



Temple of the Iron Codex

by Ree Soesbee

The legend of the *Iron Codex* is told only when the winter is the thickest, and snow has covered all the roads of the land. A book of steel pages and wrought-iron bindings, the *Iron Codex* is said to destroy any who dare to read from its cursed pages. It is said to have the power to summon strange magic, and if disturbed from its sacred resting place, its power could destroy the world. Long ago, ancient heroes placed it upon an altar, guarded and ensorcelled to keep the Codex undisturbed. So long as it is not disturbed, the *Iron Codex* will sleep... forever. It is an artifact of immeasurable power and arcane dangers... but, after all, only a legend.

Then, within the city where you make your home, a tragic earthquake struck, and a deep crevice split the city in two. Shortly after the earthquake, a fine ash began to fall over the city. Day and night for three days, the ash pours slowly down upon the inhabitants. As it does, a strange sickness strikes the residents of your home. The innocent are dying. Clerics struggle to find the cause, sending you to the edge of the chasm to discover the source of this strange plague.

It is there that you find the impossible. Deep beneath the city's southern gate, nearly a hundred feet into a crevice that did not exist, you find a pair of great iron doors, once sealed with molten silver, built into the side of the granite wall. The earth has shifted away, and the earthquake has unsealed the doors, disturbing the sleep of those within. The thick rain of ash seeps out from the tomb, seeming to whisper and claw at you as you peer into an unfathomable darkness.

And carved into the iron of the massive portal gates are the words:

"Behold the Temple of the Iron Codex."

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

Temple of the Iron Codex is a d20 System adventure booster designed for 3-5 characters of levels 7-10. It can be played as a stand alone adventure or dropped into any ongoing campaign setting.

Iron Codex



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How to Use This Product

This adventure is designed to be easily dropped into your existing *Third-Edition D&D* campaign. It can be run in a single session, and it 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. 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 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

The Temple of the Iron Codex was buried thousands of years ago by heroes who thought to keep the power of the Codex safe from any who would try to read it. So long as the Codex remained safely within the warded area, covered upon its altar, its power would never be released. However, if the Temple were disturbed or the book moved from its location, the malevolent spirits of the Codex would fight for their freedom, bringing horrible plagues and curses, until a great evil came to free it from its prison. To further guard the Temple, it was buried deep beneath the ground, where no one could ever find it. All traces of it were destroyed, all maps were destroyed, and all legends of the Codex were lost... almost.

Centuries passed, and a city was built over the site of the temple, its inhabitants not knowing what lay beneath their homes. When an earthquake fractured the ground on which the city stood, the Temple of the Iron Codex was unearthed — and the gates to the Temple shattered. Deep within the passages of the Temple, the earthquake has shaken the book from its protections, allowing the evil of the Codex to seep out past the iron gates that once enclosed it safely. That city is the site of the current adventure — and we recommend that you make it your home campaign city, the safe haven for your adventurers. After all, what better motivation for your characters than to save their own home?

Troubleshooting

Some players are going to suggest responses such as, "Well, why not take the whole city guard down there?" or "I'll call in every cleric of my church, and we'll get the High Priest to come in and move the temple to another plane." If this happens, you should remind your players of two things. First, their city is currently trying to handle the devastation of the earthquake and treat the citizens who have come down with the strange plague that followed it. Second, the book's power is obviously going to be drawing the attention of evil beings... and every minute they waste is another chance for some powerful evil being to get into the Temple ahead of them.

The Temple of the Iron Codex is an adventure for 3–5 characters of levels 7–10. It can be modified for stronger or weaker parties by altering the strengths of the monsters included in the adventure. Be sure to read the players only the information included in the text boxes. The rest of the material here is for the GM's eyes only.



Inside the Temple of the Iron Codex

The massive iron doors of the temple were once sealed with silver, but the earthquake has broken the seal and jarred the doors from their resting place. You can see through the open portal, though smoke and ashes blow in your eyes, into a hallway that leads into a large round room. On the doors is carved a giant spider, holding an enormous book.

When the party enters, they find themselves in a short hallway that leads into room 1. The hallway is carved from stone, and decorated with carvings of spirals and knotwork. The large room at the end of the hallway has no door, and can be seen from the faint light of day behind the characters. They will need a source of light to continue further.

