

The Ritual

*A Hideous Plot in Which Murder is
just the Start*

*Written by Phillip Wells
updated for WFRP 2nd edition by Michael Congreve*

Credits

Written by Phillip Wells

Illustrations by Russ Nicholson and Jes Goodwin

Updated by Michael Congreve

Skretth's Dark Lore (Warp) Spells**Armour of Darkness**

Casting Number: 10

Casting Time: Half action

Ingredients: Bit of blackened leather (+2)

Effect: 1 AP to every location and +20 bonus to Concealment Skill Tests.

Death Frenzy

Casting Number: 18

Casting Time: Full action

Ingredients: 2 drops blood from rabid animal (+2)

Effect: Ally within 18 yards gain Black Hunger.

Flensing Ruin

Casting Number: 25

Casting Time: Full action

Ingredients: Piece of elf, dwarf or human skin (+3)

Effect: Target within 10 yards takes S5 hit for a number of rounds equal to caster's Magic Level.

Skitterleap

Casting Number: 8

Casting Time: Half action

Ingredients: Hind leg of rat (+1)

Effect: You or ally within 18 yards teleport to location in line of sight.

Vermintide

Casting Number: 14

Casting Time: Full action

Ingredients: A wheel of good cheese (+2)

Effect: All creatures within template centred on caster take Damage 1 hit, except caster. On following round swarm moves 12 yards in direction of caster's choice, then control is lost.

Warp Lightning

Casting Number: 11

Casting Time: Half action

Ingredients: A slender copper rod (+2)

Effect: *Magic Missile*, 48 yards and Damage 5. Caster takes Damage 1 hit for every 1 on the Casting Roll.**Introduction**

This adventure is suitable for inexperienced or beginning player characters. It is set in Delberz, but could be used in any urban setting. It pits the PCs against Skaven and their human allies.

In this adventure, the PCs witness a cultist, Peter Tavelli, chasing and seemingly trying to kill a young man, who begs for their help. Pursuing Tavelli leads the PCs to a dangerous underground complex where a band of Skaven, led by Skretth – an unusually dangerous specimen – have joined forces with a group of human cultists. Can the PCs prevent the terrible ritual these groups are planning, and save themselves into the bargain?

This is an adventure in which the PCs are put against significant combat opposition, and at the very least the PCs should include at least two (and preferably three) characters that can look after themselves with some confidence in a mêlée.

This adventure was originally printed in White Dwarf # 99, and was later re-printed in the Games Workshop publication 'The Restless Dead', and the Hogshead Publishing supplement 'Apocrypha 2: Chart of Darkness'.

Background

Grey Seer Skretth is insane: a renegade Skaven with an impossible goal. He controls a small group of loyal but misguided Clan Skyre warriors. Recently, he and his patrol exited the Under-Empire (the web of tunnels that riddle the Empire) into the sewers beneath Delberz. The original map showed no such exit, Skretth looks upon it as fate. Skretth is somewhat paranoid and delusional, and therefore chose not to make contact with the Skaven of Under-Delberz, instead choosing to remain in isolation to perform his "research".

On a previous mission in Sylvania, Skretth had the extended opportunity to study the works and practices of a skilled Necromancer. The things he witnessed were too much even for the Skaven's warped mind, and he began to seek solace in the drug Mandrake. Constantly hallucinating from the effects of the drug, the young Skaven became fascinated by experiments he could not hope to understand. He reasoned that for bodies to be re-animated, there would have to be Warpstone present, as he believed the



substance sparked life into all things. If it was there then surely it could be extracted? If he could find out a way to extract it, he would be able to return to Skavenblight, and the accolades he felt were his due.

The Delberz sewer network has provided him with an opportunity to collect specimens and practise rituals for his flawed quest. Human cultists in the town, members of the Horned Rat worshipping cult named "The Poison Claw", have been made aware of the groups arrival and are aiding Skretth in his unofficial mission.

The adventure leads the characters into the sewers beneath the city. There they will discover that a band of Skaven have recently taken up residence down there, and, with the aid of their human servants, are carrying out bizarre rituals and sacrifices to their deity, the Horned Rat. The characters must try to eradicate (or at least drive out) the Skaven, whilst attempting to save a wealthy citizen from their clutches in the process. As the Skaven presence is significant, the characters will need to have their wits about them. Repeatedly choosing to fight will lead to a swift and bloody demise...

Claw Mark

The following encounter should occur as the PCs are walking back from a late night drink one evening at their local tavern. They should, however, have a good deal of their equipment with them, as they will have no time to go and pick up anything left in their lodgings.

As they are strolling through a particularly dark and quiet street, a door suddenly bursts open from one of the expensive houses lining the road. A young man, dressed only in his night-clothes, rushes out yelling, "Help me, someone, please!"

As he catches sight of the characters, he turns and races towards them. A large bruise covers one side of his face. As he races over, gasping for air, a dark shape appears, silhouetted in the doorway of the house. The man gasps out one last sentence, "They've got my father... Don't let them take him... Hurry..." before an audible twang comes from the doorway, followed by a much closer thud.



Skretth's Petty Magic (Warp) Spells

Favour

Casting Number: 5

Casting Time: Half action

Ingredients: Bit of human flesh (+1)

Effect: +5% bonus to your next test, or steal Favour of the Horned Rat from any Skaven within 16 yards.

Ghostly Flame

Casting Number: 6

Casting Time: Half action

Ingredients: Pinch of Warpstone powder (+1)

Effect: Light equivalent to torch burns for 1 hour. May be thrown as a *magic missile* with Damage 1.

Mark of the Horned Rat

Casting Number: 3

Casting Time: Half action

Ingredients: A rotten tooth (+1)

Effect: Target within 16 yards passes WP test or gains blemish lasting 1D10 hours for -5% Fel.

Rat Thrall

Casting Number: 3

Casting Time: Half action

Ingredients: Bit of mouldy cheese (+1)

Effect: Summon communicating and obedient rat for 1D10 hours.

Vector

Casting Number: 4

Casting Time: Half action

Ingredients: Wad of Dung (+1)

Effect: Target within 16 yards must take T test or be at -20% to Resist Disease for 24 hours.

Wrack

Casting Number: 5

Casting Time: Half action

Ingredients: Tear from a human child (+1)

Effect: Target within 12 yards suffers pain and -5% to WS, BS, Ag for 1D10 rounds.

