

Out of Body, Out of Mind

by Patrick Kapera

Welcome to the youngest and most turbulent of the realms, a mountainous expanse known as Tirna'cel. This place was once well known for its power-mongering warlords, magic-wielding sorcerers, and archfiends from the deepest pits of the Abyss. But in the last 600 years, this has changed. Tirna'cel is a peaceful and welcoming land now, due in no small part to the efforts of the warlord Tirna'gael, a member of the land's founding nobility.

Tirna'gael turned against the other rulers without warning, attacking and overwhelming them without remorse. He is said to have suddenly grown stronger and more powerful. The reasons for his remarkable gain in power are unknown, though they are routinely connected to items believed to have been entombed with him by the then-newly formed paladin's Order of Garadon.

After his death, Tirna'gael's body was interred in his central citadel, a large stone fortress suspended over an immense lava pit. There he has rested for nearly 600 years, protected by the surrounding hostile environment and a small cadre of supernatural guardians summoned and permanently bound by the Order of Garadon.

But recently, rumors have reached the corridors of Tirna'cel's capital city that invaders have struck the fallen hero's burial place, in search of one or more of his legendary magic items. So far, all that is known of these foul creatures is that they are native to the environment, being resistant to the fiery dangers of the area.

Your party has been summoned by the lord of the realm, who has charged you with ending the threat to Tirna'gael's tomb and the potential destruction of the land's long-enduring peace. If the sources of Tirna'gael's power were to fall into the wrong hands, it could mean the end of the nation as you know it.

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**Requires the use of the
Dungeons & Dragons® Player's Handbook,
Third Edition, published by
Wizards of the Coast®**

Out of Body, Out of Mind is a d20 System adventure booster designed for 3-5 characters levels 4-6. It can be played as a stand-alone adventure or dropped into any ongoing campaign setting.



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How to Use This Product

This adventure is designed to be easily dropped into your existing 3rd edition D&D campaign. It can be run in a single session, and makes for an excellent evening's gaming. To prepare yourself to run it, you should read it completely at least once to familiarize yourself with the material, and you may wish to photocopy the map in the center of the book for ease of use as well. The text on the back of the book can be read to your players in order to introduce them to the adventure. After that, you're ready to begin. Good luck!

Dungeons and Dragons®

This module requires the use of the Dungeons and Dragons® Player's Handbook, Third Edition, published by Wizards of the Coast.® You won't be able to run this adventure without it.



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DM Background

This adventure is designed for three to five characters of levels 4-6.

The rumors of the threat are in error, but the heroes don't know that. There is a truth behind the legend of Tirna'gael that has become the most carefully guarded secret of the Garadon paladins. They knew the warlord for what he really was: a human shell possessed by an ancient, destructive force from the Abyss.

Demonic in nature, this creature – called a "nescent" – is usually both incorporeal and invisible. Further, it is apparently immortal, hopping from body to body to acquire material power and territory. (See "New Monster" at the end of this adventure for more details.) The nescent used Tirna'gael's body to lash out at the other warlords, capitalizing on the element of surprise and a special ring it acquired from a dretch. This ring is now known as the signature accessory of the fallen warlord, and is believed to be the source of Tirna'gael's great power.

The paladins of Garadon recognized the demon's true nature, however, and waylaid it within its citadel. There they murdered the Tirna'gael shell and trapped the nescent inside an *antimagic field*. They transformed the fortress into a tomb, and – once the building was secure – summoned and bound mephits to act as eternal guardians against future incursions.

Tirna'gael's Tomb

For 600 years, the tomb has sat silently as a reminder of the "great deeds" performed by a demonic being intent upon dominating the races of the Material Plane.

1. Entries and Suspension Anchors

The citadel-tomb of Tirna'gael is suspended some 100 feet above a bubbling lava pit by enormous iron chains embedded in the rock of the crater's edge. At the far side, the chains are connected to enormous mooring platforms at which doors enter the tomb's interior. It seems that to get to the tomb, you will have to climb across.

Two sides of the octagonal tomb are open to the acrid air above the lava pit at the guardian chambers (see #10), but unless the PCs can fly, there's no way they're getting in that way. Peering in through these openings, the PCs can make out



pillars with what appear to be sculpted statues chiseled up and down along them, and doors leading further into the structure. Outside of these features—and the thin arrow slits banded around the tomb—the tomb’s exterior is rough and unbroken rock.

