



Wicked

FANTASY FACTORY

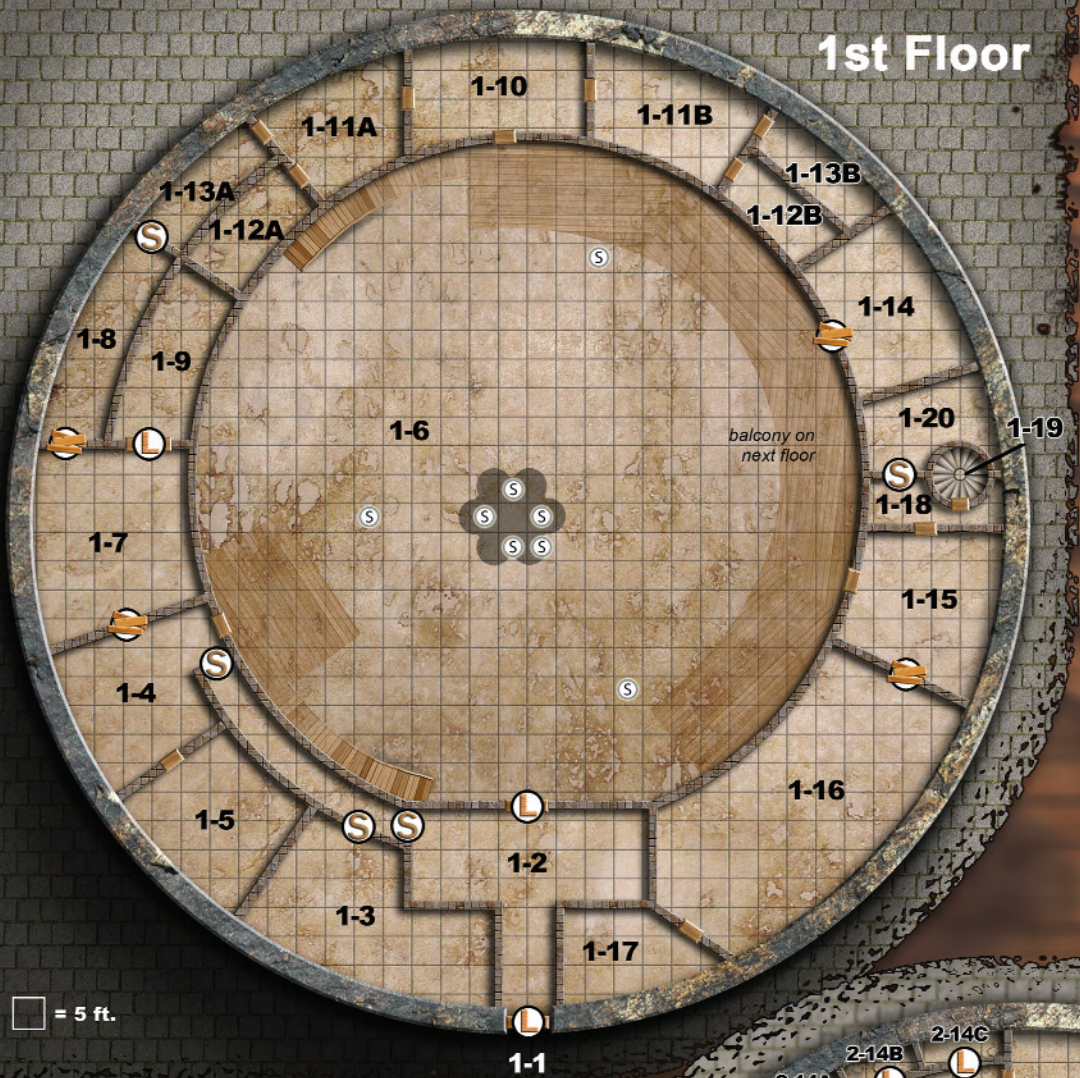
#1

RUMBLE IN THE WIZARD'S TOWER

A LEVEL 1 ADVENTURE



1st Floor

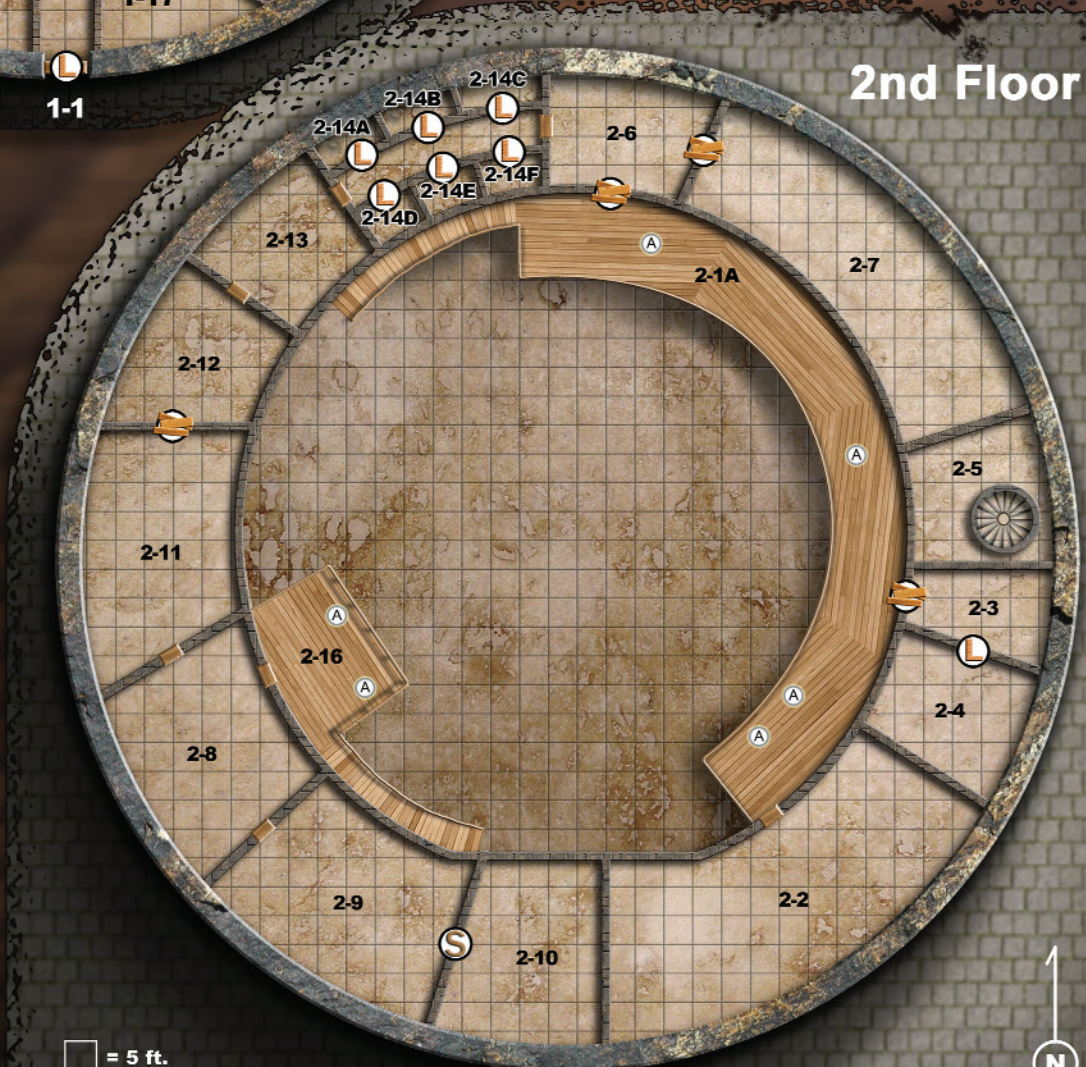


- A** Archer
- S** Swordsman
- Boarded-up door
- S** Secret door
- L** Locked door

KEY

= 5 ft.

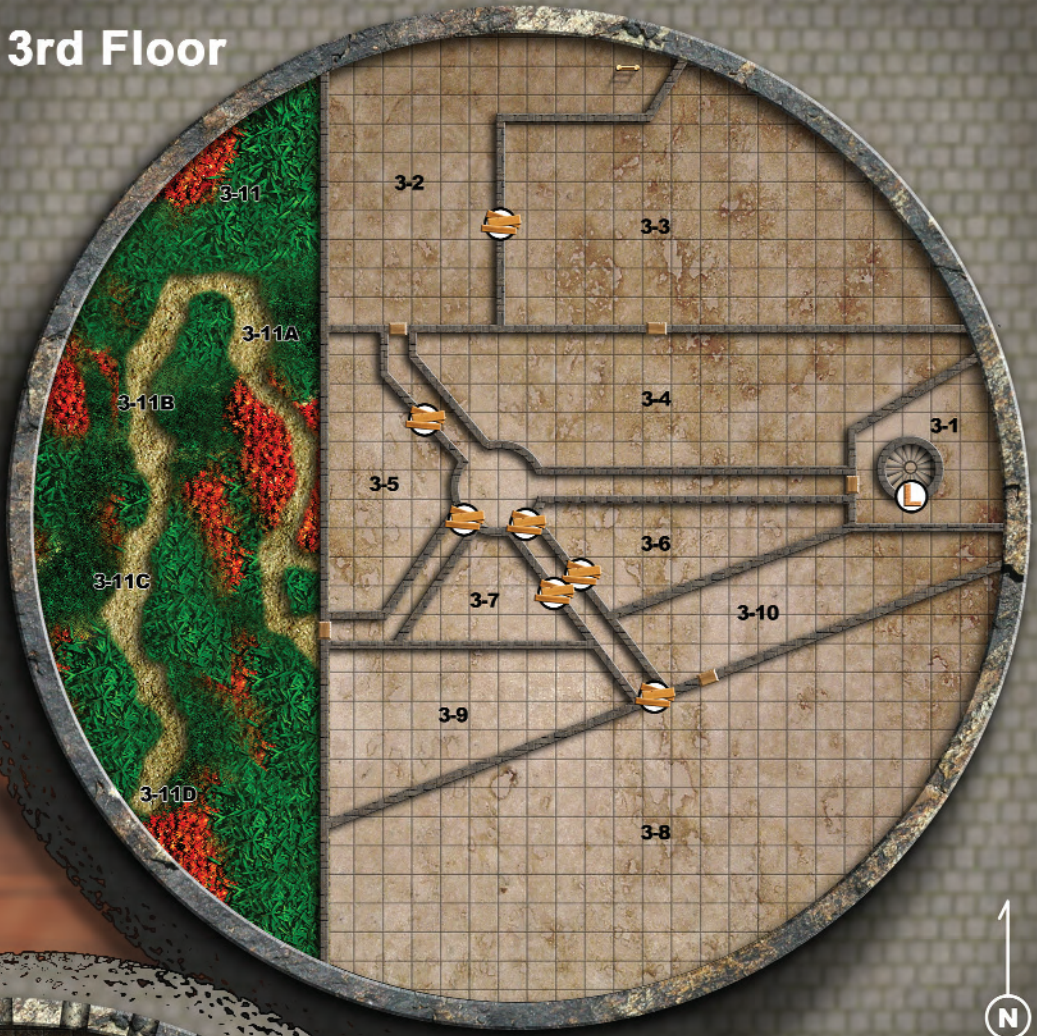
2nd Floor



= 5 ft.



3rd Floor



- A** Archer
- S** Swordsman
- Boarded-up door
- S** Secret door
- L** Locked door

KEY

4th Floor



□ = 5 ft.



RUMBLE IN THE WIZARD'S TOWER

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RUMBLE IN THE WIZARD'S TOWER

1

INTRODUCTION

Your adventures are already exciting. Characters explore dungeons, crush monsters, and score loot. But maybe you want your adventures to be more. Maybe you want adventures that are over-the-top, in-your-face, BADASS THRILL RIDES! Maybe you want adventures that are things of LEGEND! Maybe you want adventures that are WICKED SICK! That's what Wicked Fantasy Factory gives you: axes hacking, spells exploding, and blood spewing. Don't just crawl through dungeons — make them sorry they ever met you!

Rumble in the Wizard's Tower is a Wicked Fantasy Factory adventure for six to eight heroes of 1st level or four heroes of 2nd level; a party of 3rd level heroes will find the adventure an appropriate challenge, as well. The party's total levels should be 8–12. All characters will have a good time in this adventure; the party should include at least one healer (like a cleric) and one or two characters with serious combat potential (fighters, barbarians, paladins, and so forth).

