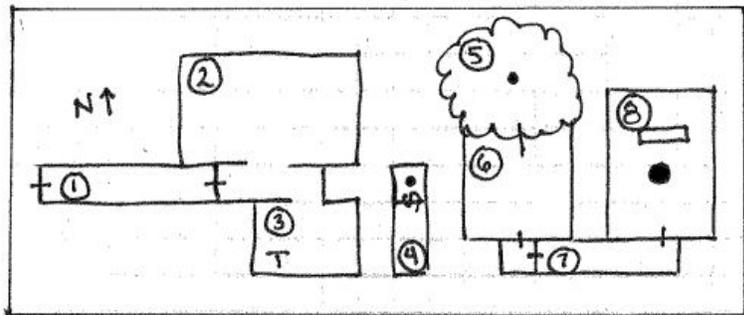


Cultists in the Keep

Set Up: The PCs are to retrieve an Elder Sign from a group of Cultists of the Old Ones. The Cultists have taken refuge in an abandoned mage's keep. DM may want to tell players to brush up on their Cthulhu mythos knowledge prior to the adventure.

Ambush: On their way to the keep, PCs are ambushed by five men (Cultists) in greenish-grey robes. Searching defeated cultists, PCs will find a tinderbox, a potion vial (healing), a circular silver pendant inlaid with a pentacle having a flaming eye in its center (a detailed examination will reveal a compartment which opens to reveal the image of a sunken city-scape-R'l'ye^h), a black key, and a glass vial containing an eye suspended in a thick yellowish liquid.



Entrance Door: The keep looks to be a single-story 20x20 gray stone structure. The only entrance is a single ironwood door-no windows or other openings. The door is locked and cannot be picked. The keep is impervious to physical and magical attack or penetration. The key may easily be found under a rock (or possibly flower pot) near the door. Door opens into Hall of Armor.

1. **Hall of Armor:** Entrance door opens to a corridor lined with 8 evenly-spaced suits of armor. When PCs are halfway down the hall, all armor will step to the center of the corridor, blocking their way. The armor in front of the lead PC will say "The Pass." If a PC shows the Cultist's silver pendant to the armor, the armor will then pause and say "The Word." If a PC says the word "R'l'ye^h," the PCs will be allowed to pass. All the armor will attack if the PCs fail to give the correct Pass and Word.

2. **Library:** Many books and scrolls can be found here, as well as the six Cultists (3 Fighters and 3 Priests) who are studying said books and scrolls. Upon seeing the party, a cultist will say, "In his house at R'l'ye^h..." and then pause. If a PC is wearing a greenish-gray robe and responds "dead Cthulhu waits dreaming," the Cultists will welcome the party as fellow Cultists. Otherwise, they attack the party. Room contains shelves of books, scrolls, and scroll tubes. One scroll tube contains dirt and another contains three 100 gp gems.

3. **Kitchen:** Area contains kitchen items such as a fireplace, cauldron, two barrels (one water and one wine), and a cupboard with cookware and dinnerware. The 3 Cultists in this area immediately attack the party. A trapdoor in the SW corner opens to steps down.

4. **Root Cellar:** Steps down from 3 lead to a storeroom containing sacks, boxes and shelves of provisions. Rope may be found in one of the boxes. Secret door in N wall opens to a small room with a 4' diameter shaft leading down to level 2.

5. **Cavern.** Shaft from room above opens to the ceiling of a steep-walled cavern. A stone door (no lock) in the S wall is partially blackened and nearby are 2 charred skeletons. Carved in the floor before doorway is an image of an amoeba with flaming tentacles (Cthuga). An inscription above doorway reads "I run smoother than most any rhyme; I love to fall but cannot climb." Splashing water on the door causes it to slide open; this is the only way to open the door. Any incorrect method of attempting to open the door will summon an amoeba-shaped Fire Elemental. PCs searching the charred skeletons will find a helmet (+1 protection and infravision).

6. **Crypt.** Sarcophagi line the E and W walls of this room; damaging a sarcophagus causes the entombed within to emerge as a Wight and attack. A faceless, 7' statue of a man dressed in robes and a pointy hat blocks the S door. An open stone box at its feet holds semi-precious gems, bits of jewelry, and coins. Placing a gift of 100+ gold value in the box causes the statue to pivot, allowing access to the door. On the door, glowing letters will appear, reading "Fore venth eve ryw, is ecan notse eal lends." Saying "For even the very wise cannot see all ends" opens the door. Door opens to a 10'x10' room with a black door on the E wall.

7. **Sally Port.** The black key from the ambush is needed to unlock the black door. Door opens to a hallway that ends in a black door. The same key unlocks this door, but cannot be used until the first door is locked. When PCs are in the hallway and both doors are locked, a fine red mist will descend from the ceiling. The red mist will affect PCs' sanity. Severity and type of insanity is left to DM discretion.

8. **Temple.** In the center of this mirror-walled room is a circular black pit (8' diameter). 10' beyond the pit is a blood-spattered altar, upon which rests a crystal-glass reliquary containing an ornate metal box. Two crystal chandeliers hang from the ceiling to the right and left of the altar. Any light source brought within 25' of the reliquary or chandeliers will refract, causing a prismatic spray once per round which can reflect off the walls and strike the PCs. If the room is in darkness, black tentacles will emerge from the pit and attack the PCs; tentacles are repelled by light. The Elder Sign, a small gray stone inscribed with a warped five-pointed star, is found in the (locked and trapped) ornate metal box. DM is free to add a High Priest of the Old Ones (Big Bad) for the PCs to battle in this area.