1. The Entrance Hall (Demaloth)

You enter a large round room, its walls covered completely in mosaics of gold and semi-precious stones. The artwork is beautiful, but portrays an attitude of seriousness and solemn guardianship. The figures depicted on the wall of this round chamber seem almost lifelike in their realism, and vary widely in race, age and size. There is even a large red-scaled dragon, twining through all the other figures and dominating the scene. In the far arc of the circular room are three passages, each leading away to the south. The earthquake seems to have struck this room hard, breaking chunks of floor and shattering parts of the mosaic.

If the players choose to look at one of the figures depicted in the mosaics, they will notice that there are ten. The names of the individual figures are listed beside each one, written in a very old variant of the common tongue.

1. (Demaloth) This is not one of the figures on the wall, but rather an image of a spider that covers the entire floor of this room. It seems to be a feminine figure, a guardian and perhaps protector of the tomb. You notice that the figure's name is carved on the first stone inside the archway leading back toward the temple opening.
2. (Arril) This is the figure of a young elven maiden, with red hair and green eyes. She is holding a sprig of greenery in one hand and a bow in the other.
3. (Forgehammer) The third figure is a stocky dwarven male, forging a battle axe on a brightly glowing anvil.
4. (Broggnax) A burly troll roars beneath a titanic waterfall, his claws extended. His skin is greyish, and he wears armor, as if he were intelligent rather than primitive.
5. (Percival) This figure is hidden beneath the last few coils of the great dragon's tail. It is a young human boy, no older than 6, who is smiling and winking at you.



6. (Leo) This figure is not humanoid, but rather a great lion made of black stone. It springs, as if leaping upon prey.
7. (Greybeard) This is an ancient man, apparently half-elven, who is resting on a chair and reading a scroll at a wooden desk. He seems wise, peaceful, and gentle, but troubled, as if he knew something bad were going to happen.
8. (Themis) A woman with bluish skin and golden hair stands wearing seashell armor and lifting a sword that glows with purity and strength. She seems to be a paladin, and the moon shines down on her as if returning her salute.
9. (Maverek) A powerful human male, wearing studded leather armor and holding a gladiator's sword. He seems confident, marching across a barren wasteland, unafraid.
10. (Shadravast) This is the largest of the murals, the Red Dragon that twists all around the room, near each of the other figures. It seems to be bringing the other figures together.

2. The Western Chamber (Maverek)

On the bronze door is carved the word 'Maverek'.

When you open the door to this chamber, you see five stone gargoyles, squatting on the floor to the chamber. They do not move, and they do not respond in any way to the door opening. The rest of the room is plain stonework. The ceiling is twenty feet high, arched, with no beams or support, and appears to have slight stress fractures from the recent earthquake. There is a bronze door in the southern wall.

These are not standard gargoyles, but creatures unique to the Temple: Lesser Vesagos Gargoyles. For more detailed information on Vesagos Gargoyles, see the Monster description in the back of this module.

While the gargoyles are stationary, they are immune to all attacks, including magical ones. If the gargoyles move to attack, they are vulnerable and may be fought. Once a gargoyle rests and takes no move actions for three turns, it freezes into stone once more and regains its invulnerability. Otherwise, these gargoyles are typical for their creature type. As soon as the characters have entered the room, or whenever the gargoyles feel they have a good opportunity, they will attack. Note that there are several large pits, covered by the illusion of a floor. The gargoyles are aware of the pits, but fly when they attack, so they aren't concerned about falling in. In fact, they may try even to herd characters into the pits. Characters who fall into a pit take 3d6 falling damage (30'); climbing out of a pit takes three turns.



3. The Straight-Ahead Chamber (Forgehammer)

On the steel door is carved the word 'Forgehammer'.

This room has an extremely low ceiling, no more than four feet above the floor. Across the floor in strange criss-cross marks are notches in the ground, stretching from one side of the room to the other in no apparent pattern. The ceiling is held up by stone pillars which seem to shed darkness over the details of the room. The earthquake does not appear to have caused any damage to this room. Dimly, in the far wall, you think you see the outline of another door.

Each of the notches in the floor (detailed on the map) is part of an elaborate trap. Some of them shield blades which cut upwards toward the ceiling, and others are the landing points for guillotine blades that drop down from above. The pillars shed magical shadows in a radius of 15' (overlapping), confusing characters and preventing them from peering into the sockets on the floor and ceiling, so they cannot determine where the blades are coming from next. Characters who are carrying a magical light source may add a +1 to their Reflex save to avoid the swinging blades, as the magical light shrinks the magical shadows. Normal light sources, such as torches or lanterns, do not decrease the shadows' effect.

