

THE COUNCIL OF MAGI

Once the party is settled, they will be taken to a secret council of ranking arch-magi. These will explain that the savants of the College are receiving what appears to be psychic distress signals, usually, visions of a great stone egg coupled with intangible feelings of despair and a sense of imprisonment. These seem to be centered on a nearby field just a day's journey from the College.

Thanks to a combined effort, the savants have crafted a psychically attuned crystal capable of teleporting the entire party to the source of distress, although this is only a one-way trip! This proposition is clearly fraught with risk, but there is a terrible possibility that should these messages become more desperate, they threaten to block all magic, rending the fabric of reality and destroying everything!

Armed with this knowledge, and with assurances that return will be possible once the summons is answered, the party has (or should) agree to make the trip. And a prize of 6,000 GP also helps...

The following ranking members lead the council:

THELINGUS MAGMERUM is a kindly, but shrewd, old man who fits the classical image of a sorcerer. He is quite alarmed at the prospect of a psychic power blotting out magic (a sort of static interference), but likewise seeks any knowledge of who or what is causing this phenomenon, going so far as to offer an additional bonus of 4,000 GP if tangible artifacts can be safely brought back.

WYNONA YLYANA is the College's ARCH-PROPHET or savant. She appears impossibly old and wise and seems to read the characters before actually speaking to them. As prophetess, she empathizes with those sending the distress signal as fellow psychics, which they clearly are, and only wants them to be assisted, although she also fears for the fate of the world, supporting the additional reward for any captured artifacts.

THELINGUS (M/L/INT) AK: 1 (staff) LL: 15 (14 HP) ME: 50' SP: 16

The arch-mage knows the following spells: Bolt (lightning), Call, Fade, Foil, Hole, Jinx, Mask, Rise, Ruin, Ruse, Stun, Urge, and Ward

WYNONA (Ms/L/INT/WIS) AK: 1 (staff) LL: 15 (14 HP) ME: 50' SP: --

As a savant, Wynona has no spell points, but is able to perform all psychic abilities without saving dice. Given their positions, the referee should assume both have access to a wide array of magical items, noting that they prefer negotiation over direct combat in most situations.

Where applicable, the following applies:

Lawful (L)	Strength (STR)	Wisdom (WIS)
Neutral (N)	Dexterity (DEX)	Constitution (CON)
Chaotic (C)	Intelligence (INT)	Charisma (CHA)

SECRET OF THE EGG

The psychic distress signal originates from an otherworldly source, specifically, a stranded extraterrestrial vessel buried underground and home to a psychically gifted reptilian race (the OVULAK).

Being a curious race, the Ovulak visited the campaign world to collect specimens of indigenous life, but were totally unprepared for the powerful magic that permeated everything. Among the captured life forms was a COCKATRICE, which escaped and turned the entire vessel, and all inhabitants, to magical stone! This happened because their ship (called the EGG) is actually a living organism capable of surviving the rigors of deep space and having a bond with its masters.

While the Egg is alive, the Ovulak have both machines and robots not affected by the cockatrice, and the latter will target intruders to the vessel, being programmed to eradicate all threats on sight...

NAVIGATING THE EGG

Since the Egg is a living thing, no doors are found, and rooms are accessed through membranous (15' diameter) round portals, now frozen in their current state. Among the non-living artifacts on the ship are metallic cylinders containing alien writing (vital clues for the players to decipher) and devices meant to aid psychic contact.

