

# Level 4: The Upper Temple of Orcus

## Level 4

**Equivalent Dungeon Level:** 5, 8 if the evil temple is assaulted

**Entrances:** Stairs from **Level 3**

**Exits:** Stairs to **Level 5**; rat tunnel to **Level 6A**

**Wandering Monsters:** Check once every 30 minutes in cavern areas only on 1d20:

1–2	1d4 ogres (see <b>Area 4–7</b> )
3	1d4 wights
4–5	3d6 giant rats
5	2d6 stirges
6–7	1d6 acolytes of Orcus (see <b>Area 4–9</b> )
8–20	No encounter

**Detections:** Characters detect major evil from **Room 4–9**, owing to the presence of a temple of Orcus.

**Shielding:** None.

**Continuous Effects:** Due to the proximity of the temple, all attempts to turn undead suffer a –2 profane penalty. The entire level radiates a continuous *dispel good* (reverse of *dispel evil*) aura.

**Standard Features:** Unless otherwise noted, all doors on this level are made of locked, iron-reinforced wood that is 2 in. thick. All secret doors are made of stone that is 1 in. thick.

**Traveling in Small Tunnels:** Characters must crawl through a number of tunnels to access certain areas on this level. Primary tunnels (dotted lines) are 3 to 5 ft. in diameter and can be walked through only by small creatures like halflings and goblins. Large creatures cannot pass through these tunnels unless they are long and slender or flexible. Such creatures make all attack rolls at –4, and man-sized creatures using all but thrusting weapons attack at –2. All area affect saves are at –6 while in the primary tunnels.

Smaller tunnels (solid lines) are less than 3 feet in diameter; even small creatures must crawl. Man-sized creatures make all attack rolls at –4, and small creatures using all but thrusting weapons attack at –2. No saves are allowed for area effects in small tunnels.

**Ogre:** HD 4+1; AC 5[14]; Atk 1 large club or spear (1d10+1); Move 9; Save 13; AL C; CL/XP 4/120; Special: None. Gear: 3d12 gp, 4d10 sp each.

**Wight:** HD 3; AC 5 [14]; Atk 1 claw (1hp + 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.

**Giant Rat:** HD 1d4 hp; AC 7 [12]; Atk 1 bite (1d3); Move 12;

Save 18; AL N; CL/XP A/5; Special: 5% are diseased.

**Stirge:** HD 1+1 (5 hp each); AC 7[12]; Atk 1 proboscis (1d3); Move 3 (Fly 18); Save 17; AL N; CL/XP 1/15; Special: blood drain (1d4), +2 to hit bonus.

**Orc, Acolyte of Orcus, Male Clr2:** HD 2 (8 hp); AC 4 [15]; Atk 1 heavy mace (1d6); Move 9; Save 14 (12 vs. paralysis and poison); AL C; CL/XP 2/30; Special: Cleric spells: 1st—*protection from good*. Gear: Chainmail, shield, heavy mace, 3 vials of unholy water, unholy symbol of Orcus, black robe emblazoned with the symbol of Orcus, a small sack with 4d10 gp.

This level houses the first of three evil temples — dedicated to the foul lord of the undead, Orcus — secreted within the catacombs of Rappan Athuk. Several priests, a demon, and a powerful spectre named Nadroj, guard this temple. A party might believe that this is the true temple of Orcus and fooled into believing that, should the temple be destroyed, the party has negated the primary force empowering these evil halls.

Referees should play the priests and other temple guardians as if they were the Referee's own characters. This major encounter area within these catacombs should not be an easy quest nor softened for the meek. As they encounter extraordinary danger, several PCs may die. The survivors' sense of accomplishment must be high, once the priests are defeated, or they may miss the point — that this is but one of three temples and that greater challenges await discovery!

This level's other denizens include a lair of ogres and an otyugh (unassociated with the temple). The map of this level is shown in **Map RA–4**.

## 4–1. Entrance

These stairs descend from **Level 3**. They are neither trapped nor dangerous in any way.

## 4–2. Empty

Bones and junk litter all rooms and caverns marked **4–2**. Referees should spice up each of these rooms with 2d4 randomly rolled items from the Dungeon Dressing table in **Frog God Games Tome of Adventure Design**, “**Book Three**, Dungeon Dressing.” Referees should also roll a wandering monster check each time characters enter a room labeled “**4–2**.”

