of the fallen. To free Vekkoru and the tortured souls who surround him, his guardian must be destroyed and the ritual of binding undone.

Random Encounters

- Ghostly Procession (a line of wailing figures, groping and stumbling along as if in darkness)
- Phantom (touch causes glimpse of spirit's final moments of life. 50% chance of uncontrollable panic)
- Spectre (a visitor to the shrine, attracted by the spiritual upheaval)
- Wraith (same as Spectre)

General Note: Undead native to the Shrine cannot be turned

1. Vestibule. A steep-walled sinkhole, 20 -30' deep, open to the sky and full of leaves and tumbled stones. (A) Small stone door, concealed by ivy and wedged ajar. Within are 2 charred skeletons. Carved in the floor before doorway to 2, is a bas-relief of a bear, wreathed in flame. Inscription above doorway, in forgotten tongue. (if deciphered: "Who shall lead us on the final path?") Speaking Vekkoru's name allows passage. Otherwise, touching door summons a Huge, bear-shaped Fire Elemental.

2. The Dead Shrines. Lit by eternal torches. Signs of combat in main hall...many green stone shards and splintered bone. Shrines A & B are darkened, no longer holy. (A) shrine of Zan, Lord of the Skies. Statue has gold inlay, some missing. (B) Minah, Goddess of the Hearth. Statue has jade details. (C) Vekkoru's Shrine. Statue has pearl eyes. West wall is lined with hundreds of eternal candles in many colors. A carving on the South wall shows a line of wretched souls moving through a burning wilderness. Above, the three gods of the shrines look down. Below each god is a small alcove. Placing candles of the correct color in each alcove (A - gold, B - green, C- white) opens a secret door to area 3. Placing the wrong candles or damaging the statues triggers a trap - a horde of Petrified Skeletons begins to stream from hidden room (D.). (99 skeletons total. Covered in greenish mineral deposits. Treat as sturdier, double-strength Skeletons with stone clubs) The skeletons pursue only as far as the Vestibule.

3. Deserted Chambers. Abandoned rooms once used by caretaker priests. One holds 3 Phase Spiders and a desiccated corpse. A milky blue *Etherweb Stone* is hidden in the dust. Functions as a minor Ioun Stone, but cursed. Creates disturbances in the Ether. 20% chance per day of attracting 1-3 Phase Spiders at a random hour, day or night.(!)

4. The Graven wood. Lit by magic starlight. Elaborate stonework, carved to resemble a forest in exquisite detail. An illusion of a real forest shifts in and out of vision. This is the dream-realm of Daughter of the Leaves, a sylvan spirit allied with Vekkoru. Her domain has been invaded by a Spirit Naga - a servant of Grevia's mother. The power of its will corrupts the dream realm, and DotL cannot drive it out. ...When the party enters, ghostly forest animals attempt to lead them to DotL at her Stone Oak (A.). She begs them to kill her enemy, but cannot answer questions about rest of shrine. If Naga is destroyed, she rewards with healing, several useful scrolls, and by revealing the door to the Hall of Brides. If attacked, she disappears.

...The northern half of the wood is corrupted, its stone crumbling and dripping with slime. Wandering are 3-6 corrupted ghostly wolves. (Incorporeal Dire wolves) The Naga is at (B), coiled high in the branches. Below it sit two Yeth Hound servants and the withered corpse of a charmed warrior who starved to death. The Naga wears a valuable collar of gold and jade, and a rune-etched false tooth functions as a brooch of shielding. Warrior's corpse has adventuring gear and a magic shield.

5. Hall of the Brides. Lit by eternal candles. Alcoves hold sarcophagi, depicting Vekkoru's earthly brides. Damaging a sarcophagus causes the bride within to emerge as a Wight. A faceless, 7' "fertility figure" statue blocks the door to 6. If examined, her surface is crudely chiseled, but lips are smooth and polished. A watery basin at her feet holds semi-precious stones, small bits of jewelry, and odd coins. Stealing from basin animates statue as Clay Golem. Returning stolen items halts attack. Retreating to Graven Wood resets the golem. ...Placing a gift of 100+ gold value in the basin causes the statue to kneel and hold open its arms. Kissing the statue on the lips causes her to step aside and allow passage.

6. The Well of Sorrows. Ringed by a descending stair. A stench rises from below. In the center, hundreds of moaning spirits swirl like a spiraling pillar, giving off a faint blue glow. Anyone touching the beam will be rended as if by a Blade Barrier. Each minute, 25% chance a spirit splits off from the spiral to approach the party. (treat as Phantom or Shadow, as desired)

7. Grevia's Prison. The night hag, Grevia, (Night Hag, mid-level Cleric/Sorceress) riding an Abyssal goat (treat as Nightmare) and carrying a magic, acid-tipped spear. She is aware of any intruders and will be waiting. Eager for knowledge, she pretends to parley, but will kill all regardless. If killed, she dissolves in a mist. (A) Three former victims, impaled on stone spikes, can animate at Grevia's command. [Treat as Mummies] In North corner is a plain stone chair where Grevia spends eternity. Tucked below is a box made from a mummified head, (holds gems) and a valuable magic tome. Grevia has etched elaborate images on the walls with her spear. These are crude but truly disturbing artworks. Examining for too long may bring nightmares in days to come, and a chance of attracting the attention of one of Grevia's sisters.

8. Tomb of the Gravegod. Room is interior of massive red crystal geode, formed from Vekkoru's heart's blood. Floor of crushed shells. Sound of a slow heartbeat reverberates. In center, a large, pulsing heart made of ghostly fire hovers above a single candle. Items of gold and silver are heaped below. An impenetrable wall of spirits swirls around all of it. ...Grevia's skeleton lies on a raised slab near entrance, staked through chest with a crystal spear. A rune-covered jar holds her withered organs, and allows Grevia to resurrect after seven days. The Spear binds her to the shrine. Destroying both spear and jar causes spirits to draw back. Snuffing the candle releases Vekkoru's spirit with a grateful, echoing sigh. At this point, the entire shrine begins to creak and collapse. The party has 30 minutes to get out - be sure escape feels urgent! If they are quick, they can grab whatever portable valuables the referee deems appropriate, as well as a magic bow, mace and talisman used by Vekkoru in life.