



UNSAFE VAULTS & HORRIBLE HAVENS

DUNGEON WORLD ADVENTURES

THE PLANARCH VAULT

Read the following to the players:

You've just landed on the Planarch Vault, a sky-fortress built to hold criminals too dangerous to simply kill. It's guarded by a team of wardens, mighty warriors each - but last week they didn't report in. You've been sent to find out why. Your job is to infiltrate the complex, rescue the wardens if possible, and ensure the vault is secure.

You're standing on a windy stone plinth, the entrance pad. One edge hangs out over open air; the other leads into the entrance. The majority of the fortress looms above you, cut out of the chunk of floating rock. Four guardsmen await you in the entrance hall ahead.

- What is the Planarch Vault currently floating over? What will be destroyed if it crashes?
- Where could the vault be landed safely?
- What are the shapeshifters' plans for the people of Nosjad if freed?
- And, as always... what do you do?

LOCATIONS

1. ENTRANCE

A stone plinth, embedded with partially-concealed sigils of surveillance. Below you is a thousand feet of open sky. The plinth leads to an entrance hall with 2-5 shapeshifters in, disguised as guards. As soon as the players attempt to go further, they drop their disguise and attack.

Sigils of surveillance will reveal a disguised shapeshifter.

Dropping a shapeshifter off the edge may kill it, if it's too wounded to turn into a bird or something. Or it may survive and escape into Nosjad... whoops.

When you're outside and there's a wind up, roll+CON. On a 10+, you keep your footing. On a 7-9, choose one: you're forced to the ground, an item is blown away, or you are swept perilously close to the edge.

2. ELEVATOR

Another plinth in a smooth stone passage allows fast travel to (from top to bottom) the bridge and conference room, cells and basement. It will get about halfway to wherever the players want to go before the sigils of control give out and the lift freefalls to the basement

level.

Sigils of control, mostly damaged, line the edge of the plinth. With the right incantations they could be repaired, restoring control of the lift.

3. BASEMENT

One of the engines keeping the vault afloat is here, damaged. Oliver the artificer is attempting to fix it, but will be ambushed by more shifters if not protected.

Oliver's an expert artificer and may have rigged up powerful magnetism-themed traps to defend herself.

Artefacts from the Warden's adventuring days lie scattered everywhere, including: a cutting from an ironbark tree, a possessed teddy bear labelled "GIZMO", a scroll of shadow walking (see the level 7 wizard spell) and an ordinary bronze key you find yourself pocketing (see The Key to the Hungry City.)

4. CELLS

Battling for his life against half a dozen shapeshifters stands REGULUS, loving every minute of it. A unconscious female guard is locked in the only intact cell. There's an altar to Fonghuang, the holy flame, in the warden's office.

The guard isn't a shapeshifter - if she regains consciousness, she'll ask a secret question (that any player who can spout lore will know the answer to, among other solutions) to prove her identity. The cell bars, on the other hand...

If you make an offering to the altar of Fonghuang, roll+WIS. On a 7+, you gain a halo of bright light (until the next time you rest) that can't be copied. On a 10+, anyone whose blood you shed will also be revealed.

5A. CONFERENCE ROOM

The top few levels of the fortress are polished wood and marble instead of hewn stone - very posh, if a little old-fashioned. SILVER has barricaded himself in the vault's conference room, suspicious of anyone else. He's been living off the minibar since the problems started.

Despite the sturdy barricade at the one door, there is another way in and out of the room via the vents that Silver hasn't spotted.

The vault is partially built from Silver's old airship, the Anastasis. He has perfect knowledge of every control on the bridge and will happily use them - if he trusts you.

5B. BRIDGE

The bridge is an absolute mess, a bloodbath. Drenched in Shapeshifter ichor is FREY THE FURY, master hunter. Unfortunately the controls have been destroyed in the fight and he doesn't know how to repair them.

If you can't land it, maybe you can crash or self-destruct the airship instead? This looks like the altimeter...

Frey's bow twists in his hands like it wants to escape. They say it's made from a dead shapeshifter.

The bridge and conference room level could be detached from the rest of the vault and used to escape (see *The Airship Anastasis*).

When you attempt to pilot the ship, roll+INT. On a hit, it's descent is slowed, but not stopped. On a 10+, you can change the anticipated crash site (at least until someone else messes with the controls.) On a miss, the falling speed increases - where's the lifeboats!?

TREASURES

Oliver's Power Glove (4 weight)

A bronze gauntlet studded with wires, linked to a gyroscope-like generator worn on the back. It's so bad. When you rest, hold 3. Spend hold 1-for-1 to:

- Use the glove as a weapon (forceful, near).
- Attract or repel something metallic as big as your hand.