Though it's designed for characters of around 2nd level, you can easily adjust the adventure to challenge heroes of higher or lower level. See the "Adjusting the Challenges" sidebar for ideas.

Adventure Summary: In *Rumble in the Wizard's Tower*, the heroes assault Morricks Tower to stop a calculating warlord from overthrowing the kingdom! They bludgeon the warlord's hired goons and come nose-to-nose with strange creatures and effects left over from the wizard who once called the tower home. Mystic traps and powerful minions — including the warlord's flame-flinging lover and the ghost of his murdered father — also confront the heroes. Finally, the heroes face Warlord Valdeez Morricks on the rainswept rooftop, the silver light from a captured extraplanar being lighting the battlefield. In *Rumble in the Wizard's Tower*, even *time* is juiced up: drawing on the powers of this extraplanar entity, characters enter the fantasy equivalent of *bullet time*!

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

One year ago, Elton Morricks, a wealthy merchant, embarked on an ambitious quest. He was wealthy to the point where money had lost much of its importance — but he knew he could turn his gold into power. His plan was to use his wealth as a tool to take over the city of Almack, capital of the Kingdom of Sundan (or whatever city and nation you'd care to substitute in your campaign).

Elton was paranoid and careful. He started by purchasing a hulking tower in the city's center. This tower was once home to a powerful wizard, and rumors said that it was haunted — it had stood vacant for decades. Its location was ideal, though, so Elton moved his home there and renamed it Morricks Tower. The tower would be his base of operations, his stronghold, his capital. To ensure no enemies could foil his plans, he added traps and other defenses. He also boarded up sections of the tower where weird wizardly stuff still happened — he would deal with that *later*.

Elton then turned to his son, Valdeez Morricks. Valdeez had trained in the army for a time, and gone out adventuring, crushing monsters, for half a year after that. Elton wanted Valdeez to be his commander-in-chief, and his first duties would be hiring soldiers, training them, and stationing them appropriately in the tower to serve as guards and sentries.

To help his son, Elton poured money into the crafting of two mighty, magic axes for Valdeez. Ever paranoid, Elton added an enchantment so that the axes' magical properties would function only for Valdeez — unless he died.

Elton sank much of the rest of his money into his *real* plan for taking over the city: the capturing of a *ternion*, an extraplanar being related to the control of time. Ternions' exact powers are unknown, but most scholars believe they can execute what they call a "ternion flare." This ability allows the creatures to slow time for specified individuals within a large area, allowing those affected to move with superhuman speed, dodging arrows and landing crushing blows. Elton's plan was to use this power for himself and his soldiers. With time as his weapon, Elton could easily subdue the City Watch, militia, and anyone else who might resist.

Elton captured the ternion. He held it in a magic field atop Morricks Tower.

Elton was working on ways to force the ternion to do his bidding when something happened that he did not expect. He had been careful, trusting no one but his son — but that was a mistake. Valdeez blamed Elton for the death of his mother, who had died ten years ago, while Valdeez was in the army. Valdeez had sworn he would avenge her memory.

So he killed his father while he was asleep one night.

Valdeez then sat at the foot of the bloodstained bed and thought. The soldiers were loyal to him; he was (and is) a good leader. And he now had control of the ternion. Clearly, Valdeez thought, his father, who would kill his own wife, wasn't fit to rule his own household, let alone a city. But Valdeez... he *was*. He took the title "warlord" and set about doing so.

Warlord Valdeez spent the last of his father's money on distractions to get the various power players (i.e., high-level NPCs) out of the city or otherwise distracted so they couldn't stop him. The key way he did this was by capturing Sayanna, the king's newest wife. Sayanna is the princess of the neighboring nation of Davinia (or whatever nation you'd like to substitute in your campaign), and the marriage had secured a long-needed peace between the kingdoms. With Sayanna gone, war threatens to break out again.

Valdeez planted clever hints and used a variety of magic scrolls to mislead the high-level investigators, who are now spread across the kingdom — and beyond — searching for Sayanna. In fact, she's in Morricks Tower with Valdeez. More sinister yet, Valdeez didn't *need* to capture her — she went willingly, hoping that her home nation would grow upset enough to start a war, and she and Valdeez could storm the castle as fighting raged on the front. She and Valdeez are partners and lovers now.

Valdeez is trying to force the ternion to do his bidding. The being is alien, trapped, and suffering, and has little intention of cooperating with its captor. Still, Valdeez will soon succeed by bribing it with its freedom. With all the big guns gone, it's up to a new breed of up-and-coming heroes to stop Valdeez. It's up to *your* heroes.

JUICE UP YOUR GAME!

Wicked Fantasy Factory adventures are like other adventures, but with *XTREME!!* added in big, red, underlined letters. Send your game blasting to the next level with the following (optional) components!

PHAT LEWT!

All WFF adventures have awesome loot scattered throughout, but only one piece of *phat lewt*, somewhere in the adventure — maybe in the boss's stash, maybe in some secret room. This piece of phat lewt is — wait for it — worth at least as much as the rest of the adventure's treasure combined! Yes, that's right: WFF adventures provide *double* the normal amount of treasure compared to your standard adventure, and half that loot is wrapped up in a single item. That means there's at least one crazy-cool piece of loot in each adventure, and it also means that GMs can easily remove the phat lewt if they prefer adventures of a poorer nature.

FINISH HIM!

You chop the monster. It dies. Cool, but how much cooler would it be if you planted a foot on its chest, ripped out its arms, and golf-clubbed it out of the dungeon?