Zombies

WS	BS	S	T	AG	INT	WP	FEL	A	W	SB	TB	M	MG	IP
25	0	35	35	10	-	-	-	1	12	3	3	4	0	0

Talents: Frightening, Mindless, Shambling, Undead.

Trappings: Unarmed.

Special Rules:

Mindless: Zombies are animated corpses with no mind or spirit of their own. They have no Intelligence, Willpower, or Fellowship, and never take or fail Tests based on these Characteristics.

Shambling: Zombies are relentless but slow. They cannot take the run action.

Skretth's Lesser Magic Spells

Aethyric Armour

Casting Number: 5

Casting Time: Half action

Ingredients: Link of chainmail (+1)

Effect: Gain AP equal to Caster's Magic Level for 6 rounds.

Silence

Casting Number: 10

Casting Time: Half action

Ingredients: A gag (+1)

Effect: Target within 24 yards must pass WP test or be silent for rounds equal to caster's Magic level.

The unfortunate young man collapses into the arms of one of the characters (perhaps one who is drawing or who has already drawn a missile weapon of his own), choking and coughing up blood. A crossbow bolt is buried in his back. He is dead.

GM's Notes

The crossbow quarrel landed in the back of Ernest Dralst, son of Klauss Dralst, a wealthy townsman. Both lived in the rather plush house from which Ernest just emerged. Ernest was asleep in his upstairs bedroom when he was awakened by someone moving about below. After waking his father, the two of them went to investigate, but were leapt upon by three intruders in the kitchen. Klauss was swiftly overpowered. Ernest, however, being younger and fitter, managed to break free and run out on to the street.

Peter Tavelli, a Poison Claw cultist, raced after Ernest in an effort to prevent him from alerting anyone, after having first ordered his companions to take Klauss back to Skretth by way of an old, forgotten, stone passageway which travels right up into the house through a flagstone in the cellar. Meanwhile, Tavelli has succeeded in shooting Ernest, but not before he managed to reach the PCs.

As soon as Tavelli fired his bolt, he retreats back inside the building and watches the adventurers' reaction through the hall window. If they pursue him, he will lead them into a trap in the house before trying to get back into the cellar and into the secret passage. If he is caught or cornered, he will seize a capsule of Black Lotus Venom from around his neck and bite in to it. These capsules are carried by all members of the Poison Claw, and contain the equivalent of four very strong doses of the drug (**Toughness Tests** for each dose are **Challenging (-10%)**, for a total -20%).

Such a capsule may not necessarily kill, though the GM is encouraged to ensure that this does not happen too often. The use of these capsules is accepted by all members of the cult, and even if the poison does not work, a successful **Hard (-20%) Torture Test** will be necessary in order to extract any information from them, such is their loyalty to Skretth.

The adventurers will probably chase Tavelli into the house in an attempt to apprehend him. The characters should remember the dying mans last words, expressing the need for speed.

Should particularly cowardly adventurers refuse to enter the house at once, the adventure can still be brought back on line. The Skaven will be very interested in capturing the party, since they are the only (living) people who know what happened to Klauss. They may be grabbed during the night and thrown into the cells in the sewers (see Into The Sewers, below) to await sacrifice. The PCs will then have to escape – Klauss will already have been sacrificed by then, so they won't have to worry about rescuing him anymore.

Upstairs Downstairs

If he sees that he is being followed, Tavelli will race up the stairs in the hall, making sure the PCs see him. If they pursue him up the stairs, he will manoeuvre a decorative wine barrel which stands on the landing to the top of the stairs and send it crashing down towards his pursuers. Anyone standing on the stairs, or at the foot (presumably to aim a bow or crossbow), must pass an **Agility Test** or be hit. The test is **Challenging (-10%)** for those on the stairs, **Routine (+10%)** for those at the foot.

Anyone hit by the barrel will take a Damage 3 hit, and be knocked down. For those stranding on the stairs, this will incur falling damage as the GM judges fit (another Damage 3 hit for a 3 yard fall is probably most appropriate. From there, Tavelli will rush back down the stairs, leaping the banister half way down (a 3-yard jump). Assuming he lands correctly, he will rush back to the cellar and enter the sewers through the secret passage. Should any character have avoided the barrel and be able to go in pursuit of him, he will turn and fire his repeater crossbow. Should any character get too close for comfort, he will just make a straight run for it, abandoning any attempt to kill the characters. Tavelli will choose to use the Black Lotus capsule in preference to being captured.

Tavelli is a tall (6'3"), angular man, with a hooked nose, small beady eyes, and black hair. He is wearing a black, wide-brimmed hat that covers most of the face, and a dark blue neckerchief as a mask. His midnight blue cloak is fastened by a clasp identical to the one lying in the kitchen. His grey trousers are neatly tucked into a pair of leather boots. He is also wearing a pale blue tunic and black gloves. The other humans serving Skretth dress similarly when involved in night missions, but are indistinguishable from any other upright citizen when going about their business during the daylight hours.

The House

Only brief descriptions of the rooms are given as it is unlikely the characters will be spending much time here. Should the party choose to hang around and spend time looting the place, it might be prudent to have a Watch patrol come to investigate – after all this is a well off district, and there is in all likelihood still the body in the street outside. All the rooms can be illuminated by lanterns hanging from the ceiling rafters, but at present, only the ones in rooms 1, 7, 11, and 12 are currently burning.

1 – Hallway

The hallway is opulently furnished with hunting trophies and tapestries which hang from the walls. A plush blue carpet covers the floor. An elaborate staircase in the south-western corner spirals upwards to a balcony that overlooks the hall. There are three tapestries here, each worth 25 crowns. The hunting trophies are not especially valuable.

Poison Claw Cultists

WS	BS	S	T	AG	INT	WP	FEL	A	W	SB	TB	M	MG	IP
34	34	31	32	35	28	37	30	1	12	3	3	4	0	0

Skills: Common Knowledge (Empire), Consume Alcohol, Dodge Blow, Gamble, Gossip, Intimidate, Secret Language (Thieves' Tongue), Speak Language (Reikspiel).

Talents: Coolheaded, Disarm, Quick Draw, Strike to Stun, Very Resilient, Wrestling.

Trappings: Club, Knuckle-dusters, Leather Jerkin.