The chains are rough but have no hand- or footholds. Climbing across the chains requires two Climb checks (DC 10 each – one to reach the halfway point and another to reach the mooring platform). Failure by 5 or more results in the character slipping off the top half of the link he’s on, toward the bottom half. Catching himself on the bottom of the link requires another Climb check (DC 15). Should the character fail both of these checks, he plunges to his death in the lava below.

At the mooring platform, the PCs find two reinforced iron doors (Break DC 28) which are open.

2. Siege Corridors

The outside wall of this corridor is flush with the outside of the tomb, and pierced regularly with arrow and siege slits. Presumably, these areas were the second line of defense when this was a fortress, but they are quiet now. Your footfalls echo in the distance.

These corridors were originally designed to allow ranks of archers and wizards to lay siege to anything that made it across (or over) the chains. Traps are built into the inner corridor walls, but they must be triggered manually from the secret passages (#5). Only rogues have any chance of finding them, though anyone may note that the floors subtly dip away from the boulder traps (#3) with a successful Spot check (DC 25).

Each of these corridors also contains at least one secret door, which can only be found if the PCs search the proper section of the corridor (DC 30).

3. Boulder Traps

Each of these traps contains two boulders, one poised to roll in each direction away from the trap mechanism. The boulders themselves are sculpted to be nearly flush with the corridor walls, and the hallway floors are gently sloped to speed the boulders along once they are released.

The mechanisms themselves have fallen into disrepair, and fail often. Roll a d6. A roll of 1-2 means the hidden doorway opens but the boulder jams in the mechanism.

4. Blast of Cold Traps

When triggered, these traps fill a 10-foot-wide area (targeting two characters, at most) with a “flash-freeze” effect.

Boulder Trap: CR 4; +5 melee (6d6); Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 20). Roll one attack for every character in the corridor. If the attack is unsuccessful, the PC is assumed to have dodged the boulder by ducking through one of the doors in the hallway.



Blast of Cold Trap: CR 3; 10-ft. length of corridor (5d6); Reflex save (DC 15) avoids; Search (DC 27); Disable Device (DC 25).

Like the boulder traps in the same area, the mechanisms for these magical attacks fail on 1–2 on 1d6.

5. Secret Passages

These rooms cannot be reached without finding one of the secret doors located throughout the structure. The doors are well hidden (Search, DC 30).

The secret door opens to reveal a new layer within the tomb, between the outer corridors and the inner rooms. This area was obviously built as a staging point for defending the tomb from invaders. Weapon racks line the walls, spy-holes open into the outer corridors, and trap mechanisms are visible along the outside wall. Two corridors are visible at the interior corners of this irregularly shaped room, leading into the heart of the tomb.

Each room has five secret portals which connect the various rooms of the tomb. The mephit guardians (#10) and the architect’s ghost (#12a) are aware of these passages and use them once they are awakened to cut off, ambush, or contact the party.

Besides the siege corridor (#2) trap mechanisms (Intelligence check, DC 10, to figure them out), these rooms are lined with racks of weapons. Most have also fallen into disrepair. If the PCs search through the weapons, have them name off in order the weapon types they are checking for. For each, roll a d6; a result of 1-2 means there are no salvageable weapons of that sort.

These locations are numbered 5a-d on the map. Hidden in Location 5a (among the other swords on the racks) is a +2 *greatsword* (Search, DC 20). This weapon is obviously magical by its appearance. Unfortunately, the weapon still bears the soldier’s family seal, which means that no one in Tirna’cel would dare buy it, as all such items are considered religious relics. Removing the family seal requires one hour of work, but it reduces the value of the sword by half, to 4,200 gp, unless a Craft: Weaponsmithing check is made (DC 20).

6. Foyers

This 30-by-30-foot chamber is decorated with regal tapestries featuring several of Tirna’gae’s greatest conquests, hung from high rafters of heavy wood. Between the tapestries, long-unused torches are fitted within simple sconces, and simple though sturdy benches dot the floor. Another wooden door is located directly across from you.

The high rafters above the party have been animated and charged with protecting the inner rooms of the tomb. Any who pass through this room without the seal of Garadon (as



Animate Rafters (2): CR 3; SZ M (construct); HD 3d10; hp 16; Init +0 (-1 Dex, +1 natural); Spd can reach anywhere in the room in one action; AC 12 (+2 natural); Slam +3 melee (1d8+6); Face 10 ft. by 1 ft.; Reach 15 ft.; SA bind (if a rafter succeeds by 5 or more with Grapple check, the target is held, lifted off the ground, and crushed; 1d6 points of damage each round until the target succeeds with a Strength check (DC 15), "plays dead," or dies); SQ construct, hardness 5; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will -5; Str 16, Dex 9, Con -, Int -, Wis 1, Cha 1; AL N.

found in #14c) clearly visible on their person are attacked. The rafters magically reach down to curl around the intruders, lifting them off the ground and squeezing them until they stop moving.

