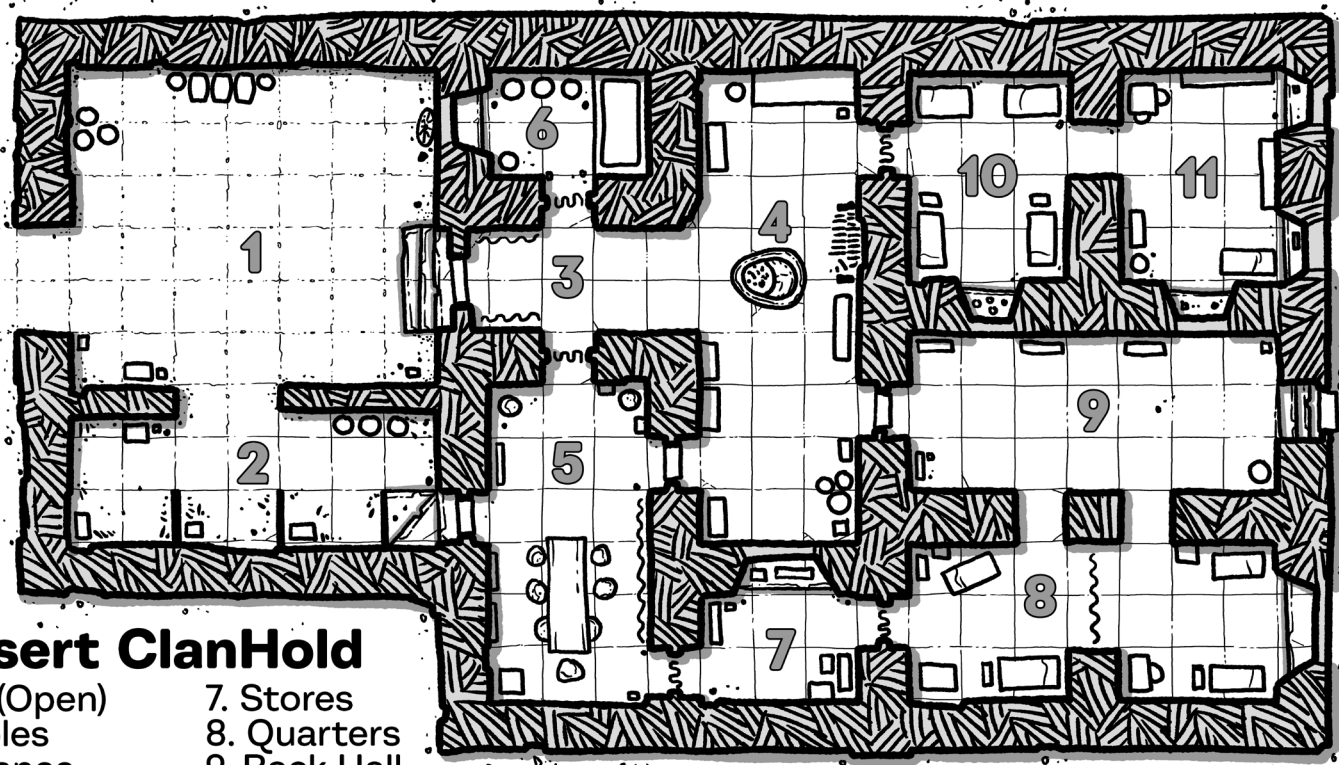




# Desert Clanhold



## Desert ClanHold

- |                  |              |
|------------------|--------------|
| 1. Yard (Open)   | 7. Stores    |
| 2. Stables       | 8. Quarters  |
| 3. Entrance      | 9. Back Hall |
| 4. Hearth (Open) | 10. Quarters |
| 5. Entertaining  | 11. Crafting |
| 6. Water Stores  |              |

Small mud-brick single-level structures are common among the desert clans – usually with a walled courtyard and an open-ceilinged kitchen area. Some richer households devote half the ground floor to animals and move the majority of the bedrooms to the second floor. To reduce heat, these buildings are typically covered in a thin layer of white gypsum plaster – and the second floor will have significant openings to allow wind to blow through.

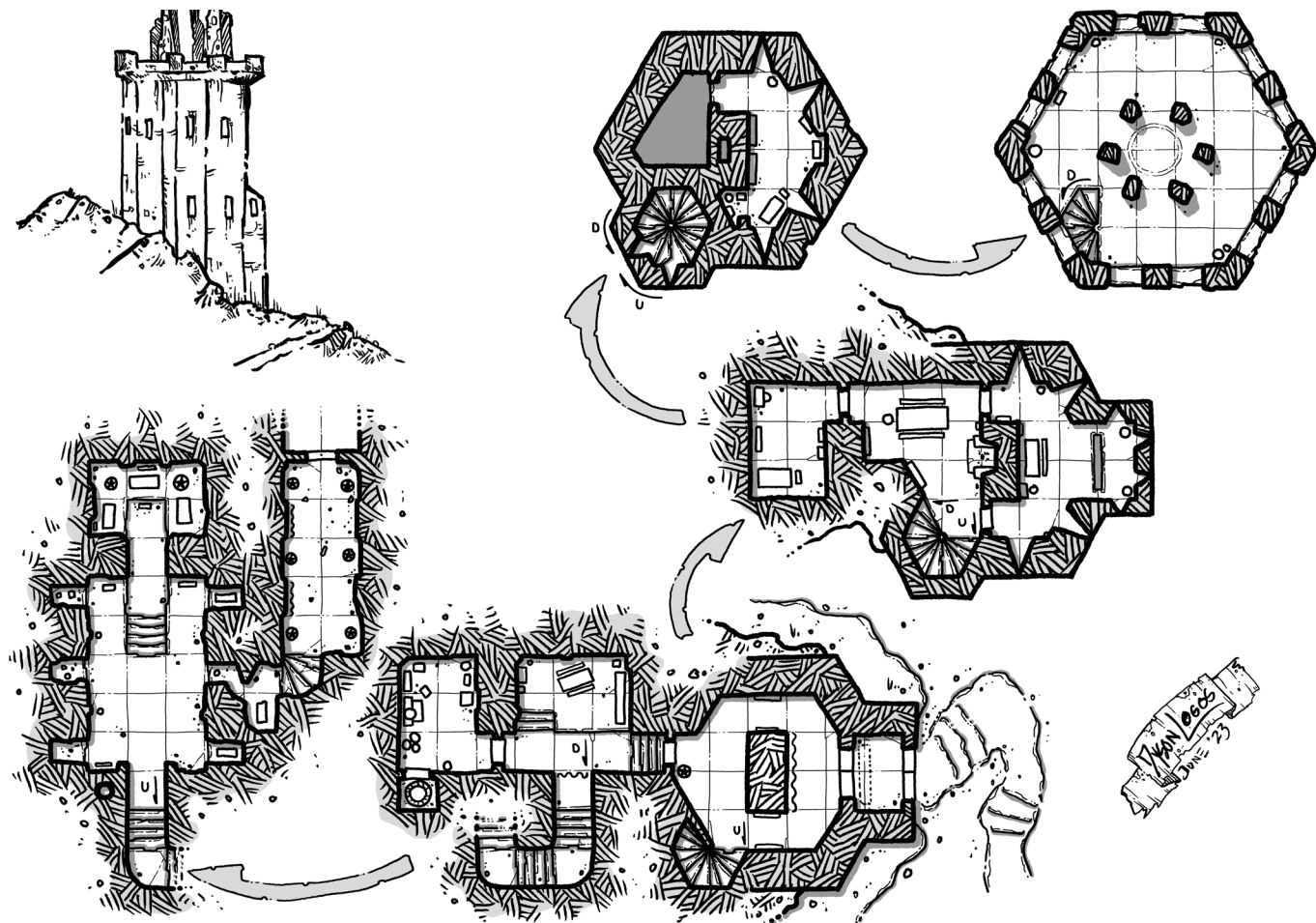
These clanholds can be free-standing in small villages or “farms”, but similar designs exist in many desert towns and cities as well.