Tigrati 'Head' Parvisch - The Jailer

WS	BS	S	T	AG	INT	WP	FEL	A	W	SB	TB	M	MG	IP
53	35	37	38	44	57	37	50	1	16	3	3	4	0	0

Skills: Command, Common Knowledge (Empire), Consume Alcohol, Dodge Blow, Gossip, Intimidate, Perception, Search, Sleight of Hand, Speak Language (Reikspiel).

Talents: Lightning Reflexes, Resistance to Disease, Resistance to Poison, Specialist Weapon Group (Entangling), Very Resilient.

Trappings: Club, Ring of heavy keys.

The Wounded Ghoul

WS	BS	S	T	AG	INT	WP	FEL	A	W	SB	TB	M	MG	IP
32	0	37	45	34	18	31	5	2	0	3	4	4	0	6

Skills: Concealment, Perception, Outdoor Survival, Scale Sheer Surfaces, Search, Silent Move, Shadowing, Speak Language (Reikspiel).

Talents: Fearless, Frightening, Natural Weapons, Night Vision, Rover.

Special Rules:

Poisonous Attack: A target who suffers at least 1 Wound from the Ghouls claws must pass a Challenging (-10%) Toughness Test or suffer an additional 2 Wounds.

Insanities: Beast Within.

Clan Skryre Clanrats

WS	BS	S	T	AG	INT	WP	FEL	A	W	SB	TB	M	MG	IP
35	30	31	36	40	28	26	18	1	10	3	3	5	0	0

Skills: Common Knowledge (Skaven) +10%, Concealment, Outdoor Survival, Perception, Scale Sheer Surfaces +10%, Silent Move +10%, Swim, Speak Language (Queekish).

Talents: Night Vision, Tunnel Rat, Specialist Weapon Group (Sling).

Trappings: Leather Jack, Skullcap, Handweapon, Dagger or Sling and Ammunition.

Black Skaven Guards

WS	BS	S	T	AG	INT	WP	FEL	A	W	SB	TB	M	MG	IP
48	30	46	46	33	20	36	18	1	14	4	4	5	0	5

Skills: Common Knowledge (Skaven), Dodge Blow, Intimidate, Perception, Swim, Speak Language (Queekish).

Talents: Coolheaded, Hardy, Night Vision, Specialist Weapon Group (Sling), Street Fighting, Strike Mighty Blow, Sturdy, Very Resilient.

Trappings: Leather Jack, Skullcap, Sword coated in Black Lotus Venom, Shield.

Peter Tavelli - Poison Claw Cultist

WS	BS	S	T	AG	INT	WP	FEL	A	W	SB	TB	M	MG	IP
32	36	32	34	41	32	32	35	1	13	3	3	4	0	2

Skills: Common Knowledge (Empire), Concealment, Consume Alcohol, Dodge Blow, Evaluate, Gossip, Intimidate, Perception, Pick Lock, Scale Sheer Surfaces, Search, Secret Language (Thieves' Tongue), Secret Signs (Thief), Silent Move, Sleight of Hand, Speak Language (Reikspiel).

Talents: Alley Cat, Disarm, Excellent Vision, Specialist Weapon Group (Crossbow), Strike to Stun.

Trappings: Club, Repeater Crossbow with 9 Bolts, Mask.

2 – Dining Room

This room is currently a total mess. Two bodies are sprawled across the floor. The table is upturned and shattered glass lies everywhere. What must have once been an expensive wooden cabinet has been smashed in along the front; the drawers and their contents have been scattered across the room. The two bodies are those of the servants who tried to oppose Tavelli when he was pursuing Ernest. The ensuing fight succeeded in completely devastating the whole room, leaving nothing of value unbroken.

3 – Lounge

This is where Klauss used to entertain his guests while they relaxed after a meal. The room hasn't suffered the same fate as the Dining Room. Several luxurious armchairs, a large decorative fireplace and an elaborate sideboard provide grand furnishing. Four paintings hang on the walls, each worth 40 crowns, but again, looting should be discouraged.

4 – Kitchen

This large room has a flight of stone stairs leading down into the cellar. Two clubs rest in a puddle of blood, evident to anyone entering the room. Any character making a successful *Search* test will find an ornamental clasp decorated with the symbol of the Horned Rat – three crossed bones forming the shape of an inverted triangle. All the items were dropped during the scuffle between Klauss, Ernest, and the cultists, and the clasp may reveal just what the characters are really up against. A successful **Academic Knowledge: Theology** test will reveal the nature of the symbol, and its connection to the Skaven. But bear in mind that many characters may believe that the Skaven are nothing more than a fairytale.

5 – Corridor

This connects the hall to the kitchen. As it is part of the house which guests would not normally see, it is merely stone-flagged, showing none of the splendour seen elsewhere in the house.

6 – Storeroom

This is where all the food and other domestic requirements of the house are kept, under lock and key. However, when Klauss and Ernest went to investigate the sounds, they armed themselves with clubs kept here (now to be found in the kitchen), and Klauss forgot to lock the door in his hurry. Thus, the door is slightly ajar, the keys still in the lock.

Inside are several sacks of grain, stacked neatly against one wall along with many other items of food – whatever seems appropriate. Also kept in the room is what amounts to a small armoury – a wooden crate marked "DANGER! EXPLOSIVES" sits innocently in the corner (it contains four bombs). In addition, there are two lanterns here, three spare flasks of oil, and a tinderbox. The bombs could prove very

useful to the party in the later part of the adventure, should they choose to take them now.

7 – Balcony

The stairs from the hallway spiral upwards onto this balcony which overlooks the hall below. The floor here is also covered in the blue carpet, but there are no adornments, save for a large, decorative wine barrel, situated in a small alcove at the top of the stairs.

8 – Guest Chamber

Visitors to the house are normally accommodated here. A large four-poster bed set against one wall, a set of teak drawers, and a large wardrobe provide the main furnishings. There is nothing of real value here, however.

9 – Servants Quarters

This large room contains four beds, only two of which have been occupied recently (by the servants lying dead in the dining room). The room is not as well furnished as the rest of the house, but still represents very good servants' accommodation.

10 – Corridor

This corridor separates Klauss and Ernest's bedrooms off from the rest of the house, providing them with more privacy. As with the hall and balcony, the floor is covered with blue carpet. Two paintings hang on the walls, worth approximately 70 crowns each.

