

# Level 15: The Den of the Master

This level is the final page of adventure within the halls of Rappan Athuk. In 25 years of Refereeing and playtesting, it has never been reached, let alone conquered. This level should be treated as the epic finale of many years of play. It is neither forgiving nor fair. Here in this small pocket plane, connected to both the Prime Material plane and the Abyss itself, the party will encounter the avatar of a demon prince with its full powers and many servants. This level is incredibly dangerous, and no one may survive travel here even without encountering Orcus himself. Remember, this is not a computer roleplaying game. There are no cheat codes to kill Orcus. The PCs are not supposed to win. If they have survived this far, they are powerful and foolhardy. Yet Orcus' avatar should prove more than a match for them. This is the end. Good luck! A map of this level is depicted in **Map RA-15**.

## Level 15

**Equivalent Dungeon Level:** All But Impossible (20+)

**Entrances:** Teleport from **Level 13**.

**Exits:** None.

**Wandering Monsters:** None.

**Detections:** The entire area radiates magic and chaos. No pinpointing of sources is possible on this level.

**Shielding:** The entire level is shielded, and no means of magical transport such as *teleport*, *dimension door*, *etherealness*, and so forth functions at all, though this does not apply to demons! Magical flight and levitation likewise do not function in any form. The only exception is the druidic ability to change form to a flying creature, as this ability is attuned to nature and thus functions normally.

**Continuous Effects:** No cleric or druid spells may be recovered while resting on this level. All divination spells register as ambiguous due to the chaos aura of the place. The entire area acts as if *dispel good* spells are constantly in effect.

**Standard Features:** All floors are made of smooth, seamless stone. All walls drop off into the Abyss. Anyone falling off a wall to the maze below is lost forever. No ceiling can be seen, as the entire level exists in an alternate plane. All is shadowy, with vision limited to half normal distances.

## 15-I. The Maze

The *teleportal* from **Level 13** deposits PCs on a flat stone pathway. Before them stretches a vast, flat maze. The pathway is the top of the maze walls, and the sides of the pathway drop down into utter darkness and oblivion. The screams and shrieks of the damned fill the sulfurous, hot air. Any lawful-aligned PCs are immediately stricken as per an *unholy word* cleric spell.

No sign or means of return is present. Only by defeating the demon prince's avatar may the PCs return to the world above. As noted above, anyone falling off the sides of the maze path is lost forever (transported

to eternal torment in the Abyss). Note the spell restrictions from above regarding travel within the maze. Along the back edge of the maze are several paths that may be taken into it. Only one leads anywhere.

While in the maze area, PCs are treated to **random evil events**. See the side bar.

## Random Evil Events

While in the maze, there is a 66 percent chance (1–4 on 1d6) each hour that a random evil event occurs. If one does occur, roll 1d10 on the following table:

- 1 A random member of the party must make a saving throw or lose 1 point of wisdom permanently.
- 2 The entire party is affected by great despair. Each must succeed at a saving throw or suffer a –2 penalty to all attacks, damage, saving throws, and skill checks (–10% for assassin and thief skills) for 2 days.
- 3 A **glabrezu** is gated in and attacks the PCs (see statistics below).
- 4 The party is affected by a reverse *locate object* spell. A save avoids this. The Referee should give false directions (left=right, and so on) to all affected.
- 5 The entire party is teleported to the initial entrance area.
- 6 The party is again subjected to the effects of an *unholy word* spell. Reroll on this table.
- 7 One randomly determined party member must make a saving throw or be affected by a *confusion* spell.
- 8 A **skeleton** with a vial of *oil of slipperiness* appears in front of the party and breaks the vial on the pathway. Anyone attempting to cross the area must make a saving throw or slide off the side. The skeleton slides off screaming in demonic glee after them.
- 9 The entire party must make a saving throw or be affected by a *symbol of discord*.
- 10 **12 shadows** attack the party, rising up from the pits along the corridor. They are not turnable.

