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The Grey Citadel

Temple of the Azure Eye

by Nathan Douglas Paul



*The Temple of the Azure Eye is a short lair-based adventure to be used in conjunction with the adventure module **The Grey Citadel** by Nathan Douglas Paul, available from **Necromancer Games**. It is intended to be a difficult series of events for a party of 4 adventurers of 6th level.*

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The Grey Citadel

Temple of the Azure Eye

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Introduction and Background

The Temple of the Azure Eye is a short lair-based adventure to be used in conjunction with the adventure module *The Grey Citadel* by Nathan Douglas Paul, available from *Necromancer Games*. It is intended to be a difficult series of events for a party of 4 adventurers of 6th level. Larger or more powerful parties may need more powerful or numerous opponents to present an adequate challenge; consider adding class levels to Azouran, extra hit dice to Xaerd or additional class levels to some of the cultists.

The party most likely learned of the existence of the Temple of the Azure Eye from the map they found in the water-carved catacombs below the city of Dun Eamon (dungeon area 3-4 in *The Grey Citadel*). At the DM's discretion, the party may have found the map as part of an entirely different treasure hoard, or purchased it from another adventurer. The local farmers may have reported stock animals stolen by cultists from temple-although they do not know them as such-and delivered the map to the party in hopes of assistance. Regardless of how they come into possession of the map, the adventure begins when they recognize the unnamed landmarks and identify the location: tiny Glitterburn Glen, a small valley not far off the trade road that runs through Eamonvale.

Glitterburn Glen is home to a handful of families and is nestled in a steep-walled canyon with a rough slope of broken rock rising even more steeply at the back. The families farm and graze the valley floor exclusively, only venturing onto the higher slopes in pursuit of itinerant livestock. The opening to the Temple of the Azure Eye is halfway up this steep talus slope, unknown to all but those who worship there. A deep fissure in the rock is filled with runoff like so many others, but it bubbles and glows with an unusual blue light. See area T-1 for further details on the temple's entrance.

The Temple of the Azure Eye is the home of an obscure cult of crystal worshippers. Their leader, who calls himself Azouran, came to Eamonvale from distant lands, seeking crystal formations among the active geothermic springs and ancient caverns that are widely known to exist there. What he found inspired him to form a permanent base of operations and found a

new chapter of his cult. A terrifying aberration known as a **crystalline horror** had either been borne into or made a home in a mineral-rich cold spring in the back of the tiny glen. Xaerd (or Shard, as he is known to the cult) made no effort to relate his origins to the human that arrived in his lair, but the gestures of supplication the man offered pleased the crystal creature and inspired him to tolerate the smaller being as a co-habitant in the heavily crystallized cave. Through Azouran's activities, the cult of crystal-worship grew, and Xaerd found that his loyal servants made his life both safe and comfortable.

The cult flourished for several years, unnoticed by the farmers below except for the occasional disappearance of livestock. Less than a year prior to the events of *The Grey Citadel*, a young cultist made a discovery that overshadowed his fanatical devotion to Azouran and Xaerd with something equally potent: greed. He had discovered tiny clusters of sapphires in the mineral deposits in one of the caverns. Only able to speculate as to their value, he chiseled free a few bits and made his escape, hoping to return with support to exploit the resource. He made it far enough the transfer a few of them to a well connected rogue, who was to meet him at the large standing stones at the mouth of the glen with an appraisal. The cultist never made it to the meeting, but instead paid a grisly price for his treachery at the hands of his brethren. The sapphires and the rough details of the meeting place at the standing stones passed through several hands before winding up in the caverns below Dun Eamon, where a merchant had suffered a similar fate for withholding information from the gang of thieves known as the Ebon Union.

Now that the stones and the partial map are in the hands of the party, they have only to locate the standing stones and investigate Glitterburn Glen. This can be done with a difficult Knowledge (Eamonvale) check (DC 20), through research by defaulting a Knowledge (Cartography) check (DC 15) with a bonus based on the quality of the research facility, or by using Gather Information (DC 18) with travelers who could reasonably be familiar with such landmarks. A two-day ride from the Dun Eamon (with the appropriate encounters from the Wilderness Encounters section) brings the party to the quiet glen and its small farm community, where the events below begin.