11 – Master Bedroom

This is the largest bedroom in the house, and is where Klaus usually sleeps. An ornate rosewood cabinet is set against the wall opposite the four poster bed, together with an equally ornate set of drawers and a spacious wardrobe. The drawers are all filled with personal belongings and clothes, but a successful **Search Test** of the Wardrobe will turn up a false bottom, concealing a secret compartment which contains 200 crowns, 67 shillings, and 300 pence.

12 – Ernest's Bedroom

This isn't quite as luxurious as the master bedroom. It is relatively sparsely furnished with a single bed, a wardrobe and chest of drawers.

13 – The Cellar

This stone flagged room is filled with barrels and casks containing a wide variety of fine wines and ales. A flight of stairs leads up into the kitchen in one corner, whilst in another corner, concealed beneath one of the flagstones, is the entrance to an old, long forgotten tunnel. This tunnel leads into the sewer system, and is the way Tavelli and company gained entrance to the house. Neither Klauss nor Ernest knew of the existence of the passage. The flagstone has not yet been replaced over the hole, as

Skretth - Insane Grey Seer

WS	BS	S	T	AG	INT	WP	FEL	A	W	SB	TB	M	MG	IP
33	25	26	38	40	44	39	14	1	16	2	3	4	2	2

Skills: Academic Knowledge (Magic) +10%, Academic Knowledge (Necromancy), Academic Knowledge (Theology), Channelling +10%, Command, Common Knowledge (Empire), Common Knowledge (Skaven) +10%, Intimidate, Magical Sense +10%, Perception +10%, Prepare Poison, Read/Write, Search, Speak Arcane Language (Daemoniac), Speak Arcane Language (Magick), Speak Language (Queekish) +10%, Speak Language (Reikspiel).

Talents: Aethyric Attunement, Cool Headed, Dark Lore (Warp), Dark Magic, Fast Hands, Lesser Magic (Aethyric Armour, Silence), Meditation, Night Vision, Petty Magic (Warp), Public Speaking, Savvy.

Trappings: Grey Robes, Quarterstaff, 10 Warp Tokens, 4 Doses of Mandrake Snuff, Magic Item (see sidebar).

Insanities: Venomous Thoughts (-10% Fel), Mandrake Man (-10% S, T, AG, INT, FEL, -15% WP, may only take half actions). Note that these modifications have already been applied to Skretth's profile.

Notes: See the last few pages of this booklet for a summary of Skretth's spells.

The Bone Claw

In the original version of this adventure, Skretth possessed a Magic Ring which allowed the wearer to automatically cast, once per day with no chance of failure, the Necromantic Spell 'Raise the Dead'. If you wish to use it here is an alternative item, created using the Skaven Technomancy rules found in *Children of the Horned Rat*:

Fashioned for Skretth at his fevered insistence by a Clan Skyre Warlock Engineer who once was part of this group (Skretth's paranoia ensuring that he felt in necessary to "silence" the other Skaven who knew too much of his research), this device, powered by Warpstone (further proof to Skretth of the accuracy of his theory) allows the Grey Seer to manipulate the dead in the similar manner to that of a true Necromancer. It takes the form of a clawed gauntlet and bracer fashioned from human bone, held together with copper wiring, which covers the entire right hand and forearm.

Category: Warp

Encumbrance: 25

Function: Allows the wearer to cast the Necromantic spell 'Raise the Dead' (WFRP rulebook pg 162). The Bone Claw has an inherent Magic Characteristic of 2, which although insufficient to cast the spell on its own, is added to the wearers Magic Characteristic when attempting to cast the spell. In Skretth's case this allows him to use up to 5 Casting Dice (including the extra dice for the Dark Magic Talent). Using the Bone Claw counts as a free action.

Malfunction Percentage: 13% (see Children of the Horned Rat pg 88 for effect).

Use Cost: 6 Warp Tokens per casting (item currently is loaded with 12 Warp Tokens).

Conclusion

If the PCs are careful and sensible, you should make sure they reach Klauss before the ceremony takes place. This gives them a reasonable opportunity to get out safely. Remember that Skretth is an incoherent maniac who could be far more powerful were it not for his Mandrake addiction. If the party rush in blindly into every combat they encounter, they deserve to find the going very tough.

Award the following experience points after the completion of the adventure:

- 20 – Each for chasing/overcoming Tavelli
- 20 – Each for conducting a comprehensive search of the house
- 30 – Each for dealing with the cultists
- 60 – Each for dealing with the Skaven, one way or another
- 20 – Each for killing Skretth
- 20 – Each if the Zombies had to be overcome
- 30 – Each if Klauss is rescued
- 10-30 – Each for good roleplaying

If the adventure is successfully completed, the characters should be encouraged not to get side-tracked by another expedition into the tunnels – particularly if they used the bombs as all those explosions are bound to have resulted in considerable structural damage.

Escaping Skaven need not be a problem. If they retreat into the tunnels, they won't bother the characters again (Skretth is effectively finished anyway). The Poison Claw Cultists, should any escape, are likely to disband or flee the town. They were only a small outfit and have no contacts to help them re-organise in Delberz. At best, they will seek to join similar groups elsewhere in the Empire.

Klauss will also repay his rescuers with 80 crowns per PC (may result in an embarrassing situation if the party earlier looted his house). The characters could increase this to 100 crowns each with a successful **Haggle Test**, but this would be pretty shameful.