In WFF adventures, heroes have *finishing moves*. Each hero gets to make up his own finishing moves. Here's what you need to know about them:

- ✦ The most important thing about finishing moves is that they are flashy and over-the-top. Think video games in which you dismember, decapitate, and explode your opponent — and seven rib cages clatter from the sky. You want your finishing move to strike terror into your enemies; to make even the staunchest dragon piddle its scales when it sees you tear out its ally's intestines, or incinerate its head with a blast of fire, or plug arrows into — BAM! BAM! BAM! — both eyes and its crotch.
- ✦ A finishing move is a separate sort of attack. It is completely different than your skills, feats, proficiencies, and everything else. It is independent of your weaponry and your specific spells. You can create a finishing move that uses your weapons or spells if you like, of course, but you can also create finishing moves in which you do interesting things without them. (See below for some examples.)
- ✦ When can you use a finishing move? You can attempt a finishing move only once per combat. Other than that, you can attempt it whenever you like, but if it doesn't take out your opponent (i.e., if you fail), you screw it up somehow and probably wish you had just swung your sword in the time-honored tradition.
- ✦ What if you succeed on your finishing move? You destroy your enemy in some gruesome, impressive, and/or awe-inspiring way. And you get bonus XP!
- ✦ How do you know when to use your finishing move? In a WFF adventure, the GM should let you know when an enemy is nearing finishing move range. He should say, "This guy's looking pretty woozy!" or "You could probably bring

the pain to this guy!" or maybe "Finish him!" The general rule of thumb is that the GM should let slip this information when the bad guy is down to about 10% of his hit points. Of course, if you think you can take him out before this point, you're welcome to try your finishing move at any time.

- ✦ Finishing moves work the same way on all monsters, no matter if they're incorporeal, ethereal, or whatever. Even if your finishing move doesn't incorporate a magic weapon, you do not suffer a miss chance against these creatures.

INVENTING YOUR FINISHING MOVE

The first step is to decide what your finishing move looks like. Remember: flashy, gruesome, and over-the-top! Remember that you might have to use it on creatures with various anatomies, so make sure it's versatile, or invent a different one for different creature types (or just variants on your primary move). Also remember that your finishing moves don't have to involve the weapon you normally wield or the spells you normally cast — or, in fact, any weapon or spell at all.

Then, determine whether your finishing move is *melee*, *ranged*, or *magic*. The answer should be obvious, since you've already decided what it looks like.

PERFORMING YOUR FINISHING MOVE

A finishing move is a full-round action that does not provoke attacks of opportunity. To perform it, follow these steps:

1) Select the target. If your finishing move is a melee move, the target must be within your melee reach. If your finishing move is ranged or magic, you must have line of sight to the target, and it must be within 30 feet.

2) Roll a d20. Add the following:

- ✦ If you have a melee finishing move, add your base attack bonus + your Strength bonus. (If you have Weapon Finesse, you can instead add your Dexterity bonus.)
- ✦ If you have a ranged finishing move, add your base attack bonus + your Dexterity bonus. If the target has cover from you or is in melee, your roll takes the appropriate penalties — but Precise Shot and similar feats can help you overcome these, as normal.
- ✦ If you have a magic finishing move, add your (highest) caster level + your key spellcasting ability (Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma).

Note that you don't get to add bonuses for magic weapons, Weapon Focus, and so forth on this roll!

3) If your total is greater than or equal to the bad guy's AC, you might take him down! (Note that the bad guy might benefit from cover and/or concealment, however.) Roll a number of d6 equal to half your character level, rounded up. (For example, a 3rd-level hero rolls 2d6. A 10th-level hero rolls 5d6.) If your total is greater than or equal to the number of hit points the target has remaining, your finishing move is successful. Describe it in gory detail!

(Note: Yes, even magic finishing moves must beat the bad guy's AC, primarily because it's just easier if all finishing moves follow the same rules. If the GM wants to change this rule, and replace AC with $11 +$ the bad guy's Will save bonus, or something, go for it.)

4) If you successfully perform a finishing move, the poor sap is worth an additional +50 XP per Challenge Rating. Congratulations! This bonus XP is divided among the party as normal, primarily to prevent cries of "kill stealer!"

5) If you failed, something goes wrong. The bad guy dodges out of the way, or pulls out of your grip, or you slip on a kidney and make a fool of yourself. Nothing horrible happens, but you pretty much wasted your turn this round.

OTHER FINISHING MOVES

You're welcome to add more than one finishing move to your repertoire or invent them on the fly as your rolls succeed. Be aware, though, that finishing moves are often a signature of a mighty hero, and the masses learn to identify him based on his moves!

FINISHING MOVE EXAMPLES

The following are some examples of finishing moves. You are welcome to use these directly or use them to inspire your own.

- ✦ Rondo, the axe-wielding dwarf barbarian, kicks his opponent in the privates so hard that important parts of his anatomy explode out his head!
- ✦ Laeriel, the elf archer, pins her opponent's feet to the ground with two well-placed arrow shots, and a third mighty shot tears the helpless foe's head from his shoulders!
- ✦ Mathees, the human sorcerer, causes his foe's head to crack open — his brain then floats out and bludgeons the body to pulp!
- ✦ Xanna, the halfling rogue, backflips onto her opponent's shoulders, plunges her daggers into his eyes, then uses them as handles to swing back to the ground!

NO CHEATING!

Do not abuse the finishing move rules! Examples of abuse include:

- ✦ Using finishing moves on creatures that are unconscious or dying.
- ✦ Hitting a creature as lightly as possible ("Hey, sorcerer, want to come over here and hit this guy with a staff for a few rounds?") until you think he's finishable.

- ✦ Using your finishing move on helpless creatures outside of combat. ("Let's tie this guy to a chair, heal him a little bit, then finish him!")
- ✦ Anything else that diminishes the cool, dramatic aspects of finishing moves.

The GM has the right to tell you that finishing moves don't work under these and any other circumstances he decides. If you stop thinking "Finishing moves are cool!" and start thinking "Finishing moves are dumb," it's time to look at what the players are doing with them.

MOOKS

Stupid, dirty little kobolds. Don't you want to just hack your way through hordes of the little buggers? Well, in WFF adventures, you can!



Certain monsters are *mooks*. These are little weenies just begging to be killed. This mook symbol — shown at left — designates mooks.