The rafters cannot distinguish one intruder from another. Also, they ignore all immobile targets, including those already in their grip. A PC could play dead to convince a rafter to let go, but would have to deal with the rafters' attacks once more when he started to move again.

There are two rafters in each room, each of which can attack a single PC each round.

7. The "Front Doors"

Upon entering this 10-by-10-foot room, you are assaulted by a foul stench. The floor and lower walls are coated in age-old gristle and bloodstains to a height of about six feet.

This chamber is a crushing wall trap. Any PC should find it easy (Search, DC 10) to discern the nature of the trap. The floor is a pressure plate that triggers the lower six feet of the walls to crash inward, crushing anything between them.

Unlike the common crushing wall trap, this can be avoided through simple speed, but the act requires a Reflexes save (DC 20). Success indicates that the PC makes it through the trap before the walls snap closed. Heroes can also avoid this trap by somehow confining themselves to the top four feet of the room when the walls close, or by not touching the floor as they move through the room.

This trap can be disarmed, though it is difficult. This requires the heroes to tunnel through to the trap mechanism buried inside the 10-by-10-foot areas flanking the trap. This is only possible through the eastern wall of the training room (#13c) or western wall of one of the storage rooms (#13d). The attempt requires an appropriate weapon (such as a hammer or pick) and a Strength check (DC 15). Failure by more than 5 by anyone trying to break through causes the walls to crash shut permanently, blocking the corridor for good.

Once the trap mechanism is reached, it may be disarmed normally (DC 20).

Crushing Wall Trap: CR 10; +20 melee (20d6); Search (DC 10); Disable Device (see below).



8. Vaults of Tirna'gael

This 30-by-30-foot room contains many delicately arranged pedestals and glass viewing boxes. The place is lined with floor-to-ceiling shelves, all containing the wondrous personal possessions of Tirna'gael. Weapons, armor, scrolls, books, and many other marvelous items remain precisely where the Order of Garadon laid them to rest over 600 years ago.

The doors into these rooms are reinforced and barred. They must be broken down (Break, DC 20) if the PCs wish to enter.

These vaults contain Tirna'gael's most cherished items acquired during his lifetime. Most are items of exotic craftsmanship. Some are magical, and all are showcased independently.

Location 8a contains:

- 70 pp bearing the original seal of the realm. Due to their rarity and mint condition, these coins are worth twice their face value.
- 4 perfectly cut tourmaline gems, worth 125 gp each.
- 6 porcelain cats, each with a hand-painted fur theme and jeweled eyes. Each is worth 750 gp to interested collectors.
- 1 precise replica of the realm's original capital city. It's heavy – over 100 pounds – but worth approximately 10,000 gp.

Location 8b contains:

- 1 set of +1 *studded leather armor of silent moves*.
- 1 +2 *gauntlet of shock*.
- 1 +1 light crossbow.
- 1 *dagger of petrification*. When this weapon scores a critical hit, damage is tripled (instead of doubled), and the target must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) or suffer the effects of a *flesh to stone* spell.
- 1 *identify* scroll (3rd-level caster) and 1 *lightning bolt* scroll (5th-level caster).
- 12 gilded darts (worth 50 gp each).

In addition, location 8b contains a dretch desperately seeking a ring he traded to the nescent 600 years ago. This dretch, you see, was in dire trouble after accidentally insulting the human warlord Tirna'gael (its master at the time). The dretch summoned the nescent, hoping that it would possess the warlord and end his troubles. The nescent complied, but it demanded a bloodline heirloom from the demon in



Dretch: CR 2; SZ S (outsider, chaotic, evil); HD 2d8; hp 9; Init +0; Spd 20; AC 16 (+1 size, +5 natural); Atk: 2 claws +3 (1d4), bite +1 (1d4); SA spell-like abilities (as if cast by 2nd-level sorcerer; at will: *darkness*, *scare*, and *telekinesis*; 1/day: stinking cloud), summon tanar’ri (summon one dretch once per day, 35% chance); SQ damage reduction 5/silver, SR 5, tanar’ri qualities (immunity: poison and electricity; resistance 20: void, fire, and acid; telepathy: 100 ft., in Abyssal); SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 5, Wis 11, Cha 11; AL CE. Feats: Multiattack.

exchange. Now the dretch searches for its ring here where the nescent – and all its world belongings – were laid to rest.

