

STONE BODIES

By [Phlox](#) of [Whose Measure God Could Not Take](#)

Background

A couple weeks ago, a group of farmers discovered that flooding had eroded the seal on a previously unknown tomb, one dug and forgotten centuries ago. None save you readers know that the following three sources contain the story of this place within them...

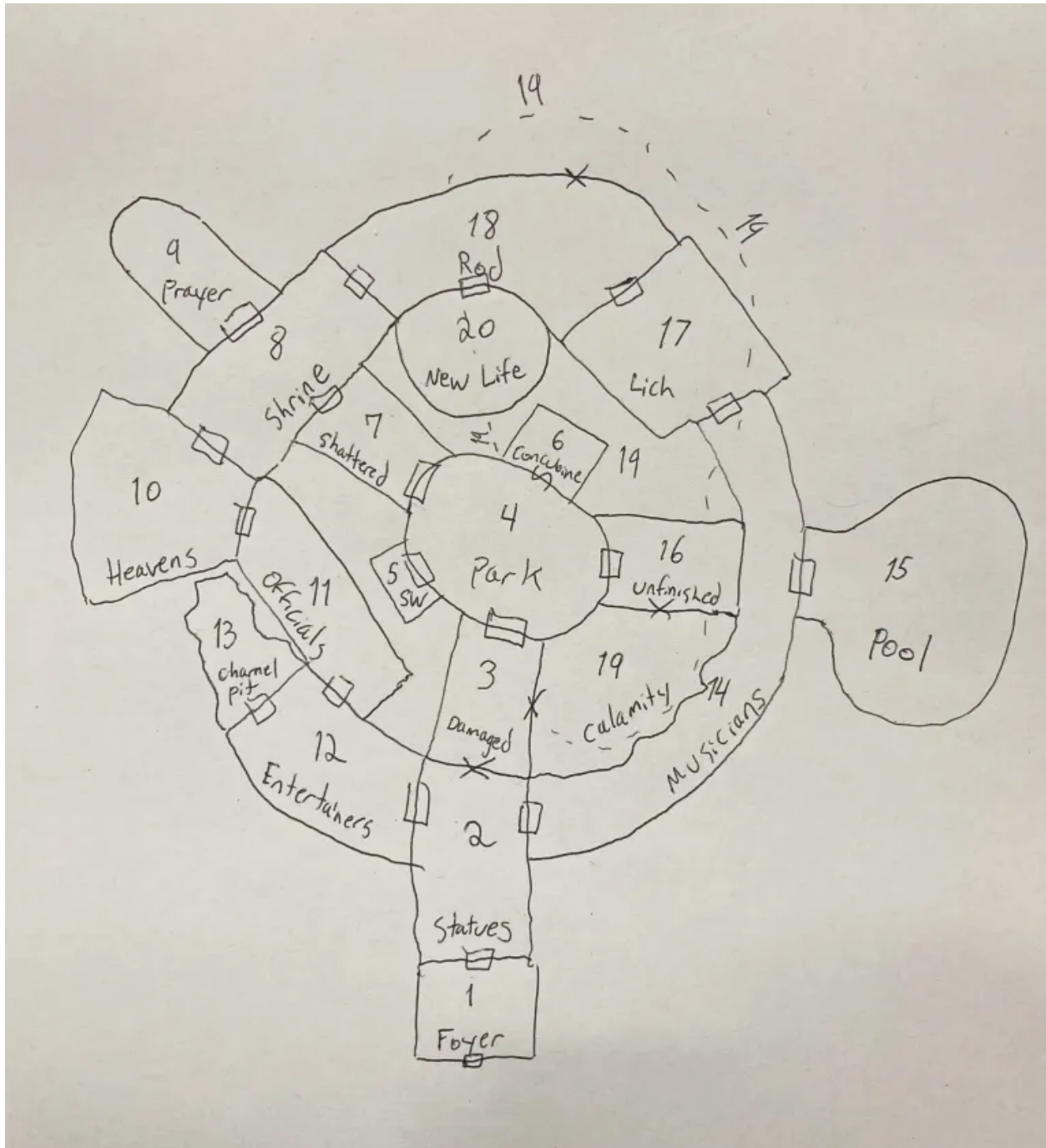
... The novelist Vico Da Spatatratto collected sources from folklore, opera, local sayings, and heroic narratives to write his authoritative *Matter of Shordabardia*. One character who looms large in the middle chapter of the book is the foreign condottiero Chleosryde, who menaces many of the demigods and spellcasters who populate the epic for a period of eight years. His downfall comes when he agrees to occupy the liberty-loving city of Ilfobordo as a colony of the Archdruidal States. Upon brutally pacifying all resistance and gaining the hatred of the local nobility, the archdruid paid the condottiero's own army to turn against him, poisoning his body and concealing the location of his tomb...