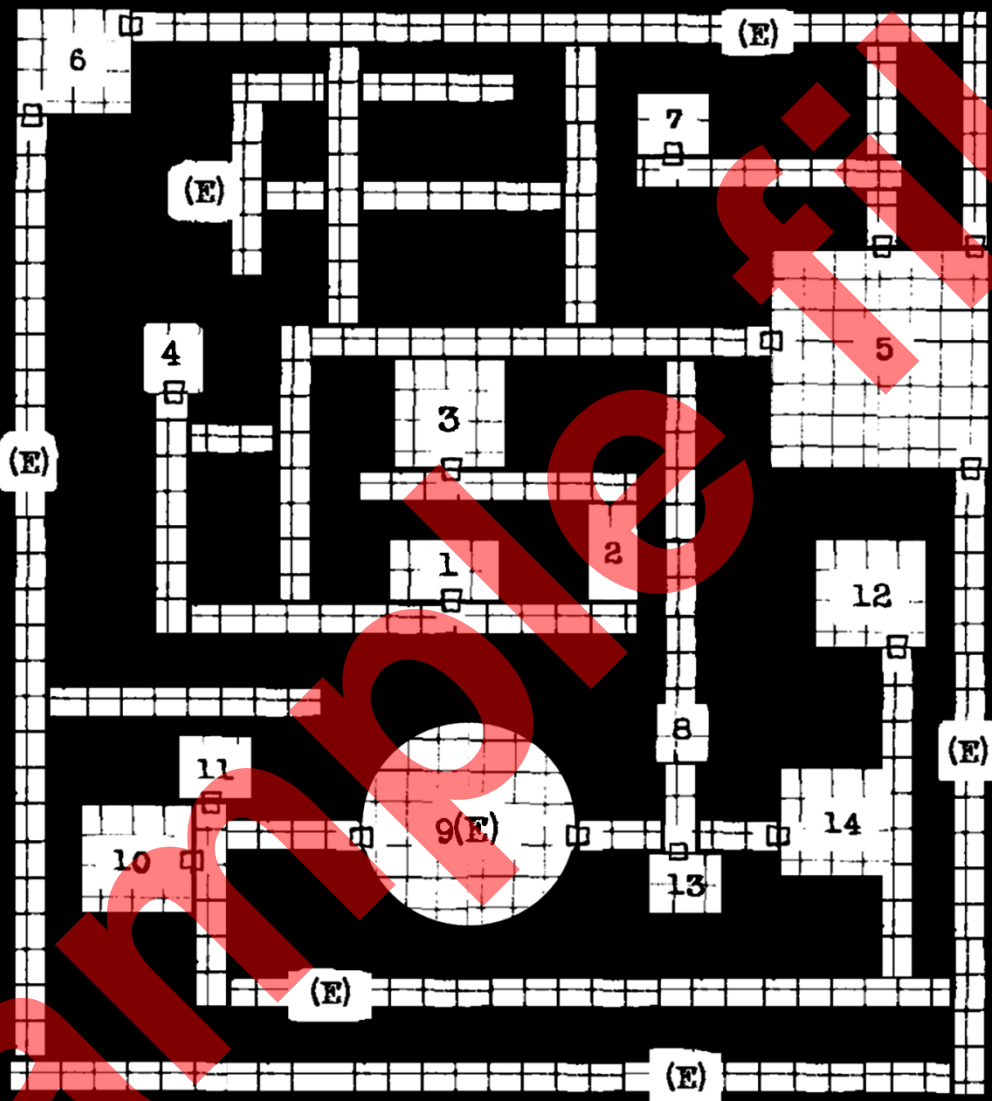
Note that the Egg is (apparently) abandoned, and the referee should reinforce a sense of lonely isolation. Even so, combat encounters exist, and these can be supplemented by random incidents rolled whenever a party lingers in an area marked (E) for more than 1 turn:

2d6	NAME	ATTACKS	LEVEL	MOVE	NUMBER	SIZE
2-6	Robot	1	5 (6 HP)	20'	1-2	M
7-9	Specimen*	--	--	--	--	--
10-11	Voider#	1(*)	3 (5 HP)	50'	2-4	M
12	Warmonger	4(*)	7 (12 HP)	30'	1	H

*Any surviving specimen from the lockdown (area 5)

#Being ethereal, these were unaffected by the cockatrice

Assume a 1-3 in 1d6 chance, although these can be assigned as needed...



