

The Insidious Library of Niltras

A One Page Dungeon by Rusty Gerard
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The Legend

Many ages ago the evil sorcerer Niltras, bent on attaining mastery of the Dark Arts, accumulated a vast wealth of wicked knowledge and built a library of insidious lore. His final step before ultimate malevolence was to transform himself into an immortal vampire. To guard his coffin and collections he built a tower far to the north where the nights are long and the days are short, then spread his shadow across the forest and hamlet of Elms Green, transforming the townsfolk into werewolves. Then one day Niltras simply disappeared, never to be heard from again. To this day no one knows why.

About the Tower

The five-story, spire-topped tower is built atop a mushroom-shaped rock outcropping in the sea far from the mainland. Jagged rocks, crashing waves, and shipwrecks pierce the waterline. Menacing gargoyles decorate the tower's exterior. The windows are narrow slits which only tiny creatures can fit through.

In the days when Niltras was still mortal, he built a magical bridge to connect his tower to the mainland. He could summon it at will, but in his absence the bridge only appears on the night of All Hallows' Eve and only if the moon is full. On such nights the bridge will appear with the sunset and the moonrise, then disappear at sunrise.

The **gargoyles** stand guard but will ignore anyone crossing the Moon Bridge or who fly in the form of a bat; any who attempt to enter the tower by other means will be attacked.

Furnishings: each room of the tower is similar. The floors are bare and the walls are lined with plain, crimson tapestries. Tall wrought-iron candle stands are ready to be used. Every surface is covered in dust and cobwebs.

Height: viewing the tower from the exterior it will appear to be four stories tall, not five.

Adventure Hook

The Insidious Library of Niltras is said to hold the greatest collection of forbidden knowledge and a vast wealth of treasure. Good-doers, evil-doers, and simple treasure hunters all wish to find the library.

The party has discovered the location of the library and the secret of the Moon Bridge. They have assembled at Elms Green at dawn on the fateful day and must follow the footpath through the forest, loot the library after dusk, and return before dawn. They are aware of the **werewolves**. They do not know the secret of transforming into a bat to enter or leave the tower. Legend says that flying there can be difficult, but they do not know about the gargoyles.

The Hamlet of Elms Green

The lifeless hamlet has become moss-covered piles of mouldering timbers. The nearest settlement is 20 leagues away (1 league equals 1 hour of travel on foot for a typical human).

The Forest of Werewolves

The party has 8 hours to travel 7 leagues east to the coast along the faint forest footpath before nightfall or else face the werewolves.

Crossing the Moon Bridge

The bridge manifests once every 29 years for 1d6 + 9 hours (time of the moonrise varies).

Entering the Tower

The heavy iron doors at the base of the tower are not locked, but the rusted hinges will require a small feat of strength to push open. Four characters of average strength working together can open the doors easily.

Once a character has touched the doors, 3d6 **skeletons** armed with rusty swords, shields, and decrepit chainmail will burst from the ground around the entrance.

Level 1 – Antechamber

This room is empty except for the standard furnishings. Narrow stairs lead to level 2.

Level 2 – Kitchen, Larder, & Refectory

This once was the living area of Niltras' mortal minions and some evidence of its original purpose still exists.

The party must enter the room one at a time. The second character to enter the room will automatically be possessed by a **poltergeist** (no chance to save). The possessed victim will block access to the upper levels and must be dealt with before the party can proceed. The entity can be reasoned with and persuaded to leave the victim's body,

exorcised by the appropriate magic, or the party can fight the possessed victim and kill him/her at *extreme* peril. The poltergeist has the following powers while possessing a body:

Blood curdling scream: deafens everyone, save or be knocked unconscious for 1d3 hours.

Celerity: the host's body becomes much stronger and swifter.

Deathly chill: extinguishes non-magical fires, inflicts 1d6 points of damage from cold.

Telekinesis: hurls small items through the air, pushes tables and chairs to block exits, etc.

Level 3 – Torture Chamber

Various implements of torture litter this room. Several traps (**T**) lie in the debris. The poltergeist's remains hang in an iron maiden.

Level 4 – Treasure Room

A secret passage (**S**) leads to level 5. A few books, scrolls, and gemstones litter the floor, along with the remnants of a broken desk.

A mound of thousands of **gold coins** is piled in the center of the room. It is alive and will attack the party if disturbed, forming into an amorphous blob and behaving like an intelligent ooze/slime/jelly. Once killed it appears to be a normal pile of coins, but the faces on them are distorted and ugly. In 7 days the faces will come alive, cursing and shouting obscenities, biting palms, and chewing through pockets and coin purses. When mixed with the living coins, normal gold coins will animate in about a month. If enough living coins (about 100) are left together they will re-form into another gold ooze.

Hanging alongside one of the tapestries is a **crimson cloak** (hidden in plain sight) that emits a faint aura of magic. Its wearer will have the power to transform into a bat at will.

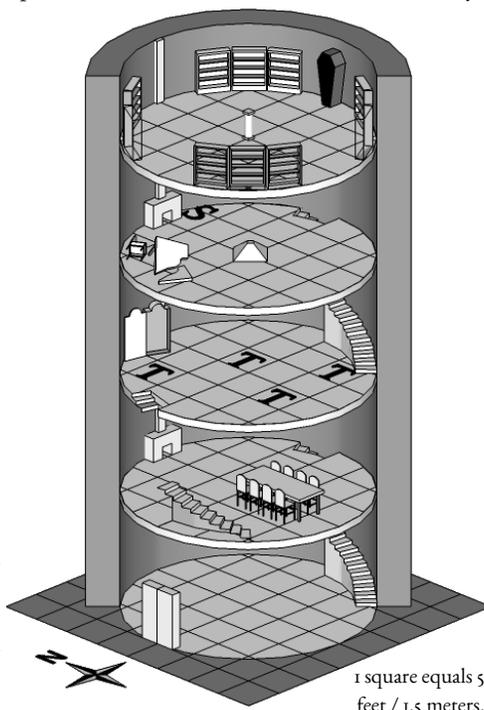
Level 5 – The Library and Niltras' Tomb

Tapestries and packed bookshelves alternate along the walls. A solitary pedestal stands in the center of the room. Atop the pedestal sits a heavy leatherbound grimoire closed with bronze hasps.

The dust covering the grimoire is actually a **contact poison**, a corruption of the tome's protective enchantments. Anyone who touches or inhales the powder must save or be paralyzed for 2d3 hours. The book is Niltras' magnum opus, containing his greatest secrets.

Behind one of the tapestries stands Niltras' coffin with the desiccated corpse of the sorcerer-vampire inside. A magical **bejeweled amulet** hangs around his neck.

The amulet radiates an aura (range 30 feet) that reopens wounds, slows natural healing, and attracts blood like a magnet – wriggling worm-like towards it to nourish Niltras. He will reanimate in 3 days if he is fed any blood.



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