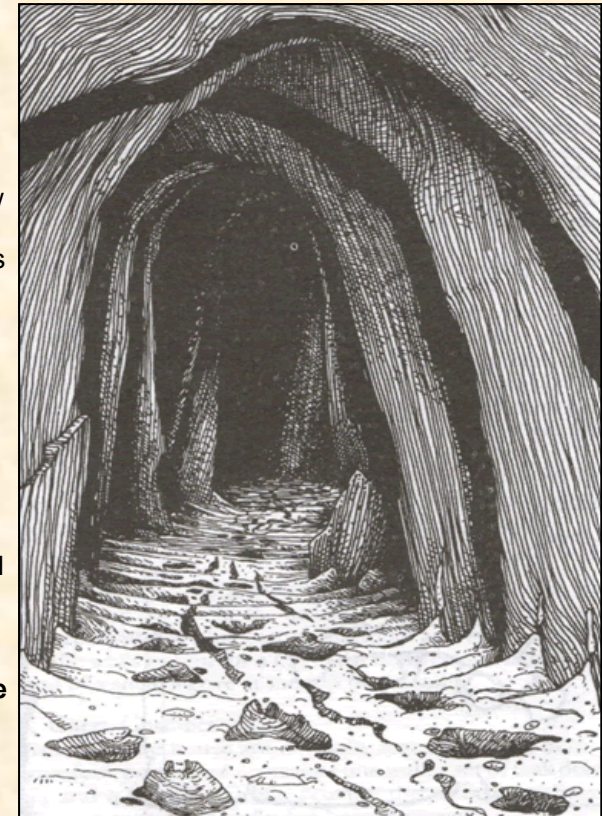
Tavelli has not yet rejoined his companions. When (or if) he manages to do so, he will pull the flagstone back into place behind him, time permitting, making a loud grating sound. A **Routine (+10%) Search Test** is necessary to find this hole if it has been closed, assuming the searcher has a reason to suspect such a tunnel must exist (such as by hearing the sound of it being closed).

Into the Sewers

Beneath the hole, a rusty, iron-runged ladder leads down a narrow shaft for 10 yards or so, finally emerging in a rough-hewn stone corridor. The course of the adventure from this point depends very much on what has happened to Tavelli. If he has successfully managed to escape down the shaft he will return to Skretth immediately and report what has happened. However, he will only mention the PC's if they are pursuing him. Thus, the Skaven will be ready for the characters and will step up the guard around the sacrificial chamber, so that when the time for the ritual sacrifice comes (at midnight), it will be much harder for the characters to stop it from going ahead, as if it isn't going to be difficult enough as it is.

If Tavelli was killed by the PCs (or if he killed himself), then he will not be missed for some time, as the Skaven have more important things to worry about with the impending sacrifice. Skretth's experiments have not been going well. He really has no idea how to achieve his goal and is increasingly worried that his followers will soon lose patience. Apart from anything else he is constantly under the influence of Mandrake root, and rational thought (if such can ever be truly grasped by Skaven) is far beyond him.

The guard around the sacrificial chamber will not be stepped up, and consequently the characters' task will be made a little easier. Any attempt to impersonate Tavelli (by wearing his clothes) will probably be successful (on a successful **Disguise Test**), but remember that there are several areas of the complex where humans are not permitted, and trying to gain access to these areas will



arouse suspicion. The cultists know where they can and can't go. From this point on, the action is dependent on where the PCs go. Don't forget that they are racing against the clock so keep a careful record of elapsed game time.

The rock corridor in which the characters are standing is pitch black. The characters will need to provide some means of illumination to progress farther (such as any of the many lanterns in the house, though be aware of how much oil the party have, as just taking a single lantern with no spare oil will no doubt result in the party becoming stranded in the sewers in the dark). The corridor is quite low (about 6' high), so tall members of the party will have to duck to avoid hitting their heads against the ceiling. The floor is covered with a shallow layer of mud (any character running or charging will have to make a successful **Agility Test** or fall over), and footprints clearly mark the path taken by the cultists. The PCs won't need the **Follow Trails** skill to follow these prints, however, a successful test will reveal that the tracks indicate two abductors, and the two continuous roughly parallel tracks indicate someone was dragged through here.

The corridor and branching passages are rather frightening, as the PCs will be able to hear strange, far off noises, and grunts echoing in them. The walls glisten with moisture – a greenish slime being evident in some places – and the air is distinctly cool. GMs should try to convey an atmosphere of foreboding here. Should the party decide to ignore the adventure, instead taking one of the side passageways, they will soon get lost, as each leads gradually downwards into a terrifying, twisting maze which works its way for miles in every direction. No further details of the side branches are given – should players really wish to investigate them, you should create the details yourself. The further into the tunnels they get, the more dangerous they become: all manner of pitfalls and wandering mutated creatures could await the unwary... The party could wander endlessly, slowly dying of starvation, lack of water, and their wounds. Since it was this way that Skrethth found his way into the sewers under Delberz, there is an entrance into the Underway here, and GM's possessing *Children of the Horned Rat* may want to intersperse some flora and fauna from the book into this area, or even have characters find their way (possibly in shackles) to the warrens of Under-Delberz.

The tracks eventually lead to a dead end: a wall of moist, smooth stonework. A character with **Secret Signs: Thief** will notice a marked stone on a successful **Routine (+10%) Perception Test**, though characters without the skill will notice the stone on a successful **Search Test**. Pushing this stone causes the wall to swing outwards, providing an entrance to the sewers. The door may be closed by pushing the stone as it protrudes from the other side (the stone merely repositions the counterweight that opens the door mechanism).

Dark, Damp and Deadly Locations

The sewers, like the corridor leading in to them, are in pitch darkness. The part of the sewers the party are exploring are roughly 10 feet wide, including narrow stone walkways, 2 ½ feet wide to each side of the effluent channel, which is 5 feet deep, and

Invariably in doesn't, and the body is dragged away into a corner. The six most recent victims lie here.

If the adventurers arrive at the chamber before the ritual has begun (at midnight), Klauss will be bound to the block by a piece of rope tied around his wrists at one end, and to the ring at the other. He will be dressed only in the white robe from room 10, and too exhausted to cry for help. He will be unguarded.

If the PCs have to interrupt the ritual to save Klauss, the odds will be against them. There may be up to a dozen Skaven in the cavern (including the two Black Skaven guards), more than enough to overpower the characters. If the party have to deal with six zombies as well (raised using Skrethth's magic item), they face certain defeat.

Unless... Remember the bombs? Exactly how the PC's use these devices is for them to figure out. They could end up killing everyone and everything in the cavern, including themselves. At the very least, sensible characters should be able to use the explosive devices to aid their retreat if they find themselves outclassed.

Captured

If the PCs are captured at any point by the Poison Claw cultists or Skaven, they will be stripped of their possessions (which will be placed in the westernmost cell of area 6) and tossed into different cells until Skrethth is ready to use them as ingredients in his latest experiments.

Characters will be allowed to shout to one another from their cells; the players may use this opportunity to discuss wild and unlikely escape plans. However, as the jailer is exceptionally dim-witted, all they have to do is think up a remotely convincing story, succeeding at a **Very Easy (+30%) Charm Test**, and Tigrati will simply open the doors and let them out (smiling, grunting, and salivating in the process).

