



Olferson's Offer

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Preface

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Intro

The door of the tavern opens. This, in itself, is not that unusual; the *The Laughing Leprechaun* does a brisk business. The figure that steps, through the door, is far different than the typical clientele of adventurers, mercenaries, and caravan merchants. This figure is cloaked in the darkest black robes of the Order of Midnight – wizards who refuse to allow anything to get in their way of knowledge and power; wizards known for the foulest of deeds and cruelest of experiments.

The conversation in the common room slowly dies out, spreading forth from this dark figure as if a *Silence* spell had been cast. Soon the shadowy figure has the entire room's attention, and he slowly pulls back his hood. Upon seeing his face, coldly handsome except for a terrible scar splitting crossing from his left eye to the lower right jaw, the barmaid drops her tray and screams. A table of half-orc caravan guards shout curses, standing and drawing their swords. A town guardsman, off-duty, pulls his dirk but is rapidly restrained by his companions.

A whisper, arcane syllables rasped into the air, and a glowing red ball of eldritch energies grows in the figure's hand. His face is impassive, but his eyes betray an anticipation.

“Oi! None of that! Your kind are not welcome here. Drink somewhere else – anywhere else!” The tavern keeper is waving his shillelagh, and his son is cranking the ancient heavy crossbow the regulars call “Bertha”.

“Your dishwater interests me not. I am here for them.” And the figure is pointing directly at your table, at your group. “A private party. I am renting your common room for the hour.” With a wave he dismisses the ball of energies, replacing it with a pouch – a pouch he tosses perfectly to land on the bar. A fortune in platinum coins spills forth.

The tavern keeper wavers indecisively. The figure tosses another pouch, more platinum gushing forth. The tavern keeper suddenly announces “Bar's Closed. Everyone go home! Private party!” He and his son begin pushing patrons out and the common room is empty in short order.

“Olferson the Black, at your service, good folk. Or Olferson the Butcher, or Olferson the Melt.”

About Olferson The Black

- With a *History* skill check, DC 10, the following information is known by the players:

In the Second War of Crested Mountain, the mage Olferson accompanied the King's forces as they set out to battle the orc army. The orcs were able to successfully ambush the King's forces on their march, and charged the surprised humans. Olferson cast a powerful magic spell, raining acid upon man and orc alike. The orc's attack was disrupted, their flesh literally running in torrents. But the King's forces likewise suffered – as did several villages miles from where the two armies contested. The final act of the orc's shaman was to cast a *Gust* spell to push the clouds away, but a miscalculation meant the acid fell upon the orc rear positions, killing many of their women and children.

Fewer than 1 in every 20 soldier survived – virtually every non-combatant was killed or seriously maimed. More would have died, but the King's Paladin Hanne struck out with his enchanted sword, breaking through Olferson's magical shield, and inflicting a terrible scar – the pain of which disrupted the concentration needed to keep the spell.

- With an *Arcana* skill check, DC 15, the following information is known:

Olferson is the Master of Evocation at the Verdant Tower – which, according to legend, should be fairly close to this village. It is said, though, that he spends most of his time exploring the UnderDark.

The Verdant Tower is an unaligned research facility used by both wizards and druids alike, with the occasional visiting guest interested in nature, weather, and plant-based magics.

Olferson's Story

To the west, two days journey, is the Tower of the Green Mages, also known as the Verdant Tower. It is a center for the study of plants and nature, well respected among wizards and druids alike. The Tower itself is unaffiliated with any political, celestial, or infernal entity, though the individual sages and scholars may choose their own path.

I spend most of my time in the UnderDark, but I do receive regular updates from my students and other sages. Three weeks ago I did not receive my expected messages, and multiple cycles passed without word of any kind. I sent one of my agents to investigate – their last message was that they had arrived at the Tower, four days ago, and I have heard nothing since.

Unfortunately, my services are required elsewhere and I cannot spend the time to determine what has happened at the Tower. Your team has proven you have the skills necessary to perform an investigation in force.

If there is no problem at the Tower, merely some fault in communications that can be rectified, then I shall see you appropriately rewarded for your time. I will even send word ahead to the capital – my name carries weight, I assure you. But if there is a problem, as I strongly suspect there to be, then I shall see you greatly rewarded.

I have some supplies that I can provide you – if some force has taken the tower you may keep these magical items. I would provide a map, but the Verdant Tower is ... well, a living organism and has likely grown quite different from that which I remember.

Return here when your quest is done. My work should require no more than one week, should it extend longer my agents will meet with you in my place for your reward.

Magic Items Granted

- *A Wand of Lightning Bolts*
- *A Sword of Lightning* (+1 sword, causes lightning damage)
- A Key that will open the doors to the Tower
- *A Scroll of Lightning Bolt* – readable by any spellcaster
- *A Scroll of Locate Creature* – readable by a druid or wizard

Non-Magic Items Granted

- A list of the names of students and sages known to be at the Tower – the list contains slightly more than a dozen names. There are more (many more students), but Olferson can only list the names he knows
- A pouch with 10 platinum coins, 50 gold coins, and 100 silver coins, “for incidentals”
- A map showing the path to the Tower
- A letter of introduction, should you encounter any sages and need to prove your mission and intent

Additional Details Olferson Has

- The Head of the Tower is Yannothe Oak, a powerful druid
- A treant sometimes wanders past the Tower. It is known as “Bugail”. If you can find it you may be able to learn some additional intelligence