Some blades roll down from the side, on pendulum-like pivots, while others drop straight down or shoot upwards from the floor. Characters must make a Reflex save (DC 17) when they cross any of these lines, to make it across without harm. With the exception of size S characters, most party members will have to navigate this room at a crouch, or on their hands and knees – increasing the save DC by 4. Characters who fail their Reflex save take 2d6 points of damage from the rapidly moving blade.

4. The Eastern Chamber (Broggnax)

On the stone door is carved the word 'Broggnax'.

The room has been shaped to appear like a massive stone garden, with trees carved in marble and greenish moss growing across the ground at your feet. A waterfall of lava pours out of the ceiling over the east wall, splashing on the rocks below. The lava river crosses the room and exits in the center of the west wall. Two paths lead from the door toward the river. On the far side of the river, the paths continue toward another stone door in the south wall. There is no apparent way to cross the river. Scattered throughout the room are approximately 20 statues of humanoids, of varying races and ages, all posed in athletic motion. The lava seems to have been scattered across the area in the west, causing strange pools of half-cooled stone. This room was hit hard by the earthquake and the river of lava coursing through the chamber is all the more dangerous for being unstable.

Ten of the statues in the room (the shaded circles) are carefully shaped Vesagos Gargoyles. The Gargoyles wait until



the party has approached the river, and then use their attacks to attempt to push the characters into the molten lava. Only the Gargoyles on the side of the river with the characters will attack. If the party is separated during their river-crossing, the Gargoyles on the far side will take full advantage of that fact. The gargoyles animate slowly, in an attempt to make the party believe that all of the statues are gargoyles. This tactic is designed to split up the party, or cause them to waste attacks on the real stone statues.

The statue marked with an "X" has a lever which will cause a stone panel to slide up from the floor and cover the river, forming a thin bridge just wide enough for one person to walk across. The lever is hidden on the statue, but can be located with a successful Spot check (DC 14) on the specific statue.

Characters who fall into the lava take die in 3 turns.

5. Chamber of Flame (Shadravast)

Each of the three doors to this room look the same. They are iron, with thick bands of red ore. A red dragon's head is carved on each door, and the doors feel warm to the touch.

As soon as you open the door to this room, you are assaulted by a wave of heat that stings your eyes and skin. This tremendous room is more than 120 feet across, thirty feet high, and at least sixty feet deep from the ceiling down to the flaming lava below. From the doorway where you are standing, a thin path twists out over the lava, supported by tall pillars of stone that rise from the fire below. The paths lead into the room above the flame. Looking to the side of the doorway in which you are standing, you see that two more doors also enter this huge room. Each doorway leads to one of the twisting paths.

Looking out at the chamber, you see that two of the stone bridges lead out to platforms, and one leads only a few short steps from the door where it enters the room. A central platform stands in the center of the room, a short distance from the shortest path. In the distance, far away on the southern wall, you see a door.

All around the high walls of this chamber is a mosaic of a tremendous red dragon, filling the ceiling and walls with massive scaled coils. The heat shimmers against the smooth stone, giving the dragon the illusion of movement.

As you step into the room, you feel slightly light-headed. Any magical light you were holding fades and ceases to glow, and any magic items you are wearing grow dull and seem temporarily unenchanted.

This entire room is enchanted with a ward versus magic, completely prohibiting the functioning of any spell or magic item while in the room. Active spells will be dampened, but their duration will continue to run out, and no spell can be cast in the chamber, or into the chamber from outside.

At each circular junction down the path, there is a small pillar, topped by a strange glass case with a golden lever inside. Moving the lid of the glass case (it swings easily), characters find the levers untrapped and in working



condition. Each lever corresponds to an opening in a path (A to a, B to b, and so on). When the lever is flipped, the corresponding bridge slides out from under the stone path, safely unifying one side of the gap with the other. These bridges are safe and sturdy to walk on, and can be triggered no other way.

Ropes suspended between the bridges will burn through from the heat in 1d3 turns, dropping anything hanging from them into the lava. Chains grow hot quickly, and sear anyone touching them for 1d4 points each turn. Characters attempting to climb across hot chains must make a Fortitude save (DC 18) or fall. Characters who fall into the lava die in 3 rounds.

6. The Library (Greybeard)

The door to this chamber is made of quartz, shimmering from the heat of room 5. On it is carved the word 'Greybeard'.

