

University Tests

Short University Scenarios by Pythagoras (gurps.hardpoints.de)

Introduction

These adventures are intended to give the PCs the feeling that they are part of a magical university.

Scenario 1: The Familiar Test



Summary

The PCs participate in the annual test that grants the 5 best students a familiar. The test consists of an underground labyrinth with unique traps and complications as well as a few combat challenges.

The rules are simple: Those who manage to return to the stairs up with a familiar can keep it. No other student must be seriously harmed or killed by direct action. No outside help is allowed. Other than that, anything goes. When they give a code word, a master will teleport in to rescue the person who spoke the word.

Familiar Effects

A familiar typically grants +2 to a single magical talent and +3 FP/day to use for spells only. It is a loyal ally, except for imps, who follow orders to the letter but try to twist them as much as they can.

The competitors

A total of 8 students take part in the competition (depending on your number of PCs, fill up the rest with the following students):

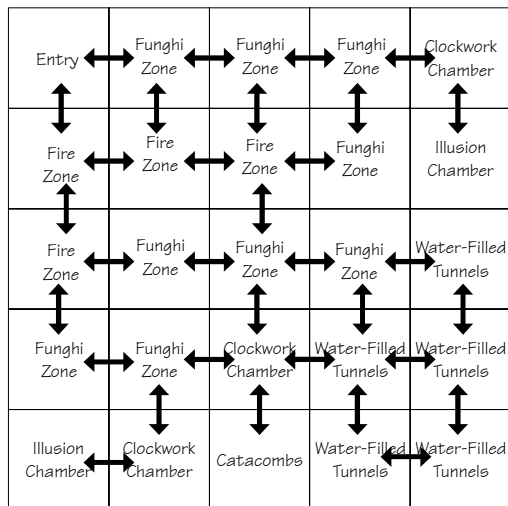
- **Beslen Dyrr** (see NPCs of Ill Repute), will try to use his *Obscuring Mist* spell to hide the traps in the labyrinth in order to cause others to fall into them. His primary action is to prevent others from achieving their goals.
- **Loic Fond-De-Chaussure** (see NPCs of Ill Repute), is mostly comic relief. He is arrogant and reckless, ending up in some sort of trap soon.
- **Lady Yasmin Virayana** (see NPCs of Ill Repute), will try to seem as friendly and meek as possible. She will stick close to others and tries to take advantage of them but only in a way that will not make her look bad. She will even pretend trying to help others but claim to be too weak.
- **Chuck McNorris** is a hulking, hairy Scotsman, with a booming laugh but callous eyes. Chuck is a Fire Wizard, who knows how to Produce Fire, Produce Light and how to cast a fire dart (Acc +0, 1/2D 10, Max 100, RoF 1, Recoil 1, Damage 2d burn). His important skills are: Brawling 16, Observation 13, Stealth 13, HT 14, FP 16. He largely ignores his competitors, blasting everything non-student that comes into his path.
- **Antonio Battasta** is a vile-looking Belcadiz elf practicing illusionism. He is very suspicious of others and a real loner. His spells are *Dancing Lights* and *Optical Illusion*. He uses the latter to create illusions of

familiars in order to lure his competitors away from the real ones. He is also a master at using wands (Magic Wand skill 16) and has a Bone Dart wand (Dam 2d-1 pi+, Acc 1, Range 75/450, RoF 1, Rcl 2) and an Ice Blow wand (Dam 2d-1 pi- and 1d fatigue (hypothermia), Acc 2, Range 75/450, RoF 1, Rcl 2), which he uses to great effect against the monsters and his fellow students (only the latter).

The Location

The test takes place in the underground labyrinth beneath the school. It is a damp, dripping place, full of slimes and funghi of all kinds. The place usually smells damp and it is hard to breathe the wet, cold air.

The underground zone is huge and a detailed map is not necessary to avoid a dungeon crawl feel. Instead, use the overview diagram on the next page, which gives an abstract description of



the place.