The Town of Knotsturn

- The town is a regular stop by caravans traveling between the knight cities of Thornberry and Castlebush, and points beyond each. It is mostly human, with a large minority of elves
- Adventuring gear, weapons, and armor are easily obtained – at standard PH prices
- The Tower Verdant is slightly more than one day's journey from the town

Rumors

- A young druid acolyte recently passed through town, but he had forsworn his vows. He claimed that dark wizards had joined with the a druidic circle to create the ultimate plant-monster, intending that it wipe all of humanity from the earth to return the world back to its natural state. He was arrested by Duke's Knights and none have seen him since
- A farmer who lives out in the wilds woke one night to find numerous trees moving through his fields. They were speaking – and though he did not understand the words they carried great anger and he and his family hid in the cellar until morning, whereupon he found his fields trampled and crops destroyed
- *(Rogue Only)* A groups of bandits unknowingly camped near the Tower Verdant several weeks ago. A terrible lightning storm that night drove them to find better shelter, and they stumbled across the tower. The lightning was striking a raised pole atop the tower, and the bandits could hear an eldritch chanting from a dozen or more throats. The bandits fled in terror when they heard the chanting turn to screams and the apparent crunching of bones
- A horribly scarred veteran in a bar warns you that Olferson cares nothing for the people he employs – that his soul is truly black and he utterly lacks any feeling toward his fellow man. He cautions you to avoid getting too deep into the wizard's affairs
- The Lich of the Marsh of Sorrows and the Master of the Tower Verdant exchange information quite regularly and are on very friendly terms
- The Village of Tharun, a tiny village of a half dozen families or so, and which would be on your way to the Tower Verdant, sent an urgent request for aid to the Baron a month or a month and half ago. An agent of the Tower Verdant happened to be conducting business in town when the villager made his request to the Mayor, and promised the aid of the Tower. Nobody knows what happened next

Leaving the Town of Knotsturn

A clear and clean dawn greets you as you pay the innkeeper for your night's lodgings and prepare to make your way to the Tower Verdant. Rumors of your mission have been circulating, as they so often do, and a small crowd is on hand to gawk at those who agreed to work with Olferson the Melt.

The road out of town is easy, and within a few hours you come across the point marked on your map to turn off. A rutted cart path leads off in that direction, and you begin walking along it. You've seen no signs of bandits, beasts, or monsters – just the usual forest and grassland critters you'd expect. The trees are spaced too far apart for a successful ambush anyway. At midday you make a quick lunch and then resume your march.

As the sun begins approaching the horizon and you start thinking about looking for a place to rest for the night, the path broadens and the ruts are more frequent. About a mile ahead, perhaps a little more, you think you can see the outlines of huts or hovels. But there are no fires, no smoke, no sounds other than the woodland creatures.

On guard, you move closer. It is definitely a small village, perhaps a half dozen small thatched hut type buildings, a barn or two, and a central well. You've stopped about 100 yards from the nearest building, using the tall grasses to conceal your presence. There is no movement or light from any of the buildings. The air is still and quiet, and an unusual odor – a sweet, sickly, rotting scent – reaches your nose.

Village of Tharun

1. Destroyed Fields

This was clearly a field of crops, well tilled and cared for, now utterly destroyed. A few scraggly weeds are poking up between the rows, but otherwise it seems as if every living thing – plant, worms, etc. has been drained of life. The dead husks and leaves of corn stalks lie in the dry and empty soil. Even those of you lacking farming knowledge can tell nothing will grow here for years.

2. The cottage of Grug the Hunter

You approach a well-appointed cottage – clearly one of the wealthier residents. A number of hides are hanging to cure along the wall closest to the path – but they have curiously been chewed away at the bottom.

Entering the cottage you find a bizarre post-battle scene. The furniture – chairs and tables – are all overturned and upset. A number of weapons, blades and spears, lie broken on the floor – obviously taken from racks along the inside walls. A sticky green ichor coats the floor and furniture in a path from the door to the far wall. At the end of the path, propped sitting upright in a corner, is the skeleton of an orc or half-orc, the flesh stripped or melted away from the skeleton. The broken haft of a spear is clutched in its hands.

3. More destroyed fields

Another field of crops, appearing the same as the first field. This field appears to have held cabbage and potatoes, however.

4. Barn

The villagers apparently used a common barn for storing their farming implements and draft animals. The stalls for the animals are broken, from the inside it, as if the animals had gone mad in panic and forced their way out. Blood at one stall suggests whatever animal broke down the gate here injured itself – and inside the stall, in the corner is the skeleton of a donkey, flesh melted from its frame.

5. Cottage of the Marigolds

A sign hanging from the eaves advertises this cottage as “The Marigolds”. The doors are smaller than typical, and the windows set closer to the ground. Entering the cottage you soon find out why – it is apparent this was the home of a family of halflings. An stand for a suit of armor is empty, and several weapons have been removed from their place of honor on the walls. The house is mysteriously empty, as if the occupants made a hurried exit.

6. Cottage of the Kitterings

This cottage shows the signs of having been set on fire – and deliberately so. The smell of alcohol and other accelerants is strong. The walls are pushing outward, and several of the shutters that would typically cover the windows are ten to twenty feet away from the cottage! It is dangerous to step inside the hut – the remaining parts of the roof could come crashing down at any point.