This small room seems magically protected from the heat of the previous chamber, and is cool and comfortable. The walls of this chamber are covered in bookshelves, with numerous tomes carefully organized on each shelf. Looking at each shelf, you note that all of the books are on the topic of the *Iron Codex*, whether they contain legends, myths, or claim to be 'factual' accounts of the book's power. The books are in remarkable shape, considering that they must have been stored here for over a thousand years. A fountain of cool water runs in the corner of the room, and two reading tables occupy the center of the room. Some of the books appear to have fallen from their shelves in the earthquake, and at least one of the shelves in the western wall is cracked and tilted, the books toppled to the ground around it. There are two other doors in the room, in either corner of the south wall, one made of obsidian, and the other made of ivory.

The water in the fountain is tainted, but not poisoned. A Detect Poison spell will not detect anything. If anyone drinks from the water, they must save versus Fortitude or fall into a deep sleep. Characters can only be awakened from this sleep with a clerical *restoration* spell.

If any book is removed from the room, its pages will quickly fall to rot and ash, no longer protected by the preservative spells cast on the room. Each hour the characters spend reading the books, reveals one piece of information:

1. The *Iron Codex* is the talisman of an ancient and powerful demon, and is partially alive. The tome is aware of its surroundings, and has the ability to call to the demon whose soul resides in it. It can summon beings from infernal planes, and acts as a beacon to evil creatures who reside on this one.
2. The spells cast on the Temple serve to shield the *Iron Codex's* beacon from reaching any infernal powers, but only while the Codex is safely on its warded and protected altar within the Temple. If it is removed from its altar, the Codex's powers will return to it, and the book will immediately begin calling to servants of its master.



3. Anyone touching the *Iron Codex* may become possessed by the spirit within the book. If this occurs, the demon is released to this plane to possess the mortal body. If the book, or the mortal shell, is destroyed, the demon is completely freed, and may move between its plane of origin and the mortal world at will.
4. The heroes depicted on the first room's mural devised this temple as a means to protect the Codex and prevent any evil forces from acquiring it. They created an altar of immense power to imprison the book. The magic of this altar would prevent the book from summoning its master's minions, and a temple was constructed around the altar so that no mortal servants of the demon could retrieve the *Iron Codex*. The heroes then buried the temple beneath a fallen mountain, hoping that it would remain buried and forgotten by humanity, and the Codex would be lost forever.
5. The *Iron Codex* has the ability to control storms and to cross planes, and can offer anyone who is strong enough to conquer the demon soul within it immense power. Anyone who could use the book could summon minions from other planes, and even take the form of a terrible demon, calling on infernal sources of strength and unknown magical spells. The wizard, Adros, once attempted to conquer the book and use its power for evil purposes. While he controlled the *Iron Codex*, he devastated an entire kingdom, killing thousands of innocents and calling forth an army of infernal beasts. He was defeated only at great cost, and the book was taken by a band of heroes.
6. The *Iron Codex* was created by an ancient demon whose name has been lost to time. He placed part of his spirit within the book and sent it to the mortal plane, hoping that someone would read it and thereby free him on this plane to cause chaos. His plan nearly worked. An evil wizard named Adros found the book, and worked spells upon it, hoping to summon the demon and then control the infernal beast in order to conquer a neighboring kingdom. His plan was foiled by a band of heroes who then took the book far from the kingdom, promising to create a permanent prison for its evil.