... The records of the elven court historians tell of the arrival of a Hobgoblin warlord, the Orchard-Burning General, at the head of a vast host that set about attacking fortified cities at random, making and breaking alliances, and eventually coming to a bad end at the hand of a fated hero, Queen Justinia Elf-Friend, who erased all memory of the Orchard-Burning General from the short-lived races' official accounts...

... Of late, orcos and yecha have fled here from the Underlands. Some tell of the chief Klaas Wreed, the warrior who set about preparing his tomb as soon as he arrived in human lands. His folly of filling up the tomb with treasures and life-restoring elixirs rather than paying out gifts to his lieutenants and elites has passed into proverbs. "As stingy as Klaas Wreed", they say of the miser, and "Don't ask Wreed what to do with that gold" they chide when someone is counting on something they're not sure to get. When his army returned without him, they did not mourn him, and they never named the foe that bested him...

d6 Random Encounters

1. Ghostly Pronouncement— on a positive reaction roll, gives a clue in the form of a challenge or warning, on a negative, just gives frightening and vague threats.
2. 1d4 **Malices** (stats as 2 HD veterans) faceless conquerors and looters, the "perfect" deeds of the ancient army. When slain, disappear before your eyes.
3. **Nesting Vermin** (stats as insect swarm) Rats, two-tailed snakes, beetles, exc.
4. **Rival Adventuring Party** from room 14
5. 2d6 **zombified workers**, throats slit. Addled and envious, incapable of speech but knowledgeable of layout.
6. Haunting— seals doors or throws things around or kills firelight.



Areas

(Note: the statues found in this dungeon are infused with the famous [Ectoplasm of Curse and Grudge](#); if shattered, this ectoplasm lashes against the person most directly responsible, dealing 1 damage.)

1. **Foyer:** A once-proud gate with its copper bars pried away. Wall frescoes depict a hobgoblin general, wielding a two-handed sword and holding aloft an ornate sceptre that resembles a golden torch. His face has been scratched away.

