

Secrets of the Old City - A One Page Dungeon Level by Waysoftheearth

Background

Almost every inhabitant of The City has heard that it was built upon the ruins of an older place – indeed, evidence of the Old City is everywhere. And rumors of its hidden treasures persist, even now.

The histories recount that the Old City was buried by cataclysmic ashes long before The Kingdom grew up to resume the industry of these parts.

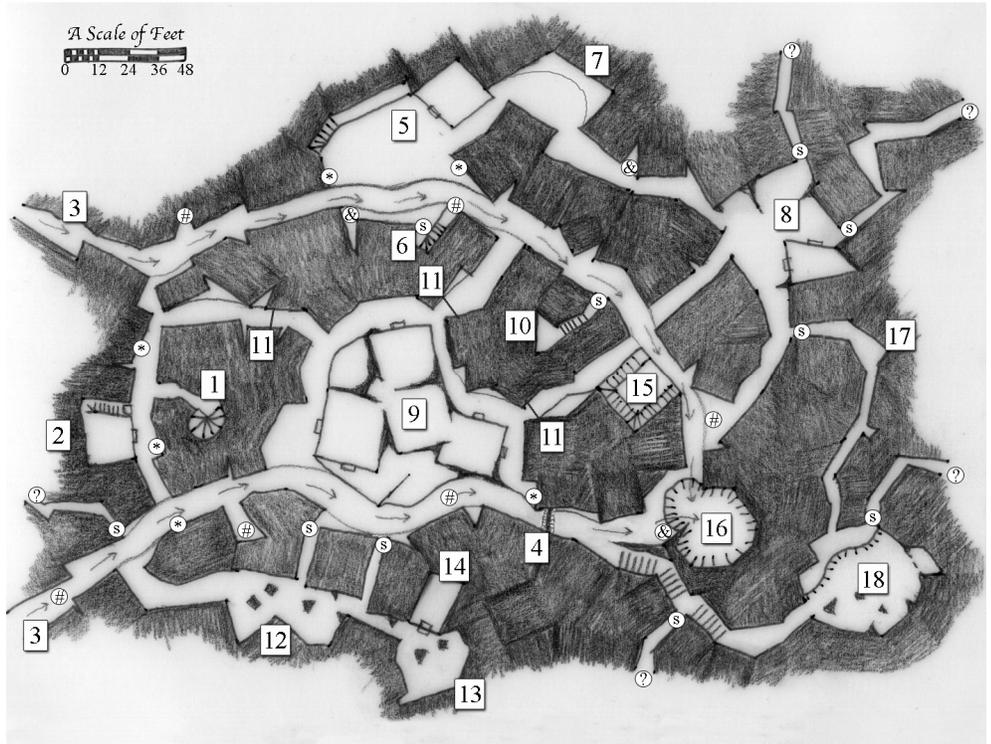
However, few among the wisest scholars know that the Old City was itself founded upon an even deeper ruin – a far more ancient and treacherous place. None now recall who the *Ancients* were, or what disaster befell them...

The Old City

The Old City now lies buried some 30' below The City, above. Its dilapidated streets now serve as a drainage system. The stink of rubbish and sewerage is pervasive throughout the dank tunnels, as are rats and centipedes.

Most of the Old City buildings are at least partially collapsed, and filled with rubble. Some few may yet be entered – as may scores of unexplored crawlways.

The two principal causeways have been shored-up by dubious stone work, and are dimly lit through the overhead sluice grates and by torches maintained by the City Guard. The remainder of the Old City is of far older stone work, and is unlit.



Map Legend

(*) **Torch.** 1-2 lit, 3-4 guttering, 5-6 spent.

(S) **Secret Entrance.** Hidden in the broken stonework.

(?) **Unexplored Crawlway.** An opportunity for the referee to extend the Old City.

(#) **Sluice Grate.** Drainage from The City's streets 20' to 30' overhead. A narrow grate that admits sewerage, storm water, and a dim shaft of daylight (or moonlight).

(&) **Yellow Mold.** This hazardous growth is almost indistinguishable from other filth in the dark sewers.

Keyed Areas

[1] **Entrance.** Spiral stair descends from the surface to a locked door. A sign on the door says "Keep Out".

[2] **Guard House.** 3 bored **City Guards** are here, shuffling work rosters, cleaning gear, drinking coffee, and playing cards. They will object to PCs trespassing in the sewers, and may even try to arrest them.

[3] **Causeways.** A foul 9" deep slick of city waste crawls toward area 16. Luckily, a 2' wide ledge is raised 3" above the filth along either side. Unluckily, it is slippery and broken in many places. Fallen stones make tiny, unsteady islands amid the horrid flow.

