

# A Stolen Spring

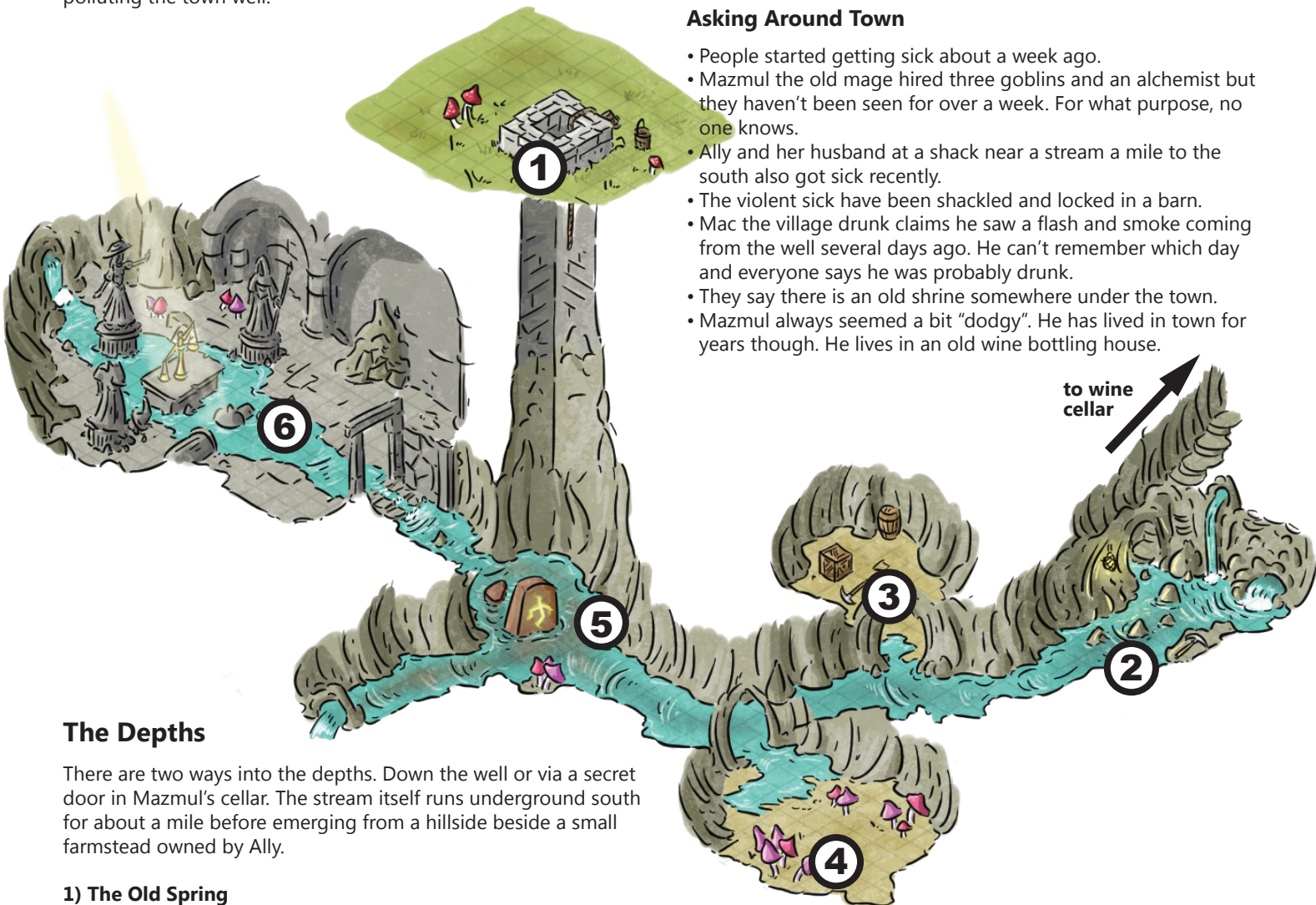
The people of this old town are all falling ill! First they grow weak, their skin turns an odd colour and peels, they have problems with their memory and co-ordination, before they finally fall into a zombie-like trance permeated by acts of random violence.

Whatever could the cause be?

Mazmul the old mage opened a secret enchanted door hidden below the "old spring", a famous well beside two old stone ruins. Unfortunately Mazmul was killed in the ensuing magical explosion and a large piece of stone made of enchanted cinnabar is now polluting the town well.

## Asking Around Town

- People started getting sick about a week ago.
- Mazmul the old mage hired three goblins and an alchemist but they haven't been seen for over a week. For what purpose, no one knows.
- Ally and her husband at a shack near a stream a mile to the south also got sick recently.
- The violent sick have been shackled and locked in a barn.
- Mac the village drunk claims he saw a flash and smoke coming from the well several days ago. He can't remember which day and everyone says he was probably drunk.
- They say there is an old shrine somewhere under the town.
- Mazmul always seemed a bit "dodgy". He has lived in town for years though. He lives in an old wine bottling house.



## The Depths

There are two ways into the depths. Down the well or via a secret door in Mazmul's cellar. The stream itself runs underground south for about a mile before emerging from a hillside beside a small farmstead owned by Ally.

### 1) The Old Spring

They say it had a name once and bubbled all the way up the shaft. Now it is just called the spring. Perceptive characters might notice a very faint green glow down in the depths.

### 2) To the Deep

Rough stone steps clearly recently dug lead down from the wine cellar to a watery cavern lit by a magical ever-glowing lamp. The water is about 3ft deep in most places. A pickaxe lies nearby.

### 3) Miner's Rest

Digging supplies lie in this cavern along with a few empty crates, some simple provisions (rotten), a number of strange sealed clay jars (each with a wick), and an old scroll. The scroll is difficult to decipher but seems to make reference to warded stone doors. The jars are actually alchemical explosives.

### 4) A Fungal Infection

This cave is full of fungus. Perceptive characters may note it was flooded recently as indicated by deposited sediment. Well, after they see the three goblin labourers from a dubious tribe nearby (*Oz, Neb, and Scab*) looking very sick and stumbling around in an apparent trance. After a minute or so, they become aware of the characters and attack with picks!

The mushrooms in this chamber are edible and have a fruity scent.

### 5) The Spring

This is where the well draws water. The water here is about 5ft deep. Mazmul's crushed body lies pinned underwater by a large cinnabar stone slab with a faintly glowing rune on it. The water around it looks rather foul.

Smart characters can tell this is the source of the poison - magical mercury poisoning. This was actually a door sealing the chamber beyond but was blown free in an explosion, killing Mazmul in the process. The spring could be cleansed if the rock were removed but it weighs well over a ton and is very big. The task is an adventure in itself!

Mazmul still clutches a silver amulet with a set of balances depicted upon it. His clothes are ruined. Further down the stream lies the body of a robed female human (*Razzly the Alchemist*) that partially clogs the narrowing stream (possibly now undead).

### 6) The Shrine

This chamber looks like it was fully underwater until recently. Inside stand three statues (one of a lich-like figure, one of an elegant female mage, one broken statue of a robed mage) and an altar. A set of gleaming golden balances sit on the altar.

The scales balance spiritual forces but for some reason are currently tipped one way even though nothing lies upon them.