2. **Statues:** Twenty glazed clay statues of hobgoblin warriors leveling their weapons northward, further into the dungeon. They wear an eclectic mix of doublets, trousers, clogs, scale coats, and animal helms, and wield straight swords, dagger-axe polearms, stringless bows, and maces.
 - a. The door further north is stuck, its frame askew. 2-in-6 chance per turn of opening it.
3. **Damaged:** Another twenty clay warriors facing north. Along the southeast and east, the roof has partially collapsed through the floor, and movement is treacherous.
 - a. **Among the rubble:** a tomb-robber's scroll, recording how the Orchard-Burning General punished those who failed him, including burning an unsuccessful captain alive, scarring the hands of a company that failed to take a town, and revoking the pensions of his bodyguards when an elven assassin almost killed him. The writer notes that the goblinoid mind must be especially loyal to follow such a brutal master.
 - b. **A gash against the eastern wall:** half-filled with debris, leads down into the foundations. See area 19 (Calamity).
4. **Park:** Cavern carved to seem natural, with artfully placed boulders and raked sand. Miniature windmills dotted artfully through the room sport decorative fans. In the center, four **Malices** guard a corpse upon a bier like holes scorched into a pleasant painting. A vast mural in the north wall shows a pleasant scene of a cottage in a field of flowers.
 - a. **The bier:** holds the earthly remains of Klaas Wreed, the Orchard-Burning General. He wears a bright red-and-blue silk coat and patinated bronze chestplate inlaid with a winter scene, **finery** worth 1000 gold coins. Removing the scarf from his neck shows that his throat was cut to the bone. His right arm clutches a five-foot-long sword, and his left shows signs that something was pried out of it.
 - i. **Tagliaboshi**, a two-handed chopping sword so fine, it bought clemency for the town of Invernotore. Its fine workmanship gives +1 to hit and damage. Optimized for splitting pikes, if your game has rules for reach weapons the wielder counts as having reach beyond theirs for attacking wielders of such weapons.
 - b. **Inspecting the mural:** the painted door of the cottage is an actual door, opening to reveal a narrow passage to area 6.
5. **SW:** This simple sunwell is a smooth shaft leading up to the surface. Rungs in the side lead up to a simple trapdoor.
 - a. **Climbing the rungs:** Some will break when weight is put on them. Save or fall 20 feet.
 - b. **Opening the trapdoor:** about four feet of earth immediately fall through the sunwell (take 1d6 damage and save or fall), but natural light will fall through, illuminating the entire park during midday. Zombified workers and Malices fear the clarifying rays of daylight.
6. **Concubine:** Chamber decked in bright fabrics— dandelion yellow, royal purple, lime green, bold magenta, anything but red or blue— and heavy with the scent of incense. Laid into a padded box is a skeleton and a mummified iguana.

- a. **In the box:** The iguana is animate, the former pet of Klaas Wreed, and essentially harmless. (Stats as mummy, but 1 HD). The skeleton is **Fiora Misilmaglia**, the former concubine of Klaas Wreed, who preceded him in death. She wears a dutifully fashionable dress worth 400 gold coins, a banded torc worth 100 gold coins, and a fox-head amulet worth 300 gold coins. In her hand, she clutches a **pearl of protection +1**.
 - b. **Searching behind the fabrics:** objects are hidden in alcoves along the walls:
 - i. Jade orb in a gilded stand. Worth 250 gold coins.
 - ii. **Snakebone fan:** aquamarine paper fan with five stiff bone quills. The wielder can transmit their thoughts in fluttering script on the fan, intelligible only to their servants, vassals, and hirelings.
 - iii. **Forged Tulip:** The dye has faded, revealing that it is a chimera of silver thread, silk, and bone. It functions as a wand of *charm person* with 12 charges, but the victim is charmed by the flower more so than its owner.
 - c. **Behind the door:** stuck to the door with wax is a blessed paper that repels the spirits of the dead. When waving it at one, they must test Morale (plz don't give them a really high morale score) or retreat. This paper has kept the iguana in the room until now.
7. **Shattered:** Three **Malices** stand surrounded by the shattered statues of captives. The walls are covered in scenes of atrocities committed by the general's armies—executions, looting, trucebreaking, and other miseries. The Malices re-enact these deeds against each other and the shattered statues.
8. **Shrine:** Stack of swords, skulls, receipts, and cauldrons forming a shrine to the immortal Nonggong, the Scorching Duke. Built out of love by Klaas Wreed and appeased out of fear by his soldiery. The shrine is covered in droppings and shows signs of nests forming throughout it. Several objects have been set out before it.
 - a. **Entering the room:** May alert the **rat swarm** within the shrine.
 - b. **The objects:** are offerings to Nonggong. Stealing one will anger Nonggong, but if the rats are killed or driven off, the image of a hobgoblin in banker's robes and armor will appear and grant the PCs permission to take them. They are:
 - i. **Bronze Bell:** Decorated with rows of bosses and a dragon with breasts like you'd see tattooed on a sailor's arm. Clapperless, it is meant to be struck with a mallet, whereupon it makes all coins within 100' hum along.
 - ii. Jade Boar Figurine: Removing a lid in the back reveals that it is a drinking vessel, containing two doses of a **potion of healing**.
 - iii. **Cursed Axe:** The word "DON'T" crudely scratched into the blade. Handle still blood-slicked. Once clutched, will not let go.
 - c. **Nonggong:** Patron of mercenaries, lover of paydays, snob, and demoniac. His d6 means are Tenacity, Hot Metal, Idle Young Men, Wind, Flooding, and Greed.
9. **Prayer:** Chamber full of tables laden with written prayers, records of ancient transactions, and outdated political maps. Still, like a room someone just stepped out of.
 - a. **Searching:** Every Turn spent searching has a 1-in-6 chance of revealing (d6) the deed to vineyard currently operated by a druid bishop, a scroll of *Protection from Magic*, a tablet with a very painful curse wished on Klaas Wreed, a **+1 intelligent**