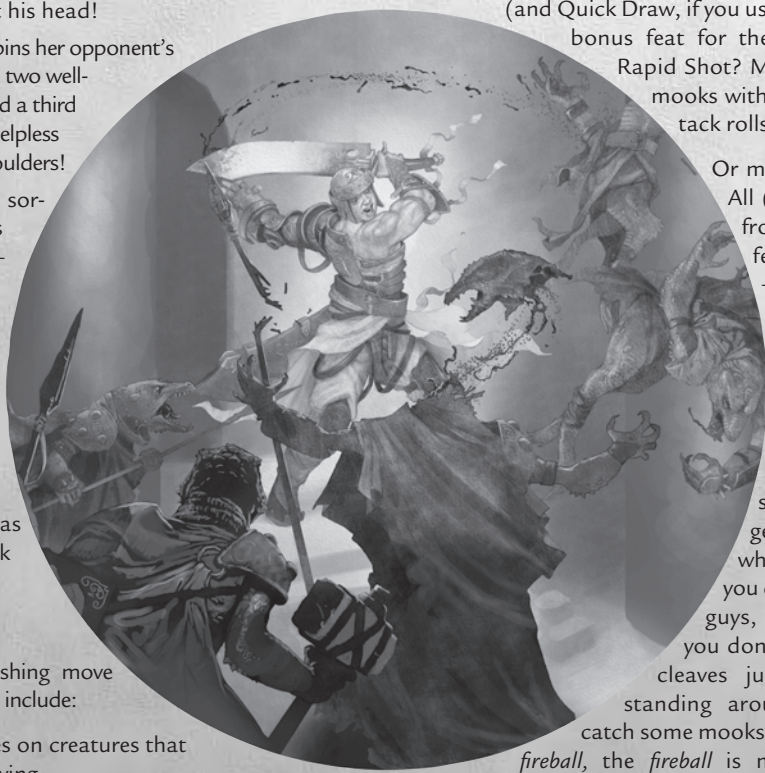
When fighting mooks, *every* character has both the Cleave and Great Cleave feats as bonus feats. What if you already have Cleave? Why, you get a +4 bonus on attack rolls when you cleave. Already have both Cleave and Great Cleave? Have a +4 bonus on cleaving attack rolls *and* damage rolls!

Is ranged combat more your game? As long as you target at least one mook with a ranged attack, you get Rapid Shot (and Quick Draw, if you use thrown weapons) as a bonus feat for the round. Already have Rapid Shot? Make the attacks on the mooks with no penalty on your attack rolls!

Or maybe you prefer spells? All (harmful) spells benefit from the Maximize Spell feat in regard to mooks — so burn up those suckers!

Note that you get Cleave and Rapid Shot only when you drop a mook. If you're fighting a bunch of mooks and some non-mooks, you get the bonuses only when you drop a mook — you can cleave *into* other bad guys, but if you drop them, you don't get additional bonus cleaves just 'cause mooks are standing around. Similarly, if you catch some mooks and non-mooks in your *fireball*, the *fireball* is maximized against the mooks, but not the other guys.

And yes, you are welcome to attempt your finishing move on mooks when they're at full hit points!



The Big Badass

Each WFF adventure also has at least one bad guy who's head and shoulders above everyone else. He's the *big badass*, and it's going to take a lot to bring him down. This symbol designates the big badass.


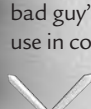
The big badass gets a free resurrection. When you take him to 0 hit points (even with a finishing move), he picks himself off the floor, roars his defiance, and jumps back up to full hit points. He comes back from anything — even spells like *disintegrate* and *finger of death* — as with the spell *true resurrection*. (He usually returns in some spectacular way — see his character description in each individual adventure for details.) Yikes!

Once you take him out a second time, though, he's gone for real. If you take him out with a finishing move the first time, you force him to use his resurrection, but you don't get any bonus XP. If you FINISH HIM the second time, though, he's worth bonus XP as normal.

E-Z Stat Blocks

You're probably familiar with stat blocks in adventures and other gaming material. They're important, but, more often than not, they're stuffed full of useless information. How often do you need to know a bad guy's Charisma score? *Occasionally*, yes, but not often.

Wicked Fantasy Factory stat blocks are small and streamlined. You could call these E-Z stat blocks. All the information

you are likely to need in an encounter is presented in a few lines. This icon  denotes defensive information, like hit points and AC, while this icon  denotes offensive information like the bad guy's attack bonus and damage. Feats the bad guy can use in combat, like Combat Reflexes and Power Attack, and

other special abilities like breath weapons and damage reduction, are also included. Where possible, all the information you need to use such an ability in combat is provided in parentheses. For example, an entry might read "breath weapon (30-ft. cone, 8d6 fire, DC 18)" or "Combat Reflexes (+3 attacks)."

A more traditional, longer stat block appears beneath the E-Z stat block. Just in case you need to know the bad guy's Charisma score.

Movie Rights

Wicked Fantasy Factory adventures are big and awesome and worthy of becoming summer blockbuster movies. Let's pretend that happened with the adventure that *your* group plays. Before you start the adventure, think about this: Who would play the main bad guys in the movie? Ask your players the same question: Who would play their characters in the movie?

The "actors" upon which you decide don't have to be alive; in fact, they don't have to be actors, or even real people! If players think Genghis Khan would do great in this role, or the Wicked Witch of the West is the perfect fit for a sorcerer character, or Mr. T of 20 years ago is a ringer for someone's fighter, wonderful!

GM's SECTION

GMs are overworked and underpaid. To help you out as much as possible, check out this cool chart of all the encounters in the adventure!

Area: The encounter area.

Pg.: The page on which the encounter begins.

Type: If the encounter likely involves primarily combat (C), a trap (T), a puzzle (P), or roleplaying (R).

Encounter: A brief description of the encounter.

EL: The Encounter Level.

Area	Pg.	Type	Encounter	EL
1-1	7	C	Morrick soldier	1/2
1-2	7	T	Lion Head Trap	1
1-4	9	C	Morrick soldier	1/2
1-6	9	P/C	Morrick swordsmen and archers	varies
1-9	11	P/C	Five-headed hydra	4
1-14	13	C	Medium water elemental	3
1-16	14	T	Flying cutlery	2
1-18	14	C	Elton's ghost	3
1-19	15	C	4 Morrick swordsmen	3
2-1	16	C	Morrick archers	-, 1, or 3
2-4	16	C/R	Ranafall the lantern archon	2
2-6	17	T	Flame trap	2
2-7	18	C	Diger	2
2-8	18	T	Poison needle trap	2
2-11	19	C	Sayanna and bodyguards	4
2-12	20	R	Shazmozell the air mephit	—
3-2	21	C	Owlbear skeleton	2
3-3	21	T	Telekinetic trap	2
3-4	22	P	Magic metal puzzle	—
3-5	22	C	Tiny animated object swarm	3
3-8	22	T	Statue trap	2
3-8	22	P	Portrait puzzle	—
3-8	22	P	Statue puzzle	—
3-9	23	C	Sharks	4
3-11a	24	C	Archer bush	2
3-11b	24	C	8 vampire hummingbirds	2
4-1	25	C	Valdeez, archers, and bodyguards	4

ADJUSTING THE CHALLENGES

Though *Rumble in the Wizard's Tower* is designed for around four heroes of around 2nd level, you can still run the adventure for larger or smaller groups of higher or lower level. To avoid slaughtering them utterly or turning the adventure into a cakewalk, you might want to adjust the adventure a bit. The following suggestions should help.