This example of a ClanHold includes a small stable for either riding & work animals, or for goats attached to the courtyard but not part of the main building. The hearth room has an open ceiling with cloth strips suspended across it to reduce sunlight shining in while allowing smoke and heat to escape.

This particular clanhold has segregated quarters for two family units – one on the north side attached to a crafting workshop, and larger quarters on the south side open to the back hall of the structure. Windows along the east and west walls are all shuttered and contain no glass.

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# Archon’s Tower



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“The Master at the Table”, said to be a sphinx in humanoid form, once ruled these lands for many miles around. This tower is said to be where he would look over the lands, from the parapets of blue stone much akin to the massive pillars in the distant City of Blue. The Master at the Table was said to infiltrate many regional societies and organizations, posing as a human, an elf, even a dragon, and supposedly even once as a goose. It would then gather information, manipulate events, and influence people to serve their interests and the interests of its small sphinxdom. But more importantly to adventurers, combining this espionage and manipulation with its knack for legendary lore, it could uncover ancient secrets, artifacts, and spells.

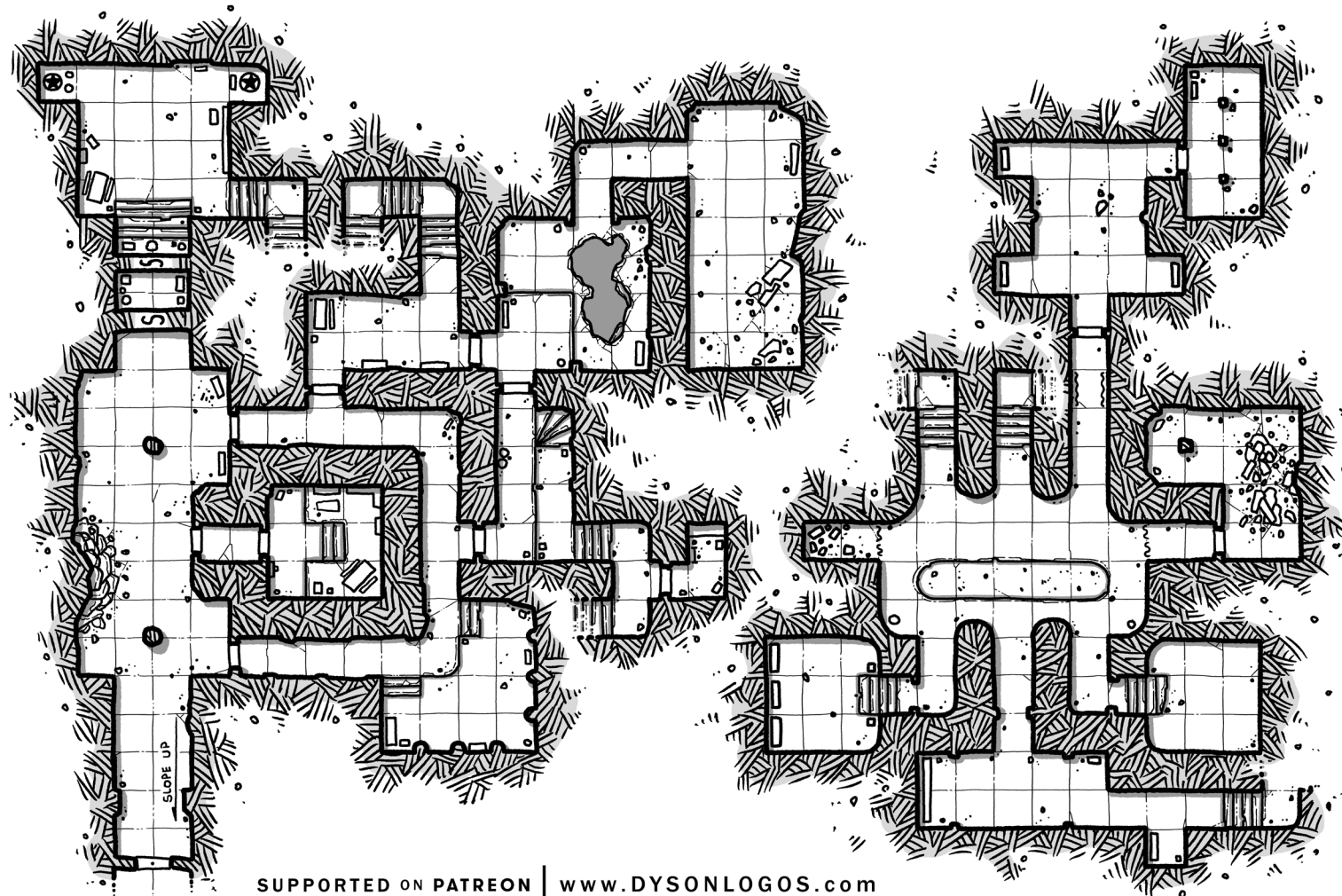
The Master is ancient history, the tower no longer the centre of a sphinxdom, and others now use the strange blue structure and the tunnels beneath. But an oracle has

seen visions of this blue spire and treasures hidden within – spells in the form of riddles that must be solved to be learned, and an artifact from another world that can change history itself. And what are the odds that this oracle is actually The Master at the Table, now returned and seeking to regain its own lost treasures?

The Archon’s Tower has four surface levels here, built partially into the rocky hillside, with only two levels being completely free-standing. The level below the rooftop is not accessible via the spiral stairs, and is instead only accessible from the level below it – by bringing a ladder, climbing the stone walls, or some form of levitation or flying to get up to the small archway 25 feet above the floor below. The lower level features a memorial of the Archon, the Master at the Table, but also has a small passageway that leads to older structures beneath – the real reason the Archon built the tower here...