misericorde that is histrionic and xenophobic (save or attack Florentines [or equivalent] on sight), a map of the tomb with an X marking a specific soldier statue in area 12.

10. **Heavens:** Thirty soldier statues face towards area 8 (shrine). The ceiling glitters in firelight, showing precious gems and metals in a diagram of the heavens.

- a. **Popping out a gem:** causes a loud hiss as invisible, sickly-smelling gas descends from a hole in the setting. Those who breathe it in must save or go unconscious, suffocating if not returned to good air within ten minutes.
 - i. **Earth gem:** limestone.
 - ii. **Moon plate:** polished silver disc worth 10 gp.
 - iii. **Sun plate:** mirror-shining red gold worth 150 gp, smiling upon everything.
 - iv. **Mercury gem:** emerald worth 500. makes you immune to the poisonous effects of quicksilver.
 - v. **Venus gem:** diamond worth 700 gp.
 - vi. **Mars plate:** iron medallion with faint grim face. When wet blood is upon it, counts as medium armor.
 - vii. **Jupiter gem:** topaz worth 300 gp.
 - viii. **Saturn gem:** amethyst worth 300 gp.

11. **Officials:** a collection of ten statues— stewards, seneschals, and bureaucrats— arranged as though in conversation. One is in the middle of delivering a low bow to the center of the room.

- a. **Imitating the bow:** makes the officials wake and speak. May give a party's leader a mantra against inhumane action— as *protection against evil* and immunity to Malices for the rest of the day. If the officials decide they don't like you, they will eat your food, drink your fluids, and screw with you.

12. **Entertainers:** Twelve statues— jugglers, fools, and dancers. Both they and the walls have been marred with curses against the general.

- a. **Speaking a curse aloud:** save or suffer its effects.
 - i. "Let him dy the deathe, be fryd and piersd, and brokn on the wheel" Save or take double damage until you level up.
 - ii. "Nonggong turn yur back from druidsop Klaas" Save or suffer a penalty from Nonggong's Means table the next time you enter the shrine or encounter his worshippers.
 - iii. "May Klaas Wreed live in interesting tymes" Save or increase the chance of random encounters for a week.
 - iv. "LIGHT BLIND THE ORCARD BURNING GENERL" Save or lose the ability to see in firelight for a month.
 - v. "A Pox On Him" Save or lose 1 charisma.
 - vi. "Gods turn klaas reed into the dog he acts as," Save or become a dog until you perform five good deeds. (🐕)
- b. **Hidden in one statue:** is a hollow cavity you wouldn't notice unless you were looking for it (see area 9). Smashing it open reveals a string of 100 gold coins and a bottle of **Alchemist's gin:** five doses, each with a different effect in sequence— *levitation*, *fire immunity*, *invulnerability*, *liquid form*, and *magnetic*

grasp. Biting into the orange curing at the bottom of the bottle makes you immediately drunk.

