

**Background**

Where once a stately castle stood, only its high narrow tower remains. Known now as Deathspine, it is the refuge of the cruel sorcerer Scarnsz. His study occupies the highest level, a private Gate providing access. The levels below are stocked with numerous dangers for any who would invade his home.

Each floor of the Deathspine has the plan shown. Striped hexes contain exits to the stairs between levels. Arrows beside the exits indicate their direction. The level 1 down exit leads outside, and the level 13 up exit leads to an outside balcony. Upon entering a floor, start the turn by arranging the party as close to the entrance hex as possible. Black megahexes are solid stone support columns, and the circle in the central megahex is an open pit shaft that runs the entire height of the tower, continuing further hundreds of feet below. Anyone falling or pushed into this shaft will plummet to their death if they can't stop their fall. Give characters a 3/DX roll to catch the edge when falling in. If successful, they can pull themselves out with 3/ST, if no one is actively preventing them. If they fail to catch hold they can roll again at each floor below, with an additional die of difficulty (next floor 4/DX, then 5/DX, etc). Falling past the ground floor into the deep shaft is fatal. Garbage may occasionally fall down the open shaft, and anyone attempting to fly up the shaft will have a heavy object dropped on them.

Use the level table below to stock each level. The character code symbol (X) indicates where contents go on the map. Scarnsz has a wall-mounted marble face *Proxy* (@) on each level, through which he can observe and address anyone on any floor. Level 5 is the barracks & stores for levels below, and 10 is the same for levels above. The levels between the stores are "menagerie" levels which contain unusual enemies and creatures, and only special staff attend to these floors. All guards and wizards in the tower have the appropriate talents for their chosen weapons and tasks. Regular staff are non-combatants and are not plotted on the map. They will typically hide or flee from the players if possible. Refer to the *In The Labyrinth* manual for more details about the creatures, spells, items, weapons, and armors mentioned.

1 - Rabble Guards. These low-ranking rabble guards (R) are the very expendable first line of defense for the tower. When you first enter, one guard is urinating down the pit shaft with his back to you, and the other two are squatting down and throwing dice along the far wall. The rabble guards have ST 10, DX 10(9), IQ 8, and MA 10. They are carrying sabers and wearing cloth armor.

2 - Dog Guards. This floor is patrolled by guard dogs (D) and their handler (H). The dogs are well-trained and fearless, and will attack as their handler directs. The dogs have ST 10, DX 14, IQ 6, and MA 12. The handler has ST 11, DX 10, IQ 9, and MA 10. He is wielding a whip.

3 - Archers and Gas Bomb Traps. This room is trapped with footfall gas bomb traps (*) in the floor. These are set off when anyone moves through the hex containing the trap. Players get a 4/IQ roll to spot the trap just before they move into its hex, and a 4/DX roll to dodge it once they do step on it. The trap releases a one-megahex cloud of *Simple Poison*. The archers (A) know where the traps are and will not willingly enter a hex with one. They will try to lead the players into stepping on the traps. The archers have ST 10, DX 13, IQ 10, and MA 10. They are equipped with horse bows and quivers of 20 arrows.

4 - Trusted Guards. These are more competent guards (T), stationed to finish off any intruders who have made it this far. They have ST 12, DX 12(10), IQ 10, and MA 10(8). They are wielding war axes and wearing leather armor.

5 - Lower Stores. Food and drink can be found here, as well as cots for the guards and staff. One cook and two attendants staff this floor. There is also a cabinet with a 4d lock containing 4 Healing potions, 4 Antidote potions, 4 Sleeping potions, and 1 Corrosive Poison potions. None of the bottles are marked. The staff can identify the different kinds by the bottle shapes, and may do so for the players. Or they may lie about the contents if they think the players will believe them and thereby harm themselves or leave the bottles behind.