- DC 15 *Insight* check will reveal that an explosion was deliberately set inside the hut
- DC 15 *Investigation* check will reveal the remains of several sacks of flour and grain, hanging from the ceiling rafters, and a large dried pool of blood on the floor
- DC 10 *Investigation* check shows that there is nothing in the cottage that would be expected of a family – no clothes, no personal possessions, just heavy furniture

7. Cottage of The Hag Witch

A sign hangs from the eaves of this cottage with numerous arcane symbols drawn upon it. You do not even need to consult a mage or cleric to know these are ridiculous – they are simple symbols drawn without regard to meaning. Scrawled in a crude hand within the circle of these symbols are the words “The Hag Witch”.

The door is locked (DC 10 *Sleight of Hand* – or an axe). The inside is filled with herbs, plants, spices, and bottles with strange fungal growths. A large cauldron is suspended over a small firepit. A bed in the back is covered with a green ichor and dead leaves and twigs. The ichor appears to have dripped in from the closed window.

- A DC 20 *Perception* reveals that the ichor leads UP from the bed to the window, as if something had crawled out, rather than drip DOWN

8. Pond

You would have expected a typical village pond, but this pond is choked with weeds. Several dead fish are floating, rotting, in the middle of the pond. The water is dark and foul.

9. Commons Hall

This is the village's common hall, where the village forge is located and where the villagers could gather for prayer or party. The forge is cold and dark. The hall itself shows signs of extreme violence – barricaded doors broken down, broken weapons scattered across the floor, overturned and destroyed tables and chairs, and blood stains on the floor and walls. The unusual smell is quite strong in here, and a green ichor is everywhere.

10. Cottage of the Weavers

This cottage appears to have been hastily abandoned. There is a green ichor stain across the floor to a pantry area, where the shelves have been destroyed. There is no food remaining, but many personal possessions lay strewn about.

11. Cottage of the Masons

This cottage features a short stone wall partially encircling the front. The cottage was in the process of being built – and while there are still supplies, boards, stones, etc., you note a distinct lack of any tools.

The Well of the Village of Tharun

As you approach the well you see that a large parchment has been nailed to the support. The bucket and draw have been removed and placed to the side.

- If a creature drinks the water, roll d10 for the result:
 1. The creature begins to glow as per *Faerie Fire* spell for 1d6 minutes
 2. The creature is healed 1d8 hit points
 3. The creature *Polymorphs* into a giant toad for 1d20 minutes
 4. The creature, if intelligent, believes itself to be of a random race and class. They will act as such, even believing they are casting magic spells, succeeding at their skill checks, etc. until the next sunrise
 5. An obvious illusion of the creature appears next to the drinker. It silently mimes and mocks everything the creature does before vanishing 1d6 hours later
 6. The creature becomes deeply infatuated with the next humanoid they see and acts as if under a *Charm Person* spell. The effect wears off in 1d4 days
 7. If not mindless, the creature gains the ability to understand (and speak, if so bodily equipped) Sylvan, permanently
 8. Ask the player to roll a die (any die of their choice). Divide the size of the die in half and add one. If the player has rolled that or lower, they are resistant to Sturge damage until the next sunrise – and if above they are vulnerable to such damage. For example, on a d4 the resistance is 1-3, but on a d20 the resistance is 1-11
 9. The creature rolls a die (any die of their choice). On even, they *Enlarge*, as per the spell, and on odd they *Reduce*. The effects last 1d10 hours
 10. The creature's eyesight wavers briefly, and when it returns they see a faerie creature taking urinating into the well. DM's choice if this is a true vision or not!

The Night After Tharun

- If the players spend the night in the open they will have no cover from the stirges and d8 stirges will join per round. If they have instead holed up in a cottage they only d4 stirges will be able to penetrate per round. If they have holed up in a cottage and taken steps to reinforce the cottage then the stirges will dash themselves uselessly against the walls and roof, with the players invulnerable
- The stirge attack will last d10 rounds, after which they will all fly away
- The stirges attack just after midnight. Check against the party's passive perception, highest among those on guard, to determine surprise
- Stirge hit points table:

1	2	2	3	1	3	3	3	1	3
3	2	4	4	2	1	4	1	3	4
3	2	4	2	2	4	3	4	1	2
4	2	3	3	3	2	1	2	1	1
1	3	3	1	3	1	1	3	2	3
2	4	4	1	2	1	1	4	4	1
1	4	2	4	2	1	2	3	2	2
4	3	4	2	3	3	2	3	1	3
1	2	3	4	3	4	1	3	3	1
3	4	4	1	4	2	2	1	4	1

The Tower Verdant

At dawn's break you begin the final miles to reach the Tower Verdant. The land gradually becomes more twisted, more corrupted, as you march. Within an hour or so you hardly recognize the landscape, so dark and foul it has become. It is almost as if a curse has struck the land, draining it of life and sustenance. Many of the trees now stand bare and warped, and the floor is more a carpet of fungi than leaves and branches.

In three hours or so you see the Tower before you. It is not what you expected – it looks more like the tower of a foul coven of evil witches than a place where druids and wizards research nature and the weather.

A door of glowing crystal stands at the base of the tower, slowly pulsating with arcane energies. The key given to you by Olferson also begins to glow softly, its ambiance growing and shrinking opposite of the door.