13. **Charnel pit:** Pile of disarticulated bones. Workers will not attack here, simply weeping.
 - a. **If blessed:** or otherwise improved, the zombified workers lie down in sleepy rows and their spirits move on. Ignore rolls of 5 on the encounter table.
14. **Musicians:** Long hallway with a procession of forty musician statues, each with their instrument. A **party of chancers** camps here, resting before continuing their search for the general's command rod. They are amiable, more likely to be rivals than enemies, but getting the rod would not go well for anyone.
 - a. **Speaking any name:** causes the musician statues to play for a few seconds. If "Klaas Wreed" is spoken, they will play a triumphant dirge, and an illusory wall in the west will fade away, revealing a passage into area 16 (Unfinished).
 - b. **Daddo the Rake:** Thief 2. Leads and organizes with sheer enthusiasm. Figures the command rod will allow him to command all these statues. Happy to make a deal to cooperate, then double-cross when the gold is in sight. Carries 500 coins muffled in cotton in his breast pocket.
 - c. **Bianca de Invernotore:** Fighter 2. A brawler with a wicked hook-shield, she can make two attacks in a round; once with the hook and another with a fist, elbow, heel, or knee. Doesn't consider herself a "real" tomb raider, just hired muscle. Picked up a gem worth 250 gold when no one else was looking.
 - d. **Stefano Misilmaglio:** Magic-User 2. A pretentious oaf who assumes that he is related to Klaas Wreed (he's not) and that this blood connection has fated him to own all that he finds here. Knows the spells *Charm Animal* and *Hold Portal*. Wears a dragon-headed gold ring worth 100 gold coins.
 - e. **Janneken the Foreigner:** Hobgoblin. Hired as a guide but by no means a historian. Knows that this is the tomb of the Orchard-Burning General, but not his name. Keen sense of smell and skilled with the spear. Her signature move is to set a spear against a charge, and if she strikes a running foe twisting them to the ground. Just now picked up a set of **Hobgoblin Pipes**, a simple thing of bronze. Like much of the rest of the tombs, they are haunted. Any song played will only produce the notes of woe which bring melancholy and sorrow, as well as nearby spirits. If exorcised or Turned, it becomes a mundane set of pipes.
15. **Pool:** An artificial pond full of shimmering quicksilver, with a picturesque miniature shrine island in the middle.
 - a. **Crossing:** Those who run quickly can hustle over the top, but cautious movement involves wading through— save vs mercury madness now and vs deadly metal poisoning a week from now.
 - b. **In the shrine is Reniu**, a bird-cobold-spirit, ancient and all-knowing, who can advise those who consult him on the important matters of their lives with surprising insight and accuracy. But he's a real trickster, and if you fail the mercury madness save he controls your actions for 10 minutes, usually making you do something foolish and dangerous.

16. **Unfinished:** hall with unfinished warrior statues and statues of workmen on break. Leaning against one is an odd-looking puck-shaped object. The floor along the south wall has started to buckle, and there's a narrow gap into the foundations (area 19)
- a. **Thuiskomst Wheel:** A thick, fuzzy, mauve wheel of wax that weighs about a hundred pounds. If cut into, reveals perfectly aged cheese— chalky and soft, with notes of burnt onion and wet wool. By tradition, warbands setting out from the Underlands bring a freshly sealed wheel of cheese, and enjoy it upon their return. This specimen is especially fine, and if the party digs in, every member with Constitution 12 or less gains 1 point of Con.
17. **Lich:** Cracked wizard statue with glaring red-eyed black-toothed skeleton within.
- a. **Vranck Wreed:** Magic-User 8. The general's shit-kicking second son, awaiting his father's "inevitable" resurrection. Will crash through his statue-shell to throw a hex on fools who displease him. He wears fine black silk robes with skeleton embroidery, worth 1000 gold coins.
 - i. **Ten Nails:** Vranck wears foot-long copper fingernails on his finger-bones, each one inscribed with a spell to form a spellbook of sorts.
 - 1. **Left pinky:** *Phantom Limb* (1st) Target saves or you control a limb of theirs for the next month. This nail also contains his Death, and if his bones are destroyed he'll drip out of the nail 1d20 days later and reform.
 - 2. **Left ring:** *Magic Missile*
 - 3. **Left middle:** *Wizard Lock*
 - 4. **Left pointer:** *Laser Maidens* (4th) Summon 1d6+1 loyal monocolored hologram-warriors with d6 HP, medium armor, shield, and spear for ten minutes. They can fly at light-speed at the cost of 1 HP.
 - 5. **Left thumb:** *Five at One Stroke* (3rd) Exactly five targets save or take 6d6 damage, cleft by an invisible chop.
 - 6. **Right thumb:** *Name of Glory* (3rd) Any number of targets in a 30' circle must save or periodically shout "Vranck Wreed!" for the next six hours.
 - 7. **Right pointer:** *Devil's Bridge* (4th) Conjure a sturdy stone bridge across up to 200 ft. Of empty air. It falls apart upon the next new moon.
 - 8. **Right middle:** *Locate Object*
 - 9. **Right ring:** *Levitate*
 - 10. **Right pinky:** *Detect Magic*.
 - ii. **Black Kiss:** Vranck's teeth are covered in a lipstick of crushed jet kneaded into an [Onychophora](#) butter, keeping the tube and a tube of beeswax on his person. Smooch exposed flesh and the beloved must save or have that part of their body stiffened and paralyzed for 1d4 hours. A quick peck will only create a feeling of pins and needles. Four snogs remain in the stick. Loading up on multiple doses only slightly lessens the