Sigil of Fonghuang (0 weight)

This tiny obsidian rune carved in the likeness of a phoenix will give off a bright, hot glow in the presence of falsehood. If you lie while holding the sigil, the obsidian will turn cold and dark until you make amends to whoever or whatever you lied to.

The Shifting Bow (2 weight,

far) This meticulously carved longbow still retains its malleable properties of the shapeshifter flesh it was carved from. It can take on the appearance of any common material at a thought: stone, bone, wood or metal, for example. When not in use, it can be easily concealed (wrapped around an arm, for example.) The bow's mass stays the same though, so it couldn't be stuffed into a pocket or something.

The Airship Anastasis Silver's airship was a formidable sky-

cutter once, and with some TLC it might be again! The ship can fly with a skeleton crew of 4, but is best crewed with at least 10.

When you travel many leagues as quickly as possible in the Anastasis, roll+WIS. Take +1

forward if the ship has at least 5 capable crewmen on board. On a hit, you get there when you intended. On a 10+, you don't have to break something vital (a rare component, the crew's morale, international trade routes) to do so.

The Key to the Hungry City (0

weight) This normal-looking bronze key will magically fit any lock. When turned, it will open and the door will lead to the city of Dis - the ultimate refuge for those who need to lie low. But beware, for when you unlock the doors to the city of Dis, they cannot be closed again, and in time, the hungry city will consume your world.

See Dark Heart of the Dreamer (by Jonathan Walton) for more information on the planes and the ravenous city of Dis!

The Planes Explored, by Schirduan (1 weight, 50 coin)

A bottle of Oskabad Merlot (1 weight, 75 coin)

Warden's nightstick (1 weight, close, D6 coin)

MONSTERS

Shapeshifters

Group, Amorphous, Intelligent, Organised

Fleshy assault (b[d8] damage, reach) 12 HP 1 Armour

The family have taken the opportunity to wreck the vault and are likely to be hiding everywhere. All they're interested in is deceit and chaos. **Instinct:** to frustrate and mislead

- Disguise itself as something or someone innocuous
- Split the party
- Disguise itself as a player-character
- Shed disguise to avoid damage

The Mass

Solitary, Amorphous, Terrifying

Fleshy absorb (2d10 damage, close) 21 HP 2 Armour

When the shapeshifters escaped, some had been in solitary for so long they'd gone mad. They merged with each other, along with anything else they could find. The resultant mound of flesh, fat and gristle is a hideous thing. For Mirka's sake, don't let it touch you. **Instinct:** to be together, forever

- Absorb a weapon or magical effect
- Turn into a failed, monstrous reflection of it's attacker
- Engulf something utterly

"White"

Solitary, Devious, Amorphous

Shapeshifters aren't known for their individual personalities, but this one has made a name for himself as being particularly ambitious and savage.

No matter what form it takes, this one has an obvious tell - a tuft of white hair, albeit usually concealed. Although this tell limits it's powers of disguise, the real danger is in who it's already killed... **Instinct:** to sow chaos

- Hide in plain sight
- Betray the party at the worst possible time
- Escape and change disguise again
- Lead someone into a trap

At the start of the session, roll a d4. White has already killed and disguised himself as this warden! He won't reveal himself immediately, but wait for the perfect opportunity to betray the party.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This went great in my playtest! I rolled a 3, so the party found "Regulus"

in the middle of a scuffle with half a dozen shapeshifters. Naturally, Logan the templar did the righteous thing and jumped into the middle of the fray. Regulus was his usual cheerful, manic self. Between the two of them, they started to turn the tide, but Regulus lost his weapon... so Logan threw him his spare pistol, fully loaded.

By the time the shapeshifters were defeated, Logan was down to 3 HP and openly bleeding from a ragged gunshot wound...

THE FOUR WARDENS

FREY, THE FURIOUS HUNTER

Called shot (d8+2 damage, far, ignores armour) 16 HP 2 Armour

No-one suffered more at the hands of the shapeshifters than Frey. After the year of Whispers, he spent years hunting them down in the wild, carving an enchanted bow from the flesh of their dead leader as an example. He hates being a warden, but since no-one knows the shapeshifters better than he, he's contented himself with making their lives as miserable as his.

Instinct: to make shapeshifters suffer

- Make an impossible shot
- Slow down pursuers with caltrops or bolas

Things Frey might say if he's not a shapeshifter:

Where's Silver? His prize bloody airship is about to crash and he's the only one who can pilot it. (Also, do any of you know how to fly a sky-fortress?)