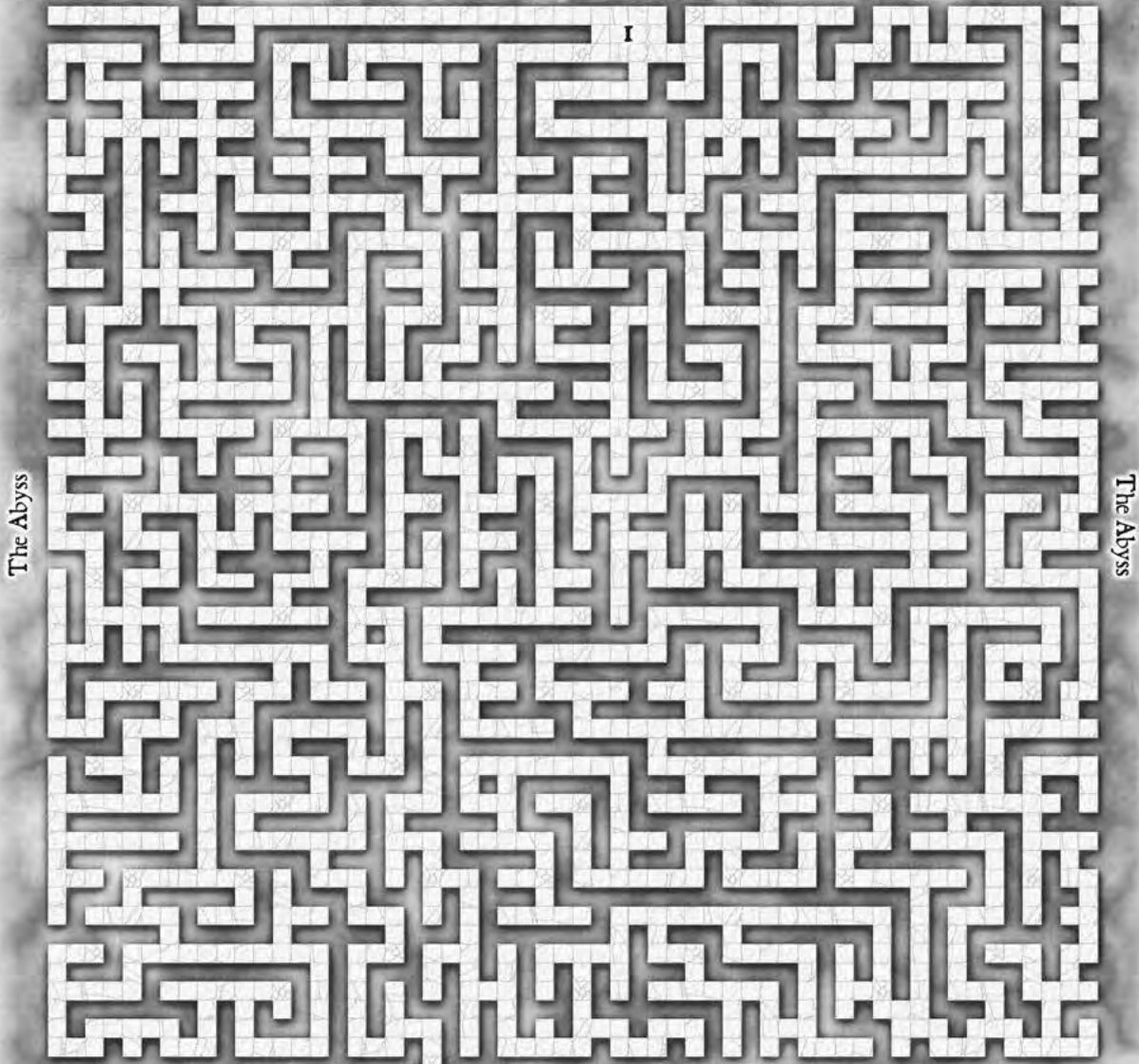
**Glabrezu:** HD 10 (70 hp); AC –3 [22]; Atk 2 pincers (2d6), 2 claws (1d3), 1 bite (1d4+1); Move 9; Save 5; AL C; CL/XP 11/1700; Special: Magic resistance (60%), demonic magical powers.