- Holding forth the key, either directly in front or as if looking for a keyhole, will open the door. If the key is not presented forthright then the door remains closed
- The tower has 9 levels
- Using the *Locate Creature* spell once the Tower has been entered is a smart decision – the player (who is not necessarily the caster!) who remembers and suggests it will be granted the title of *Protector of the Tower Verdant* by Olferson at the end of the adventure

Tower Verdant – Level 1 - Entrance

You step into the Tower, and as you do so you feel a moment of vertigo and nausea. It quickly passes, and you find yourself in an enormous entrance hall – far larger on the inside than the outside! You can feel the subtle magics of the Tower feeding tendrils into your mind, suggesting that it is not an extra-dimensional space inside the Tower, but rather you are feeble and insignificant before the Tower's greatness. A suggestion more worthy of a conclave of dark wizards; you know immediately something has gone quite awry.

The entrance hall is lined with portraits of great wizards and druids from history. Its marble floor echos from each step you take. The space is lit from above by some indirect illumination, and ahead is a short staircase ascending to a set of large double doors. To the right of the doors is a huge portrait of a stern but intelligent man. The panel beneath identifies him as “Yannoth the Oak”.

Tower Verdant – Level 1 – Main Hall

Past the double doors an enormous hall greets your eyes. The business hall of the Tower greets your eyes – a chamber likely three hundred feet long and fifty wide. To your left a feast table almost as long as the chamber and easily six feet wide extends forth. The table is in utter disarray – the dishes and plates knocked about and to the floor, glasses overturned, and crockery smashed. At the far end is a dais with a table obviously for the Tower masters and important guests, likely also in the same disarray. To your right are numerous overturned chairs and small tables, broken and knocked down privacy walls and panels. The center is open and carpeted, and in the very center is a crystal staircase climbing upwards.

- DC 15 *Perception* or DC 10 *Investigation* reveals the presence of green ichor on some of the furniture – the same ichor as in the village
- A DC 20 *Investigation* check will turn up d6 magical privacy panels. The panels form a 20x20 foot invisible, intangible, insubstantial wall centered on the panel through which no sound can carry
- A DC 25 *Investigation* check will turn up a crystal goblet worth 100gp

Tower Verdant – Level 2 – Staircase

Ascending the staircase you find yourself in the center of a circular room. Equally spaced are 8 doors, each with a different symbol marked up it. Four of them carry the symbol for an element – fire, water, earth, and air. One carries a stylized sun, and one a stylized moon. The seventh has three stars, and the last contains the image of a desk.

The staircase extends both directions from here.

* DC 15 *Perception* check - “You feel as if you are being watched”

Tower Verdant – Level 2 – Fire

The door opens to a classroom apparently devoted to the study of the nature of fire. There are posters on the wall diagramming the parts of a volcano, the parts of a geyser, and a much larger, almost tapestry, discussing a forest fire. The room has a dozen or so desks arranged around a central fire pit, which itself is in a magical circle. The room is warm and lit by many torches and lamps.

Tower Verdant – Level 2 – Water

The door opens to a most unusual sight. The room is filled with containers of water, some small ones holding a goldfish, some quite large and holding marine creatures you are not familiar with. One wall is a window into a giant tank of water, around which swim monstrous forms barely visible in the dim light. There are few sitting desks – most of them are designed to stand for working.

Tower Verdant – Level 2 – Earth

Your eyes are surprised when this door is opened – it opens to a mine! A short passage leads to a large excavated room, with dug out passages in various directions. A table in the center of the large room contains a number of jars with different gemstones, and a series of shelves contains many more.

- An *Investigation* check to look for valuables will turn up:
 - Roll Natural 1 : Baby mimic
 - Total < 5 : Iron pyrite (*Alchemy* or *Metallurgy* knowledge to detect)
 - 6 – 8 : A lump of coal
 - 9 – 12 : Obsidian chunk worth 12gp
 - 13 – 17 : Citrine gemstone worth 60gp
 - 18 – 22 : Amber chunk worth 120gp
 - 23+ : A fine topaz worth 600gp

Tower Verdant – Level 2 – Air

You open the door and ... *almost* ... take a step forward. But looking down you see there is no support – you cannot see the ground. Looking up you see no ceiling. Looking straight across you see desks, bobbing gently in mid-air. A breeze rushes upwards, strong and consistent. Past the desks is an instructor's table, upon which are several items; they are difficult to make out, but it may be rings and/or bracers.

- A *Fly* or *Levitate* will allow a player to easily cross to the table. Absent that, the player can attempt to jump across from desk to desk to the table – the first jump requires an *Athletics* check of DC 15 followed by a DC 15 *Acrobatics* check to navigate the bobbing desks. A *Jump* spell or similar grants advantage to both checks. Failure, or simply stepping forth assuming the absence of a floor is an illusion, means a *Fall*
- A creature who falls picks up increasing speed downward and the desks and door rapidly become tiny dots and then invisible. The air rushes past every faster and faster. A black floor soon becomes visible ... but before striking the floor the creature is harmlessly *Teleported* back to the circular room. The creature must make a *Wisdom* saving throw against DC 20, and on failure is *Frightened* of the room for one week and cannot willingly enter
- There are a dozen or so rings and bracers on the instructor's table. Wearing one allows the user to walk at door / desk / table level as if there were a floor. The items have no function outside of the Room of Air

Tower Verdant – Level 2 – Sun Room

Upon opening the door you are hit with a blast of intense radiant light. Painfully blinking your eyes to clear them, you see a simple classroom as you would expect in any wizard's tower. A stand near the instructors desk holds the source of the intense light – a lantern hanging from one of its hooks illuminates the room.

- The lantern can be taken. It is a simple lantern with a *Continual Light* spell cast at its center by a Level 15 wizard

Tower Verdant – Level 2 – Moon Room

The room you reveal is lit by a dim ethereal light from some unknown source. The walls are draped with silks and satins which seem to mute any noise. Arranged in a U-shape in the center of the room are a number of cushions, while the center holds a low dais on which more cushions sit.