After getting him to unlock the door, a swift grab for the key and a well placed kick could leave him in the cell and the character outside with the keys.

High Explosives!

The full rules for bombs can be found in the *Old World Armoury*, but are presented here for completeness.

Bombs can either be placed or thrown. It takes a full action to light and throw a bomb. If placed, they require no attack roll, if thrown the **Specialist Weapon Group: Explosives** Talent is required, or the throwers Ballistic Skill is halved. A bombs fuse can be cut to various lengths (ten second increments to a maximum of a minute). When a bomb detonates, it inflicts a Damage 6 hit to all creatures and buildings in a 10 yard radius (large template). If an attempt to throw a bomb misses, roll 1d10 and consult the diagram below. On a 1, the bomb is a dud. On a 10, the bomb misfires and explodes in the wielders hand. On a 2-9, roll another 1d10, with the result being the number of yards away from the target, in the direction indicated by the first roll, that the bomb lands. If the **Ballistic Skill Test** fails by greater than 30%, there is no need to roll for a miss location; the wielder drops the bomb at his own feet (though if the fuse is long, he may have enough time to pick it up and try again) .

Hey, Maybe the Rat was on to Something!

Skretth's ritual grimoire is a rough collection of his fevered writings, both on his idea for the perfect ritual, and the delusional ranting of a madman. The book is only good for kindling, though a character who can read Queekish (unlikely admittedly, unless you are running a campaign based around the Skaven), it gives a rare and disturbing insight into the mind of a truly insane specimen of an alien species. Someone reading this book must pass a **Willpower Test** or gain an **Insanity Point**.

However, a GM who owns *Realms of Sorcery* might want to develop the possibility that Skretth was actually onto something. Although his idea that he could refine Warpstone from a dying person was clearly wrong, a living person does have some traces of the Winds of Magic within them. Hence, Skretth's notes could form a starting point for a Wizard who wishes to create a ritual to create Power Crystals. Skretth has already begun the process of designing the ritual, but has so far been unsuccessful – due in part to the skewed result that he seeks, and in part to some of the unrealistic parameters (in particular the Consequences and Casting Time). It is up to the GM how much work and modification needs to be done by a PC wizard to make the following ritual viable:

Condensing the Soul

Type: Arcane

Arcane Language: Daemonic

Magic: 2

XP: 200

Ingredients: A human sacrifice, a ceremonial dagger, a granite altar, black and white ceremonial robes for the caster and sacrifice respectively.

Conditions: At least six participants chanting in unison with the caster. The ritual must be begun on the last stroke of midnight.

Consequences: None.

Casting Number: 14

Casting Time: One minute.

Description: The sacrifices life essence is condensed, creating a new Power Crystal (GMs choice over which type is most appropriate – Jade or Amethyst are the most obvious choices, although the ritual could be modified to use an animal sacrifice which could result in an Amber crystal).

tunnel. This is where the Skaven assemble to attend the ritual. A torch in a wall bracket provide illumination – the light cast is sufficient for Skaven eyes, but characters without night vision or a light source of their own will only be able to see dimly.

When everyone is in place (all the Skaven attend rituals), Skretth stands at the head of the block and leads the group in a chant: a noise so loud it can be heard as far away as area 3. This lasts for about a minute, increasing in volume and speed until the Skaven are worked up into a frenzy. Victims are killed at this point, then the Skaven fall silent, waiting for something (they are not sure what) to happen.

half filled with slow flowing muck. See the *GM's Toolkit* for more ideas on exploring sewers.

The walkways are only wide enough to permit movement in single file, and, as they are also wet and slippery, anyone attempting to run or charge must make an **Agility Test** each round or slip and fall in. The effluent, not surprisingly, emits a terrible stench, and anyone falling in will have their Fellowship characteristic halved until they have an opportunity to clean up. Due to the shallow depth of the effluent, there is no risk of drowning, even for a Dwarf or Halfling, unless the character is unconscious (due to an unfortunate Critical Hit); in this case rules for drowning can be found in the *WFRP Companion*. Characters wishing to leap the effluent may try to do so, but the width of the walkway is insufficient for a running leap, making this a more difficult prospect for most characters. It is easily possible to wade across the channel, though with much the same effect as if the character had fallen in. Anyone doing so must pass a **Routine (+10%) Agility Test** or slip and fall over each round. Anyone unfortunate enough to fall in the effluent channel and perhaps take a sip of the soup, must pass a **Challenging (-10%) Toughness Test** or contract the Bloody Flux.

An unpleasant and unsettling atmosphere pervades the sewer systems, and all characters without a previous career which would inure them to such an environment (such as Rat Catcher or Sewer Jack), make **Willpower Tests** (except those related to casting or resisting Magic) at a **Very Hard (-30%)** modifier. Sound carries further than normal here; making all listening based **Perception Tests Routine (+10%)**.

The major encounter areas in the sewers and the branching passageways are detailed below. As the whole area below the cellar has been taken over by the Skaven and their servants, there is a 10% chance per minute of the characters encountering someone or something. Roll 1d10 and consult the table below:

- | | |
|--------|---|
| 1 - 4 | A lone cultist on a routine errand for the Skaven. Use Tavelli's profile if a fight develops, but remember that raising the alarm will be the cultist's main priority. |
| 5 - 6 | A patrol of between two and four cultists armed with swords. Use the standard cultist profile. Unlike a lone cultist, these are more likely to initiate a fight, only thinking of raising the alarm when the fight turns against them. |
| 7 - 8 | A single Skaven, going about his business. Use the Clanrat profile. Although determined to keep the presence of his kind in the sewers secret, Skaven are cowardly animals, and his first instinct will be to flee and hide. |
| 9 - 10 | A small band of two (or more at your discretion) Clanrats returning from a routine reconnaissance patrol elsewhere in the sewers. These will want to keep the presence of Skaven in the sewers secret, and attack in earnest, though will flee for their lives when faced with determined opposition. |

During combat, if a Critical Hit is scored, the victim will need to pass an **Agility Test** or fall down (falling into the sewer channel if fighting on a walkway).

