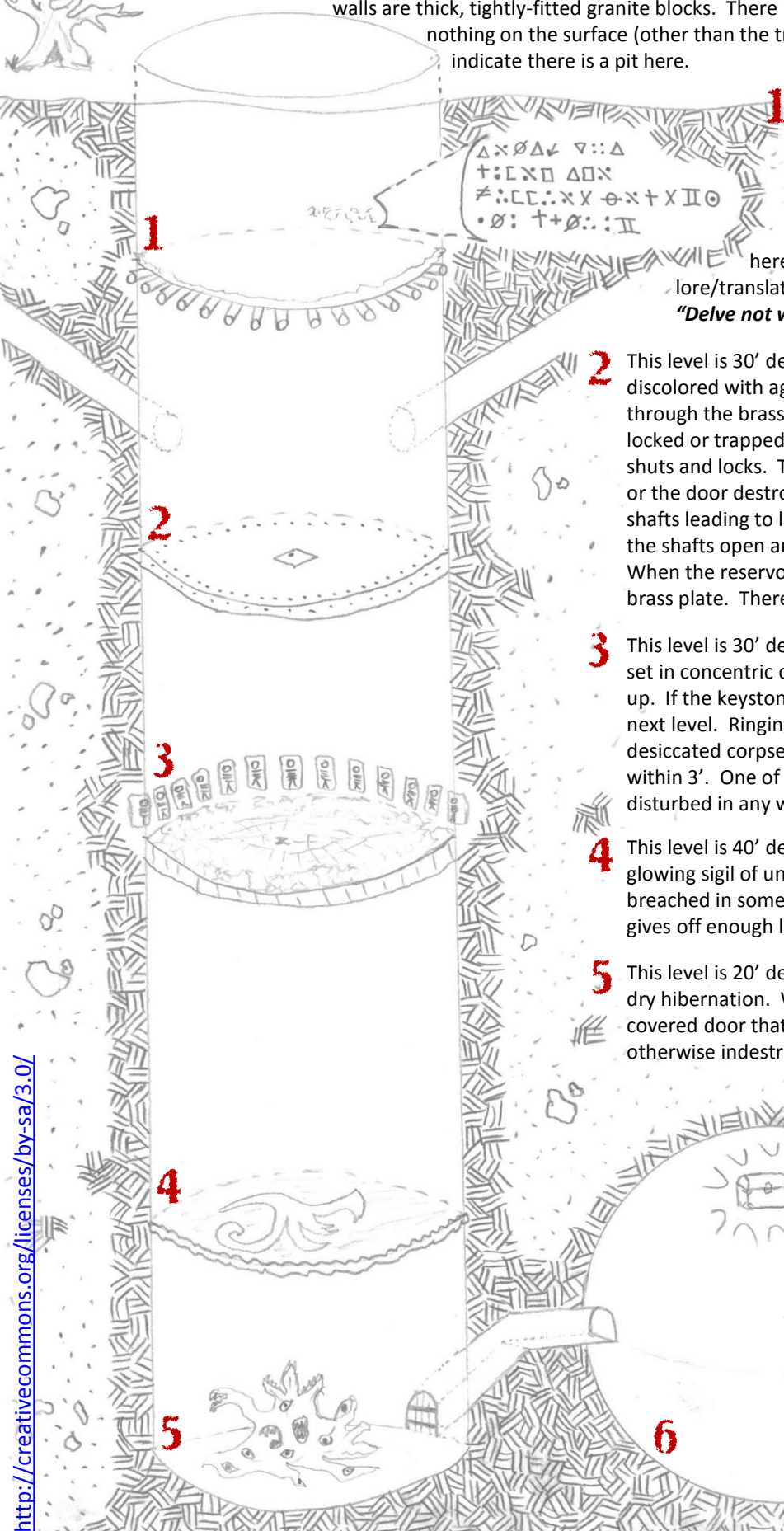
THE PARCHED THROAT

by Intrepid Eddie

A huge petrified tree serves as a marker for the pit's location.

The pit is 40' in diameter and over 140' deep. The shaft walls are thick, tightly-fitted granite blocks. There is nothing on the surface (other than the tree) to indicate there is a pit here.



1 This level is 20' deep and filled in with dirt/rubble. The removed dirt is searchable for the odd archeological artifact like coins, rusted weapons/armor, and pottery. The floor of the level is hard-packed dirt over timbers with no simple way through. There is no light source except for what is open to the surface. Examination of the sides of the pit here will reveal faint, hastily-chiseled ancient runes. If a lore/translation check is successful, only a rough translation is achieved: ***"Delve not where arcane workings bind and keep parched the throat."***

2 This level is 30' deep and is empty. The floor is a thick brass plate, green and discolored with age. There are 3" holes around the edge that go completely through the brass plate. In the center of the plate is a 3'x3' trap door. It is not locked or trapped and opens easily. If the trap on level 4 is triggered, this door shuts and locks. There is no key – the lock must be picked by tools or magic, or the door destroyed. 15' up the wall there are two hidden, undetectable shafts leading to large reservoirs of water. If the trap on level 4 is triggered, the shafts open and water rushes out, draining through the holes in the floor. When the reservoirs are emptied, the pit is filled to just below the level of the brass plate. There is no light source.

3 This level is 30' deep and is uncomfortably hot and dry. The floor is flagstone set in concentric circles. In the center is a keystone that holds the entire floor up. If the keystone is removed or destroyed, the entire floor collapses to the next level. Ringing this level are 25 evenly-spaced alcoves containing desiccated corpses (***Ashen Husks***). They attack individually if approached within 3'. One of them has a ***key*** for the door on the level 5. If the key is disturbed in any way, all 25 *Ashen Husks* attack. There is no light source.

4 This level is 40' deep and is empty. The floor is a magic force field with a large glowing sigil of unknown provenance in the center. If the floor is dispelled or breached in some other manner, the ***flood trap*** is triggered. The glowing sigil gives off enough light to see by.

5 This level is 20' deep . On this level is a ***Gibbering Mouther*** that has been in dry hibernation. Water from the flood trap will revive it. There is a rune-covered door that can only be opened by the key from level 3; the door is otherwise indestructible. There is no light source.

6 This room is a perfectly-smooth, diamond-hard sphere, 40' in diameter. The entire room glows dimly with a magical aura (lore/magical investigation reveals containment and non-detection spell effects). Suspended by magic near the top of the room is a large chest. The chest is actually a ***Mummified Mimic*** that will attack if moved. It has all the abilities of a *Mimic* as well as those of a *Mummy*. Once killed, the *Mummified Mimic* can be searched as a normal chest. It contains a powerful book of necromantic magic (***Interitus de Profundis***), presumed to have been lost long ago.

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