## 4–3. Water, Water, Everywhere!

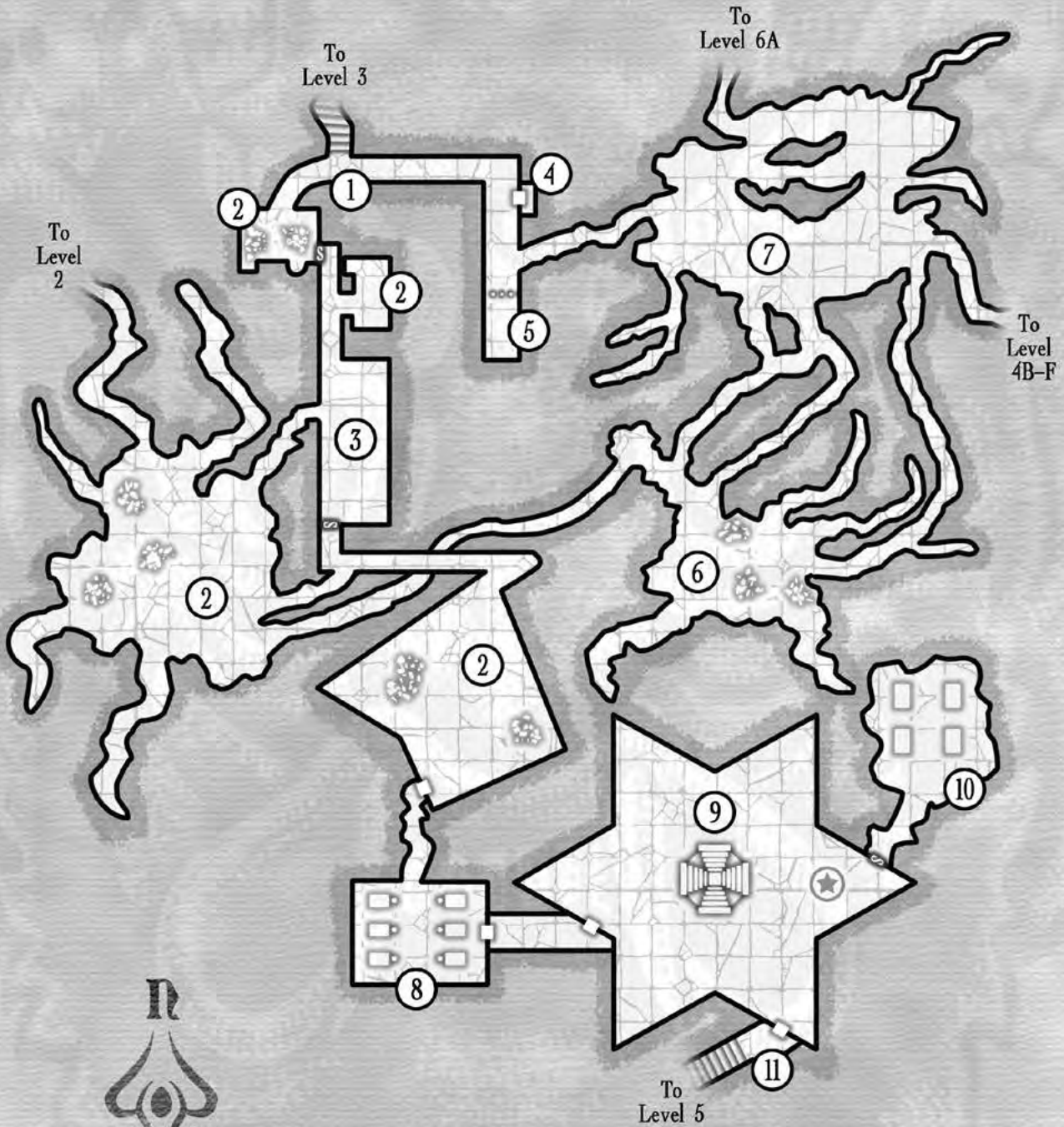
Oily bubbles regularly spout to the surface of this water-filled room, creating a rippling, iridescent sheen. The walls and ceiling, colored a glossy black, cast weird reflections from the party's torches.