The dretch is convinced that his ring is located somewhere in the tomb. (It’s in the tomb proper (#9), which he has not yet entered for fear of encountering the nescent). The PCs represent an opportunity to check whether the ring is hidden with Tirna’gael’s remains, and the dretch tries to cut a deal with them to bring the ring to him. The most valuable thing the dretch has to offer the PCs is his service for a specified time.

The dretch always flees combat, no matter the odds. Ashamed of the circumstances that brought him here, he refuses to summon other dretches to his aid.

9. The Tomb of Tirna’gael

This area is protected by a permanent *antimagic field*. The spell was focused in the room’s doors, making them material components in the casting. All four doors are physically locked (Break, DC 25), though up to two people can attempt to open one at once. If any of them are opened, the effects of the *antimagic field* are negated, and the nescent is released.

If the PCs cancel the spell and enter the room, read the following:

aThe heart of Tirna’gael’s tomb is an immense, gothic chamber decorated with tall, arched alcoves on all sides, towering to the roof some 80 feet above. The room’s only occupant is a heavy, black marble sarcophagus lying upon a wide dais. The lid of the sarcophagus has been chiseled into a likeness of the fallen warlord, his mighty broadsword resting atop his still form.

Besides the nescent, the only items of interest in this room are inside the sarcophagus. Should the lid be opened (Strength, DC 20; up to six characters may attempt this together), the tomb’s trap mechanism is sprung, the sound of metal grinding on stone is heard, and the floor begins to shake and wobble. The PCs have two rounds of action before the entire floor of the room (along with the sarcophagus and Tirna’gael’s remains) falls through the bottom of the suspended tomb and into the lava pit below.

This trap is linked to the wards placed upon the mephits in the guardian chambers (#10), who awaken after this room

is disturbed. DCs for finding and disarming the trap can be found under “Tomb Trap Mechanisms” (#15).

Characters may attempt to dive out of the room (Reflex save, DC 15). They might also stand within one of the arched alcoves around the room, but they’re then trapped in front of a gaping hole through the bottom of the tomb.

A hero might attempt to take something from inside the sarcophagus. This requires a full action, of which the PCs only have two. A hero could grab Tirna’gael’s ring or longsword. Those who persist in trying to steal his armor are doomed to plunge into the fiery depths below.

Any who look inside the sarcophagus are entitled to a simple Spot check (DC 5) to notice that something is wrong. Tirna’gael’s remains exhibit signs that he was brutally murdered. Many of his torso bones are cleaved in two, and the back of his skull has been crushed. This information should come as a surprise to PCs who know the hero’s legend, in which he presumably grew old and died of natural causes.

Once released, the nescent immediately moves to inhabit a body – likely one of the mephits, unless one of the PCs is suitable. After that, it uses the available bodies to drive away or kill intruders and reclaim its possessions.

The nescent always attempts to possess the strongest creature it can. It ultimately hopes to murder all the invaders it cannot control, then retake its stronghold. Having winked out of existence when the *antimagic field* was created, the nescent is unaware that any time has passed, and it still fears Garadon reprisal. It tries to prevent anyone from leaving, lest they inform its old enemies. It flees the area if anyone escapes.