For Weaker Parties: Consider replacing the hydra in area 1-9 with a dire ape and reducing the number of soldiers in area 1-6 by a third (four archers and eight swordsmen). Change the Medium water elemental in area 1-14 to a Small water elemental. Make Elton's ghost (in area 1-18) a 1st-level (instead of 2nd-level) aristocrat. Remove two soldiers from area 1-19. Make Sayanna (in area 2-11) a 2nd-level (instead of 3rd-level) monk and remove one of her bodyguards. Replace the owlbear skeleton in area 3-2 with a wolf skeleton. The telekinetic trap in area 3-3 deals 1d6 fewer points of damage. Replace the animated object swarm in area 3-5 with two Tiny animated objects. Remove the Large shark from area 3-9. Remove four vampire hummingbirds from area 3-11b. Remove three archers and one bodyguard from area 4-1 and consider reducing Valdeez's Strength by 2 points and making his axes battleaxes or handaxes rather than dwarven waraxes.

For Stronger Parties: Add one level of warrior to all soldiers, swordsmen, archers, and bodyguards. Give the hydra in area 1-9 an additional head or two. Give Elton's ghost (in area 1-18) another level or two of aristocrat and allow him to use his corrupting gaze more often. The needle trap in area 2-8 carries Large monstrous scorpion poison (DC 14, 1d4 Con/1d4 Con). Give Sayanna (in area 2-11) an additional level of monk. Replace the owlbear skeleton in area 3-2 with a troll skeleton. The telekinetic trap in area 3-3 deals 1d6 more points of damage. Add four Hit Dice to the animated object swarm in area 3-5. Make the statue trap in area 3-8 deal damage every round (instead of every other round). Replace the archer bush in area 3-11a with an assassin vine. Make the vampire hummingbirds in area 3-11b much larger and give them the statistics of stirges. Give Valdeez an extra level or two of fighter and raise his Strength to 18.

A HEROIC START

Getting the heroes involved with this adventure requires tipping them off to the threat Valdeez poses in Morricks Tower. The possibilities for doing so are myriad; you might use one of the following, or make up one that's way better for your campaign. The mood is best if it's a dark, stormy night — because, hopefully, the heroes will strike at the tower the same night, and the climactic final confrontation on the rooftop is more memorable if it's dark and stormy! Therefore, no matter what hook you use to draw the heroes into the adventure, it's important to emphasize the immediate nature of the danger: The heroes should act *immediately*, because Valdeez could succeed at any

time. They can dally a little bit — they have enough time to explore the tower a bit on their way up; they just don't have time to leave (to drag Sayanna back to the castle, for instance) or rest for a few hours before getting a move on.

✦ **Let's Try This Thing!** A group of Valdeez's soldiers leaves Morricks Tower to perform an experiment: to see if Valdeez has figured out how to tame the ternion. The soldiers (four of them — the group is EL 3) carry small vials of silver liquid: water that sat for weeks in the ternion's radiance, hopefully creating a connection with the creature. The soldiers are under orders to find a likely-looking group — probably city watchmen, but a band of heroes serves just as well — to try the experiment on. Use the statistics for Morricks swordsmen from area 1-6.

The heroes encounter these guys as they wander the streets. The combat is likely brief, but it's important that the bad guys provide the necessary information. So, they can brag and boast before the fight, or one of them can surrender and spill his guts. Aside from imparting the dire and immediate nature of the threat, the amount of knowledge the soldiers possess is up to you. (Be careful of revealing too much here, but if the heroes need an extra incentive, the soldiers might know about the ternion.)

On the first round, the soldiers throw their vials to the ground. They don't do anything (unless you want them to; see the Ternion Time sidebar in area 4-1 for some possible effects) except shatter uselessly.

This hook is best for parties that enjoy combat. It's also nice because it begins with action, which is always a good thing, and it allows heroes to try out their finishing moves — especially nice if this is their first Wicked Fantasy Factory adventure.

✦ **Help Me, Heroes, You're My Only Hope.** Someone explains the situation to the heroes. This character might be a street urchin who's been hanging around Morricks Tower, a deserter from Valdeez's forces, one of Sayanna's former ladies-in-waiting, a suspicious city watchmen, or any similar character. This NPC knows at least that Valdeez's threat is real and immediate; the rest of her information is up to you. She may have false or misleading information as well, if you want to mess with your players a bit.

This hook is best for players that want to know what their mission is, then go do it, without extraneous monkeying around.

✦ **A Great Job Just Opened Up Down the Street!** The heroes get involved in the adventure by getting involved with Valdeez's forces. They might hear from a friend of a friend that a local noble is paying good coin for people who can handle themselves in a fight. Of course, the characters have to go through a screening process — including interviews by Valdeez himself, who judges their commitment and honesty — before they are allowed in, but canny heroes can bluff their way in.

In this hook, the adventure begins well before area 1-1. It also is liable to progress in a different manner than that depicted below, as the heroes could decide to turn traitor while they are within the building — even when they are near Valdeez. (Though their superiors could assign them to strict patrol duty, with a barracks in a local inn, to prevent this possibility.) In any case, this hook requires a bit more work on your part, but players who enjoy roleplaying and intrigue will enjoy it.

MORRICK TOWER

Morrick Tower is an old stone tower with thick walls. Many interior doors are boarded up, demarcating the areas that Valdeez and Elton have not yet explored (or *have* explored and determined are too dangerous). Many secret doors hide throughout the complex as well (see the Search DC below).

Torches or lanterns light the areas in the tower if Valdeez, Sayanna, and/or their soldiers frequent the areas. A few small torches provide dim light in the secret areas they use (like area 1-20 and the passage leading from area 1-2 to 1-4). Areas the soldiers don't enter — those beyond barricaded doors — are lightless unless noted otherwise.

Ceiling height is 20 feet unless noted otherwise.