Despite its appearance, there is nothing particularly hazardous in this room — except to halflings! Three feet deep, the water covers a foot-thick floor of organic mud (the decomposing matter of which creates the bubbles). All movement in this room is at 1/8 normal speed. On the south side of the room, a *wizard locked secret door* (11th level caster)

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1 square = 10 feet



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provides access to the upper temple area. The door opens by sliding down from above the water line, stopping about 4 ft. off the ground. Opening this door triggers an *alarm* in **Area 4-8**, permitting the priests therein to prepare for the party.

### 4-4. The Trap, Part 1 — The Monster and Gate

The priests in **Room 4-9** designed this trap to slay the unwary. The trap consists of a rotating stone block triggered to drop a stone portcullis and simultaneously release a **black pudding**. Nothing happens here until something triggers the trap in **Area 4-5**, thus releasing the pudding. The pudding completely fills the hallway and slowly moves down the corridor toward **Area 4-5**, attacking trapped victims. There is no way to detect the stone block portion of this trap, but characters inspecting the ceiling might detect the portcullis (which blocks the passageway).

**Stone Portcullis Trap:** A maximum of 3 people may combine their efforts to lift this gate; manual reset; attacks as a 10 HD monster inflicting 3d6 points of damage to anything underneath it when it falls.

**Note:** Damage applies only to those underneath the portcullis

**Black Pudding:** HD 10 (60 hp); AC 6 [13]; Atk 1 attack (3d8); Move 6; Save 5; AI N; CL/XP 11/1700; Special: Acidic surface, immune to cold, divides when hit with lightning.

### 4-5. The Trap, Part 2 — The Trigger

The **secret door** in this area is a false door that springs the trap. Relatively easy to find and unlock the secret door opens outward. One round after it is opened, the trap springs: the portcullis drops, and the pudding in **Area 4-4** is released. The pudding arrives in 5 rounds, oozing through the bars to attack the PCs. The secret door opens to reveal a blank wall. A portcullis slams shut 40 ft. behind the PCs. A grinding noise can be heard and a large blob oozes out of the wall, about 100 ft. behind the portcullis. It begins to slither toward towards its trapped dinner!

### 4-6. Max's Lair

The air in this room smells terrible; slimy dung rots in piles, and rotten corpses are heaped everywhere. This is the lair of **Max**, a surprisingly intelligent otyugh. Any living creature that enters Max's lair must succeed on a saving throw vs. poison or be rendered helpless and puking until removed from the area. Each attempt to subsequently reenter the area requires a save. Max hides and waits until the PCs have fully explored the room and encountered no hazards. He lurks under three feet of offal near the tunnel to the east and grabs the last person in line, as the PCs move into the tunnel, trying to create a bottleneck. Max will negotiate with the PCs, speaking a broken version of Common. If the Referee feels up to some creative role playing, Max might befriend the PCs if they in turn bring him "gifts."

**Max the Otyugh:** HD 7 (36 hp); AC 3 [16]; Atk 2 tentacles (1d8), bite (1d4+1); Move 6; Save 9; CL/XP 8/800; Special: Disease.

Otyughs live underground, hiding in piles of refuse, for they are scavengers. These bizarre creatures are slightly larger than a human, a mass of flesh mounted on three squat, elephant-like legs. The otyugh has a sensory-organ stalk, and two rough, bone-ridged tentacles used for attacking

enemies. Anyone bitten by an otyugh's mouth has a 90% chance of contracting a fatal disease (death in 3d6 days unless cured). Although they are relatively stupid, otyughs use rudimentary telepathy to communicate with each other (and other telepathic beings, if they are encountered).

**Tactics:** Max is not nearly tough enough to confront a party that has survived long enough to reach its lair. Therefore, he will grab one PC, grapple him without causing damage, and begin speaking. Max prefers to be "friends" with the PCs, hoping they will present him with dead things. In return, he helps the PCs by watching their backs while they are near his lair and giving them "gifts" (though such gifts should be spread out over several visits). Max, a coward at heart, will not fight unless cornered, nor does his friendship extend to fighting for the PCs.