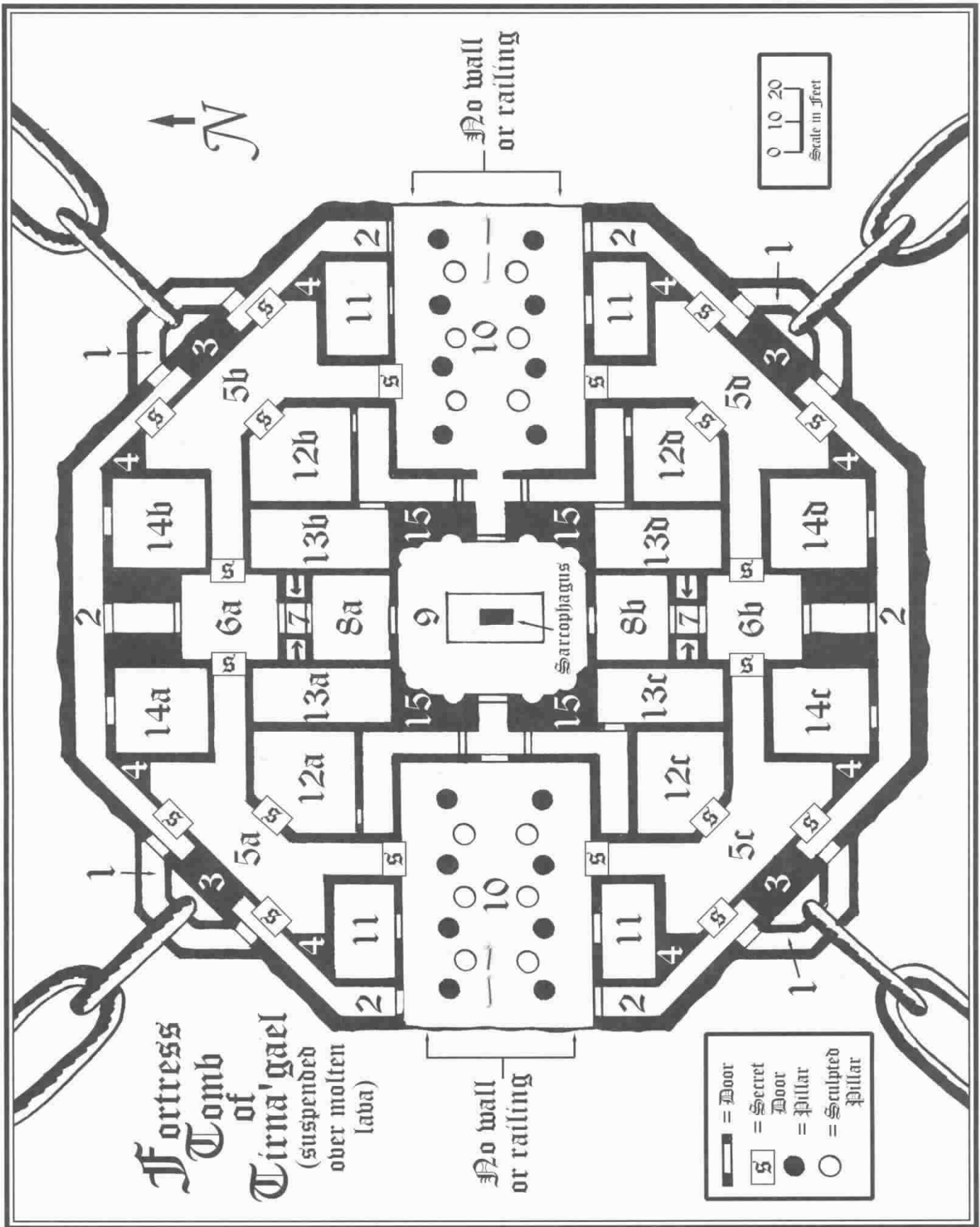
For details about the ring, see “New Magic Item” at the end of this adventure.

10. Guardian Chambers

Rows of sculpted pillars line this long hall, which opens into the air above the lava pit. Each is a miniature depiction of an enemy that Tirna’gael toppled. Each also bears the likeness of a tiny demon, etched in startlingly realistic detail.

Each of the center six pillars in each of these locations contains one of 12 mephits bound to the site and linked to the magical wards placed upon the tomb proper (#9). These are released from their confinement (but not their obligation to protect the tomb and vaults) if any of the tomb’s doors are opened. Note, however, that the forces guiding this magical trap have become somewhat sluggish over the centuries; once the tomb is opened, only two of the mephits awaken every three rounds (one from each room, 10a and 10b) until they are all moving about.

The mephits immediately attack anyone responsible for opening the crypt. Otherwise, they demand that all intruders vacate the place immediately. The mephits are bound to this purpose through an ancient bargain with the Order of Garadon and are incapable of negotiating on the matter.





Mephits (12): SZ S (outsider, fire); HD 3d8; hp 13; Init +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30, fly 50; AC 16 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +4 natural); Atk 2 claws +4 (1d3 and 2 fire); Face 5 ft. x 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft; SA breath weapon (every 1d4 rounds; cone of fire, 15 ft.; damage 1d8, Reflex half (DC 12)), spell-like abilities (save DC 12 + spell level; 1/hour: *magic missile*, cast by 3rd-level sorcerer; 1/day: *heat metal*, cast by 6th-level sorcerer), summon mephit (1/day, only 25% same kind; roll d%, on failure, no mephit appears; summoned creature cannot summon another for 1 hour); SQ fire subtype (immune to fire, double damage from cold if save fails), fast healing (heal 2 points/round when touching torch-sized or larger flame), damage reduction 5/+1; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +3; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 11, Cha 15. Skills: Bluff +5, Hide +11, Listen +6, Move Silently +7, Spot +6. Feat: Improved Initiative. CR 3.