**Shadows (12):** HD 3+3 (20 hp); AC 7 [12]; Atk 1 touch (1d4 + strength drain); Move 12; Save 14; CL/XP 4/120; Special: Drain 1 point strength with hit, hit only by magic weapons.

# Rappan Athuk

## Level 15: The Den of the Master

Teleport from Level 13

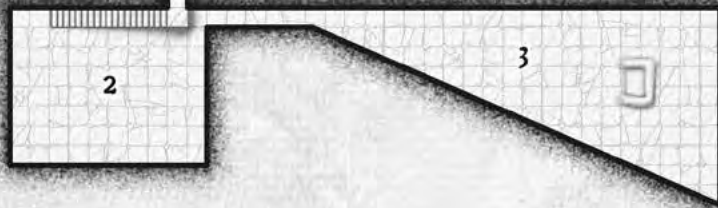


The Abyss

The Abyss



1 square = 25 feet



## 15–2. The Demon Greeting

At the end of the maze, two of Orcus' **mariliths** consorts confront the party, *teleporting* in to attack as soon as the threshold is crossed at the maze exit. They do not fight to the death, as their only purpose is to "soften up" the PCs before the final encounter. Note that these demons are already here, and do not count toward Orcus' summon demon ability for the day! These ladies wade into combat, casting *charm person* spells as they do so. When wounded over 50% of their hit points, they teleport to their lord's side and prepare for the final battle. Once these demons are defeated, the area may be examined. The entrance to **Area 15–3** is a long corridor, filled with thousands of bones, crushed and powdered with age and abuse. Moldering corpses and rusty, rotted gear of all kinds litters the hallway. It leads 400 ft. to the final room.

**Mariliths (2):** HD 8 (60 hp); AC –3 [22]; Atk 6 weapons (1d8), tail (1d8); Move 12; Save 8; CL/XP 13/2300; Special: Magic resistance (80%), +1 or better magic weapon required to hit, demonic magical powers.

## 15–3 The Den of the Master

This is it, the final encounter. The Referee should very carefully prepare for this battle prior to initiating combat. Even if the PCs have destroyed all three shrines, it is highly unlikely that they will defeat the demon prince. This room is a huge shrine, dedicated to all that is dark and evil. It is the den and living quarters for the most foul presence of the Avatar of Orcus himself.

In addition to the Avatar of Orcus, the room also contains **2d6 skeletons**, **1d8 zombies**, **1d6 ghouls**, **1d3 ghastrs**, **1d6 shadows**, **1d3 wights**, and **1d2 spectres**.

**Ghastrs (varies):** HD 4; AC 4 [15]; Atk 2 claws (1d3), 1 bite (1d6); Move 14; Save 13; AL C; CL/XP 5/240; Special: Stench, paralyzing touch.

**Ghouls (varies):** HD 2; AC 6 [13]; Atk 2 claws (1d3), 1 bite (1d4); Move 9; Save 16; AL C; CL/XP 3/60; Special: Immunities, paralyzing touch.

**Shadows (varies):** HD 3+3; AC 7 [12]; Atk 1 touch (1d4 + strength drain); Move 12; Save 14; AL C; CL/XP 4/120; Special: Drain 1 point strength with hit, hit only by magic weapons.

**Skeletons (varies):** HD 1; AC 7 [12]; Atk 1 weapon or strike (1d6) or (1d6+1 two-handed); AL N; Move 12; Save 17; CL/XP 1/15; Special: Immune to sleep and charm.

**Spectres (varies):** HD 7; AC 2 [17]; Atk 1 spectral weapon or touch (1d8 + level drain); Move 15 (Fly 30); Save 9; AL C; CL/XP 9/1100; Special: Drain 2 levels with hit, immune to non-magical weapons.

**Wights (varies):** HD 3; AC 5 [14]; Atk 1 claw (1 hp + level drain); Move 9; Save 14; AL C; CL/XP 5/240; Special: Drain 1 level with hit, hit only by magic or silver weapons.