1 – Entrance to the Sewers

The secret door leads into the sewers proper. The walls are made of dull grey stone and glisten with moisture (although this time there is no slime). From here, it requires a successful **Follow Trails Test** to follow the route taken by the cultists to the second secret door. Even if this is not successful, the characters will realise on a successful **Intelligence Test** that although it is possible to leap or wade the effluent channel, for two men dragging an unconscious person it would prove practically impossible, certainly so without leaving some sort of trail on the opposite side. Thus, their quarry must have kept to this side of the channel. To the left, the channel could go on for some way, maybe even forking once or twice. However, due to other effluent channels crossing the path, or build-ups of detritus that would have given away anyone passing through, it should be obvious that the abductors did not pass this way.



2 – The Ghoul

The party will see a humanoid body slumped face down over the walkway, one arm dangling over the edge. When they first see the figure, the fact that it is dressed in rags and lies unmoving will be evident. The figure is, in fact, a Ghoul, which was attracted here by the smell of dead human flesh. It began to explore the area, but came across a Skaven patrol which attacked it immediately. The Skaven easily overpowered the miserable creature, and left it for dead. However, it is still barely alive, and is currently on the verge of regaining consciousness.

The Ghoul will not come to unless one of the characters tries to turn it over or otherwise inspect it, in which case it will attack until the party kills it or moves out of its range. Due to previous Critical Hits inflicted by the Skaven patrol, it cannot walk, and any attacks it makes count as **Challenging (-10%)**. Even if the party kill it, it serves one useful purpose, to indicate that the abductors did not come this far (as it would have been impossible to drag an unconscious human past even a wounded Ghoul such as this one).

3 – Entrance to the Skaven Den

Here a secret door opens into a rock corridor branching off to the right. Anyone following the trail of the abductors will see the trail disappearing into the wall here. Otherwise a successful **Search Test** is required to find the secret door. There is no

his worshippers. The pit is a natural narrow shaft about 3ft in diameter which disappears downward out of sight, and is effectively bottomless.

9 – Skretth's Chamber

Two burly, black furred Skaven stand guard at the entrance. Unless the PCs arrive during the ritual (where the victim will be Klauss Dralst), Skretth will be here. The contents of the room are scattered all across the floor. Skretth's mental state has deteriorated through his addiction to Mandrake and the failure of his experiments. He spends more and more time here isolated from the rest of the group in "think-think time". The only contents of the room are some foodstuffs, a shield, half a dozen unrefined Mandrake roots, and a small jar containing a dozen doses of his Mandrake snuff. In addition, Skretth's ritual grimoire can be found here, unless he is conducting the ritual, in which case he will have it on him.

10 – Robing Chamber

Skretth uses this room to prepare himself for the rituals. Two robes hang from pegs driven into the stone walls. One is black with red lining. This is the robe which Skretth uses when he performs his futile Warpstone extraction ritual. The other is white, torn, and bloodstained. Victims are dressed in this just prior to the ceremony. A sacrificial dagger is stored on a natural shelf on the stone wall (unless the ceremony is under way).

11 – End of the Tunnel

The tunnel ends at this point, dropping away to the sewer some 7 yards below. A rope bridge spans the chasm, ending in another tunnel mouth which leads away into the darkness. A rough staircase has been carved into the rock on the southern side of the gap, to allow the Skaven access to the sewer system by their own route (they prefer to avoid contact with the humans whenever they can).

12 – The Sacrificial Chamber

This huge natural cavern is dominated by a carving of the Horned Rat on the northern wall. At the north end of the cavern is a bloodstained granite block with an iron ring set into it. The south end is bare, except for two pillars supporting the entrance to the

Mandrake Snuff

Unlike the usual drug imbibed by most addicts, Skretth's Mandrake snuff is a little different. He has blended the powdered root with an equal amount of powdered Warpstone. This special mix not only satiates his craving for Mandrake (he has to take the same dosage as any other addict), but also has the same effect as Warpstone powder. Any non-Skaven trying this powder suffers the full effects as a dose of Mandrake, but must also pass a **Challenging (-10%) Toughness Test** or suffer from a Mutation. Handling the snuff is less dangerous than handling normal Warpstone Powder, a character doing so having to pass a **Very Easy (+30%) Toughness Test** or suffer a Mutation. A spellcaster consuming the snuff, in addition to the effects listed above, receives a +3 to his Casting Roll for any spell cast immediately (the snuff counts as an extra component), however, the risk of Tzeentch's Curse increases, doubles counting as triples, and triples counting as quadruples.

6 – Corridor and Cells

This dismal corridor is accessible from the guardroom by a sturdy oak door. There are nine cells, each has a small barred window in it. It will require a **Challenging (-10%) Strength Test** to break down the door, or a successful **Pick Locks Test** to pick the lock on the doors. Of course, the jailer has the keys to all these cells.

Only seven of these cells are used as such though. The western-most cell will store any equipment taken from captured characters, and is always locked. The eastern-most cell is the jailer's 'den', the current incumbent being Tigrati Parvisch. He is 5'10" tall, and wears a layer of stinking sweat and dirt. He is dressed in a filthy white vest, and equally disgusting black trousers. He always carries the ring of keys to the cells on his belt in the fashion of all good jailers, making them difficult to get hold of. Fortunately, he is immensely stupid and easy to trick. Tigrati's room is crudely furnished with a makeshift table and chair, on which stands a bottle of cheap Estalian wine. The cells are rat-infested holes with damp straw on the floor and not even a bed. The only light in them comes from a single lantern hanging in the corridor.

7 – Junction

The north running passageway from the guard room splits into two at this point. Standing at the junction, in the positions indicated on the map, are two brown furred Skaven sentries. Humans are only allowed past them if they have been sent for by Skretth, so again, the PCs will either have to bluff or fight their way past. These Skaven believe that no pathetic human would dare attempt to see Skretth uninvited, so they are not too difficult to bluff, requiring only a successful **Charm Test**. Fighting here, however, will alert Skretth if he is in his chamber.

8 – Shrine

Skretth turned this rough-hewn cave into a shrine for the worship of the Horned Rat. It consists of an altar flanked by two crudely sculpted 8' statues of the Horned Rat. His symbol – three bones forming an inverted triangle – has been chiselled into the rock wall opposite the altar. The roof is supported by four stone columns, and there is a small pit in front of the altar where offerings to the deity are thrown by



need to be too harsh here, if the characters do not find it and continue past, have a patrol of Skaven (as above) exit through the secret door as they are about to pass it by again after dealing with the Ghoul.