# Beneath the Archon's Tower



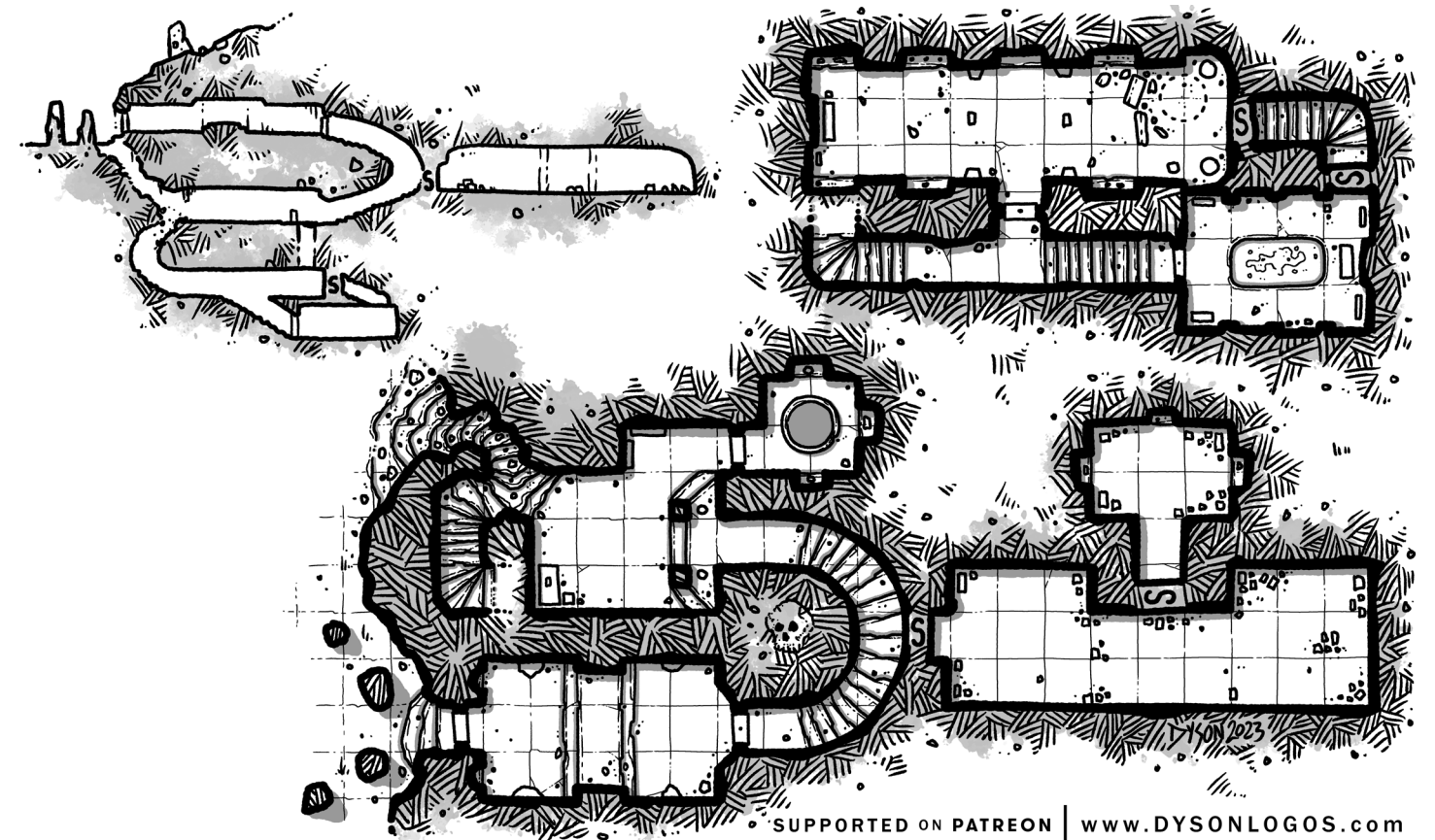
There are deeper structures hidden beneath the Archon's Tower. Those who have discovered these ancient ruins can but assume that The Master at the Table chose this site to build the tower specifically to seal off the entrance. The two-level substructures have their own distinct architectural style, lots of curved corners, a few too many stairs, and a dried pool in the lower chambers that was likely once full of some foul ichor or perhaps even blood.

Of note, there are four ways between the two levels. Two stairs lead down to the main

room in the lower level from above, the stairs in the southeast corner, and the broken floor in the chamber on the upper-right that leads to the room just to the east of the central chamber below (with all the debris on the floor from the collapsed ceiling above). The chambers here show that they have been used for other practices over the years, with tables set up here and there for guards or perhaps even living.

And of course, the oracle did indicate there were important lost treasures down here...

# The Black Skulls Tomb



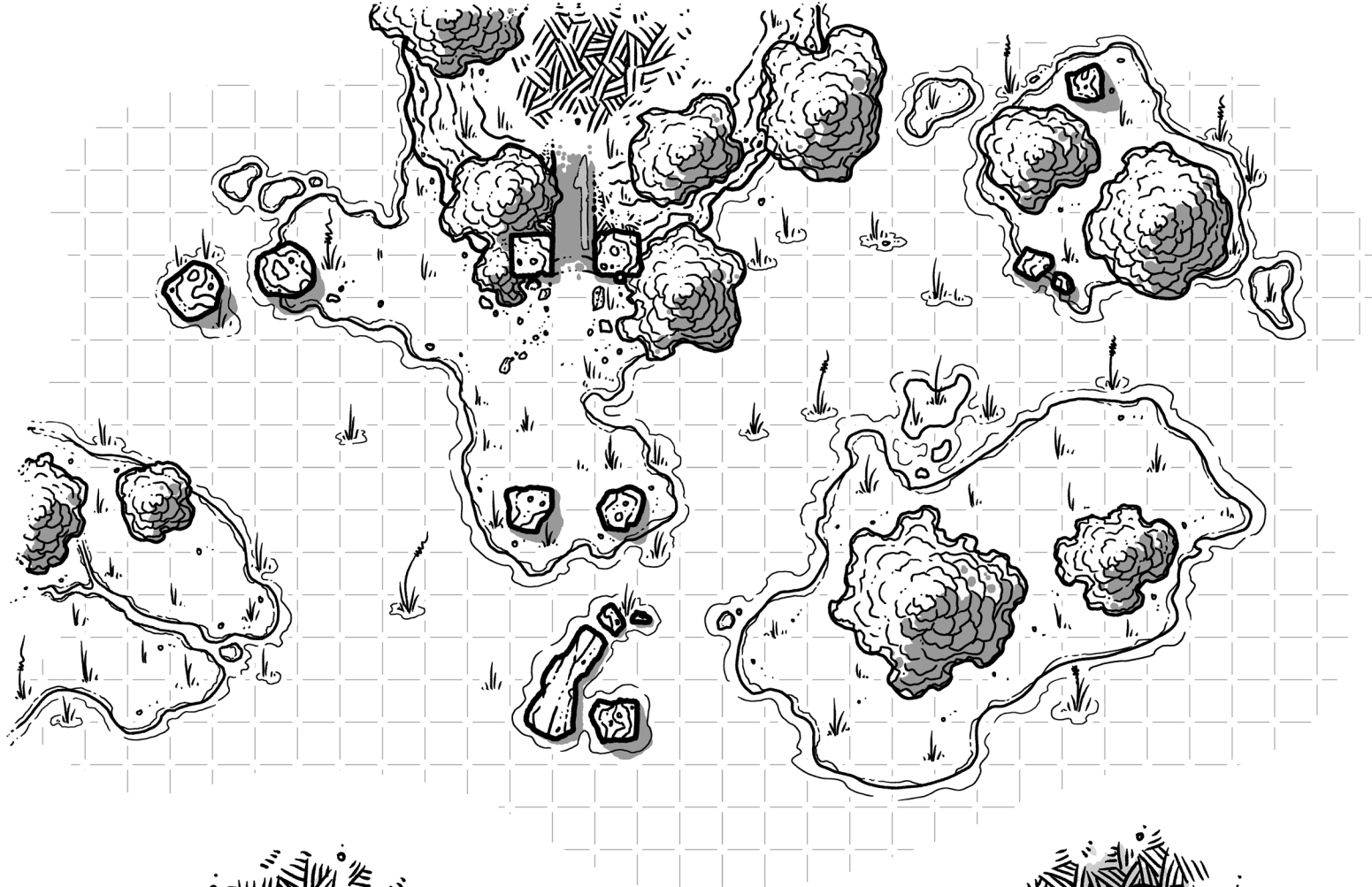
In remote and desolate Khervis, surrounded by mountains and ravines, is the Black Skulls Tomb – a small subterranean complex with two entry ways. The first is a stone door behind four standing stones that leads to an antechamber (“the Chamber of the Black Skulls”) with a magically sealed stone door beyond it that shows no signs of ever having been breached. The antechamber is decorated with four massive black skulls (cut out of stone) on a circular black background – two on each side of the room. Each of the four standing stones outside also have this same motif cut into them (although the black paint has long ago faded).