- Resting for an hour or two in this room (a *short rest*) gives all of the benefits of a *long rest*

Tower Verdant – Level 2 – Stars Room

The door opens into the middle of a hilly plains. Ahead of you, perhaps one hundred or so feet, are a number of stone monoliths arranged in a series of circles. There is no ceiling – above is simply a cloudless night sky.

- If the party approaches the stone monoliths

Carved into each stone monolith is some arcane symbol. The symbols glow with a soft silvery light every few moments – there is clearly a pattern to how they illuminate but you cannot fathom the pattern.

- After approaching the monoliths, have each player make a *Perception* check – on a 15 or higher they catch a glimpse of some strange, small, one-eyed creature watching them but ducking out of sight to avoid detection. The players will not be able to track the Nothics

Tower Verdant – Level 2 – Study Hall

Some kind of student of student library greets you as you open the door. The bookshelves contain a number of books, basically introductory texts on nature, weather, astrology, and similar.

- On a DC 15 *Perception* check the player will catch a clear view of a Nothic spying on them. But they will not be able to give pursuit; the Nothic will vanish through an arcane secret door
- On a DC 15 *Investigation* check the player will turn up a filled wineskin, obviously left by one of the students. The wine is actually decent and worth 5gp

Tower Verdant – Level 3 – Library

You ascend the staircase into an enormous library. The library itself is three levels, though the central staircase does not connect to any of them. Instead, smaller staircases and mobile ladders allow access to the additional levels and books.

The first level contains a number of desks for study and reading. The second level appears dedicated to mostly druidic knowledge and the third level of the library to wizardry.

Illumination is provided by soft glowing globes floating in the air – they are insubstantial and flicker through a rainbow of colors as you pass your hand through them.

- Give the players some brief time to investigate the library. The Nothic will appear preferentially to a wizard, sorcerer, or warlock, then any other spellcaster, and then the player with the highest Charisma

“Forgive my intrusion, goodly person,” a soft voice speaks from behind you. Whirling in semi-panic, for you never heard or noticed its arrival, you find yourself facing an unusual one-eyed creature. Its arms end in clawed talons; its teeth are sharp and pointed. And its eye seems to flicker with magical energies.

Tower Verdant – Level 3 – Library (cont)

“This is the one selected to speak. This one remembers how. Even ages, this one has the memory. A decision has been made regarding you. If they help you, it was decided, you will help them. So they sent this one to ask.

“They have knowledge of what lies above. Two levels above you will need this knowledge. They know, they will deal if you will deal. If they tell you what you need to know about the fifth level, will you stand aside? Will you continue about your mission, and leave them? They tell you now this knowledge is very valuable. Very valuable.”

- If the party does not agree to the terms, the Nothic will turn and leave
- If the party agrees

“There are two guardians on the fifth level. They know them well, too well. The guardians are too strong for them. The first is Tarshix – it is a Naga, corrupted and evil. Beware its curse and do not grovel before it. The second is Iyaga – a Naga, also corrupted. Do not be seduced into becoming its friend, and take your rest elsewhere. The guardians are creatures beyond death. If you defeat the guardians, then this one shall let them know. This one shall go with you. Trust this one to aid you.”

- If the party could use a *long rest* the Nothic will suggest the Moon room below
- The Nothic will not give away any information about itself or its fellows
- The Nothic does not have any magic items, gold, etc. to give
- If the party agrees to the Nothic's terms, then this Nothic will accompany the party up to the fifth level. During the battle it will use its *Weird Insight* ability to scan the party and provide advice
- The Nothic will not answer questions about the shambling mound – not part of the deal, and the adventurers cannot make it profitable enough

Tower Verdant – Level 4 – Student Dorm

You arrive to an unusual dormitory level. This level is split in two – one section, with dirt floor paths, leaves, branches, etc. is clearly for druids. The other, with solid stonework is probably for wizards. But that's not the most unusual thing.

On the druid side the vegetation is dying – brown leaves, withered vines, a carpet of fungi. On the wizard side the walls are scored with gouges and marks suggestive of lightning bolts and fire spells. A green ichor is splashed across the walls and floors of the stone, along with the off-color evidence of bloodstains. The same odor you smelled in the village is present on this level.

As you look down the halls of the wizard side it is obvious some kind of battle was fought here. Fought and lost, though there are no bodies present.

Tower Verdant – Level 5 – Vault

The great crystal staircase ends on this level. You are in a waiting room, a quite large waiting room. Twenty feet in front of you are is a large double door, and in front of the double door are two bone nagas. They rise and intertwine before the doors, before uttering a weird hiss.

“Strangers. Strangers. Are you invited? Are you invited?”

- Tarshix is the guardian based naga, and Iyaga is the spirit based naga. Iyaga has cast *Detect Thoughts* and will undetectably shift his attention among the party to read surface thoughts, preferentially targeting any of the party who answers or speaks
- Both naga will believe the Nothic is one of the party
- Neither naga will react unless the party moves to the door. The party cannot pass the nagas without an invitation ... which they do not have
- The Nothic will use it's *Weird Insight* on the players – for several reasons. First, of course, it wishes to gather their secrets. Second, if it is successful it will provide that player an insight that will give them advantage on their next attack or save against the nagas. And third, if time is running short, it can *deus ex machina* short-cut a critical hit

Tower Verdant – Level 5 – Vault – After the Naga

The forms of the naga grow indistinct and insubstantial, transforming into a vapor that quickly vanishes. The double door behind them opens with a loud ***clunk***. The Nothic bows its head several times at you, then races through the doors.