**Treasure:** Max possesses several treasure items that the PCs cannot find in the over-three-foot-deep piles of filth in which he lives. Max might give these items as gifts to the PCs, depending on the players' roleplaying or the size and quantity of presents that the PCs give Max. PCs cannot locate these items without Max's help.

Max has the following items in his lair: 1 suit of dwarf-sized platemail, a brass tiara worth 125 gp, a goblet carved from lapis lazuli worth 500 gp and a +1 shield.

### 4-7. The Monster and Treasure Room

**These 8 ogres** wandered up from **Level 12A** via **Levels 6A** and **9A** and established their den in this cave. They have been quite happy here, sniping at the local fauna or the amusing adventurers who occasionally cross their path. The ogres have an uneasy truce with the inhabitants of both the evil temple and **Level 5**; they do not readily venture to either area, preferring a more circuitous route that avoids them since a member of their party got himself killed on **Level 5**, and Banth cannibalized him for spare parts to create a flesh golem. The ogres attack immediately, but retreat to **Level 6A** if sorely injured.

**Ogres (8):** HD 4+1; AC 5 [14]; Atk 1 large club or spear (1d10+1); Move 9; Save 13; AL C; CL/XP 4/120; Special: None. Gear: 3d12 gp, 4d10 sp each.

**Tactics:** If they surprise the PCs, the ogres throw spears and charge, trying to bottleneck the PCs in the entrance tunnel. Though not too bright, the ogres are smart enough to attack "witchy-humans" (i.e., spellcasters), if they can get at them, and concentrate their attacks on specific opponents instead of pairing off with individual combatants.

**Treasure:** These ogres have accumulated quite a hoard. Each ogre has a large sack packed with several goodies, as follows:

- **Sack one** contains three dead giant rats, a large wheel of cheese, 140 gp, 3 oil flasks and a large, pretty rock (uncut, unpolished alexandrite worth 1,000 gp).

- **Sack two** contains half of a week-dead elf wearing elven chainmail, a longsword etched with silver with a golden pommel and quillions (worth 200 gp), six silver arrows in a leather quiver and 230 sp.

- **Sack three** contains a small cask of fine brandy, a heavy crossbow, a steel breastplate of dwarf manufacture, a ceramic pot full of antitoxin (six doses; grants a +5 bonus to save vs. poison), 325 cp and 120 sp.

- **Sack four** contains a two-foot-square silver mirror, a silver and sapphire ring worth 30 gp, a mummified human arm, a battered book written in halfling (titled *The Wanderings of Helman Hairfoot*) with a rose pressed inside it, and a rusted crowbar (which is really a rusted crowbar).

- **Sack five** contains an ivory scroll case (10 gp) that contains a treasure map (located outside Rappan Athuk), 44 gp, a silver helmet with a garnet set in the forehead (altogether worth 60 gp), two dead rats and one dead stirge.

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- **Sack six** contains the body of a dead magic-user wearing tattered robes and a silver dagger, four large but worthless shiny rocks, a thoroughly destroyed spellbook with only two spells still usable for study (darkvision and dispel magic), 340 sp and 100 gp.

- **Sack seven** contains three flasks of holy water, a case of 12 crossbow bolts and 120 gp.

- **Sack eight** contains a mantle of hope, five dead giant rats, a severed halfling head wearing an earring made of gold worth 10 gp, six large but rusty iron spikes and a small sack of fresh oranges (10).

## 4–8. The Priests' Quarters

This room functions as the temple priests' sleeping quarters. The room contains six beds, evenly spaced apart, and six wooden chests, one situated at the foot of each bed. The beds and chests are of simple yet practical construction.

The priests, most likely absent when the PCs arrive, are preparing for combat on unholy ground (Area 4–9). They have left behind several surprises for the party: the chests are trapped, as is the door leading to Area 4–9! The chests all contain non-magical robes, cloaks and daggers. The third chest also contains a *Book of Ineffable Foulness* and a *ring of the weak mind* (that instead detects as a *ring of feather fall*), which gives the wearer –2 on all saves to resist mind control and illusion. The traps are as follows:

**Chest #1 — Poison Gas Trap:** Set off by a touch trigger; all targets in a 20 ft. radius sphere must save or die.

**Chest #2 — Lightning Blast Trap:** Set off by a touch trigger and resets automatically; throws a 9 dice *lightning bolt* (as the spell).