7. The Obsidian Door (Leo)

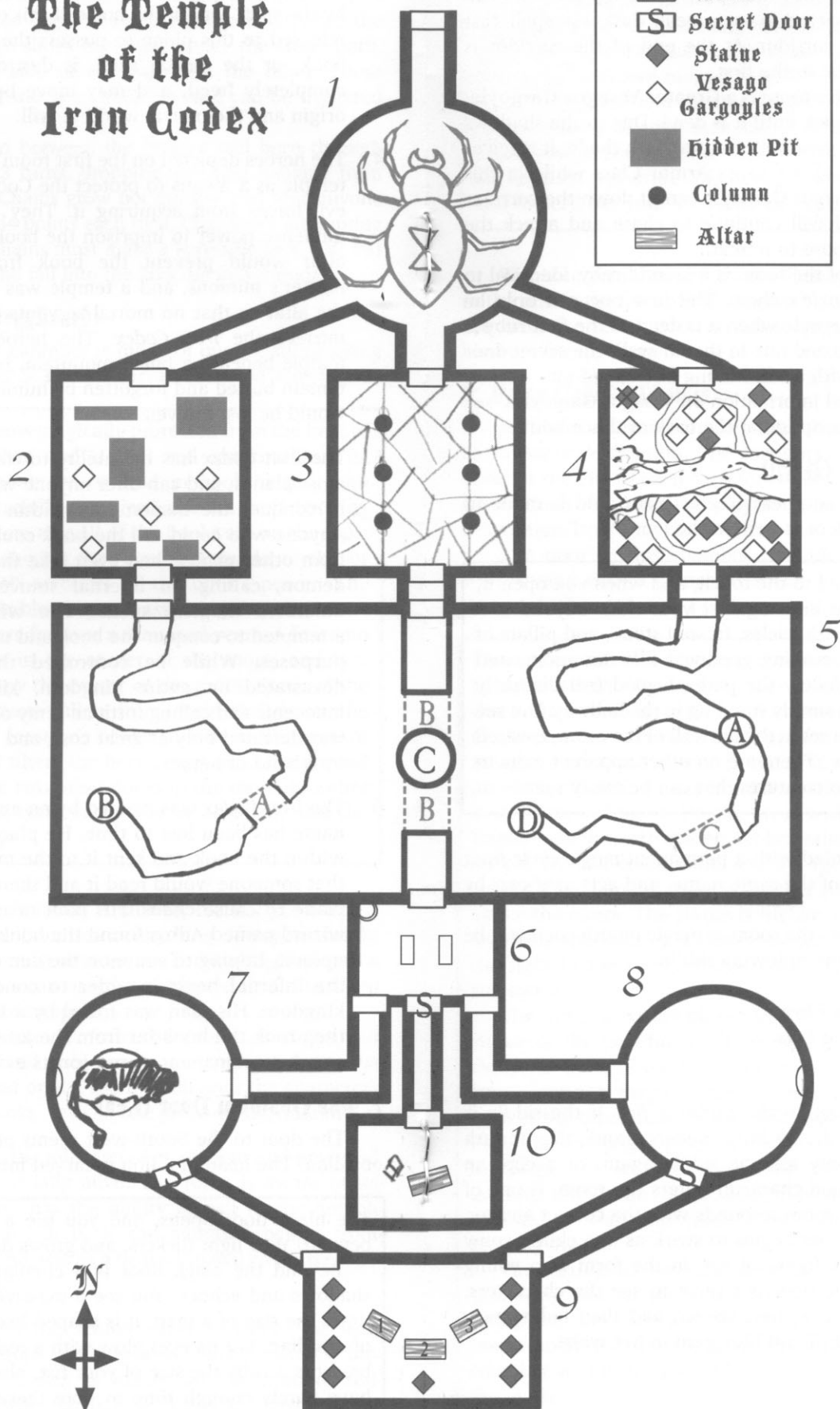
The door to the South-west seems plain, and is made of obsidian. The head of a lion is carved into the black stone.

The black door opens, and you see a long, dark tunnel beyond. Your light flickers, and grows dim.

Beyond the black door is a circular room filled with shadows and echoes. You see a massive stone statue, five times the size of a man. It is shaped like a male lion made of obsidian, but its eyes glow with a red, feral light. On its breast is a ruby the size of your fist, also glowing red. You have barely enough time to note these things before the beast attacks.

The Temple of the Iron Codex

	Door
	Secret Door
	Statue
	Vesago Gargoyles
	Hidden Pit
	Column
	Altar





If the characters follow the tunnel, their light sources will operate at half-capacity due to a weak darkness spell cast permanently on the corridor. At the end of the corridor is another door, identical to the first.

The creature in this room is a **Greater Vesagos Gargoyle**. It will continue to attack until it is dead. Due to the shadows in this room, and the creature's natural dark shade, it receives an additional bonus of +1 to its Armor Class while in this area. The Greater Vesagos Gargoyle can fit down the corridor (though barely), and will continue to chase and attack the characters if they choose to retreat.

On the far wall of the room is a second ruby, identical to the one in the gargoyle's chest. The first one can only be removed from the gargoyle when it is dead. If the first ruby is placed against the second one in the far wall, the secret door in this room opens with a soft hissing of trapped air.

For more detailed information on Vesagos Gargoyles, see the New Monster description at the back of this module.

8. The Ivory Door (Arril)

The door to the southeast seems plain, and is made of ivory. On the stone door is written the word 'Arril'.

The ivory door is cold to the touch, and when you open it, you feel a chill that bites against your skin. Beyond is a wintry room filled with icicles, frosted stone, and pillars of ivory. A sense of pervading goodness fills this room, and those who do not follow the path of good feel distinctly uncomfortable even simply standing in the hallway. You see a beautiful blue gem set in the far wall of the room, covered in a thin layer of ice. There are no other apparent exits to the chamber, and no creatures that can be easily seen.

