

## Grist for the Mill, by Vance Atkins

The old **post-mill (1)** lay idle for years, its runner stone cracked, and the windmill replaced by a new water mill. A month ago, Atin Shaban arrived with a 'new' stone and said he would set the mill grinding again. He repaired the mill-works and winched the new runner stone into place. Passersby noted that the millstone appeared odd – black, not of usual buhrstone, with intricate carvings where the lands and furrows should have been.

The post-mill turned into the wind and the nightmare began. The town was racked by earthquakes. Walls and buildings collapsed. Monsters, many not of this plane, appeared and disappeared. Townsfolk fled, or went mad. The town burgher fled when his servants turned on him and tried to eat his face. He retreated to the **abbey (2)** outside the city walls as the madness crept outward. The abbey is outside the radius for now, but with each day the chaos grows nearer. The burgher is desperate – the town coffers are open to anyone who can cease the madness (although the cashbox is buried under the collapsed **city hall (3)**). Approaching the mill requires negotiating the damaged town, magical effects, and possible invasive creatures.

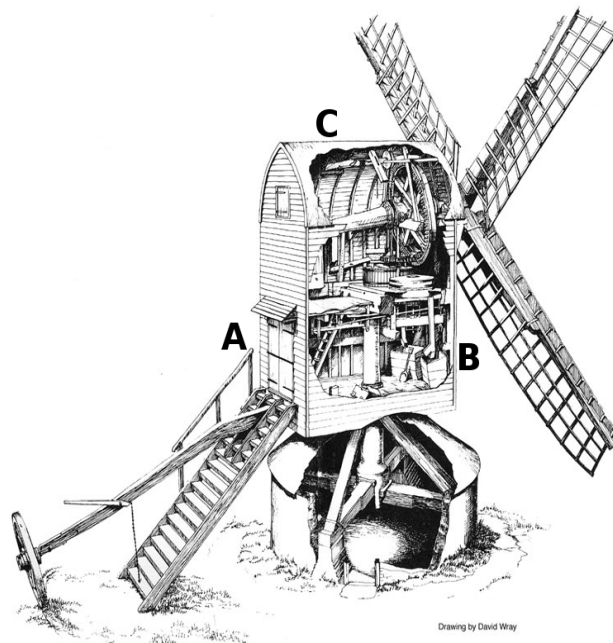
**d12 Millstone Effects** (Shifts hourly within each of the 6 sectors):

- 1-2. No effect
3. Magic doesn't work
4. Magic 2x effects
5. Magic effects reversed or affect random target
6. Insanity – save vs WIS score

7. Increased gravity – all movement halved, all missiles ½ range, melee -2 to strike
8. Earthquakes, 1d4/turn building or debris-fall – 2d8 dmg within 15' radius of building
9. Light warped - vertigo, melee at -4
10. *Hallucinatory terrain* - alien landscape (per spell)
11. *Darkness* (per spell)
12. Roll twice, ignore 1 or 2

**d12 Wanderers** (1d6 chance of encounter per exploration turn):

1. Townsfolk (cowering in fear, looting, or gone mad)
2. Town guards, in shock, retreating from attempt to approach mill
3. Imps (2-4), causing havoc
4. Misc. Undead (d10: 1-3:<1HD, 4-6:1HD, 7-8:2HD, 9-10:3HD)
5. Small elemental (4HD)
6. 2-12 Chaotic Humanoids, attracted by the mill's aura
7. Dinosaur, confused (d6: 1-4:herbivore, 5-6:carnivore)
8. All plants become ambulatory, carnivorous
9. Displacer beast (1d4 chance of fighting blink dogs)
10. Giant wedge of alien cheese, tasty (roll-under CON & permanently gain 1d3 pts to random attribute, otherwise lose 1d3 pts).
11. 1-4 Horned worms burst from ground (HD4, AC6/13, lamprey-like jaws, 1d8, attaches on target)
12. Fire salamander, extra grumpy



**Post-Mill** – The mill's floors are 15x25', with two levels. The varied stone effects within the cramped space make for complex logistics. **A) Door** - secured with *Wizard lock* unless null magic in effect; **B) Meal Floor** - Dis-articulated bodies of Atin Shaban's assistants are strewn here, torn apart by the stone's forces; **C) Milling Floor** - The **Ageaul'i Stone** was intended to access a parallel world, but was incorrectly activated, instead grinding time and reality, and leaking elemental and abyssal planes. Atin Shaban spins in agony, half bound into the stone as it slowly turns on the bedstone. Insane and partially incorporeal, Shaban is imprisoned by the alien black stone he intended to control. In lucid moments he cries, 'Kill me!', 'Free me!' or 'Hang the stone!' between guttural screams and alien words (MU9, HP 21, AC8/11, incorporeal - magic weapon to hit). Touching him (or the stone) causes 2d8 electrical damage + 1d6 chance of being bound into the stone. Shaban may be removed by magical means (*levitation, dimension door, etc.*). Removing him from the stone has a 75% chance to kill him from shock. Killing him has no effect on the stone. Wedging the stone in place or damaging the mill works will 'freeze' the effects but not stop them. Suspending the stone (700 lbs), by physical (non-metallic) or magic means, will disconnect it from the bedstone (and by association, this plane), until a means to break or secure it may be found. ...and therein begins a further adventure...