Once the mephits are released, the adventure changes, both in pace and purpose. The nescent may possess one of these creatures, and – even if it doesn't – it attempts to control as many as it can using its *command lesser creatures* ability (see the Appendix for more). This splinters the mephits, leaving those not under the nescent's control to seek aid in eliminating their fellows. The PCs may be able to capitalize upon this good fortune and gain several important allies.

11. Crypts of the Fallen

This dark room is cramped, but affords a sense of intense reverence. From the light spilling in from outside the tomb structure, you can make out several vertical crypts lining the rear and flanking walls. Each crypt bears the symbol of Tirna'gael's reign. These are his finest warriors, buried with him for all eternity.

The doors to these rooms are all locked (Break, DC 15). Should any of the crypts be opened, the PCs find nothing but a skeleton clad in simple plate armor, with a personal weapon, all of which spills out onto the floor. None of the armor or weapons in these crypts are special in any way. In fact, most are pitted and useless from centuries of neglect.

12. Living Quarters

Much of Tirna'gael's fortress was left alone when the place was converted into a tomb. You have ventured into one such area.

Except for #12a, these areas are mundane, filled with mundane furnishings, and liberally coated with dust.

a. Barracks: This room is home to a long-standing "guest": the ghost of Theodore Biggs, the architect who converted it into a tomb.



Biggs knows the awful truth behind Tirna'gael. He is bound here by his guilt over misleading the people of the realm about Tirna'gael, as well as what he sees as the paladins' failure to permanently deal with the nescent. He seeks the PCs' aid in reconciling these misdeeds, though only after they have proved to him that they are both good and noble. Evil characters find themselves targets instead.

Good PCs should desire to destroy the nescent once they know what it is, and what it's done. Biggs informs them that this is impossible, as the Order discovered firsthand. Their best option, he explains, is to trap the nescent permanently within a body, as with a *flesh to stone* spell. Fortunately, Biggs was working on just such a solution when the Order decided to trap the nescent here. He consigned a wizard to enchant a special weapon (a *dagger of petrification*) to use against it. This weapon is now in the vaults (#8b), where the ghost gladly leads allied PCs to obtain it.

As the architect for the tomb, Biggs can also guide the PCs around the various traps (and – if you like – even show them how to use them against the monsters and guardians in the tomb). He also informs the PCs that they should all acquire seals of Garadon from the guard stations (#14c) if they intend to venture through the foyers (#6)

b. Mess Hall: Also occasionally used as a war room, this chamber contains one large table surrounded by several high-backed chairs. The rest of the room is devoted to smaller, lower tables surrounded by simple benches.

c. Workshop: This room was once devoted to the conception, construction, and maintenance of weapons, armor, and siege machines. It contains three large forges, several worktables, and a large drawing board, though all of the tools have long since been removed.

d. Barracks: This room is intentionally sparse. The only furnishings in the room are two rows of heavy wooden

Biggs' Ghost: SZ M (undead, incorporeal); HD 7d12; hp 45; Init +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd fly 30 (perfect); AC 13 (+2 Dex, +1 deflection) or 12 (+2 Dex, when it manifests); Atk Incorporeal touch +3 melee (1d4, +1 against ethereal); SA manifestation (can strike with touch, can be attacked), frightful moan (living creatures in 30-ft. spread must Will save or panic 2d4 rounds; those that save are immune for one day), *telekinesis* (free action once per round, as cast by 12th-level sorcerer), *detect evil* (as cast by a 7th-level sorcerer); SQ rejuvenation (if destroyed, returns in 2d4 days with a successful level check (1d20+7, DC 16); may be destroyed for good by relieving its suffering); turn resistance +10, undead, incorporeal; SV Fort +10, Ref +9; Will +10; Str 12; Dex 15; Con –; Int 17; Wis 17; Cha 20; AL L.G. Skills: Craft: Blacksmithing +3, Craft: Carpentry +5, Craft: Locksmithing +3, Craft: Stonemasonry +5, Craft: Trapmaking +9, Hide +8, Knowledge: Architecture +10, Knowledge: Religion +3, Listen +8, Profession: Architect +10, Search +8, Spot +8. Feats: Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike, Skill Focus (knowledge: architecture). CR 5.



beds with footlockers, only one of which contains anything of interest (a gilded bracelet worth 250 gp).