The corridor beyond is inclined upwards at a steep angle (evident to anyone entering it), levelling out as it reaches area 4. Half way along, just before the bend in the passage, is a trip wire. Any character approaching it will spot it on a successful **Perception Test**. If it has gone undetected, each character passing by it must pass an **Agility Test** or unwittingly trigger it. If the trip wire is triggered, two things happen. Firstly, a bell rings in area 4, alerting the guards there to the presence of intruders. Secondly, a small glass globe drops to the floor, releasing a yellowish gas which floods a 2 yard area (centred on the unfortunate who triggered the trap), spreading an additional 2 yards in all directions each round for 1d10/2 rounds. Anyone caught in the gas must pass a **Hard (-20%) Toughness Test** or fall unconscious for 1d10 minutes.

After the gas has dispersed (as many rounds as it took to fully spread out), the guards from area 4 will take any unconscious characters and throw them in the cells in area 6. If any characters are unaffected by the gas, the guards will seek to **Strike to Stun** with their clubs. They do not want to kill the characters because of Skretth's instructions to acquire sacrificial victims. If the PCs end up being subdued, refer to *Captured!* below.

4 – Cultist's Common Room and Guard Chamber

This roughly hewn cavern serves as the common room and guard chamber for the cultist servants of the Skaven. There are a couple of tables and some chairs in the north-eastern area of the room, two sets of bone dice, and a pack of cards lying on the tables. Illumination is provided by four torches mounted on the walls. If Tavelli managed to escape, this is where he will be (unless the party are hot on his trail, in which case he will not have had the time to complete his report to Skretth, and will therefore be in area 9). At any time there are between two and eight off duty guards in the room.

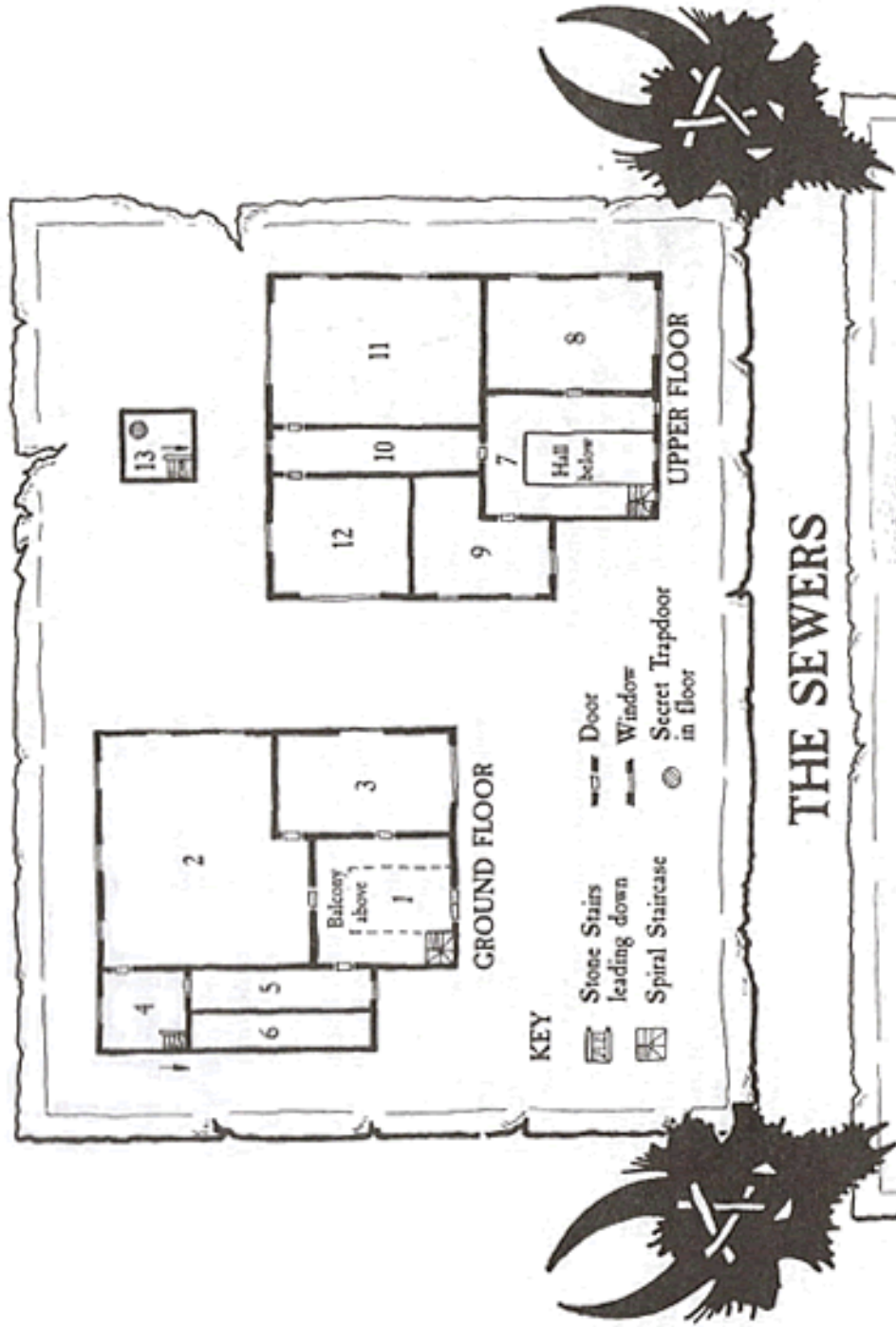
The guards' actions are dependant on whether the party triggers the trap wire or not in area 3. If they don't, the guards will be sitting at the table having a game of cards, and the PCs are going to either have to think up a convincing story and try to bluff their way through (the guards are naturally suspicious, making the **Charm Test Challenging (-10%)**) or they will have to fight.

These guards knew Tavelli: if once of the PCs has donned the cultists outfit, they will immediately recognise that character as an imposter. The noise of the fighting will alert the Skaven sentries in area 7, who will attempt to ambush and capture any intruders into their area.

5 – Armoury and Store Room

This small cave serves as a makeshift armoury for the guards in area 4. It contains five swords, six daggers, three hand axes, two flasks of oil, two tinderboxes, and eleven torches. The weapons are all arranged in wooden weapon racks set against the walls, and the torches, oil, and tinderboxes are stacked neatly in another corner.

THE HOUSE



THE SEWERS