THE SERPENTINE EGG

Sample file

LEVEL 1: THE UPPER DECK

The party will find themselves in a small stone chamber that should initially be described as an ordinary dungeon. Over time, however, the referee should introduce increasingly alien elements, including what looks to be screens and strange dials on the walls, now turned to stone through some unknown means. Smart players, especially sci-fi fans, will quickly identify this as a spaceship, although for realism, the referee should limit their descriptions to medieval terms...

1 - Unbeknownst to the party, this chamber is a teleportation hub intended for small landing parties to the surface. The referee should describe a detailed "statue" depicting a pair of reptilian humanoids, possibly some previously unknown deities (?) worshipped by a forgotten cult from ages past. Both are standing, and wise characters (or those who bother to ask) may detect a hint of surprise in their otherwise alien features, although this is debatable.

Entrants will appear on a slightly raised and circular dais (the teleportation device), although the walls here are otherwise smooth and devoid of markings beyond the aforementioned alien "statues".

2 - This lengthy passage was formerly a decontamination chamber, complete with stone pipes and nozzles the referee should try to describe in low-tech terms. Here, returning parties would be cleansed of any microbial infestations before entering the ship to report their findings and deliver specimens to the lockdown in area 5, below.

A pair of ROBOTS (best described as golems) are stationed here and immediately target any intruders. Being non-living, they avoided the magic that turned the rest of the ship to stone, something thoughtful players may pick up on. These are designed to look much like their alien makers, i.e., slender reptilian humanoids:

AK: 1 (claws/laser) LL: 5/+1 (7 HP) ME: 20' (--) SE: M/+0

The robots attack with powerful "claws" and a head-mounted laser effective to a range of 60', but with a minimum of 20', meaning they fire these first before closing in for melee (+1 damage as a golem), being programmed accordingly. They fight to the end.

Although provisionally described as golems (or automatons), defeated specimens reveal complex wiring beyond the clockwork-style gears typical of similar constructs. Each has a small and still-intact optical device that, when looked through, translates any foreign writing by means of a special protocol (treat as a permanent Read spell), although this is left to the players to discover on their own, perhaps with a few small hints.

The optical device (OCULON) is non-functional outside the Egg and fits easily in the palm of a character's hand.

3 - Here the walls hold unusual runes (alien writing) that can be understood by means of an oculon that translate to read: INFORMATION STORAGE or something similar. Indeed, there are multiple recesses containing shiny (1' long) cylinders along each one. These are adorned with a fine script translatable by means of the oculon, although with limited results owing to the technological concepts involved:

CYLINDER #1: The Egg responds strangely here...

CYLINDER #2: Search party has returned...

CYLINDER #3: Unable to stop the strange contagion...

Optionally, and to heighten the tension and offer clues, any party returning with the reader (from area 4, below) will experience whatever visions the adventure so requires, and this is left to the referee and their players, who can affect the outcome with their actions.

4 - This small chamber was the living quarters of the librarian, a slender reptilian humanoid now turned to stone and caught in its final pose, rising from what appears to be a desk. This holds a peculiar helmet-like item that can be pried loose with little effort and may be worn by anyone, including magicians. There are two rather conspicuous slots above the eyes where the oculons can be fitted to activate the device's true use as a psionic reading apparatus.

Once assembled, this artifact (known simply as the READER) allows the wearer to handle any cylinder and receive telepathic images related to its contents. This is a more efficient means of translation, although anyone lacking the intelligence ability must roll saving dice with every use or suffer a debilitating headache that imposes -1 to all dice for several turns thereafter (usually 1d6). Clever referees can hint at this function by giving limited visions after touching anything...

The cylinders from 3, above, can be telepathically examined with more dramatic results as per the following:

CYLINDER #1: A colorful egg-shaped object is seen floating through a black sea of stars, and the user gets a feeling of cosmic vastness that requires saving dice to avoid 1d6 hits from the stress.

CYLINDER #2: The user receives a vision of oddly clothed reptilian humanoids, identical to the "statues" previously seen, exploring a forest landscape easily recognizable as the surface recently left behind.