**Chest #3 — Globe of Cold Trap:** Set off by a touch trigger and resets automatically; throws a 9 dice globe of cold (as fireball, only freezing damage).

**Chest #4 — Scything Blade Trap:** Set off by touch trigger and resets automatically; attacks as a 8 HD monster and deals 1d8 points of damage.

**Chest #5 — Poison Needle Trap:** Set off by a touch trigger; save or die.

**Chest #6 — Mind Fog Trap:** Set off by touch trigger and resets automatically; casts a power word *blind* effect (per 9th level magic-user).

**Door with Feeblemind Trap:** Set off by touch trigger and resets automatically; casts *feeblemind* (9th-level magic-user) on all within a 20-foot radius area.

### Shrines of Power

The unholy shrines in this dungeon, of which this is the first, provide power to the demon prince, Orcus, and his avatar, the "Master." To cleanse the area of evil, PCs must destroy and perform *dispel evil* upon each unholy shrine. Additionally, destroying the unholy shrines weakens Orcus' avatar, making it possible for a high-level party to defeat him on Level 15.





## 4–9. The Upper Temple

This area is a set of huge double doors, carved from deep-black stone. The doors' bas-relief carvings indicate that some great evil lies beyond. Lifelike details in the skulls, screaming faces, unholy symbols and demons are carved into the doors.

The shrine doors themselves are **trapped**, but not locked. Once the doors are opened, the real fun begins — PCs face **Zehn**, a chaotic high priest; five of his 5th level underpriests; a dozen acolytes; Nargarshapan the vroock and Nadroj the spectre. Remember: Lawful creatures attack at -2 to hit in this area!

**Referee Note:** The teleportal from **Level 3A, Area 3A–10**, deposits PCs in this area.

**Stone Double Doors with Glyph of Warding Trap:** 3 in. thick; protected by glyph of warding cast by a 9th-level cleric; all non-chaotic creatures passing through the portal are cursed to lose 6 points of wisdom (save to negate).

The room itself, shaped like a six-pointed star, features a fiery pit of smoky lava at its center. Over this pit, a series of four staircases ascend to a central platform, 30 ft. above the lava. Immersion in the lava deals 10d10 points of fire damage per round, no save allowed. Contact with the liquid causes 6d6 points of fire damage per round (save for half). The room's final noteworthy feature is a statue of the demon prince, Orcus.

**Zehn**, a high priest of Orcus, and several **attendants** oversee this

shrine. The demon prince has bequeathed Zehn a pair of assistants to aid in the temple's defense: **Nargarshapan**, a vroock, and **Nadroj**, a spectre (formerly a magic-user/merchant favored by Orcus, and thus allowed to retain his knowledge of spells) whose tomb is located on **Level 6A**. Several, if not all PCs may perish in an attempt to destroy this den of evil. Wise and well versed in combat, the priests never surrender or parley. Anyone captured alive is either immediately killed or sacrificed to Orcus after the battle. Combat like this is the stuff of which legends are made. Referees should play these NPCs with all their guile and skill. If their PCs finally defeat them, Referees should buy their players a drink and pat them on the back; they have done well.

**Zehn, Male Human, Clr9 (Orcus):** HP 41; AC 2 [17]; Atk 1 heavy mace (1d6); Move 9; Save 7 (5 vs. paralysis and poison); AL C; CL/XP 12/2000 Special: Turn undead. Str 14; Dex 10; Con 15; Int 11; Wis 16; Cha 9. Gear: Heavy mace, platemail, shield, priestly vestments, gold unholy symbol (worth 60 gp). Cleric Spells: 1st – *cause light wounds, detect good, protection from good*; 2nd – *bles, hold person, silence, 15-ft. radius*; 3rd – *bestow curse, cause disease, prayer*; 4th – *cause serious wounds x2*; 5th – *dispel good, finger of death*.

**Humans, Priests of Orcus, Male Clr5 (Orcus) (6):** HP 25; AC 4 [15]; Atk 1 morningstar (1d6); Move 12; Save 11 (9 vs. paralysis and poison); AL C; CL/XP 6/400; Special: Turn undead. Gear: Chainmail, shield, morningstar, unholy symbol, prayer book, fine black robe emblazoned with the symbol of Orcus. Cleric Spells: 1st – *cause light wounds,*

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*protection from good*; 2nd – *bless, hold person*.