An alternate access point into the deeper levels is a collapsed section into a lower stairwell. This unstable descent bypasses the antechamber and curved staircase and leads straight into the stairs that descend to the lower chambers. Again, the doors to these chambers are sealed, but with traditional mortar instead of magic. The larg-

er chamber can also be accessed via the well in the small room on the level above (surrounded again by three black skulls). The lowest chamber once held a pool of something that has dried into a thick black crumbly crust that is intensely poisonous if swallowed.

But this completely ignores the actual treasure of the Black Skulls Tomb – the secret treasure chamber isn't in the depths of the dungeon, but is attached to the first flight of stairs from the antechamber. Here there are statuettes, paintings, and carvings of the Black Skull, as well as magical amulets, scrolls and flensing daggers of the cult that built this complex. Beyond that is a second secret treasure chamber, heavily trapped, who's treasures include a 4 inch crystal orb containing a fragment of the original Black Skull – a fragment of a slain god from a distant realm – the Black Skull Orb can grant visions, insights, and even curses upon those who gaze within it.





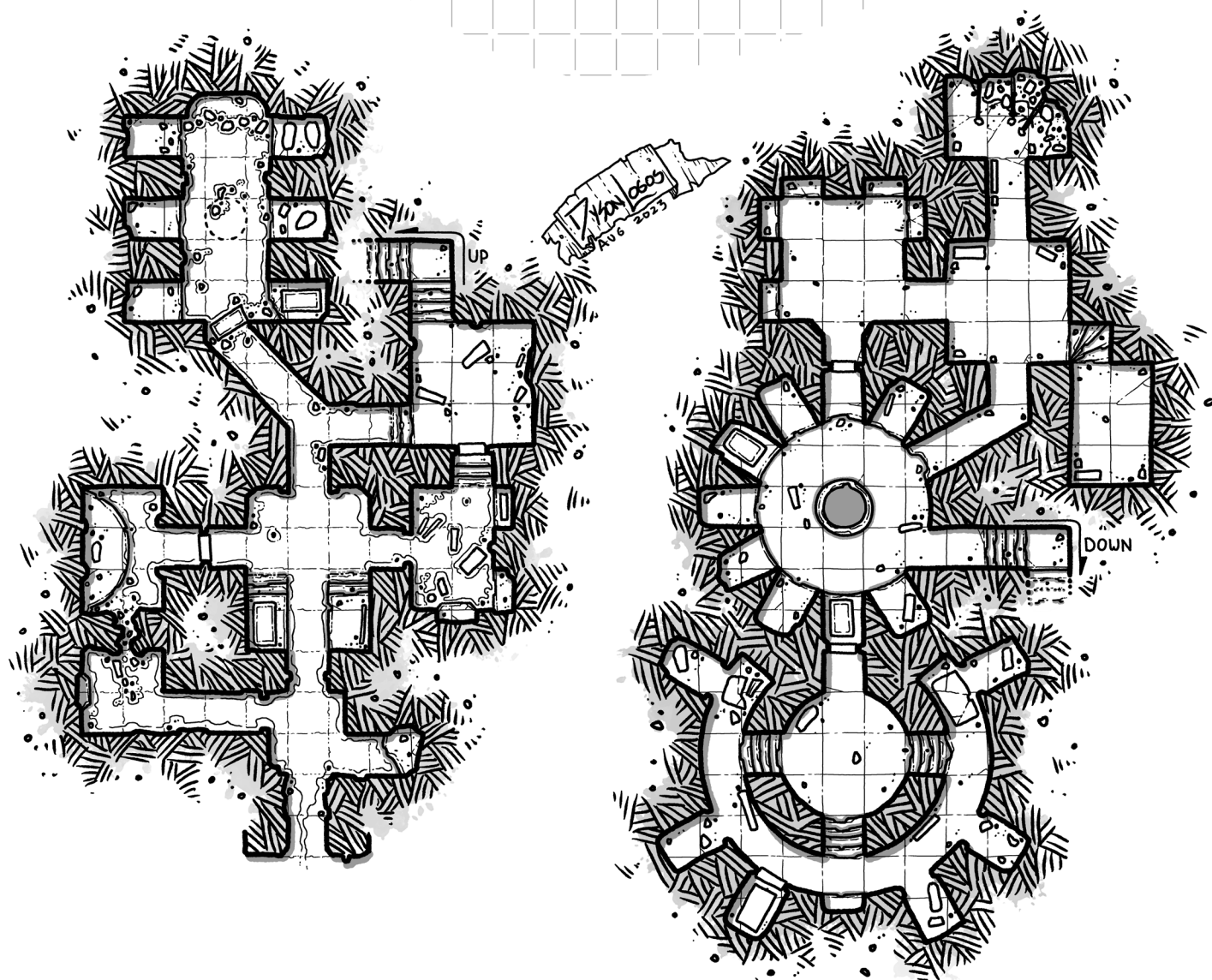
# Sunken Crypts of the King in Copper

The King in Copper ruled a civilization that adjoined (and eventually was subsumed by) these swamps. While libraries wax poetic about the King's wisdom, wealth, and magic, they were better known for their arrogance, ambition, and cruelty that lead to forming pacts with foul entities beyond the reach of their civilization. The dark pacts of the King in Copper granted them the ability to manipulate the water, plants, animals, and even the lands of the swamps that extended around their ancient kingdom. Knights of the kingdom would ride upon King Crocodiles that weighed over a tonne through whose eyes the King in Copper could see with a thought.

The entire kingdom was put to sword and flame, the King slain, and their body thrown into the swamp where an isle of stone lifted up from the marshy waters and seemed to consume the body, forming stony crypts for the King and their slain generals.