13. Communal Rooms

Much of Tirna'gael's fortress was left alone when the place was converted into a tomb. You have ventured into one such area.

Each of these areas is filled with completely mundane furnishings, all liberally coated with dust.

a. Storage Room: All the miscellaneous accouterments removed from the other rooms when the fortress was converted into a tomb are crated and stacked neatly toward the edges of the room. These crates contain nothing of true value.

b. Kitchen/Pantry: A huge oven and wood-burning stove consume the back half of this room. Iron shelves stand on either side. Cooking utensils, pots, and the like have been crated and can be found in the storage room.

c. Training Room: The center of this room consists of a sunken arena where various competitions and martial lessons took place. Surrounding this pit are a wide variety of bars, ladders, swings, and other training equipment.

d. Storage Room: See #13a.

14. Guard Stations

This room contains a long officer's desk along with several chairs.

These are simple guard posts, where Tirna'gael's troops were stationed round the clock. All are abandoned now. Only one contains anything of interest. In location #14c, several skeletons sit about the room, clad in full plate bearing the seal of Garadon. These are the paladins who trapped the nescent in the tomb and then died with the secret. Their armor and weapons are long-since useless, but the seals upon their tunics can be salvaged. Anyone wearing one of the seals is ignored by the animated guardians in the foyers (#6).

15. Tomb Trap Mechanisms

This trap can be disarmed, though it's hard. The PCs must first tunnel through to the trap mechanism, which is buried inside the irregularly shaped areas at the four corners of the tomb proper (#9). This requires an appropriate weapon (such as a hammer or pick) and a Strength check (DC 15). Failure by more than 5 when trying to break through the wall results in the trap being sprung prematurely. Once the trap is reached, it may be disarmed normally (DC 20).

Tomb Trap: CR 4; death (if still in the room when it falls); Reflex save (DC 20 avoids, but only if the PC is within 5 feet of an exit with a clear path out of the room when it falls); Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 20).



Epilogue

The cleanest path to victory is for the PCs to discover and use the *dagger of petrification* on a creature while the nescent is inside it, and then destroy the statue. But there are other options.

If you want to bring the nescent back later in your campaign, you might omit the ghost from the scenario, forcing the PCs to rely upon their wits to survive, increasing the chances that they leave the tomb without destroying the nescent. If the heroes take Tirna'gael's ring with them when they leave, the nescent is especially likely to follow them, traveling from one body to the next until it regains its coveted treasure and exacts revenge upon the characters.

New Magic Item

Ring of Tirna'gael

When first encountered, this item appears to be a simple ring of indistinct history. Unless it is attuned to someone, it also seems to be rusted and pocked nearly beyond repair. An Appraise check (DC 15) determines that it might be salvageable as a minor trinket worth, at most, 2 gp. But if it is owned (carried, worn, or maintained) for a week or more, it becomes attuned to the owner and begins to change shape, appearing more and more ideal for him or her.

When attuned, the ring adds +1 to all damage generated by the wearer. This bonus is applied to all damage regardless of the source. This bonus is applied after all other modifiers and multipliers. Should the wearer continue to wear the ring as he or she gains levels, the bonus is increased by another +1 for each level gained. This bonus is lost immediately if the ring is ever out of the wearer's possession for one week.

The ring's physical appearance shifts slowly, apace with the benefits gained, until it looks perfectly suited to the wielder. If the ring was attuned to a paladin, it would become more regal and brilliant until it gleamed with a vibrant, platinum sheen. Regardless of what the ring appears like when attuned, it always reverts to a tarnished and rusted band after it has been abandoned for a week.

As a side effect of increasing its wearer's physical strength, the ring controls the destruction of a body when possessed by a nescent. While wearing the ring, the host isn't affected by Body Destruction. Unfortunately, while the ring is worn, the nescent's Augment power doesn't work, and its Damage Reduction power doesn't grow any stronger, either.

This ring is a minor artifact and cannot be destroyed by any mundane means.



Nescent

Medium-Sized Outsider (Neutral, Evil, Incorporeal)

Nescents are demons, though they are not tanar'ri. In fact, the tanar'ri consider them parasites, a plague upon the Abyss. Nescents are usually both incorporeal and invisible, but they are able to possess the bodies of creatures. Their limitation is that they can only use neutral or evil beings as a host. Many tanar'ri suspect this is why the nescents are most often seen in Abyss, where good is rarely encountered.