“This one thanks you for your service. They will be arriving shortly. You should move quickly onward.”

Beyond the doors is a staircase leading to another set of double doors. There is no sign of the Nothic.

Tower Verdant – Level 6 – Offices

Passing through the second set of double doors you find yourself in some kind of guild-hall-esque series of offices. A battle has been fought here, too, with green ichor staining the walls, floors, and ceiling. Desks are overturned, and scorch marks dominate all of the surfaces. Nameplates have been knocked from their holders, and at various places the floor is covered with torn pages and used scroll fragments.

There is a simple spiral staircase leading upwards to the next level.

- The offices have been ravaged and trashed. There is nothing of value to discover

Tower Verdant – Level 7 – Infirmary

You exit the staircase into some kind of infirmary. The room you are in appears to be some kind of triage ward, and various doors lead off from here. The area, curiously, does not show signs of any battle having taken place.

- A DC 15 *Investigation* check will turn up the entrance book. If a player specifically looks for it (or something close), then no check is necessary
- If a player looks for medicines or potions, make the following d8 check (each potion slot can only be found once)

1. Potion of Healing
2. Potion of Greater Healing
3. Potion of Thunder Resistance
4. Potion of Lightning Resistance
5. Potion of Vitality
6. Potion of Speed
7. Potion of Speed
8. Potion of Diminution

The potions are labeled in an arcane script, but one understandable to a *Comprehend Languages* spell or ability

A simple stone staircase leads upwards to a set of doors.

Tower Verdant – Level 8 – Destroyed Laboratory

As you open the doors at the top of the stairs a terrible foul stench assaults your noses. It is the same scent as the village, the same as you have smelled elsewhere in the tower. It is coming from the jungle-like growths on this level.

You find yourselves at the wall of a circular room about 60 feet across. The room is choked with vines, weeds, and corrupted vegetation. A greenish ichor drips from most of the leaves and vines. The leaves move as if in a breeze although, of course, the air is deathly still.

- The shambling mound is in a random square at least 20 feet from the door. It will remain motionless until a character approaches within melee range
- The shambling mound will feign death if it falls below 50 hit points
- The terrain is considered difficult – except for the mound
- Under the horrible vegetative carpet are the bones of scholars, students, and staff

Tower Verdant – Level 9 – Observatory

You have reached the top of the tower. Various wheels line the walls of this chamber, driving chains that reach upward. It is obvious the roof can be retracted – allowing the skies to be viewed by any of the many telescopes, and various inscrutable instruments, that dot the chamber.

Along the walls are star charts, astrological references, and calendars of the various races showing important dates.

- On a DC 15 *Investigation* check, or automatic if the players look for it, the calendars and astrological references reveal that the Comet of Gruumsh would cross overhead at twilight during a fierce lightning storm. Written logs indicate that, during this time, an aurora borealis was also seen – indicating the casting of significant Fey magic

Returning to Knotsturn

It is a somber return to Knotsturn. On the one hand, the mission is success, for you have both discovered the source of the problems at the Tower Verdant and removed it. But, on the other hand, you were too late to save any of the students.

You spend time at the same tavern, waiting the return of Olferson. One night, two of the town guard arrive and head to your table. “We bear word,” they say. “The Mayor wishes you to dine with him tonight. Please arrive by the 8th hour.”

At the appointed hour you are outside the Mayor's manor, and are escorted in to a small and private dining room. The Mayor stands to greet you. Olferson is seated at the table sipping from a glass of wine, and beside him is a noble lady unfamiliar to you. The Mayor signals his servants, who bring in food and place it on a long table, before leaving, closing the doors behind them. The Mayor himself pours your wine.

“We are gathered to receive your reports. M'lady Countess Youngstone would hear word of her cousin, Teaa deDrunknor. And, of course, His Eminence Olferson would learn of your mission. I will see word dispatched this night to the Duke, with copies made to carry to His Merchant Majesty.”

- If the party truthfully exposition-dumps their mission, Olferson will gratefully allow the party to keep the magical items he gifted them
- The Mayor will be aghast at the destruction of the Tower Verdant and immediately leave to send his dispatches

Olferson reaches for his wine glass, and attempting to drain it, finds it empty. He scowls. “Fey magics of this scale are not frivolously cast. There is a darkness, and it is in motion. The Tower Verdant no longer stands – it shall be years before it can be restored to its prior strength. They knew our strengths, and our weaknesses, and our desires. But what is their ultimate goal?” He stares into his empty wineglass.

Triage Log – Verdant Tower – Hammish Dyer

New Moon

- *Jin Torwhich – nettle poisoning*
- *Beneth Yar – lamprey bites*

Waning Crescent 2nd

- *Jin Torwhich – punctured by murder thorn*

Waning Gibbous 2nd

- *Mary Marigold of Tharun – unusual lesions*
- *Rathgar Kittering of Tharun – unusual lesions*

Healers' Notes – Waning Gibbous 3rd

A most unusual specimen was brought in this day by Sage Dalca, found in a burned out cottage. Neither he nor Sage deFluer were able to identify the species of this ... plant? Weed? Spore? Fungus? It seems significantly damaged and in some kind of hibernating state. Sage Balan believes it can be reanimated.