This room is warded with a permanent *magic circle from evil*, as per the spell of the same name, and acts as if cast by a 12th level caster.

If a creature enters the room, a magic mouth spell will be triggered. It repeats the following riddle:

*Give me food, and I live.
Give me water, and I die.
What am I?*

The correct answer to the riddle is *fire*. If the riddle is incorrectly answered, nothing occurs, and the mouth disappears. It will only ask the riddle again, or accept an answer, if another good character enters the room. If one of the characters in the room responds with the correct answer, the snow in the chamber begins to swirl, as in a child's snow globe. It spins into a figure of ice, in the form of a young woman. Although she does not seem to see the characters, she addresses them in a short speech and then fades away into snow, leaving a brilliant blue gem in her wake.



The maiden opens snowy eyes, and speaks in Elvish. "You who have come here, seeking the *Iron Codex*, know this. Its powers are uncontrollable, and it can corrupt with a touch. If you stand before me, I know that no evil rests in your hearts. Yet there is a greater danger: that evil will tempt even the souls of good men, and lead them to their doom. I pray you, if you seek the Tome for your own purposes or for another, put aside this quest. Leave Evil where it lies, and imperil not your soul with this stained tome."

The blue gem dropped by the illusory maiden is identical to the one in the far wall. If the gem placed against the one in the wall, the secret door in this room will open with a soft hissing of trapped air.

9. False Codex (Themis)

Both of the secret corridors from room 7 and room 8 lead to the same destination. The corridors are identical, and the doors at the end of each corridor are also identical. No matter from which direction the players enter, read the following description.

The door to this chamber is made of a strange bluish steel, forged with a damascus sheen. On the door is carved the word 'Themis.'

Though the corridor was dark, the room inside is filled with a brilliant light. You see a large, rectangular room with three massive stone altars at its center covered in velvet cloths. On the east wall, there are four statues which you recognize from the mosaic in the first room of the temple: an elven maiden, a male human warrior, a large troll, and a serpentine dragon. By the west wall are four more: a human woman with spiders on her raiment, a burly dwarf, an elderly half-elven man, and a large stone lion. At the rear of the chamber, there is another statue on a high dais above the altars. The statue is lifelike, dressed in armor of seashells and holding a shining sword aloft – the source of the light in the room. The woman's face is peaceful, but sorrowful.

The three altars are placed in a 'U' formation before the statue of the paladin, each covered in a thick red velvet cloth. All three of the altars are covered in gold and silver runes, strange magical symbols and arcane writing. On each of the three altars lies a thick book, the cover made of iron, and the pages peeping out from beneath the closed bindings are stained the color of blood. Even the unenlightened can sense powerful magic in this room, emanating from the three books, the altars, and the glowing sword.

The earthquake has caused major damage to this room, shattering one of the statues (the human female), and tilting the three altars dangerously, the books having slid precariously to the edges of the three platforms. This chamber, and its possessions, have been badly disturbed by the quake.

You see no other entrances or exits to the chamber.



All three of the books on the altars are cursed, and will radiate evil, and powerful magic (necromatic, evocation, and conjuration at 12th level) if such is detected. None of these tomes is the actual *Iron Codex*; all three are identical copies of the legendary tome, possessing none of its true power.

Anyone who touches one of the books will suffer the following effects (depending on the book). The effects can only be removed by a *remove curse* spell:

Book 1. PC must make a Reflex save (DC 14) or be struck for 3d10 points of electrical damage. Success indicates only half damage. PC must also make a Will save (DC 17) or become cursed by the tome. The cursed possessor covets the tome, insisting that it is the true *Iron Codex*. He hears it whispering, and becomes convinced that it is a danger to the world. In order to 'save the world from the tome', the PC will become obsessed with security for the book. At the earliest opportunity, the PC will abandon his companions and seek out the nearest 'safe place', be it a marsh, forsaken mountain range, or other isolated locale. There, convinced that the world must be protected from the Codex, the PC will hide himself and the tome, slowly losing his sanity and becoming less human, until he is rescued, or starves and dies.

Book 2. PC must make a Reflex save (DC 14) or be struck for 3d10 points of fire damage. Success indicates only half damage. PC must also make a Will save (DC 17) or become cursed by the tome. If cursed, the possessor is convinced that this is the real *Iron Codex*, and immediately feels the uncontrollable desire to kill anyone who tries to take it from the Temple. This irresistible urge even extends to friends, lovers, and even those closest to the PC. The PC is now willing to give his life in order to 'save the world from the evil of the *Iron Codex*'.