**Zombies (varies):** HD 2; AC 7 [12]; Atk 1 weapon or strike (1d8); Move 6; Save 16; AL N; CL/XP 2/30; Special: Immune to sleep and charm.

**Referee Note:** these undead minions cannot be turned or destroyed by turn checks while in the presence of Orcus.

The room itself is huge, fully 200 ft. in diameter, with an evil, pulsating

altar of the demon lord in its center, carved of entwined bones and in the shape of a throne. The throne itself seems to scream and writhe as if in pain.

Treasure is heaped about in piles, and the bones of previous victims are liberally strewn among piles of weapons, armor, and gold.

**Consequences:** Now the fight begins! If the PCs lose, their souls are devoured and they are forever dead. If, on the other hand, they win, Orcus will be banished from the Prime Material plane for 666 years. The Referee should take care with this, as all priests of Orcus will lose their ability to cast spells of 7th level for 666 years! This event will have a dramatic effect on global politics and power struggles. Who is kidding whom, though, Orcus will destroy them all!

**Magical Protections:** The den is under the effects of *dispel good* spells. The altar radiates an unholy aura, as does Orcus himself. This affect is not calculated into his stats below.

**Special Note to the Referee:** If the PCs are to have any chance, they must have destroyed the evil temples on **Levels 4, 9, and 14**. If they have not, the avatar has his full powers and is absolutely unbeatable. For each shrine destroyed, the demon prince is weakened, and his ability to hold mortal form and fight the PCs is diminished. Four sets of monster statistics are given for Orcus. The first represents Orcus at his full potential, with all three evil shrines intact. The second is for use when one shrine has been destroyed, the third for two shrines destroyed, and the last is if the PCs destroyed all three shrines to Orcus within the dungeon. As you will note, only if all three shrines were destroyed is there really any hope of the PCs ridding the planet of this evil god.

**Tactics:** Orcus spends 2 rounds taunting the PCs. The other demons and undead attack immediately. The tactics used by the demons are too variable to list; however, it is unlikely that they simply dash into combat. Orcus prefers to *summon shadows*, as he can summon a large number of them and they are unturnable and can gang up on his enemies and drain strength. He also likes to summon vampires. If pressed, he summons a **baalroch** or **mariliths**, though he is loath to do so.

### Orcus' Stats

See the Monster Appendix for a full description of the Demon Prince. Orcus's avatar is considerably stronger than normal when temples dedicated to him in Rappan Athuk remain functioning. His statistics and abilities—depending on the number of shrines destroyed—are as follows:

**Orcus (unweakened):** HD 30 (120 hp); AC -5 [24]; Atk *Wand of Orcus* (2d6 or death) or 2 fists (3d6) and tail sting (2d6 plus poison); Move 18 (fly 24); Save 3; AL C; CL/XP 40/10400; Special: Command undead, spells, summon undead, +3 or better weapon to hit, immunity to electricity and poison, speak with dead, magic resistance (75%), telepathy 100 ft.

**Orcus (one shrine destroyed):** HD 29 (110 hp); AC -5 [24]; Atk *Wand of Orcus* (2d6 or death) or 2 fists (3d6) and tail sting (2d6 plus poison); Move 18 (fly 24); Save 3; AL C; CL/XP 40/10400; Special: Command undead, spells, summon undead, +3 or better weapon to hit, immunity to electricity and poison, speak with dead, magic resistance (65%), telepathy 100 ft.

**Orcus (two shrines destroyed):** HD 27 (90 hp); AC -5 [24]; Atk *Wand of Orcus* (2d6 or death) or 2 fists (3d6) and tail sting (2d6 plus poison); Move 18 (fly 24); Save 3; AL C; CL/XP 40/10400; Special: Command undead, spells, summon undead, +2 or better weapon to hit, immunity to electricity and poison, speak with dead, magic resistance (55%), telepathy 100 ft.

**Orcus (three shrines destroyed):** HD 25 (70 hp); AC -5 [24]; Atk *Wand of Orcus* (2d6 or death) or 2 fists (3d6) and tail sting (2d6 plus poison); Move 18 (fly 24); Save 3; AL C;