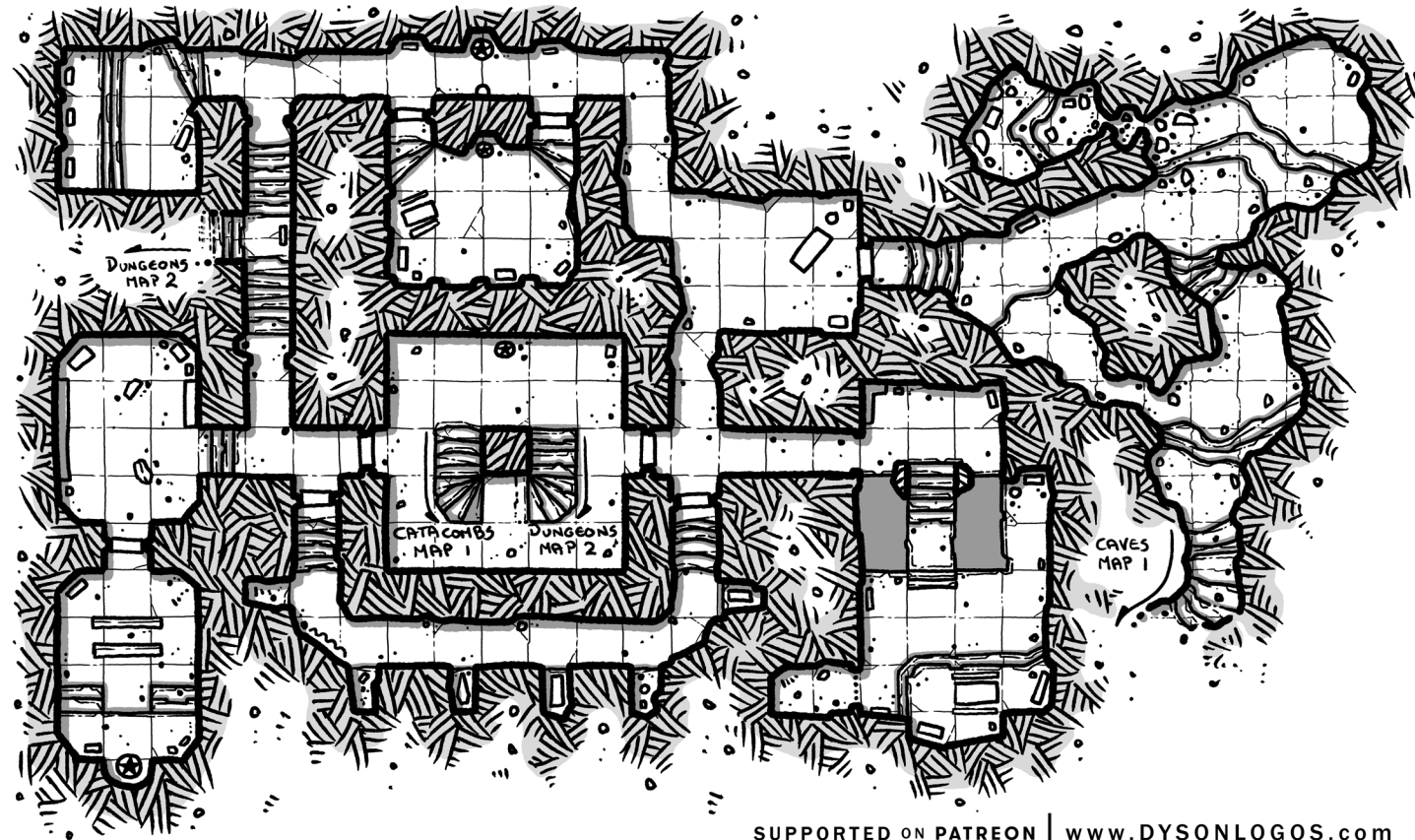
The crypt island remains to this day, lost in the swamp that eventually consumed the lands where the fallen kingdom once stood. The crypts are within a massive stony abutment that is now covered in moss, swamp muck, and plant life. The main level of the crypt (on the left of the map) is flooded, with brackish swamp water about two to three feet deep covering the floors. The upper level (on the right) is drier but still damp and unpleasant. None of this is improved by the foul froglike swamp beasts that have claimed it as their home.

Of note on the upper level there is a "well" that leads down to the upper left room on the lower level, as well as a collapsing chamber on the upper right - that room has wooden braces mounted to hold the collapsing walls and ceiling back. The braces are tied together with oiled vines and if pulled the whole assembly will come down, collapsing the walls and ceiling and "hopefully" providing an escape route to the residents.





# The Index Card Dungeon Dungeons Map 3



The Index Card Dungeon is a collection of ten maps that each fit on a 3" x 5" index card which combine, interlock, and intertwine to produce a single larger dungeon environment.

This month's maps comprise the second half of this collection - the first five maps were posted in September and are available in the September collection PDF.

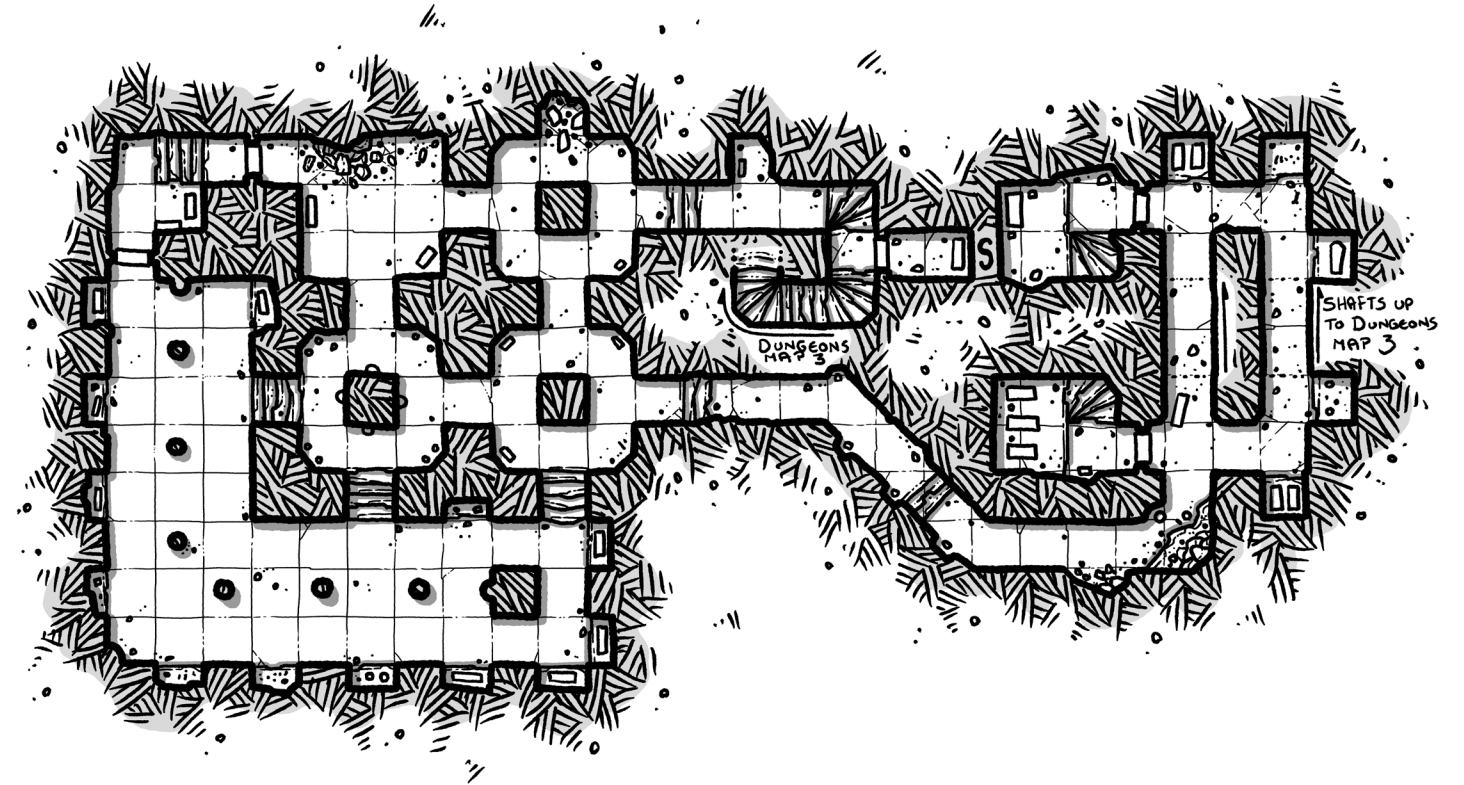
We are now entering into the depths of the "Index Card Dungeon" with this sixth map in the set. This map connects to the Dungeons Map 2 above it (via the stairs in the open chamber in that map that lead to the centre of this one as well as the stairs on

the left side of both maps) as well as the Caves 1 map via the natural caverns on the right, and finally deeper into the Catacombs 1 map via the continuation of the central stairs and a small passage that passes over two shafts that extend into the halls of the catacombs below.