3. PC must make a Reflex save (DC 14) or be struck for 3d10 points of cold damage. Success indicates only half damage. PC must also make a Will save (DC 17) or become cursed by the tome. The resulting curse convinces the individual that this is the true *Iron Codex*, and immediately *knows* that the book will confer great power upon him, if he only were to remove it from the Temple. The urge to take the tome and run is nearly uncontrollable, and the PC may take such action, if his companions are not prepared to stop him.

The statues around the room, while remarkable in their perfect likenesses, are not magical. Only the sword in the hand of the woman behind the three altars is a magic item. The longsword is a named weapon: the runes on its surface read '*Mordrungir*'. It is a +3 *weapon*, with the ability to create *light* and *darkness* at a command. If wielded by a fighter of good alignment, the sword gains the ability to *detect evil* in a 30' radius.

If the characters take any of the three Tomes from their altars and carry them out, they are free to leave the Temple (re-negotiating the traps, of course). However, within a week, a demon will arrive at the city and ransack the temple, carrying away the true *Iron Codex*... beginning a new adventure for the PCs as they discover their error.



10. The True Codex (Percival)

If both of the gems from rooms 7 and 8 are placed upon their respective matches in the walls at the same time, a secret door opens in room 6. The door to the inner chamber is made of plain stone, and carved into it is the word 'Percival'.

This small room is plain and unadorned, the stonework exceptional but unassuming. The walls are granite, and the altar in the center of the room is made of forged steel. Behind the altar is an incredibly lifelike statue of a small human boy.

However, this room is in disarray. The recent earthquake that shattered the doors of the Temple and caused damage elsewhere have tilted the altar, causing the massive tome that once rested upon it to slide to the floor below.

This room is the actual burial chamber of the *Iron Codex*. The book lying on the floor radiates evil, and the altar on which it once rested radiates a strong aura of protective magic. Anyone approaching the book feels heat coming from its wrought-iron covers, and can hear faint whispers as if voices spoke from between the blood-red pages of the tome. Anyone who touches the *Iron Codex* must make a Will save (DC 20) or be possessed by the demon within the tome. For more detailed information on the abilities of the *Iron Codex*, see the Item description in the back of this module.

At this point, most of the difficult part of the adventure is over. All the PCs must do is straighten the altar (which will cause the large steel altar to begin to glow again, its power restored), and place the Codex on top, within the protective aura of the spells cast on the large steel altar. However, they must be cautious not to touch the *Iron Codex*. Carrying it through simple means, such as cloth or leather, is not enough to protect them from the curse of the Codex. Only by touching it with steel gauntlets (reducing the Will save to 10) or by using levitation or other distance-lifting means can they avoid the *Iron Codex's* attempts to possess their bodies.

Once the *Iron Codex* is safely on the altar once more, the statue in the back of the small room will come to life, and a small boy's voice will whisper, "*Thank you...*". All characters are healed 3d10 wounds, and receive the benefits of a *bless* spell for 12 hours.

Conclusion

If the characters have been successful, they have navigated the dangers of the Temple of the Iron Codex, restored the tome to its proper resting place, and saved the lives of their city. However, there are still several threads to be considered before the GM closes the book on this adventure.

Now that the evil minions of the Codex know where the Temple lies, they will stop at nothing to retrieve the book and free their master. The PCs must find a way to either re-bury the Temple, defeat the demon, or destroy the *Iron Codex* safely – no mean feat. These adventures do not have to immediately follow this module, but can be a series of long-term plots for the characters in future gaming sessions.

Vesagos Gargoyles

Medium-sized Magical Beast (Earth)

Vesagos gargoyles are similar to their plainer cousins, as both are created, animated creatures formed to guard and to attack as programmed by their creator. However, Vesagos gargoyles are significantly more dangerous and more intelligent than other gargoyles.

Further, when a Vesagos gargoyle is stationary, it cannot be harmed by weapons, magic, or other effects. Once it has moved, however, it is as vulnerable as other gargoyles. Vesagos gargoyles are intelligent, and use tactics to confuse their opponents. Further, they can be shaped into any stone creature – a statue, an animal, etc. – without losing any of their abilities except flight (if their new form has no wings). They often hover, using their breath weapon as a distance attack, before swooping for a claw or bite.