Walls and doors have the following statistics unless an area's description notes otherwise. The tower includes a number of large interior windows, as well; most are magically reinforced and have the statistics shown below.

Exterior Walls: 5 ft. thick; hardness 8; hp 180; break DC 40; Climb DC 30 (normally 25, but the rain makes the walls slippery).

Interior Walls: 1 ft. thick; hardness 8; hp 90; break DC 35; Climb DC 20.

Magically-Reinforced Glass Window: 2 in. thick; hardness 15; hp 30; break DC 30; Climb DC 20. The window radiates moderate transmutation magic.

Wooden Door: 1-1/2 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 15; burst DC 16.

Barricaded Wooden Door: 2 in. thick; hardness 6; hp 20; burst DC 23. Characters can pry the boards off the doors with a bit of time (DC 15 Strength check), which reduces the door's statistics to that of a normal wooden door (above).

Stone Secret Door: 4 in. thick; hardness 8; hp 60; burst DC 28; Search DC 20.

TERNION FLARES

At various times throughout the adventure, the ternion, captured on the roof, may flare. When it does, silvery light suffuses the tower for a moment. During a ternion flare, at your discretion, time might slow for certain individuals.

A ternion flare is a good idea when the heroes are having an easy time of it against an enemy who is supposed to be a challenge (like Elton's ghost in area 1-18 or Sayanna in area 2-11). The flare can give the villain a momentary boost. Conversely, if the heroes are getting their butts pounded, you might use a ternion flare to help them out a bit. The ternion might also flare at random times, just to fill the areas with silver light and provide an air of mystery and fantasy.

A character who benefits from a ternion flare operates under the effects of ternion time for 1 round (see the "Ternion Time" sidebar on pg. 26).

LEVEL 1

The adventure begins when the heroes approach Morrick Tower. Hopefully, it's a dark and stormy night. The following areas are keyed to the associated maps. Boxed text is meant to be read aloud or paraphrased to the players.

AREA 1-1: GUARD POINT (EL 1/2)

As the heroes approach the tower, read or paraphrase the following.

Rain sheets down, drenching you and the cobblestones. You round a corner and see an odd sight: Eighty feet above the ground is a glowing, silver dome. The dome is enclosed atop a tower, and a silver light within shines and flickers, sending spectral shapes flowing along the rain-spattered glass. A flash of lightning illuminates the hulking shape of Morrick Tower. It is a fat, round edifice, heaving upward nearly 80 feet, crowned by the silver, glass dome. A pair of solid wooden double doors stands at the front. A lone guard, looking miserable in the weather, huddles against his spear.

The doors here are tougher than interior doors. They are also locked, though the guard has the keys.

Strong Double Doors: 3 in. thick; hardness 6; hp 25; burst DC 25, Open Lock DC 25.

Bad Guy: The guard is at the door mainly to keep away unwanted guests — he is not particularly well-trained, nor does he have any way of contacting his friends inside. He refuses entry to anyone who doesn't provide the pass phrase ("Victory is nigh!"). Characters might bluff their way past the guy, but it's much easier just to pound him to a pulp.



MORRICK SOLDIER: Init +0, Spd 30 ft.; hp 8, AC 13, touch 10, flat-footed 13; \times Atk/Full Atk +3 melee (1d8+1/x3, longspear); Reach 10 ft. with longspear.

Morrick Soldier, human male War1: CR 1/2; Medium humanoid (human); HD 1d8+4, hp 8; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13, touch 10, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +1; Grp +2; Atk/Full Atk +3 melee (1d8+1/x3, longspear); Reach 5 ft. (10 ft. with longspear); ALLE; SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 13, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills and Feats: Listen +4, Spot +4; Toughness, Weapon Focus (longspear).

Possessions: Longspear, studded leather armor, key to the doors.

AREA 1-2: ENTRYWAY (EL 1)

This T-shaped room is quiet and peaceful compared to the raging storm outside. It is also dank and cold, with only a couple flickering torches providing light. At the far end is a pair of strong, iron-banded doors. A couple feet above the doors is a grilled window, from which comes yellow light and the sounds of people talking.



The heroes can climb up to the window above the door (Climb DC 20) or boost one of their number up (DC 15 Strength check) to look into area 1-6. If they do, read or paraphrase the following.

You look into an enormous round room, awash with yellow light. The room looks like something out of a wealthy merchant's mansion: Red carpet covers the floor, the walls are polished stone, fine wooden staircases lead to overlooking balconies, and wooden doors with gilt decorations ring the room. (A couple doors, though, have grimy planks of wood nailed over them.) The ceiling must be two stories above the floor, and hanging from it on a gold cord is a mammoth, crystal chandelier bedecked with innumerable candles.

People — soldiers — are scattered throughout this room. They wear leather armor and sheathed swords and walk idly about or chat in small groups. A large gang sits cross-legged beneath the chandelier, staring up at the crystal masterpiece and playing dice. A couple keep wary eyes on the door behind which you stand. On the balconies stand other soldiers with strung bows. At least a dozen soldiers are in this room — perhaps more.

Hopefully, the heroes see clearly that kicking down the doors is a *bad idea*. In addition to the small army on the other side, the doors are strong, locked, and trapped.

Strong Double Doors: 3 in. thick; hardness 6; hp 25; Break DC 25.

Trap: The doors have lion heads carved into them at about head level. The lion heads are covered with dust (which a DC 15 Spot check notices). Attempting to open the doors without tapping the lions on their foreheads causes ghostly red lion heads, growling, to stretch from the carvings, bite the intruder, and recede.

Lion Head Trap: CR 1; magic device; touch trigger; automatic reset; Atk +6 melee (1d8, 2 bites); Search DC 17, Disable Device DC 21.

No one who lives in the tower uses these doors; everyone goes through the secret doors. Due to this activity, telltale signs (scuff marks, mud, debris) lead from the outside doors to the secret door; a DC 15 Spot check allows a hero to detect this trail, and the Search DC to find this secret door is 10. A small catch behind one of the torches opens it.

AREA 1-3: DEMON STATUE

This chamber is dark, but the light playing in from the open door hints at a bare stone chamber. Against the wall across from the door is a statue of demonic countenance. It stands tall and slender, with small horns, muscular arms folded over its robes, and a hugely distended mouth. Its lower jaw drops all the way to the statue's base, where it merges with a semicircular trough that rings the statue.