This area has been infiltrated by humanoids via the caves, but they know better than to move up into the trapped and guarded level above (and try to keep out of sight when travelling through the chamber with the stairs up). They make their lairs here in the dark, trying to subsist of the cave crickets that live in the small caves here.

# The Index Card Dungeon Catacombs Map 1

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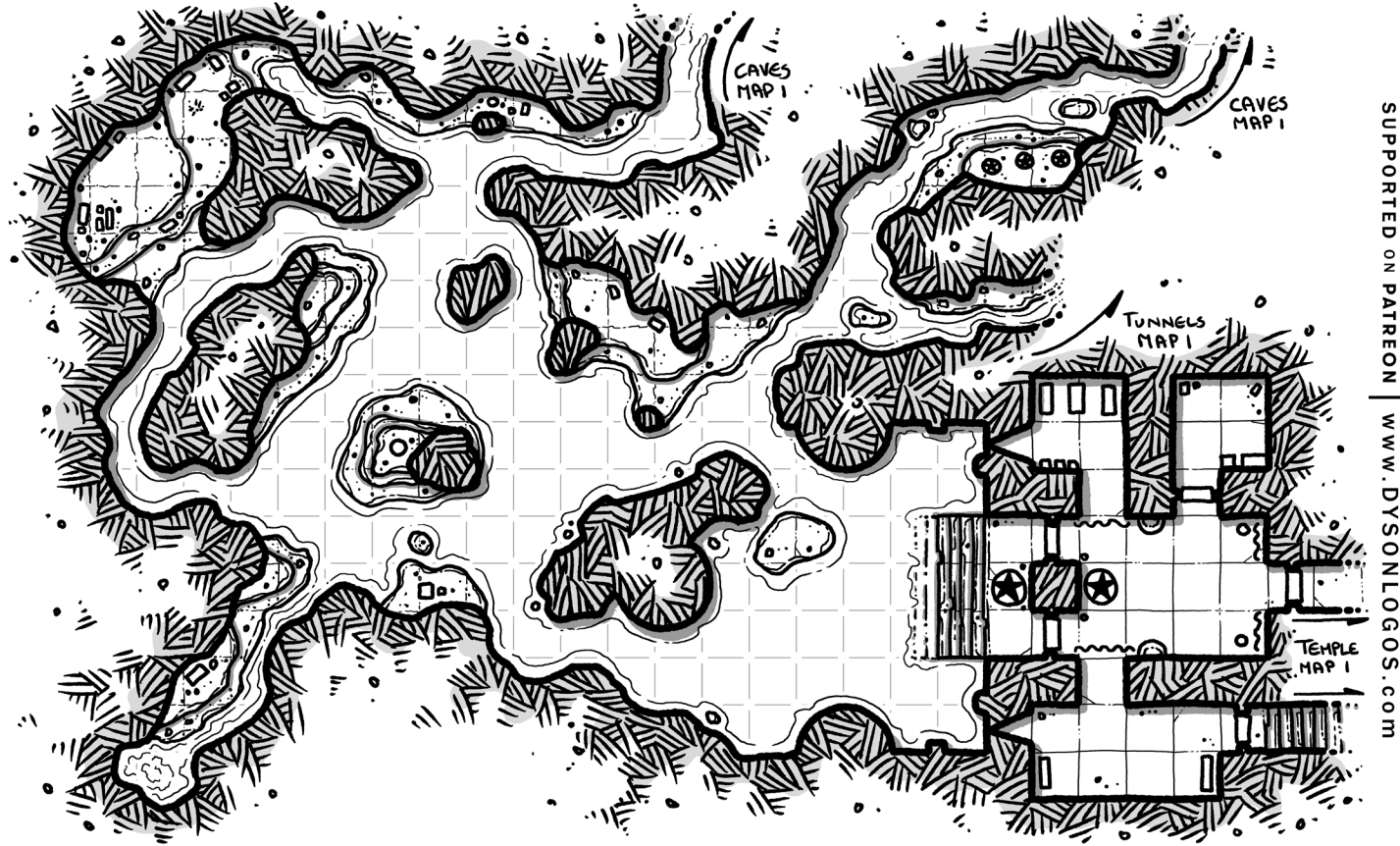
The Catacombs. This deep map under the dungeons of the Index Card Dungeon is the only one in the set that connects to only one other map (the stairs and shafts up to Dungeons Map 3). These ancient catacombs are blighted with a fowl and dark supernatural "shadow fog" that reduces light sources to one third of their normal brightness, and the whole area is of course guarded by shadows of those who died down here.

But of course, there are grave goods to be plundered by those unafraid of the dark. A number of tombs and crypts are down here in the shadows, and while some have been plundered, the shadows and a few wraiths have managed to keep the rest of them undiscovered.