allure. When applying, be sure to lay down a layer of beeswax from the accompanying tube or else suffer the effects yourself.

18. **Rod:** Hallway with twenty statues in a line, all facing towards a pile of rags and bones. Along the north wall, the floor sags, and a collapsed section leads down into the foundations (area 19).

a. **The pile:** is a shanked skeleton with time-aged clothes. It carries the withered remains of adventuring gear as well as the **command rod**, a golden sceptre that resembles a blazing torch. If anyone picks it up, every statue in the dungeon will decide they're trying to become the next Orchard-Burning General and will therefore stab them to death (stats as hobgoblins). If you do manage to get it out of here, it's worth 2,500 gold coins, but as a treat it counts double for XP purposes.

19. **Calamity:** A vast section of the tomb's foundations have been half-collapsed and dug away by a Calamity. This gnawed cavern is irregular, dark, and stinks of saliva.

a. **Calamity:** the oafish burrowing soldier of an infernal hierarchy (stats as umber hulk). Resembles a biker, a beetle, and a Pantalone. Feeds on disorder and confusion, and thus is in a sort of food coma from the psychic energy of the tomb. Maintains a collection of unpolished and raw gems he's found, worth about 1000 gold coins, in addition to some buttons and minerals of only sentimental value.

b. **Fighting the Calamity:** risks bringing down the tomb above. Fighting (or otherwise exciting) the Calamity has a 50% chance of causing it to burrow through the foundations of one nearby chamber, then a 1-in-10 chance of causing a chain reaction collapsing the entire dungeon.

20. **New Life:** In the center of the chamber is a strange object like a red wardrobe, covered in written blessings and charms. To one side is a desk and scroll rack, and to the other is a stone coffin.

a. **The wardrobe:** is a masterpiece of geomancy and [kastromancy](#), a magical chamber to return life to the dead. Its operation is complicated (see the section below) and the wardrobe will not function in other locations.

b. **The desk:** contains writings about how to use the "Fruit of Heaven Chamber" to bring someone back from death to life. The body must be set in the chamber and the door shut. A mage must call them back into the body by name, waving incense and shattering a magic sword (if they have ever killed someone) or tearing magic cloth (if they have not). They pour the blood of a hydra over the top of the chamber, and the newly alive body opens the door with 1 hit point. If anything goes awry in this process, what emerges instead will be a Custodian of the Deeper Fire (stats as greater fire elemental, but pissed off)

i. On the desk, an elf skull is used as a paperweight. On the inside of the back is a hobgoblin phrase painstakingly inscribed: "De ouden zijn sterfelijk", a pointed sort of memento mori that is also a call to action. Someone displaying the skull, such as on a chain or wearing it as a helmet, may call on its magic if they are reduce to 0 HP, shattering it and regaining 2d4 HP.

- c. **The coffin:** is empty, just kept here in case it's needed. On the inside of the lid are glow-in-the-dark affirmations.