If the heroes proceed into the room with a light source (i.e., they can see the east wall), continue with the following.

In the room's east side is a nook, and in the nook stands a decorative wall — though “decorative” is purely a matter of taste. The wall is covered with faces human, bestial, and demonic (some reminiscent of the statue). The faces grin, grimace, scowl, and scream, each in a different way.

The wizard who once owned this tower brought back both the statue and the wall from an expedition to savage lands. Valdeez and his soldiers have not discovered this room.

A DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check reveals that the statue is of a bloodthirsty, fiery demon; he allegedly granted his power to people who allowed him to drink their blood.

If a living creature touches the statue, read or paraphrase the following.

Orange fire comes to life in the statue's eyes. A voice, speaking Common, echoes from it. “Let me drink your blood, mortals, and I shall reward you.” The eyes burn. They are almost hypnotic.

Characters can sacrifice blood (their own blood, not that of a dead opponent) to the statue by bleeding into the trough. If they do, the blood hisses as if on a griddle, and, in beads, rises along the statue's stretched jaw and into its mouth. The eyes flare brighter as the blood rises.

A hero can choose how many hit points of blood he wishes to sacrifice. After sacrificing blood, the hero feels himself brimming with power, and feels his hands and eyes tingle. He knows instinctively that he can concentrate on these feelings to make something happen — and if he tries it, he finds that he can shoot brief rays of orange fire from his palms, fingers, eyes, or any ob-

ject he holds in his hands. This is a supernatural ability, takes a standard action, provokes attacks of opportunity, and has a maximum range of 30 feet with no range increment. The hero can fire as many rays as he likes, though the ability goes away when the wounds from his blood sacrifice heal.

The rays require ranged touch attacks to hit and they deal fire damage. The amount of damage they deal depends on the amount of blood the hero sacrificed, as shown on the table below.

Hit Points of Blood Sacrificed	Ray Damage	Hit Points of Blood Sacrificed	Ray Damage
1	1	7–8	1d8
2	1d2	9–10	1d10
3	1d3	11–12	2d6
4	1d4	13–18	2d8
5–6	1d6	etc.	

Demon Statue: Hardness 8; hp 35; break DC 25.

Loot: Hidden in the mouth of one of the screaming faces on the wall is a heavy silver key (Search DC 15). The key opens the door to area 1-9. It's also worth 10 gp.

AREA 1-4: GUARD ROOM (EL 1/2)

This room resembles a pleasant sitting room, though it is bare save for carpets on the floor and a single wooden chair. A small, closed glass window sits in the east wall. A gold cord passes diagonally down through a hole below this window and is wrapped around a wooden wheel. In the north wall, boards are nailed across a dusty door.

A guard starts up from the chair.

Bad Guy: The soldier stationed here is tasked with ensuring that no intruders enter the tower, though he doesn't expect any to get past the previous defenses (the guard in area 1-1, the secret door in area 1-2), so he's not expecting trouble.



MORRICK SOLDIER: Init +0, Spd 30 ft.; hp 8, AC 13, touch 10, flat-footed 13; Atk/Full Atk +3 melee (1d8+1/x3, longsword); Reach 10 ft. with longsword.

See area 1-1 for complete statistics.

Tactics: The guard is sitting down, so he takes a –4 penalty on his initiative roll. He doesn't want to piss off Valdeez, so, unless the heroes attack him first, instead of attacking or going for help, he challenges them and their intentions. If he figures they're hostile (e.g., if they attack him), he leaps for the east door – but in his haste, he might fumble with it for a round before opening it and screaming for help. (So, unless the heroes are *really* sloppy, they should be able to take this guy without alerting the tower.)

Development: The gold cord holds aloft the chandelier in area 1-6. The wheel allows people to lower it to the ground so they can replace the candles. Cutting the cord or kicking out the stop in the wheel causes the chandelier to crash to the floor, slaying the five soldiers who were sitting beneath it (well, dealing 5d6 points of damage to each of them, which should be enough to finish them) and causing a panic. A round or two pass before one of the soldiers checks out area 1-4 to see what happened.

If the heroes look through the window in the east wall, they see area 1-6. Though the balcony interferes with their view, they should be able to tell that a group of five soldiers plays dice directly beneath the chandelier.

AREA 1-5: STORAGE

This room was once a bedroom – a bed and bare mattress still sit in the corner. The chamber is now a storage room. Longswords, spears, and shields lean against the walls in neat rows, and a couple suits of studded leather are tossed on the mattress. Barrels, coils of rope, lanterns, backpacks, and other items are also evident.

This is the soldiers' storage room.

Loot: The room contains five longswords, three longspears, three heavy wooden shields, two suits of studded leather armor, and any miscellaneous goods you'd care to add. In addition, hidden in a special case wedged between two barrels (Search DC 10) is a *wand of cure light wounds* (50 charges).

Note: This wand is vital for success in this adventure. If the heroes don't find it here, you might plant it elsewhere, or allow them a DC 10 or 15 Spot check to notice it.

AREA 1-6: MAIN CHAMBER (EL VARIES)

Use the second boxed text from area 1-2 for a description of this room.

This is the main staging area for Valdeez's soldiers. They practice here and hang out with each other, as well as keep a watchful eye for intruders – they are more alert than their companion in area 1-4, because the officers keep them sharp.

Eighteen soldiers commonly spend time here, some on official sentry duty, others killing time with their friends. Though they're all 1st-level mooks, eighteen is still a lot of bad guys for the heroes to confront. In fact, it's probably too many. (Hopefully, the heroes realize this fact when they observe the room from area 1-2 or 1-4.) However, the heroes have several options to make the combat here easier:

- ✘ In area 1-4, they can drop the chandelier on a group of soldiers, killing five of them immediately.
- ✘ They can drop the chandelier by slicing through it with a ranged attack, like an arrow. It has AC 20 and 6 hit points.
- ✘ They can lead the hydra from area 1-9 here. See area 1-9 for details.
- ✘ They can bypass this area by taking the secret doors around it. They can also use this series of secret doors and passages to ambush soldiers in this area (for example, by climbing to level 2 and dispatching the archers on the balconies).
- ✘ Whatever other crazy ideas the players come up with.

If a fight breaks out here, the ghost of Elton Morricks, Valdeez's murdered father, makes an appearance. Read or paraphrase the following.