In Glitterburn Glen

The sleepy little community of Glitterburn Glen is so named because of the myriad flakes of mica in the brook that babbles softly between the farms on its way join the rushing River Eamon. The name itself should be a clue to the nature of the mineral deposits in the hills, where numerous springs feed the year-round flow of the brook. The farmers that live there are simple folk, and they have only one common building—a stone homestead that was willed to the collective ownership of the community—to call a public house. There they gather in the evenings to chat, mend and pass jugs of home-brewed mead and cider. No money is exchanged, and everyone brings what he or she can afford to toss in the stewpot, or a song and a tall tale. They are typical of the hardy, self-sufficient folk of Eamonvale, but they are completely unaware of the dangerous creature that dwells just beyond their grazing flocks.

In addition to the name of the valley, the party might catch a few other clues to the location of the mineral deposits:

Giles Mullion is one of the wealthier farmers in the glen, and he lives in the only two-story building with his wife and three young daughters. In the windows of his farmhouse, visible from the road (Spot DC 18) are slices of geodes that he collected in the high pastures and carried to Dun Eamon to have sliced and polished. He readily relates to interested characters where he found them and offers to sell them a polished slice for 5 sp.

Phoebe is a seven year old girl who weeds her neighbor's garden plots and is allowed to keep a few vegetables in return, while her widowed mother **Mira** takes in wool from the other farmers to be spun in exchange for a share. A man from a nearby town has plans to wed the young widow and stops by frequently to deliver gifts of cured meat and other goods. Last time he visited, he gave Phoebe a blue crystal pendant that he found while hunting above the glen. She can relate to the party roughly where it was discovered, which may lead them up to the rocky slope at the back of the valley.

Bort is a shepherd who tends some of the higher pastures at the back of the valley. Lately,

he's had less luck in retrieving sheep that have wandered off ('lately' being the past few years, as the cult has grown). He recently spent his saved-up coin to buy a short sword from a passing merchant. As his paranoia grows, his fire-side tales of wolves, bears, dragons and demons get more and more elaborate, but nobody takes him seriously. The party probably encounters him at the public house.

The Temple of the Azure Eye

The Temple is located up a steep slope of broken rock debris at the back of the little valley. Several streams of water trickle down from the higher hills, all of them heavily mineral-laden and containing the chips of mica that gives the Glitterburn its name. Footing is precarious but relatively safe, although horses cannot navigate the blocks of broken stone. A few faint tracks might be found (Wilderness Lore DC 18) among the mossy boulders, leading to area T-1.

T-1. Entrance Pool

Nestled between massive boulders, a small, oblong pool glimmers brightly despite the gray clouds above. The walls of the pool are of light colored stone, enhancing the blue tint of the water, and several small streams of bubble filter up from the sandy bottom.

The entrance to the temple is a hidden in a deep pool of water (shaped vaguely like an eye). There are tracks easily visible around the pool. There is a small trickle running from the pool down towards the Glitterburn, but there is no apparent inlet from above; the water bubbles up from deep underground. The water is quite cold; heroes entering the pool are subject to the rules for water and cold dangers in the **DMG**. Diving to the bottom and returning to the surface requires a Swim check (DC 12, modified by weight). At the bottom of the pool is a secret door that guards the entrance tunnel.

Secret Door: Search (DC 18), 2 in. thick, Hardness 4, hp 30, Break (DC 18), Strength check to open (DC 20).



T-2. Outer Corridor

The underwater tunnel from the secret door in T-1 surfaces here, in a small pool several feet in diameter. Beyond the edge of the pool, a narrow tunnel leads into darkness. The walls and floor here are thickly crusted with mineral deposits, causing them to glisten dimly in the light filtering up from the pool.

T-3. Sleeping Chamber

In this small cave to the side of the main corridor the cultists share a communal sleeping area. Small pebbles have been used to level the floor and allow drainage, and the cultists sleep in beds made of animal pelts. There is a 20% chance of encountering 1d4 cultists in this area (from area T-6), who are 50% likely to be asleep unless the party makes a noisy entrance.

T-4. Common Chamber

This cavern is larger than the sleeping chamber and hosts the activities of the cult that are not directly related to worshipping Xaerd—which are few. Essentially, the members eat and converse here between cycles of sleep and meditation. The only items of interest are the crystal bowls that cultists eat and drink from, which were grown rather than shaped (see Azouran's granted power, below).

Treasure: 7 heavy crystal bowls, each made up of 40 gp worth of blue quartz, but possibly worth more if aggressively marketed as curiosities or ceremonial artifacts.