Have you seen Oliver? If she's not already been eaten by these putties, she needs to go fix the engines or recalibrate something so we stay afloat.

Regulus thinks he's the life of the party, but he can take care of himself. Just don't let him out of your sight - nobody's safe alone in here.

OLIVER, THE ARTIFICER

Energised glove (b[d10] damage, close, ignores armour) 12 HP 3 Armour

Despite some nasty rumours from her youth, Oliver has been a valued member of the city. She has good relations with the gnomes, and had a hand in the development of many of their electrickery-powered inventions. Of course, she kept some of the best projects for herself, like her overclocked power glove.

Instinct: to study in peace

- Attract or repel something with the power glove
- Ignore or absorb a powerful attack

Things Oliver might say if she's not a shapeshifter:

Have you seen Silver? Dashing-hero type, fancy sword and pistol? He should be on the bridge, or near it.

Regulus tends to do his own thing a lot. I know this isn't the most trustworthy of situations, but that old clown will come through when you need it.

Frey scared me back when these things were all locked up - seeing them all running free might tip him over the edge.

REGULUS, THE FOOL

Whatever he can find (d8 damage, close, forceful) 12 HP
1 Armour

If Regulus ever regrets leaving the order of the flame, he's not mentioned it. Believing in himself over a higher power made life a lot more interesting, but he's always come through when his colleagues were in trouble. **Instinct:** to look out for number one

- Sneak off without warning
- Strike an opponent when they least expect it

Things Regulus might say if he's not a shapeshifter:

Hi, how's it going? Lovely weather we're having, eh?

The others? Who knows? I don't know about you, I'm here to have a good time.

Sure, I used to pray to the old shrine, but not anymore. She don't keep me warm like she used to.

SILVER, THE DASHING PILOT

Duelling pistols (b[d6] damage, near, precise, 2-piercing) 12 HP
1 Armour

Although his beautiful ship might have been rebuilt into a fortress, Silver still thinks of himself as the roguish sky-pilot. This is the first time in years he's had to get serious again, but that's OK - it'll make for a great new story to tell! **Instinct:** to survive today (and brag about it tomorrow)

- Use the environment to make a daring escape
- Inspire allies or cow enemies with a grandiose gesture

Things Silver might say if he's not a shapeshifter:

Where's Frey? I'd have assumed he'd be here to rescue me by now.

Where's Oliver? She needs to get down to the basement. Something's wrong with the engines, I can feel it.

Where's Regulus? Actually scratch that, he's probably off doing something crazy stupid.

EPILOGUE

When the adventure is over and the players have done all their post-game stuff (resting, supplying, carousing etc.) roll + however many named wardens the players saved. On a hit, they've decided to come out of retirement! On a 10+, one of them (GM's choice) has a job for the party to investigate the crater on Aberrant-eye Mountain.

On a miss, weeks later the party hears rumours the wardens fled Nosjad under mysterious circumstances. And wasn't that chair over THERE when you left the room this morning...?

If it stalked the living, Blade had a bolt, trap or gadget for it. A monster hunter without compare, he always kept something for his trophy room. His encounter with the dragon Xelastras left him with serious unpaid debts.

To the long-lived elves and dwarves, Calandril's name still means something. Favoured by both races, this ranger mixed elven grace with dwarven knowledge. In life, he was accompanied by Mellencamp, his faithful cougar.

Brash but good-hearted, Light's wolfish features matched his personality. He loved all things in nature, and the gardens of Havenshine were his domain. He saved and nurtured many rare plants there before his death.

It wasn't long after the battle for Daviston that Westara thought talking back to a death god was a good idea. For her trouble, she earned a flayed face, a talent for stitching bodies back together, and a renewed interest in necromancy...

WELCOME TO HAVENSHINE

Read the following to the players:

The beastmen snort and caper in front of you, kicking up gouts of dust from the stone paved floor. The eyes of this castle's previous owners stare down imperiously from a painting on the far wall.

Obvious exits are back, into the courtyard, out a vine-choked window to the garden, or up the stairs to the first floor.

The biggest of the beasts charges at you, head down, misshapen horns aimed at your stomach. What do you do?

Who or what are you here for?

(Choose one:)

- The head of the albino beast of Nekesti
- The Liber Laqueum from the library of Calandril's Blade
- A cutting of the white tree from the Garden of Light

WHAT THE PLAYERS DON'T KNOW...

Long ago, four warriors defended the land in the last great Beastman invasion. The beastman's shaman clouded the warrior's minds with a fel enchantment, indirectly causing the deaths of many before they could free themselves and win the day.