# The Index Card Dungeon

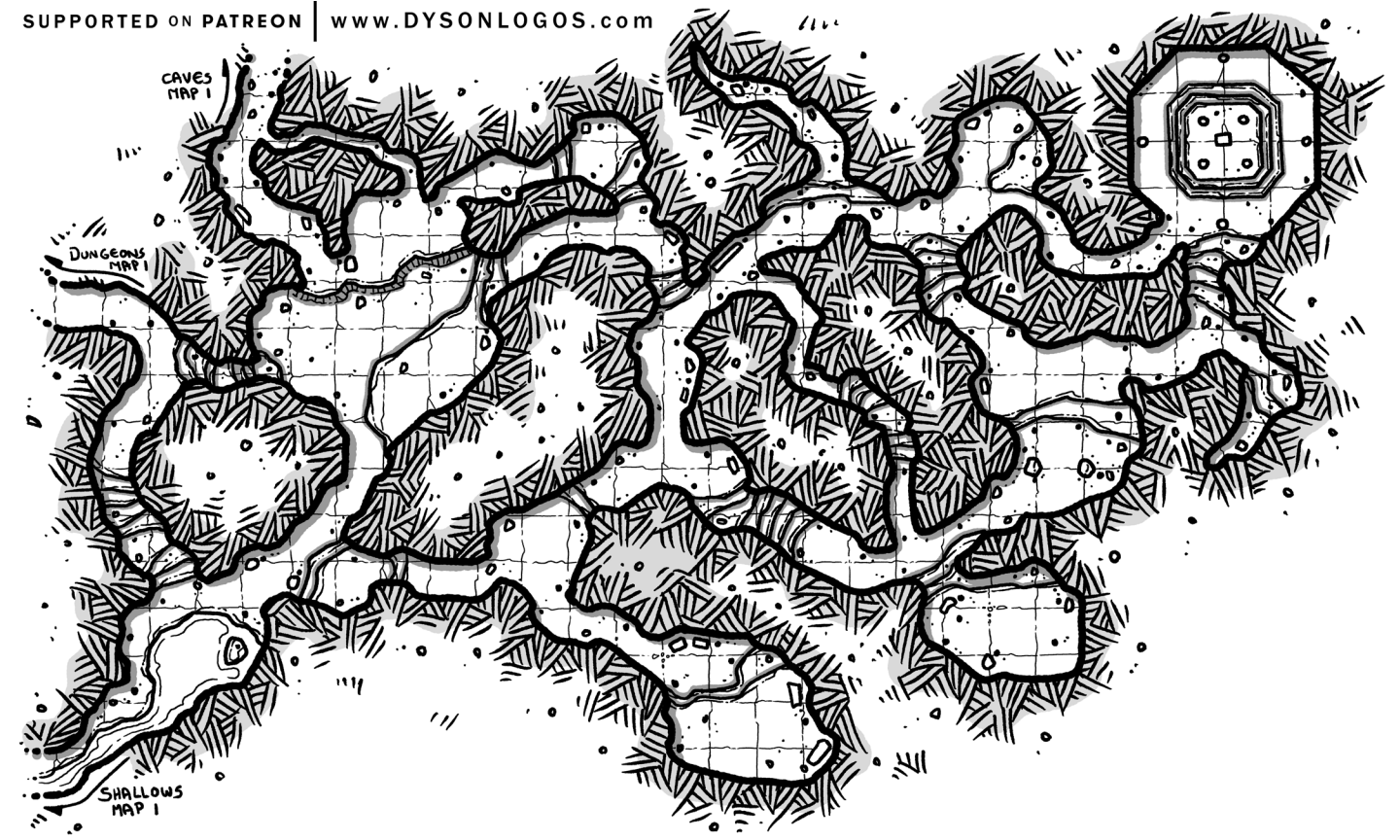
## Shallows Map 1



As indicated by the name, this section of the Index Card Dungeon is mostly flooded, but only to a depth of a few feet. Water comes in from a small waterfall in the lower left corner of the map and gradually moves north to Caves Map 1 where it drains out through cracks in the stone of the pond in that area. Morlocks have taken up residence in these shallows, hunting blind fish and harvesting a fungal algae-like scum that grows in the nearly still waters. They live in fear of the degenerate elves that reside within the temple structure on the lower right of the map (that then extends to Temple Map 1).

# The Index Card Dungeon

## Tunnels Map 1

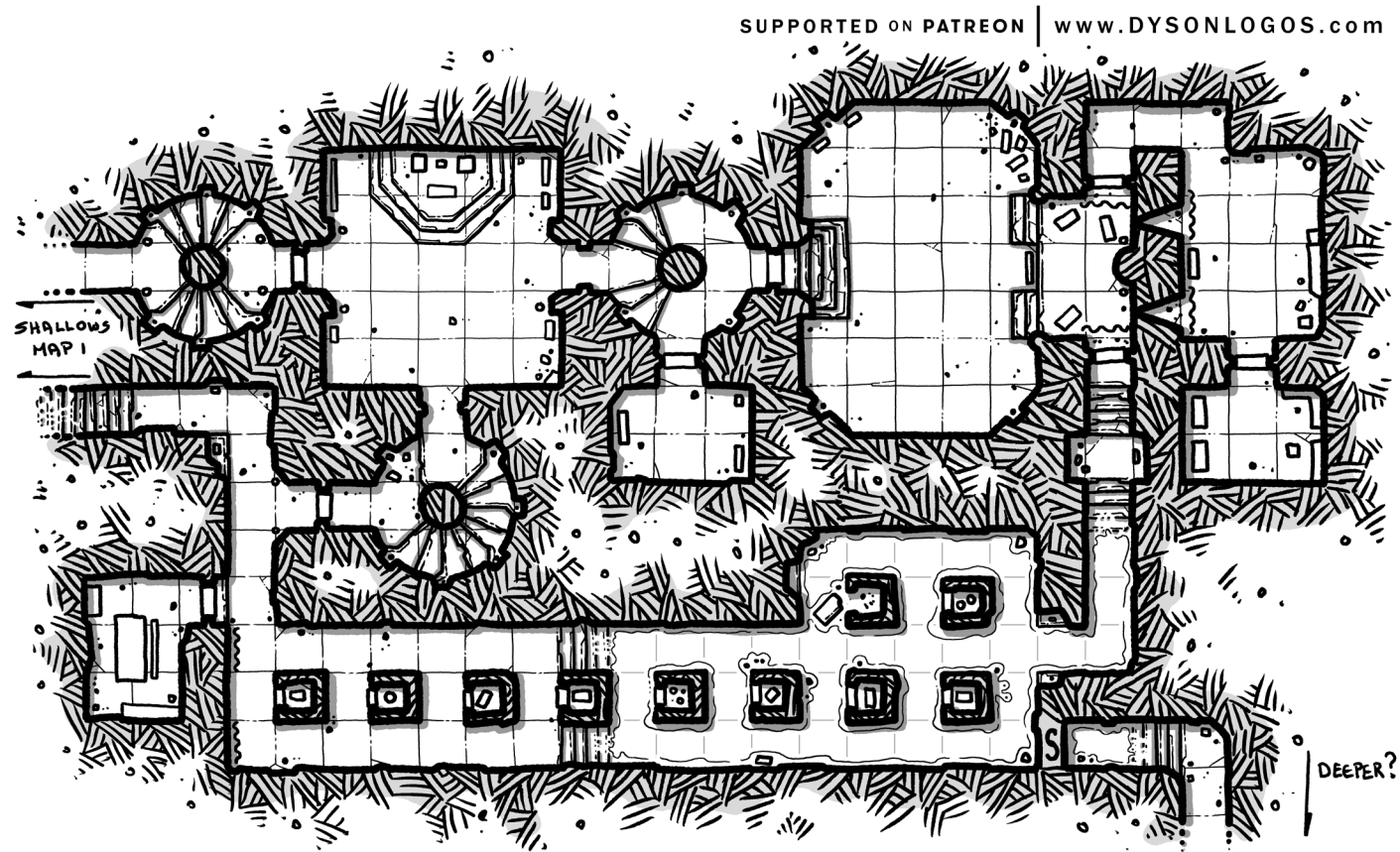


The tunnels connect three other maps in the Index Card Dungeon – Caves Map 1, Dungeons Map 1, and Shallows Map 1. The tunnels are home to things that scurry and ooze, and a few who have been driven out of the other parts of the dungeons but not out of the complex entirely. At the far end of these caves, hidden from view from the rest of the dungeons, is a chamber with a three-tiered dais set with small stone orbs on pedestals. The orbs seem very resistant to being moved from their seats, held there by strange magics.



# The Index Card Dungeon

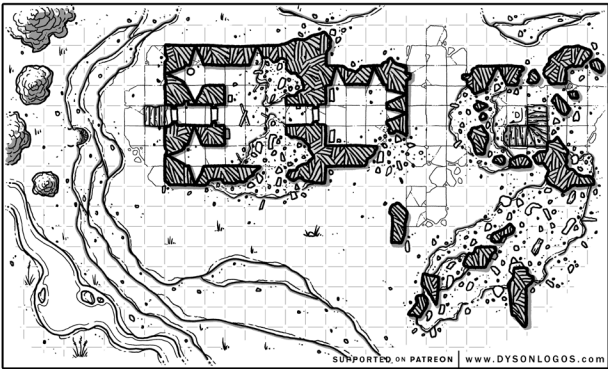
## Temple Map 1



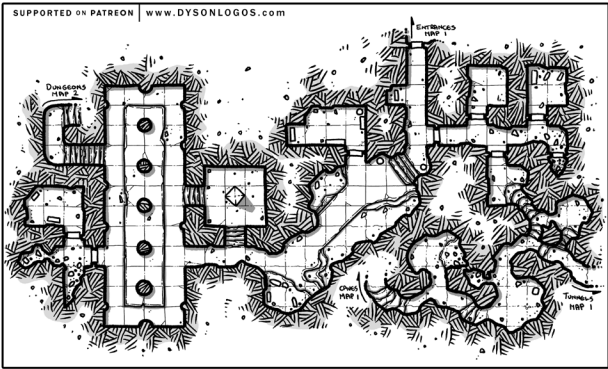
Down beyond the flooded shallows of the Index Card Dungeon is the Temple of the Dark Rites - home to a small clan of degenerate elves who were once the masters of the few morlocks that survive in the shallows. The elves live in perpetual darkness and self-denial, consuming only food and water summoned magically from other realms. They no longer remember the names of those they pay lip service to, just that there are rites that must be performed in specific ways to appease the dark lords that sealed them down here unknown ages ago.