6 - Giant Scorpions. A pair of giant scorpions (X) are kept on this level. The remains of the live rabbits they are fed are scattered around the floor, and a still-living bunny or two may be spotted. The scorpions have been conditioned to not attack anyone for a short time after they hear a gong, which is how the staff feed them safely. The scorpions have ST 20, DX 12, IQ 2, and MA 12.

7 - Air Elemental. A sylph (#) is imprisoned here inside a cage of enchanted glass (O). Scarnsz watches through a Proxy and will release it when the time seems best. The sylph is strong enough to throw people up to three hexes away. It will try to throw them into the pit shaft, or failing that against the walls for 1d damage (the sylph must make a DX roll; the target gets 5/ST to resist, and 3/DX if they can grab something to anchor themselves). It has ST 50, DX 12, IQ 8, and MA 20. If the players defeat Scarnsz the sylph will be free and leave the tower.

8 - Bombers & Treasure Vault. This floor contains the main treasure vault (V). It has a 7d lock and contains 8 \$500 gold bars, a 2-hex *Magic Carpet*, and a *Unicorn Horn* magic item. In an especially cruel act, the vault is guarded by four prootwaddles (P) wearing harnesses with *Explosive Gems* (3d dmg) attached. Each prootwaddle will charge and attempt to enter HTH, at which point their gem will detonate. It also explodes if the wearer dies. Scarnsz has convinced them that the gems give them godlike powers. They have ST 10, DX 10, IQ 7, and MA 10.

9 - Basilisk & Skeletons. This basilisk (B) is a guest of Scarnsz and kept well fed by the kitchen above. It has two skeletons (Z) to protect it so that its comfort is rarely disturbed. It will prefer to paralyze any adventurers that intrude upon its lair and then let the skeletons dispatch them. The basilisk has ST 10, DX 8, IQ 8, and MA 12. The skeletons have ST 12, DX 10, IQ 0, and MA 10. They are wielding broadswords and carrying spiked shields.

10 - Upper Stores. This is the fancier kitchen, providing delicacies for the upper floors, plus the odd nasty treat for the basilisk. This floor is staffed by a chef, three attendants, and a physicker. The barracks here are nicer than those of the lower stores as well. There is a cabinet here with a 5d lock containing 3 Healing potions, 1 Revival potion, 2 Simple Poison potions, and 3 Fear potions. As with the other stores, none of the bottles are marked, and the Healing potions are in different bottles than those from the lower stores. The staff here may also mislead the players about the contents of the bottles, particularly if the players are now few in number and gravely wounded.

11 - Apprentices. A pair of wizard apprentices (W) work and sleep on this floor. There is a magic workshop here, as well as chemistry and alchemy labs. One apprentice (Jauslon) has ST 13, DX 11, IQ 13, and MA 10, and knows *Staff III* (holds 6 ST), *Fireball*, *Reverse Missiles*, *Sticky Floor*, *Aid*, and *Alchemy*. The other apprentice (Elgramb) has ST 13, DX 12, IQ 12, and MA 10, and knows *Staff II* (holds 8 ST), *Staff-to-Snake*, *Illusion*, *Magic Fist*, *Aid*, and *Chemistry*.

12 - Elite Guards. These two elite guards (E) are the most dedicated and skilled guards in the tower. They will defend their post with their lives. They both have ST 15, DX 12(9), IQ 9, and MA 10(6). They each wield a pike ax and wear chainmail armor.

13 - The Study. This is the home and sanctuary of Scarnsz (S), and he is too proud to allow himself to be driven from it. He will neither flee nor surrender. He has ST 13, DX 13, IQ 20, and MA 10. Among the spells he knows are *Staff V* (holds 20 ST), *Zombie*, *Summon Demon*, *Diamond Flesh*, *Create Gate*, *Lightning*, *Flight*, and *Greater Magic Item Creation*.

If you defeat Scarnsz the tower will subsequently be abandoned by any staff and other survivors left behind. Among his personal effects are keys for all tower locks, and the current password to use the Gate ("gargantilok") is mentioned in an unfinished letter to another mage. Where the Gate goes is up to the GM.