But the ensorcellment, however temporary, had earned the heroes the mistrust of those in power. They were rewarded with the fortress Havenshine - a pretty, but isolated castle on Mirkasa's northern coast. The message was clear: stay away from the people. Taking "early retirement", the heroes disappeared from daily life and their story was lost, for a time.

Now, a new beastmen invasion is underway. The PCs have avoided roving bands of hunters and come to Havenshine for their own purpose, unaware of the albino beastlord that intends to awaken the heroes of Havenshine to a dark spell once more...

THE COURT- YARD & EN- TRANCE HALL

When you examine the portrait closely, roll+INT. On any result, you hear the distant noise of a great battle. On a 7-9, the GM will tell you a truth about the four heroes. On a 10+, you may also ask the GM any one question about this castle.

Four statues stand in the courtyard (A good push could topple them onto a beastman.) They depict four warriors: a trapper, a ranger, a druid and a wizard.

This castle's stood on the cliffs for centuries. Going by the subsidence and cracks in the walls, it won't be here for another century. It might not be here tomorrow!

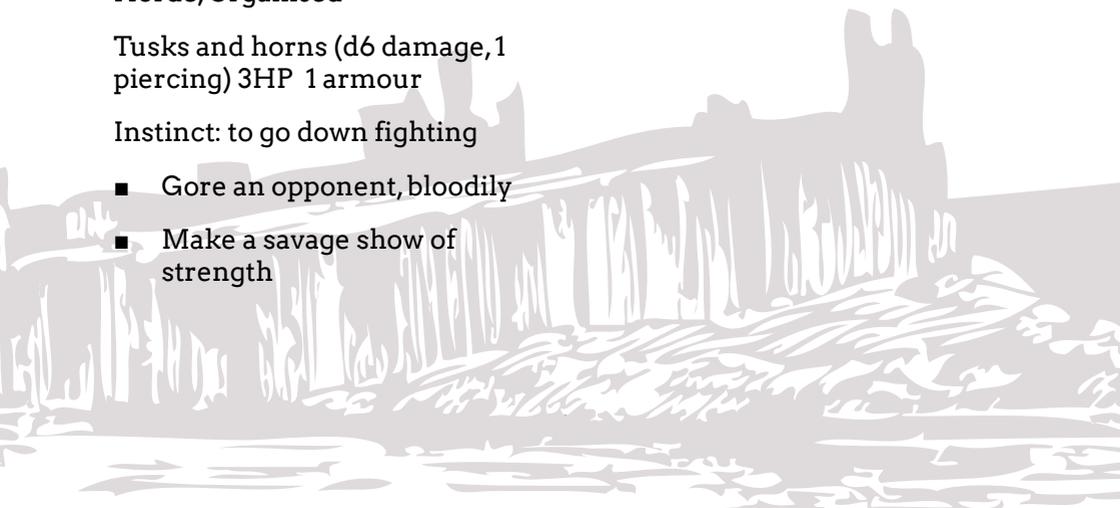
4-8 beastmen curs

Horde, Organised

Tusks and horns (d6 damage, 1 piercing) 3HP 1 armour

Instinct: to go down fighting

- Gore an opponent, bloodily
- Make a savage show of strength



CALANDRIL'S BLADE

Read the following to the players:

Unlike the entrance the library is spotless, apparently kept clean by the half-dozen automatons patrolling the aisles. The shelves are filled with dwarven rune-tomes. The walls of the study area at the far end of the room are covered with trophies. You think you see some kind of shadow skulking around in the rafters above.

Calandril's spirit (in the form of a shadowy cougar) guards the library, but isn't out to harm the party. He won't help them either unless they can provide something he wants - putting his and the other heroes' souls to rest, or perhaps clearing their name from the battle of Daviston.

When you fiddle with anything in the room, it's probably booby-trapped. Roll+DEX. On a 10+, either you drop it in time, or you get it but the GM picks an option from the list below. On a 7-9, either it explodes (a fragment or two may remain) and the GM picks one option, or the GM picks two options - your call.

- A gust of wind blows the chandeliers out

- You're locked in
- You get a faceful of Tagit dust and fall into a light sleep
- The trophies in the room start manically laughing
- The servitors now see you as a threat

Before his death, Blade was in the thrall of the dragon Xelastras. Hidden amongst his notes is the location of the Xelastras' lair. Blade's ashes could be useful leverage with the dragon, or the location itself could be useful for all kinds of reasons.

Dwarven Servitors

Group, Construct

Whirring bronze limbs (b[d8 damage) 12HP 2 armour

Forceful

Instinct: to keep the library tidy and free of pests

- Tidy up a shelf or book
- Self-destruct, revealing an explosive or gas trap
- Answer only to the owners of the castle

The rune-tomes (2 weight each; 1 weight for a dwarf) would be worth a lot to the right buyer.