T-5. Azouran's Chamber

The cult's spiritual leader resides here, although he spends little time in this area beyond minimal sleep requirements. The area's furnishings are finer than those found elsewhere, but are still simple and ascetic: a pallet bed, a small plank table and a few bits of traveling equipment. What is most noticeable is the concentration of crystal growths here; small clusters of bluish crystals dot the walls and ceiling, seeming to glow with their own radiance. They can be pried free with minimal effort and are valued as blue quartz.

Treasure: 2d10 pieces of blue quartz (4d4 gp each)

T-6. Inner Corridor (EL 7)

A group of **crystal cultists** lie in wait here to attack the party.

The walls of the corridor widen, expanding into a larger chamber. Amazingly, the cavern is filled from one end to the other with spires and slabs of beautiful ice-blue crystal, some as clear as glass, others richly opaque. Light from an unknowable source floods the area, filtered blue by the crystal growths and refracted and reflected through the many facets and panes. Your own images are reflected as well, distorted and multiplied in a bizarre array of geometric images.

This corridor is wider than the entrance corridor, but it has been divided several times with sheets of translucent blue crystal that Azouran created with his *crystal growth* granted power. Repeat uses of the power over several months allowed him to create what he saw to be a fitting tribute to the subject of his worship. The end result is something akin to a hall of mirrors, with the following game effects:

- Spells based on rays or using area effect patterns of light such as *color spray* or *hypnotic pattern* require a Concentration check (DC 14+spell level, or +4 to existing DC) to take full effect. Failing this roll results in either dispersion with no effect or reflection back towards the caster (50% chance of either).

- Individuals fighting in the corridor appear to be under the effects of a *mirror image* spell, with the exception that only 1d3 images are generated (roll every time the hero or NPC makes a 5-foot or greater move). Ranged and melee attacks against individuals in the corridor must be randomly distributed between apparent "targets." Cleave and Great Cleave cannot be used to follow up from a destroyed crystal reflection. **Note:** the cultists are unaffected by this phenomenon and can easily discern a real character from his or her reflection. When introducing the encounter, using phrases like "you see two dozen men leap from hidden niches" can help reinforce the effect.

- When a section of crystal growth is destroyed by any method, apply 1d4-1 points of damage to anyone within a 5-foot radius due to flying slivers of razor-sharp crystal.



Crystal Cultists, War2 (6): CR 1; SZ M; HD 2d8; hp 8, 8, 9, 9, 10, 10; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+2 Dex, +3 armor); Atk +4 melee (1d4+2 plus lasting wound, crystal dagger, crit 19-20/x2); SA crystal dagger; AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 14, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills: Hide +2, Knowledge (mineralogy) +1, Intimidate +1. **Feats:** Dodge, Quick Draw.

SA-Crystal Dagger: Azouran and Xaerd have specially trained the cultists in the use of their crystal daggers. Following a successful hit and only if the cultist has a partial action remaining (did not move or charge), they may use this action to break the dagger in the wound, rendering it useless and dealing an additional 1d4 points of damage. Essentially, this is an automatic critical without the added Strength bonus, and it equates to a full attack action. An actual critical hit stacks its damage with the extra crystal dagger damage.

Possessions: blue leather armor studded with

crystal fragments, 4 crystal daggers, blue quartz pendant worth 8 gp, clear quartz gazing crystal worth 2d10 gp.

Tactics: The cultists lurk on the edge of the corridor in hidden niches screened by crystal sheets, allowing them to imagine that they are immersed in their beloved element. Their armor, tattoos and the distortion of light in the chamber aide their Hide rolls (+10 circumstance bonus, total bonus +12). Once one of the cultists is aware of the party, they all leap out (spectacularly through the crystal panels, if desired) and attack the party. Once they have closed to melee range, they use an attack action, followed by their lasting wound ability if the attack is successful and finish with a 5-foot step to change their reflections. They use their Quick Draw feat to re-arm themselves for the next round. They fight as fiercely as any devoted fanatic, making the most of the mirror effect of the chamber and continuing until slain.

T-7. The Temple (EL 10)

<n>This area is primary place of worship for cult, and the setting for the final showdown. The text has been written assuming the party made a bit of noise on their way in.

A group of five men stand on the far side of this chamber, gazing at you as you enter. Their skin is heavily scarred and tattooed with intricate geometric patterns, and they all wear blue leather sarongs hung with tiny crystals. Behind them is a shimmering pool of clear blue water.