I have recommended caution as Yaggoth the Oak has departed for Castlebush responding to a summons from His Lordship. I have sent a messenger to find him, but I fear he may have already reached the city where my messenger dare not fly.

Mary Marigold of Tharun perished this morning of her wounds, never regaining consciousness. If young Rathgar Kittering of Tharun does not respond to treatment then it is likely we shall never know happened in their village. The whereabouts of the other villagers is, at this point, unknown. Enchanter deStone believes they have fled south and likely fallen prey to the lizardfolk who ply the Fourty Souls.

This 3rd day Waning Gibbous, Hammish Dyer

Healer's Notes – Waning Gibbous 5th

I write these notes in haste, for any who follow.

Whatever horrible thing Dalca found was not dead. We were successful in bringing it back to life – to a terrible, awful life. It is devious – but not, I think, intelligent. But it killed Mistress Cassidy and consumed the body. Then the students who entered looking for her. And several others, one-by-one.

We learned too late. With Mistress Forgemaiden I am invoking Closure and sealing the Tower. It has grown too powerful with the magics of the Tower Verdant, but with Closure it shall surely weaken. Perhaps not enough for us – but if you find this message make sure Yaggoth the Oak is told of our sacrifice.

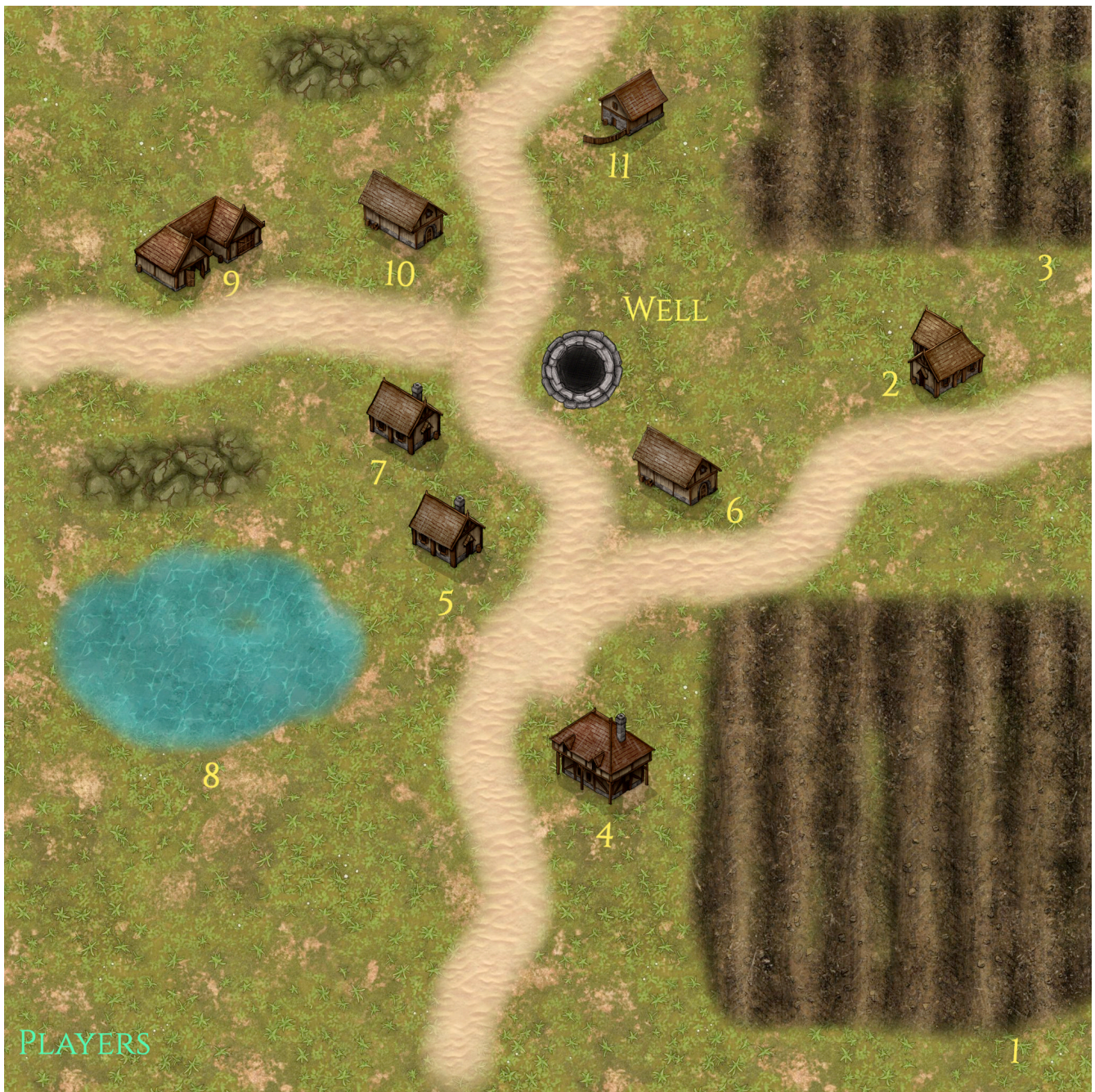
The hour approaches. May The Daghdha see us to victory.

May The Daghdha carry us all.

*This 5th day Waning Gibbous, Hammish Dyer, Druid of the First Star
Tower Verdant*



Yannoth the Oak



The Village of Tharun

Danger!

This well is contaminated by Fey majiks.

Do not drink. Do not use.