Nescent must constantly move from creature to creature, however, their possession has an effect upon the target's body. Within days or weeks, the body begins to break down, consumed by a growing fire within. Hours before the body collapses entirely, its skin sloughs off, revealing smoldering, dripping lava where muscle and tendons should be. A body completely consumed this way is reduced to smoking ash, leaving the again incorporeal nescent to find a new vessel.

Solitary creatures, nescents are greedy and territorial, staking out strongholds from which they spread their influence and collect trophies of their success: useful things such as weapons, armor, magical items, and the like. Nescents care little for material wealth outside of the items and security it can purchase for them.

Nescents are extremely vindictive, even for creatures from the other planes. Their grudges last for thousands, of years.

Creating a Nescent

"Nescent" is a template that can be added to any host of neutral or evil alignment. The host's type adds "outsider." It uses the host's statistics and special abilities as noted here.

Hit Dice: Same as the host or d10, whichever is higher.

Initiative, Speed, AC, Attacks: Same as the host.

Damage: Same as the host, plus the effects of nescent possession.

Face/Reach: Same as the host.

Special Attacks: A nescent retains all the special attacks of the host and also gains those listed here. Unless noted otherwise, saves have a DC of 10 + half the nescent's HD + the nescent's Charisma modifier.

Nescent Possession (Su): Once per round, a nescent can enter a new host of evil or neutral alignment, on the Material Plane. The target can resist the attack with a successful Will save (DC 15 + nescent's Charisma modifier). A creature that successfully saves is immune to the nescent's possession effect for one day.

If the save fails, the nescent enters the host's body and seizes control of its physical functions. The host immediately gains the effects of the Augment and Damage Reduction abilities, which it retains until the nescent leaves. The host is also affected by Body Destruction (see below).

Augment (Su): The body of a host possessed by a nescent grows stronger, tougher, and faster the longer the nescent remains within it. Starting on the first day, the nescent chooses one physical ability (Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution) to increase by 1 (to a maximum of 30). The nescent may increase one such ability per day.

Command Lesser Creatures (Su): While possessing a

host, the nescent can control other creatures with fewer HD than those of its host. Any creatures the nescent targets must succeed at a Will save or follow the nescent's commands as though affected by a dominate person spell cast by a 10th-level sorcerer. This ability has a range of 50 yards, although it's telepathic, so line of sight is not required.

Special Qualities: The nescent retains all qualities of its host, and the host gains the outsider type while possessed.

Incorporeal: When not possessing a target creature, a nescent may only be harmed by other incorporeal creatures, +1 or better magic weapons, or magic, with a 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source. It can also pass through solid objects at will, and its own attacks pass through armor. It always moves silently.

Invisible (Su): While incorporeal, a nascent is invisible. Since the nascent has no body, this prevents the use of mundane Spot or Listen checks to find it.

Know Alignment (Su): A nescent sees alignments as physical elements and automatically knows the true alignment of any creature it spies.

Invulnerable (Su): While incorporeal, a nescent can only be attacked physically if found on its home plane – which has never been located, even by the Tanar'ri.

Damage Reduction (Su): The body of a host slowly grows tougher the longer the nescent remains within it. Every day of possession, the base creature gains 1/- points of damage reduction, up to a maximum value of 20/-.

Resistance (Su): A nescent has fire resistance 20.

Body Destruction (Su): For every day a host is possessed, it loses 1 hit point permanently, and its maximum hit point potential is reduced by 1. This is unavoidable and irreversible. When the host body reaches 0 hp, it crumbles into smoldering ash, leaving the nescent to find a new host.

Saves: Fort and Ref are the same as the host, plus any ability modifiers. Add +20 to Will saves.

Abilities: Int 14, Wis 11, Cha 20. While incorporeal, a nescent has no Strength or Constitution, but it has a Dexterity of 12 for purposes of moving about only. In a host, the nescent uses its own Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores and the host's Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution scores.

Skills: Intimidate +9, Knowledge: Other Planes +10, Search +5, Speak Language: Common, Spot +5, Tumble +5. The nescent does not have access to the host's skills.

Feats: Blind-Fight, Endurance, Power Attack. The nescent does not have access to the host's feats.

Climate/Terrain: Any (though usually any land or underground).

Organization: Solitary.

Challenge Rating: Same as the host' CR+2.

Treasure: Standard for the host, though after six months in the body, the ratio between monetary treasure and items shifts to half the standard money and twice the standard items.

Alignment: Always neutral evil

Advancement: See nascent possession, augment, and damage reduction, above.