Each zone takes about an hour to cross and each hour within a zone requires one roll on the event table (1d6). Also, there is a 2 in 6 chance to encounter other students. Make sure that these students will either mislead the PCs or fall for one of the traps. If things seem to take too long, one of these students

might already have a familiar in his hands, giving the PCs a chance to grab it away from their competition.

Since the competition takes as long as required, the PCs can rest inside the labyrinth as well. Each day, there is a 2 in 6 chance that one of the 5 familiars is found, bringing the test closer to its end.

Entry Area

This zone of the labyrinth is harmless but requires some patience to traverse.

Fire Zone

This part of the labyrinth is growing increasingly hotter as the PCs go deeper and the air has a tinge of sulphur. Each hour in this area causes 1 FP of damage due to the heat.

1	No event
2	No event
3	Fire Trap
4	Triggered Fire Trap
5	Lava Pit
6	Familiar

Fire Trap

An Observation+2 or Per+2 roll reveals that there are tiny holes in the floor that smell of hot oil. Those entering this zone will take 2d burn damage to their legs (1-3) or torso (4-5) or arms (6) (roll 1d6).

Triggered Fire Trap

As above, but there are signs that the trap has been triggered, leaving it harmless. One of the fellow students is now wounded and might even still lie here. Helping a wounded enemy is probably a good way to make a friend.

Lava Pit

The tunnel is blocked by a lava pit, which can be bypassed with a Climbing-4, a 5m jump, or by flight.

Familiar

Roll 1d6: This is either a small fire elemental (1-3), a tiny pseudodragon (4-5), or a mechanical bird (6).

Funghi Zone

Funghi zones are warm and damp and full of funghi and slimes. There is a good chance that parts of the labyrinth are blocked here and require some effort to pass them by. Also, a gelatinous cube dwells in this section.

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| 1 | Heavy Growth |
| 2 | Heavy Growth |
| 3 | Heavy Growth |
| 4 | Poison Spores |
| 5 | Bare Tunnel |
| 6 | Familiar |

Heavy Growth

The tunnels are filled with all kinds of slimy growth. Hacking through takes 30 minutes extra and costs 1 FP. Fire spells with area effects are a quicker way to get through here.

Poison Spores

This part of the tunnels lies lower and is filled with lazily floating spores. A *Naturalist*+3 or a similar roll will reveal that it is a bad idea to go through here without holding one's breath. The spores deal 1d toxic damage to those breathing them.

Bare Tunnel

An intersecting tunnel is surprisingly clean, exposing bare rock, as if cleaned with acid. A *Per*-2 roll reveals a faint acidic smell. Following the tunnel is a *bad* idea, as it leads up to a hungry Gelatinous Cube.

Familiar

Roll a d6: The creature found is a Bogun (1-2), a Mandragora (3-4), an imp disguised as another creature (5), or a tiny wooden construct doll (6).

Clockwork Chamber

This section is a huge chamber filled with evershifting bridges and moving platforms. The chamber is noisy and smells of metal, smoke, and grease. It is almost impossible to see the walls of the chamber.

In order to cross the chamber, a *Mathematics*-3 or a similar skill roll (adding a bonus for *Versatile*) is required. For each point of failure, the traversal takes an additional 30 minutes and there will be another roll for events.

- | | |
|---|------------------------|
| 1 | Electrum Horror |
| 2 | The Web |
| 3 | The Corridor of Blades |
| 4 | Electrum Horror |
| 5 | Broken Cogs |
| 6 | No Event |

Electrum Horror

An Electrum Horror guards the bridge the PCs have chosen. It will attack anything it spots and fight to the death. What makes this scenario interesting is that the fight takes place on a bridge that is moving (requires *Acrobatics*+2 or *DX*+2 to be able to act. Critical failure means that the PC falls to the next lower level taking 1d+2 damage).