Sometimes the shallows fill up with water faster than they can drain via the cracks in the stone basin of the caves, and the temple has been flooded in this manner a few times - including recently enough that the lower section of tombs remains flooded with a few feet of brackish water. In these tombs is a secret door that leads deeper - and while the elves are aware of it, they have a taboo that strictly denies them opening it or even discussing it. Should it be found and forced open, they would not pursue or even acknowledge anyone beyond the portal.

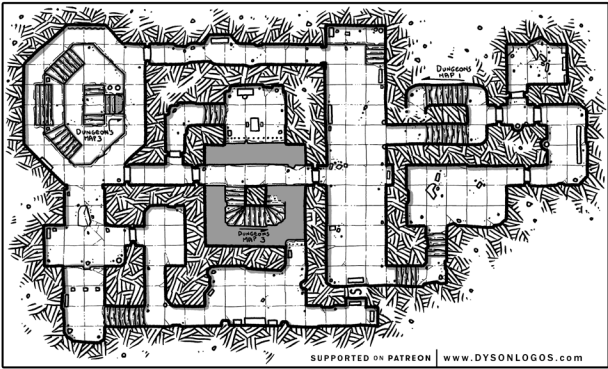
## INDEX CARD DUNGEON



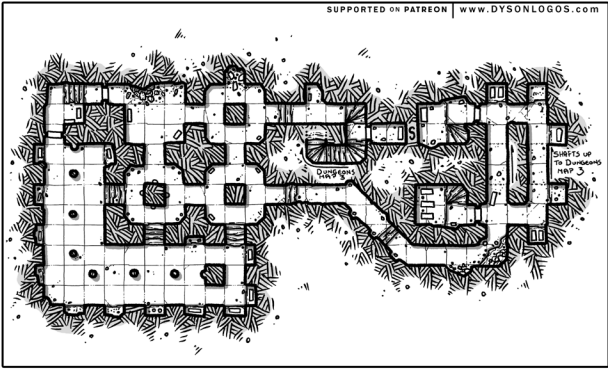
**SURFACE 1**



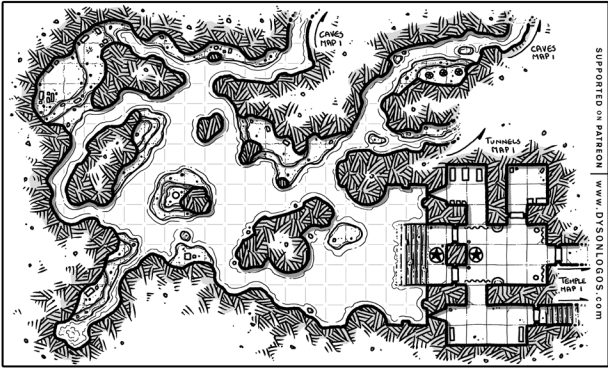
**DUNGEONS 1**



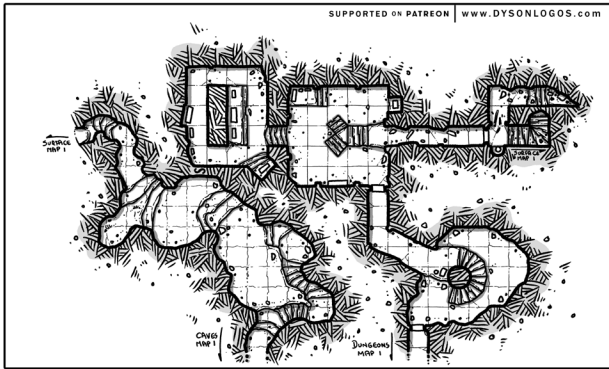
**DUNGEONS 2**



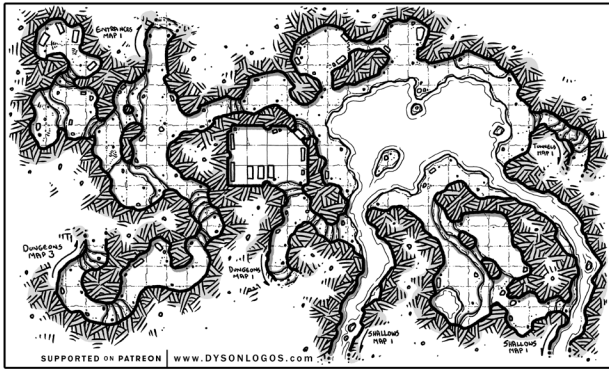
**CATACOMBS 1**



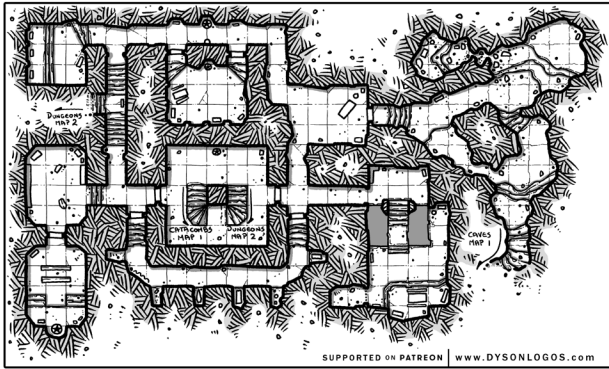
**SHALLOWS 1**



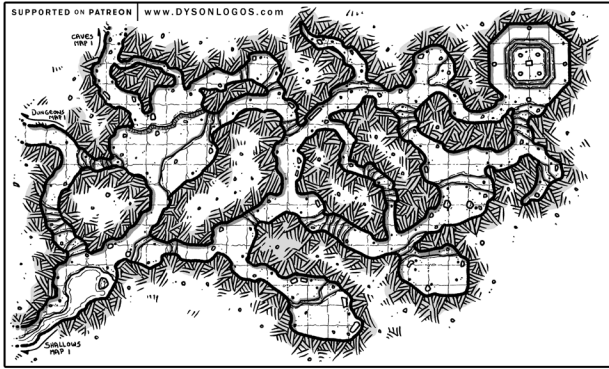
**ENTRANCES 1**



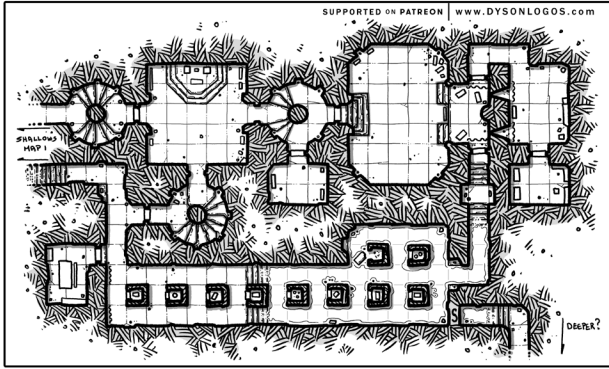
**CAVES 1**



**DUNGEONS 3**



**TUNNELS 1**



**TEMPLE 1**