Azouran, Clr8: CR 8; SZ M; HD 8d8+16; hp 62; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+1 Dex, +2 Natural, +3 armor); Atk +10/+5 melee (1d8+2, masterwork mace); SA crystal dagger; SQ crystal growth, scarification, rebuke undead, unique spells; AL LE; SV Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +11; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 16, Cha 10.

Skills: Concentration +10, Knowledge (mineralogy) +2, Heal +4. **Feats:** Combat Casting, Empower Spell, Iron Will, Weapon Focus (mace).

Divine Spells Prepared (6/5/4/4/2): 0-cure minor wounds, guidance, light, mending (x2), resistance; 1st -command, cure light wounds, detect chaos, glitterdust (x2); 2nd-cure moderate wounds, delay poison, hold person, shatter, 3rd-cure serious wounds, dispel magic, magic vestment, meld into stone; 4th-cure critical wounds, empowered bull's strength.

Domain Spells Prepared (Earth, Evil): 0-magic stone; 1st-soften earth and stone; 2nd-stone shape; 4th-spike stones.

SA-Crystal Dagger: The entire cult is highly trained in the use of their crystal daggers. Following a successful hit and only if the cultist has a partial action remaining (did not move or charge), they may use this action to break the dagger in the wound, rendering it useless and dealing an additional 1d4 points of damage. Essentially, this is an automatic critical without the added Strength bonus, and it equates to a full attack action. An actual critical hit stacks its damage with the extra crystal dagger damage.

SQ-Granted Power: Clerics of Azouran's mineral god can create crystal growth once per day. This power creates *crystal sheets* (6 square inches per cleric level) or *crystal clusters* (1 cubic inch per cleric level). The normal conditions for crystal growth (mineral deposits, water,

temperature) must be met. Both formations are of low-grade quartz worth an average of 1 gp per cleric level. Multiple uses of this power may be used to create larger formations.

SQ-Scarification: Azouran and the adepts of the cult have been subject to repeated ritual scarification ceremonies at the hands of Xaerd. The result is an enormous quantity of scar tissue covering their entire bodies. This renders them less sensitive to pain and slightly more resistant to damage, resulting in a +2 natural armor bonus.

SQ-Unique Spells: Azouran and his adepts have access to spells that are normally unavailable to divine casters. The most notable is *glitterdust*, which is identical to the arcane version except that it is a 1st level spell for devotees of the mineral god. At the DM's discretion, other earth or mineral-related spells may also be available.

Possessions: crystal-topped masterwork mace, 2 crystal daggers, pouch with 4 sp, pouch with 5 uncut sapphires worth 275 gp, 250 gp, 225 gp, 200 gp (x2).

Description: Azouran is a quiet, intense man of medium height. His head is cleanly shaven and decorated with geometric patterns tattooed across his scalp. The tattoos continue down his face and spread across his lean torso to the belted leather sarong he wears. Tiny crystals hang from his ears, neck and broad belt.

Azouran founded the Cult of the Azure Eye upon discovery of the eye-shaped pool, the crystal-filled cave and its unique tenant. The current membership of the cult is comprised of like-minded worshippers he has sought out over the past several months. They respect his authority, but even Azouran bows to the will of Xaerd, who they regard as an avatar of their mineral god.

Crystal Adepts, Adp2 (4): CR 1; SZ M; HD 2d4+7; hp 11, 12, 12, 13; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+1 Dex, +2 natural); Atk +1 melee (1d4 plus lasting wound, crystal dagger, crit 19-20/x2); SA crystal dagger; SQ scarification, unique spells; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +5; Attributes Str 10, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 14, Chr 8.

Skills: Concentration +7, Knowledge (mineralogy) +2, Heal +5. **Feats:** Combat Casting, Toughness.

Divine Spells Prepared (3/2): 0-cure minor wounds, guidance, light; 1st -cure light wounds, glitterdust.

SA-Crystal Dagger: As described above.

SQ-Scarification: As described above.

SQ-Unique Spells: As described above

Possessions: 2 crystal daggers, blue quartz pendant worth 8 gp, clear quartz gazing crystal worth 2d10 gp.

Description: The Adepts are shaved and tattooed like their leader, and wear similar blue-dyed leather sarongs that offer no actual protection.