[4] **Submerged Pit Trap.** The ledges are badly broken hereabouts, and a number of slippery "stepping stones" may tempt explorers. Hidden by the filthy runoff is a 10' deep, 6' wide fissure. Anyone slipping into it will vanish into the foul muck and risk drowning.

[5] **Works Depot.** A large area mostly cleared of rubble. Tools and equipment suitable for maintaining the sewers is stored in a locked, dilapidated building.

[6] **Thieves' Entry.** An unsteady stair hidden within a ruined building leads right up to a loose sluice grate. Shifting the grate aside a slim PC may access the sewer.

[7] **Toad's Grotto.** A **Giant Toad** lurks beneath the filthy mire, likely attacking by surprise, and possibly swallowing whole. It submerges itself for protection. The grotto contains evidence of a recently eaten Goblin.

[8] **Goblin Foothold.** A band of 12 **Goblins** have recently arrived in the sewers, but have already sent word to summon their cousins. They know of the toad and of the thieves. Their treasure is limited to the result of today's minor mischiefs in The City, above.

[9] **Thieves' Den.** A gang of 7 **Thieves** hide out in this ruinous knot of free-standing Old City buildings. They may feign cooperation, but betray and rob the PCs given half a chance. They have amassed a modest hoard which is hidden in 2 separate stashes; a small locked chest of coins lies beneath a loose floor-board, and a sack of silver wear is hidden up a chimney chute. They know of and avoid the Ogre.

[10] **Renegade's Stash.** A double-crossing thief stole the gang's prize loot and smuggled it here. His **Rot Grub** infected corpse still clings to a small lockbox that contains a small coin purse and an enchanted lantern.

[11] **Trip Wire Traps.** Set by the thieves to warn them of visitors. Causes stones to topple off a wall with a clamour, possibly causing injury.

[12] **Spiders' Ante.** A web-strewn cave littered with skeletal remains. 4 **Large Spiders** are hidden in dark recesses, watching over 23 un-hatched giant spider eggs. One of the dried corpses wears a silver ring, but an alluring gleam is visible ahead (see area 13).

[13] **Spider's Lair.** Another web strewn feeding ground where a **Giant Black Widow** awaits. She will likely surprise from above and behind, possibly dragging her luckless victim into a dark tunnel to be devoured. The gleam visible from area 12 is from a brass helm. Former victims' goods make up the loot, but access to area 14 is the main prize.

[14] **Old Gem Cutter's Workshop.** Forced entry into this Old City building may reveal a small trove of Old City vintage coin, uncut stones, as well as gem stones.

[15] **Old Watch Tower.** The only access is via an open window space some 14' above (reachable by an Ogre). The tower contains a dark stair up to a condemned ruin in The City's poor quarter, where children sometimes play. Optionally, also leads down to dungeon level 2.

[16] **Drop Hole.** The causeway filth drops some 30' into a wretched cesspit (welcome to dungeon level 2).

[17] **Fugitive's Hideout.** A terrified **Girl** has escaped the Ogre's cook-pot (area 18) and hides in this tiny cave. A single shaft of light falls from an awkward crack between street cobblestones, 30' above. Her poor parents will pay a modest reward for her rescue.

[18] **Ogre's Lair.** A narrow ledge 20' above overlooks a grisly cave occupied by an **Ogre** and his pet **Worg**. A giant cook-pot in the middle of the cave is surrounded by children's shoes (former victims). 2 terrified **Boys** are penned in at the rear. The Ogre wears a stout ring mail shirt and carries a great flail, the Worg wears a collar that protects it from magic. If pressed, the Ogre throws black toadstools into his fire, creating a *stinking cloud* that he and the Worg are immune to, or upends his boiling cauldron. The Ogre's loot is children's dolls and toys, and the gear and coin of slain guards. The boys' poor parents will pay a pittance for their rescue.

Random Encounters

2d6	Encounter
2	1 Girl (escaped from the Ogre).
3	d3+1 Boys (1-2 fleeing for their lives, 3-4 lost and afraid, 5 looking to become brave adventurers, 6 looking to join the thieves).
4	d4+2 Thieves (1-2 heading to a job, 3-4 setting a tripwire trap, 5-6 returning from a job with loot).
5	d4+2 City Guards (1-4 on patrol, 5 returning with wounded, 6 making dirty deal with local thieves).
6	1d6 Giant Centipedes
7	Rat Swarm of 4d6 x10 Rats.
8	1d6 Giant Slugs
9	d4+2 Goblins (1-3 scouting, 4 setting a trap, 5 disarming a trap, 6 hiding loot).
10	1 City Surveyor (apparently surveying state of The City's foundations, but...)
11	1 Ogre (1-3 scouting, 4-5 heading out child-snatching, 6 returning with a child).
12	1 Wight (tormented spirit of an <i>Ancient</i> that has found its way up from deeper levels).