By Order of the Tower Verdant

Yannoth the Oak, Master of the Tower

Being a List of the Names of Sages and Students of the Tower Verdant

Penned by

Olferson the Black

Master of Evocations, Tower Verdant

<i>Sage Ciprian Dalca</i> <i>Horticulture</i>	<i>Sage Andrei Balan</i> <i>Weather / Astrology</i>	<i>Sage Nedran deFluer</i> <i>Soils and Waters</i>
<i>Scholar Teaa deDrunknor</i>	<i>Nettlebrush Piper</i> <i>Druid of the Wild Forest</i>	<i>Hammish Dyer</i> <i>Druid of the First Star</i>
<i>Scholar Grun Jill</i>	<i>Enchanter Joran Bluxor</i>	<i>Enchanter deStone</i>
<i>Scholar Dorin Bluxor</i>	<i>Pel</i> <i>Druid of the Fifth Star</i>	<i>Crydon deArr</i> <i>Druid of Glass</i>
<i>Student Jin Torwhich</i>	<i>Student Pedwar Bys</i>	<i>Student Justin of Baker</i>

Yannoth the Oak – Master of the Tower Verdant

Tossbeth Forgemaiden – Mistress of Enchantment

Prudence Cassidy – Mistress of Transmutation

Stirge

Tiny beast, unaligned

STR 4 (-3)	DEX 16 (+3)	AC 14 (natural)
INT 2 (-4)	CON 11 (+0)	SPD 10, fly 40
WIS 8 (-1)	CHR 6 (-2)	HP 1d4

Senses

Darkvision 60, Passive perception 9

Actions

Blood Drain

Melee, +5 to hit, 1d4+3 piercing damage and the stirge latches to the target. While attached, the stirge does not attack. Instead, at the start of each of the stirge's turns, the target loses 1d4+3 hit points due to blood loss. The stirge can detach itself by spending 5 ft of movement, and it does so after draining 10 hit points of blood from the target (or if the target dies). A creature, including the target, can use its action to detach the stirge

Nothic

Medium aberration, neutral evil

STR	14	(+2)	DEX	16	(+3)	AC	15
INT	13	(+1)	CON	16	(+3)	SPD	30
WIS	10	(+0)	CHR	8	(-1)	HP	55

Skills

Arcana +3, Insight +4, Perception +2, Stealth +5

Senses

Truesight 120, Passive perception 12

Special

Keen Sight

The nothic has advantage on *Perception* (WIS) checks that rely on sight

Actions

Multiattack

The nothic makes two claw attacks

Claw

Melee, +4 to hit, 1d6+3 slashing damage

Rotting Gaze

The nothic targets one creature it can see within 30 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 12 *Constitution* saving throw against this magic or take 3d6 necrotic damage

Weird Insight

The nothic targets one creature it can see within 30 feet of it. The target must contest its (Charisma) *Deception* check against the nothic's (Wisdom) *Insight* check. If the nothic wins, it magically learns one fact or secret about the target. The target automatically wins if it is immune to being charmed

Bone Naga

Large undead, lawful evil

STR 15 (+2)	DEX 16 (+3)	AC 15
INT 15 (+2)	CON 12 (+1)	SPD 30
WIS 15 (+2)	CHR 16 (+3)	HP 49 , 65

Condition Immunities

Charmed, Exhaustion, Paralyzed, Poisoned

Damage Immunities

Poison

Languages

Common plus one other

Senses

Darkvision 60, Passive perception 12

Spellcasting - General

The naga is a 5th level spellcaster (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks) that needs only verbal components to cast spells. The spells are determined by its previous life

Spellcasting - Guardian

Cantrips (at will)

Mending, Sacred Flame, Thaumaturgy

1st level - 4 slots

Command, Shield of Faith

2nd level - 3 slots

Calm Emotions, Hold Person

3rd level 2 slots

Bestow Curse

Spellcasting - Spirit

Cantrips (at will)

Mage Hand, Minor Illusion, Ray of Frost

1st level - 4 slots

Charm Person, Sleep

2nd level - 3 slots

Detect Thoughts, Hold Person

3rd level 2 slots

Lightning Bolt

Actions

Claw

Bite, +5 to hit, 10 feet reach, 2d6+3 piercing damage plus 3d6 poison damage

Shambling Mound

Large plant, unaligned

STR 18 (+4)	DEX 8 (-1)	AC 15
INT 5 (-3)	CON 16 (+3)	SPD *
WIS 10 (+0)	CHR 5 (-3)	HP 149

The shambling mound moves 20 feet on land, and 20 feet in the water

Skills

Stealth +2

Damage Resistances

Cold, Fire

Damage Immunities

Lightning

Condition Immunities

Blinded, Deafened, Exhaustion

Senses

Blindsight 60 (blind beyond that point), Passive perception 10

Special

Lightning Absorption

Whenever the shambling mound is subjected to lightning damage, it takes no damage and regains a number of hit points equal to the lightning damage dealt

Actions

Multiattack

The shambling mound makes two slam attacks. If both attacks hit a Medium or smaller target, the target is grappled (escape DC 14) and the shambling mound uses its *Engulf* on it

Slam

Melee, +7 to hit, 2d8+4 bludgeoning damage

Engulf

The shambling mound engulfs a Medium or smaller creature by grappling it. The engulfed target is blinded, restrained, and unable to breathe, and it must succeed on a DC 14 *Constitution* saving throw at the start of each of the mound's turns or take 2d8+4 bludgeoning damage. If the mound moves the engulfed target moves with it. The mound can have only one creature engulfed at a time