Xaerd (Shard), Crystalline Horror: CR 5; SZ M Aberration; HD 7d8+21; hp 52; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 20 (+2 Dex, +8 natural); Atk +9 melee (1d6+4[x2] plus wounding, claws), +7 ranged (4d6, crystal shards, crit 19-20/x2); SA shard spray, wounding; SQ damage reduction 10/+1, cold resistance 20, bend light, blindsight; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +6; Str 19, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills: Hide +8, Listen +8, Move Silently +9, Search +5, Spot +9. *Feats:* Dodge.

SA-Shard Spray (Ex): As a standard action, a crystalline horror can loose a spray of razor-sharp shards of glass in a 40-foot cone from its body. This spray deals 4d6 points of damage

and threatens a critical on a roll of 19 or 20. The crystalline horror can fire one such spray, once per round, and no more than 5 times per day.

SA-Wounding (Ex): Each time a crystalline horror hits with a claw attack a small bit of glass breaks off in the wound, resulting in a wound that bleeds for 1 point of damage per round thereafter. Multiple wounds result in cumulative bleeding. The bleeding can only be stopped by a successful Heal check (DC 15) or the application of any cure spell or other healing-type magic (*heal*, *healing circle*, for example).

SQ-Bend Light (Ex): By shifting the make-up of its body, a crystalline horror can refract natural light in a 10-foot spread as a standard action. Creatures in the area of effect must succeed at a Reflex save (DC 16) or be blinded for 3 rounds (50% miss chance in combat, all opponents have full concealment, lose Dexterity bonus to AC and grant opponents a +2 bonus to attack rolls, move at half speed, and suffer a -4 on most Strength and Dexterity-based skills). Creatures to whom sunlight is harmful or unnatural take 2d6 points of damage from this ability. Undead creatures caught within the area take 4d6 points of damage and undead particularly vulnerable to sunlight, such as vampires, take 4d8 points of



damage. Creatures that cannot see or perceive objects through the use of vision are unaffected by the blindness, but still suffer damage if they are vulnerable to sunlight.

Note: The Crystalline Horror is an original creature created by Scott Greene and is featured in the *Tome of Horrors*, available from *Necromancer Games*.

Tactics: Azouran and the adepts are openly worshipping at the edge of Xaerd's pool when the party enters, although if any of the crystal panels in area T-6 were smashed or if other loud noises were created, there is no chance for surprise. The adepts initiate combat by moving forward, flinging fistfuls of mica over the party and casting *glitterdust*. They then leap into melee with their crystal daggers to protect their leader and the avatar of their mineral god.

Azouran begins the combat by casting *empowered bull's strength* (Str 19, +10/+5 melee, 1d8+6) and *magic vestment* (AC 18). He casts *glitterdust* if not already engaged and then wades into combat swinging his crystal-topped mace. He heals himself as necessary, but only heals the adepts if not threatened.

Xaerd lurks in his pool of clear blue water until the combat is underway, and then leaps out in a spray of icy water and crystal shards on the third round. He avoids including Azouran in the area of effect of his shard spray or bend light abilities, but willingly deals damage to the adepts if they are in melee with the heroes (they merely sigh in pleasure as the lethal slivers lacerate their bodies). After identifying the most threatening target, he engages in hand to hand combat.

T-8. Xaerd's Pool

In the deep, clear pool at the back of the Temple is the treasure that drew the party here. In the silica-rich sand at the bottom of the 10-foot deep pool (see area T-1 for the rules for swimming in this pool) are some uncut sapphires and other gems that Xaerd had collected and used to entice the cultists to act on his behalf.

Treasure: 8 uncut sapphires worth 300 gp (x3), 275 gp, 250 gp (x3), 225 gp; 4d10 pieces of blue quartz worth 4d4 gp each. **Note:** there is no noticeable difference between the unfinished stones... all appear dirty, clouded and encrusted with worthless deposits. A Knowledge (gemcutting) or Appraise check (DC 18) is required to separate the priceless from the commonplace.

Development

As mentioned above, the party may try to exploit the mineral resources of the cave, but this requires considerable effort and expenditure in terms of manpower, mining technology and possibly magic. If the party chooses to do so, consider the impact on the farmers of Glitterburn Glen. If they relate their discovery to Arb Angus, the Lord of Eamonvale (who technically has rights to the resources), he may contract them to supervise the mining and protect the crews from danger while excavating the area.

