

CHAPTER ONE

I NTRODUCTION

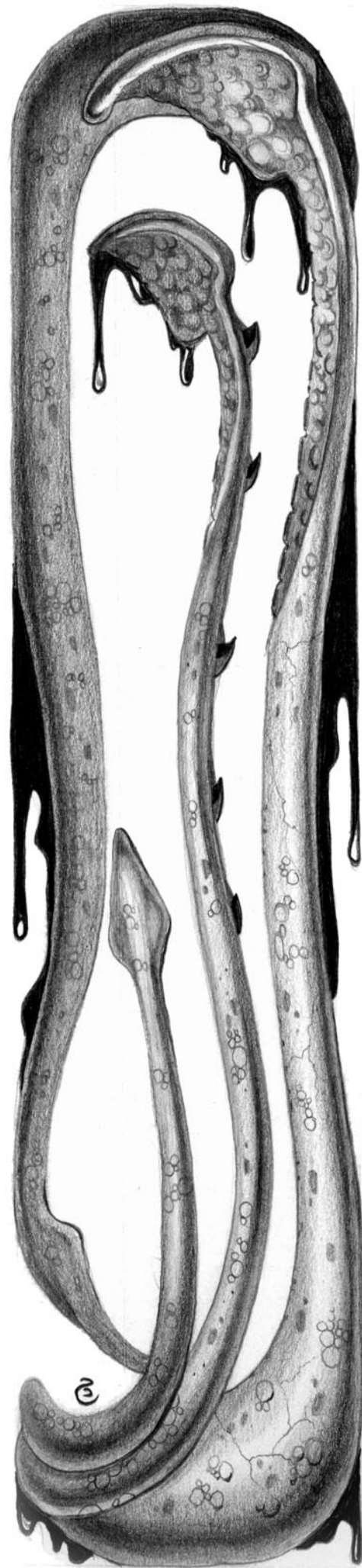
The thing about dirty deeds is that it takes a dirty sort of person to do them — the type that you can't completely trust. It's old hat among the morally upright to point out the inherently self-destructive bent of evil. After all, the fellow who's slimy enough to help you kill your trusting business partner is, by definition, more than ready to turn around and kill you for a few extra coins. Betrayal is a given among thieves and trust is the last resort of the stupid or desperate. Consequently, if you find yourself having to trust some scum bag, count yourself among the stupid and desperate...

Or maybe among the very, very unlucky.

In the Belly of the Beast is a scenario designed for a group of three to six characters of 2nd to 4th Level. The scenario is very roleplaying intensive, as the meat of the story revolves around the characters' ability to successfully hold together an uneasy alliance of three rival groups. There are plenty of chances for negotiation, social tension, and backstabbing. The scenario also includes a fair bit of combat and tactical planning. With a small amount of work, the adventure can be modified to optimize the action towards either a roleplaying or tactical focus, depending on your group's preferences. Throughout the text, we highlight ideas and tips for modifying the adventure to suit your needs and goals.

The story leading up to the events covered in the adventure is a critical driving force behind the problems and conflicts that the characters must deal with. It is important that you study the background and acquire a fair grasp of it. *In the Belly of the Beast* is a character-driven story, and as such you'll need to understand the characters involved in the adventure to run it well.

A few common gaming aids can come in handy when running this adventure. First, miniatures will help for the tactical portions of the action and may even help keep things clear when the characters are interacting with the cast of non-player characters (NPCs) that they meet. Second, a large-scale recreation of the adventure setting, such as a dry erase mat, will aid the players in making plans and visualizing their situation. Finally, as the adventure features a lot of roleplaying and diplomacy, you may want to formulate a distinctive voice and mannerisms that you can act out for each NPC in order to make each one a distinct person in the players' minds.



CUSTOMIZATION

This scenario is designed to be adaptable to any fantasy setting with a minimum of work. The bulk of the action takes place in the sewers beneath an unnamed city. The details of the city, such as its government and important personages, are intentionally left undeveloped so that the adventure is as portable as possible. Each NPC's background is left vague as to particular places or people. You may want to incorporate elements of your own game world into the backgrounds in order to better integrate the NPCs into your game. If your campaign is in the planning stages, you may wish to drop hints about the NPCs and the organizations they represent into your game in order to foreshadow the action in this scenario and to increase the tension between the player characters (PCs) and the NPCs.

CC2 MAPS

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