The Liber Laqueum (1 weight)
A tatty notebook bound in

orc-skin, containing a wealth of knowledge on traps. **When you set a trap**, declare what it's for (e.g. "goblins"), choose two and roll+DEX. On a 10+, choose three. On a miss, the GM will remove one.

- The trap deals your damage to the target
- The trap ensnares your prey, for hours at least
- The trap targets two types of monster
- The trap requires no gold or adventuring gear

THE GARDEN OF LIGHT

Read the following to the players:

Most of the wall on this side of the castle has already fallen into the ocean. The white tree hasn't, but only just - it's right on the cliff-edge. Between you and the edge is an vine-choked garden, broken up by the occasional feature or fountain. A troupe of battle-weary beastmen are fighting amongst themselves by the old oak tree.

The old oak tree is the corpse of a treeman, sacred to the Dryads that live here. The beastmen aren't fighting amongst themselves, they're fighting off the dryads as the garden comes to life around them!

At the foot of the white tree is an old skeleton, wrapped in vines and leaves. This is the druid Light's corpse, and his soul is still attached. Light cannot directly speak to the players, but his will is enacted in part through the dryads. If his corpse (and the tree) go over the cliff edge, his soul will never find rest.

When you drink the brackish fountain water, roll+WIS.

On any result, you've become attuned to this garden - if you're willing, you can help Light

escape his corpse and find peace. On a 10+, you take +1 ongoing to navigating the garden until the next time you rest. On a miss, you can still help Light, but the process will hurt.

Vineish Dryads

Group

Whipping limbs (2d6 damage)
9 HP 1 armour

Reach

Instinct: to provide food and protection for the garden

- Distract and confuse with pheromones
- Rip interlopers to shreds
- Draw sustenance from the ground

The treeman's last acorn (0 weight) If you plant this acorn somewhere it can flourish, one day a forest will stand in that place - and the trees will remember it was you who made it happen. If you eat the acorn, you will absorb the long memories and raw natural energy of the treeman for yourself - this energy is very powerful, but how it physically manifests is up to the GM.

A cutting of the white tree (1 weight) It is said the roots of the white trees grow together, connecting to the forest realm of Sengir - the elven god of nature.

It is also said when the last white tree falls, Sengir's protection of the mortal realm will be over and "the lords of fire will reign free." A cutting, or the location of a white tree sapling, will carry immense religious significance for the forest elves. Wearing a fresh sprig of white tree on your breast is said to provide protection from infernal or unnatural flame, but will wither away after a few days.

WESTARA'S CATACOMBS

Read the following to the players:

The crypt ahead of you is a cold, unwelcoming space filled with the corpses of beastmen. Ahead of you shuffles a white-furred beast-thing, it's mismatched, stitched body horrible to behold. It's attention is currently focused on the open coffin in the room. It doesn't seem to have noticed you yet. What do you do?

The albino beast has somehow been merged with the necromancer, Westara. Both souls vie for dominance, but there might be something of the necromancer's soul - some humanity - left to appeal to. You hope.

Three other tombs lie in the room, untouched. Someone strong enough could fling the heavy stone slabs at the monster to do some damage.

There's a beastman corpse in a strange slumped pose by the stairs, as though lying on an invisible wall. The final step is rigged with an enchantment - it lets creatures down, but not up again.

Destroying the step would permanently deactivate the

trap; or magic could be used to disable (and re-activate) the trap as needed.

When you appeal to Westara's soul within the abomination, roll+CHA. On a 10+ he will become lucid, for a time. On a 7-9 he will falter, but fail to break free of the abomination's hold. On a miss, the mix of dark energy in the body will further warp it.

Westara's soul in the Albino beast

Solitary, construct, terrifying

Miscellaneous limbs (2d6 damage) 18HP 2 armour

Forceful

Special Qualities: stitched together

Instinct: to emerge dominant

- Raise a corpse from the dead
- Struggle between human and beast minds

Mareth's Pin (0 weight, hand)

A foot-long hollow bronze stake with a cork stopper on the end, used by necromancers as a quick-and-easy reanimation tool. Pour some of your own blood (from 1 HP to 6 HP's worth) into the stake, stab it into a corpse's chest, and the body will animate and work as an extension of your will. If you pull the stake out, the corpse turns

back into meat and you suffer no further harm. If anyone else pulls the stake out, or the zombie is reduced to 0 HP, you suffer an additional d6 damage (ignoring armour).