In order to maximize the value of the sapphires, they must be cut and polished. This can be done by the gnomes of the Gemcutter's Shop, which can be found in the great Crafthall in Dun Eamon (area H-10 in The Grey Citadel). These gnomes are shrewd businessgnomes and try to maximize their profits by swindling the party out of the nicer stones in exchange for cutting and polishing the poorer ones.



□ = 10 ft.

Temple of the Azure Eye

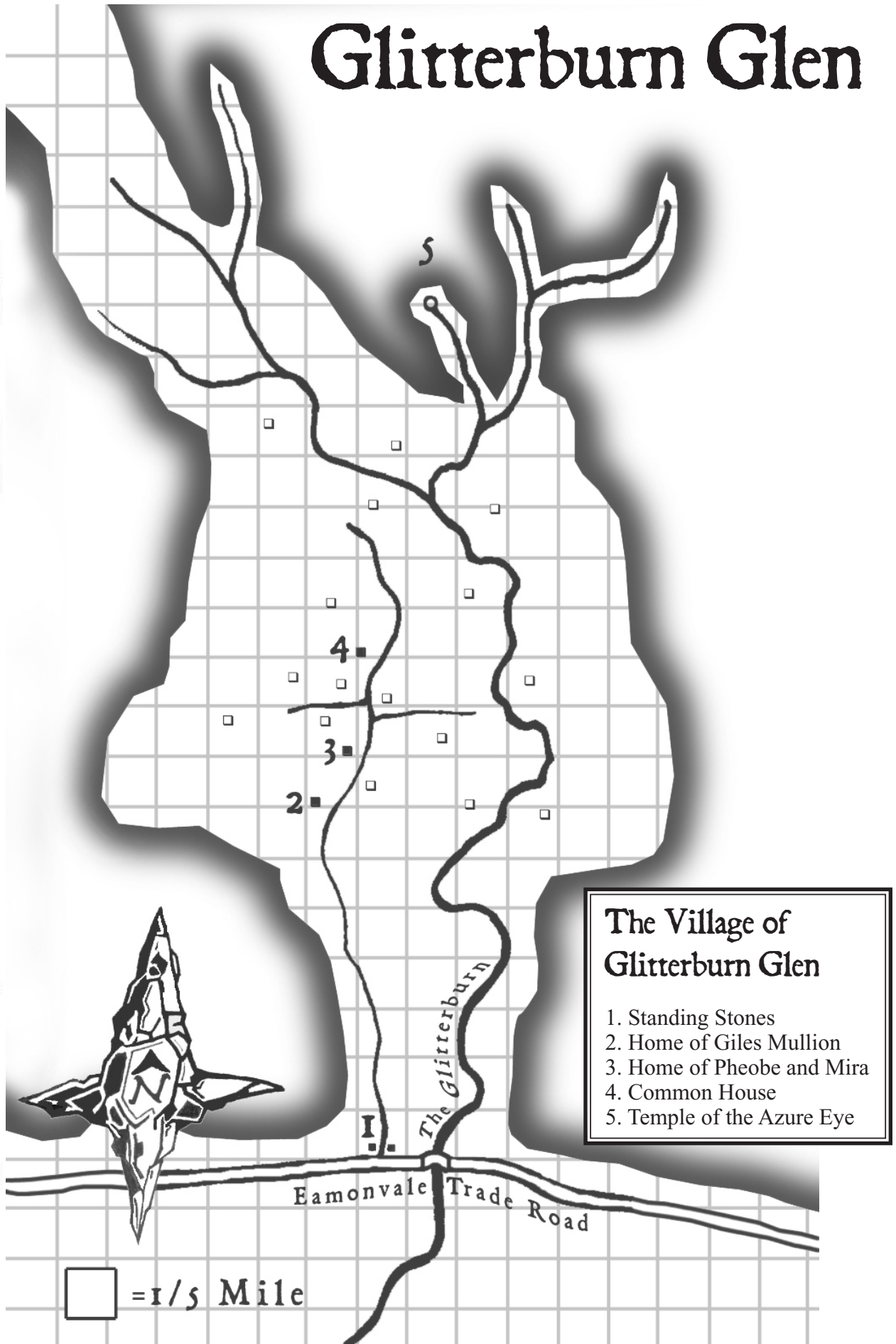


Underground
Pool

Surface Pool



Glitterburn Glen



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