The Web

A huge and almost intransparent web blocks the way of the PCs. It is home to three small poisonous monstrous spiders. These creatures are hungry but is wounded or outnumbered will retreat.

The Corridor of Blades

This section of the chamber is filled with long, bladed arms that move at a complex pattern. Three *Acrobatics*-1 or *DX*-1 rolls are required to get through, each failure deals 1d-2 damage to a random location. A *Mathematics*+1 roll is required to figure out the pattern, giving +3 on the *Acrobatics* rolls.

Broken Cogs

The cogs in this section are broken, seemingly damaged by another student. It takes another hour to get through the chamber, requiring another encounter roll.

Illusion Chamber

These chambers look like beautiful libraries, filled with all kinds of interesting books. A Per+Talent (Illusionism)-4 roll is required to figure out that most of the things in this room are just illusions.

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| 1 | Book Avalanche |
| 2 | Fake Familiar |
| 3 | Fake Familiar |
| 4 | Familiar |
| 5 | Familiar |
| 6 | Familiar |

Book Avalanche

An illusionary book avalanche crashes down on the PCs. This requires a Per+Talent (Illusionism)-4 to figure out that this is an illusion. If the roll is failed, a fear check has to be made.

Fake Familiar

A random familiar seems to sleep in this aisle. Make a Per+Talent (Illusionism)-4 to figure out that this (and the carpet on the floor) is an illusion. Those walking up to the familiar will fall down a pit that is filled with spikes dealing 1d-1 impaling damage to the feet. A DX or *Acrobatics* roll allows to avoid this fate.

Familiar

Roll a d6: The creature found is a mechanical brass crab (1), a skeletal rat (2), a cinder rat (3), a floating feathered snake (4), an imp (5), or a cat with boots (6).

Catacombs

These halls are lined with niches full of skeletons. While none of these are

undead, necromancers will still feel a powerful and negative undead presence.

- | | |
|---|----------|
| 1 | Wight |
| 2 | Wight |
| 3 | Wight |
| 4 | Familiar |
| 5 | Familiar |
| 6 | Familiar |

Wight

The PCs hear slow footsteps around a corner and Necromancers will feel a powerful undead presence. The PCs can try to flee and will succeed if their are either fast (4 points of success and less than 2 points of failure with three rolls of *Running*) or stealthy (a single *Stealth*+2 roll, which also gives a brief glimpse at the Wight). This scenario gets interesting when a fellow student shows up, who might alert the Wight of the PCs presence or might join forces with them.

Familiar

Roll a d6: The creature found is a talking skull (1), a spider (2), a dust paraelemental (3), a Will-O-Wisp in a lantern (4), an imp (5), or a tiny obsidian lion construct (6).

Water-Filled Tunnels

These parts of the labyrinth are filled with murky water. It is not cold enough to cause extra fatigue damage and not deep enough to require swimming.

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1 | Movement |
| 2 | Movement |
| 3 | Sudden Underwater Current |
| 4 | The Floating Corpse |
| 5 | Familiar |
| 6 | No Event |

Movement

Let the PCs make a Per test and tell them that there was movement just under the surface or that something touched their legs. However, this is harmless.

Sudden Underwater Current

Unless the leading PC passes a Per-4, he is swept away by a strong underwater current. 5 points of success in *Swimming* are required to get out of the current, with each point of failure increasing this total by one. For every 5 rolls required, the PC takes 1 FP of damage. Giving in to the current causes 1d FP damage and leaves the PC stranded somewhere in the labyrinth.

The Floating Corpse

The PCs find the floating corpse of one of their competitors, showing tiny bite marks all over. Optionally, the student is only unconscious and the PCs might help him or her.

Familiar

Roll a d6: The creature found is a prince turned into a toad (1-2), a water elemental (3), a tiny water nymph (4), a transparent water-element creature turtle (5), or a mechanical beaver (6).