**Humans, Acolytes of Orcus, Male Clr2 (Orcus) (12):** HP 9; AC 4 [15]; Atk 1 morningstar (1d6); Move 12; Save 14 (12 vs. paralysis and poison); AL C; CL/XP 2/30; Special: Turn undead. Gear: Chainmail, shield, heavy mace, 3 vials of unholy water, unholy symbol, 3d10 gp, lantern, 3 flasks oil, flint and steel. Cleric Spells: 1st – *cause light wounds*.

**Nargarshapan the Vrock:** HD 8 (55 hp); AC 1 [18]; Atk 1 beak (1d6), 2 foreclaws (1d4), 2 rear claws (1d6); Move 12 (Fly 18); Save 8; AL C; CL/XP 9/1100; Special: Magic resistance (50%), darkness, immune to fire.

**Nadroj the Spectre-Wizard:** HD 7 (40 hp); AC 2 [17]; Atk 1 spectral weapon or touch (1d8 + level drain); Move 15 (Fly 30); Save 9; AL C; CL/XP 11/1700; Special: Drain 2 levels with hit, immune to non-magical weapons, magic-user spells: 1st – *charm person, magic missile, protection from good, shield*; 2nd – *mirror image, phantasmal force, web*, 3rd – *hold person, slow*; 4th – *confusion*.

**Tactics:** The priests use fairly simple tactics: Zehn casts *prayer and protection from good* and then teleports PCs into the lava using his ring. The acolytes cast *bless* and *protection from good* then wade into melee, relying on their god's protection. The priests' actions parallel that of the acolytes. When the opportunity presents itself, each priest uses his death touch ability or his *hold person* spell. As befits their chaotic nature, the higher-level priests let the acolytes bear the brunt of combat (e.g., melee with PC fighters). The vrock immediately casts *darkness*, then flies into battle. If the vrock is slain, Zehn calls Nadroj from area 4-10 and begins by using his *hold person* spell. Nadroj arrives in 1d3+1 rounds and begins killing held PCs before using his own spells, beginning with *confusion* and *mirror image*, or engaging mobile foes. None of Orcus' minions retreats or gives quarter. Priests sacrifice charmed PCs immediately following combat, tossing their bodies into the lava pit. With great delight, Nadroj turns paladin characters into spectres.

**Treasure:** Other than the priests' respective treasures, as listed above, are a pair of gigantic fire opals that function as eyes in Orcus' statue (each worth 10,000 gp). The altar service (pure gold) is worth 1,500 gp if melted down and sold as bullion (the melting process will eradicate the bloodstains).

A secret door leads to **Area 4-10**, and a normal door leads to **Level 5**.

## 4-10. Nadroj's Lair

The room contains four crypts, each featuring an intricately carved, knightly figure. A great uneasiness envelops those PCs who enter. As soon as PCs cross the threshold, **3 spectres** rise from the crypts. These horrors — the souls of paladins slain by Nadroj — attack immediately.

**Spectres (3):** HD 7 (30 hp); AC 2 [17]; Atk 1 spectral weapon or touch (1d8 + level drain); Move 15 (Fly 30); Save 9; CL/XP 9/1100; Special: Drain 2 levels with hit, immune to non-magical weapons.

**Tactics:** The spectres attack as a group, draining one opponent entirely before attacking another. They preferentially attack priests and paladins.

**Treasure:** The crypts contain the remains of the three dead paladins. Each paladin wears some useful items, which the evil priests have left intact. Each crypt contains a suit of gilded platemail, a shield, a great helm, and the following items: Crypt one contains a *+1 longsword* that sheds blue light to a radius of 10 feet, the light causing a queasy feeling in the stomachs of chaotic creatures. Crypt two contains a *+1 two-handed sword* that shrieks when it hits chaotic creatures, forcing them to save vs. fear. Crypt three contains a *+1 longsword* that can cure disease once per week for lawful creatures.

## 4-II. Stairs Down

These stairs descend into **Level 5**. They are neither trapped nor otherwise dangerous.