Vesagos gargoyles can be created by a Wizard of 14+ level, with suitable proficiency to create enchanted items. The wizard must have a manual of creation for the creature type. The cost of such an endeavor is 10,000 gold for a lesser, and 100,000 gold for a greater Vesagos gargoyle. Once created, they obey their creator as semi-intelligent automatons.

Vesagos gargoyles have two sub-types: Lesser and Greater gargoyles. Statistics for both are listed below.

Lesser Vesagos Gargoyle

Hit Dice: 6d10+6 (52hp)
 Initiative: +2 (Dex)
 Speed: 45 ft; fly 75 ft (average)
 AC 18 (+2 Dex, +6 natural)
 Atk: 2 Claws +8 (1d4), bite +4 (1d6),
 Breath weapon (fire) +8 (1d10)
 Face/Reach: 5 ft. X 5 ft/5ft.
 SQ Damage reduct. 15/+1;
 Immune to Fire-based attacks
 SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +1;
 Str 13, Dex 14, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 7;
 AL N
 Skills: Hide +9, Listen +4,
 Spot +4;
 Feats: Multiattack, Weapon
 Finesse (claw, bite)

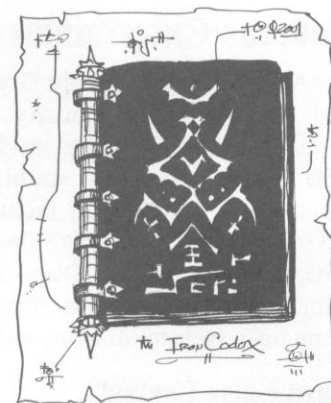


Greater Vesagos Gargoyle

Hit Dice: 9d10+16 (94hp)
 Initiative: +3 (Dex)
 Speed: 25 ft; fly 55 ft (average)
 AC 20 (+3 Dex, +7 natural)
 Atk: 2 Claws +8 (3d4), bite +4
 (3d6), Breath weapon (fire) +10
 (3d10)
 Face/Reach: 10 ft. X 10 ft/10ft.
 SQ Damage reduct. 20/+1; Immune to Fire-based attacks
 SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +1;
 Str 13, Dex 16, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 7;
 AL N
 Skills: Hide +9, Listen +4, Spot +4;
 Feats: Multiattack, Weapon Finesse (claw, bite), Power Attack

The Iron Codex

The *Iron Codex* is a massive tome, its blood-stained pages bound in black iron. Strange runes decorate the surface of the tome in a silvery substance that seems to smear under the touch of mortal hands. The *Iron Codex* radiates evil, and is a unique artifact. Created by a powerful demon over an aeon ago, the *Iron Codex* is an evil tome designed to allow the demon Radbos access to a mortal plane. Mortals who touch or read the *Iron Codex* must make a Will save (20) to resist possession by the demon's soul.



The *Iron Codex* has the following powers and abilities:

Minor Benign Powers:

Can cast *Unholy Sanctuary* 3 times/day around the holder of the item.

Allows the owner to speak all manner of Infernal tongues, including the language of demons, devils, and extra-planar evil beings.

Major Benign Powers:

Provides the owner 75% resistance to fire, cold, and acid, so long as the owner is holding the *Iron Codex*.

The owner can summon and control a single Glabrezu demon, or two succubi, once per week.

Prime Power:

The *Iron Codex* confers upon its owner the ability to Plane Shift to any of the infernal planes (requiring another Will save versus the demon Radbos each time this power is used) and back to the owner's plane of origin.

Reading the pages of the *Iron Codex* requires another Will save for each page read. However, each time the owner reads a page, he gains the power to summon another demon of random type, once per week. The power gained by reading a page lasts one month.

Minor Malevolent Effects:

All creatures of nature instinctively abhor the owner of the *Iron Codes*. Animals immediately attack, and the possessor is considered to have a -25 to all Charisma reaction rolls with animal-like creatures or primitive races.

Major Malevolent Effects:

Aside from the malevolent effect of having your soul constantly at war with the soul within the *Iron Codex*, the owner of the *Iron Codex* must perform the blood sacrifice of a sentient being, each full moon, or the owner's Will save to resist the Codex is increased by 1 for each month that passes without sacrifice.



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Credits

Produced by: AEG
Written by: Ree Soesbee
Edited by: D. J. Trindle
Art Direction: jim pinto
Layout: Steve Hough
Cover Illustration: Cris Dornaus
Cover Colorist: Cris Dornaus
Interior Illustrations: Cris Dornaus and Carl Frank
Cartography: Cris Dornaus
Dedication: For my love, my love, my love — my Joseph.

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