



THE FINAL DEATH OF ZAZ-GEMAN

HOMEBREW

Can you save the City of Jewels from disaster?



The Final Death of Zaz-geman

The *Final Death of Zaz-geman* is a 5th Edition adventure for **3-7 characters of 8th-level** and is **optimized for a party of four characters with an average party level (APL) of 8**. This adventure sees the party climbing the mountain lair of a powerful gorgon called Zaz-geman to steal an artefact that contains the djinni Kedaz the Fair. Although this adventure is set in the world of Adrenon, you are free to fit it into any setting you like.

Background

While not the capital, the city of Rih Maksura, also known as the City of Jewels, is by far the richest city in the vast Kingdom of Jum. It is also, perhaps as a result of this, a hive of scum and villainy.

One such villain is Akuran the Ignoble, an incubus and the leader of the Black Snakes gang. Nothing can stop Akuran's lust for power and fame, but now the knave has set a most dastardly plan in motion; taking the City of Jewels hostage.

How will he achieve this aim? A wish granted by a djinni of course. The gorgon Zaz-geman has within her vault, an iron flask containing such a djinni. Posing as the city's protector, the lamassu Natan, Akuran plans to send adventurers to the gorgon's lair, high atop the Shattered Mountain, to do his dirty work.

Adventure Hook:

Our adventure begins in the City of Rih-Maksura, on the edge of the Golden Desert. The characters have been summoned to the temple of the Goddess of Law to meet Natan, the protector of the city. When they enter the temple read or paraphrase the following.

The temple is clearly one of the grandest buildings within the City of Jewels. The marble floors reflect the light of the sun outside. Fountains of gilded statues speak of the city's wealth.

Although almost eternally empty, the gargantuan space within the temple could hold hundreds, if not thousands, of worshippers.

Your arrival, however, is expected and within moments of your arrival, a priest steps up and addresses you, his voice filled with the pompous surety of nobility.

"You must be the adventurers we summoned. Please, come this way, Natan is eager to speak with you." Without another word, he hurries away, heading deeper into the temple.

A short walk takes you to a large antechamber. Reclining atop a large divan is a massive lion with the face of a man. Flat against the creature's back are the golden and feathered wings of an eagle

In a deep timbre it speaks. "Welcome adventurers. Thank you for coming."

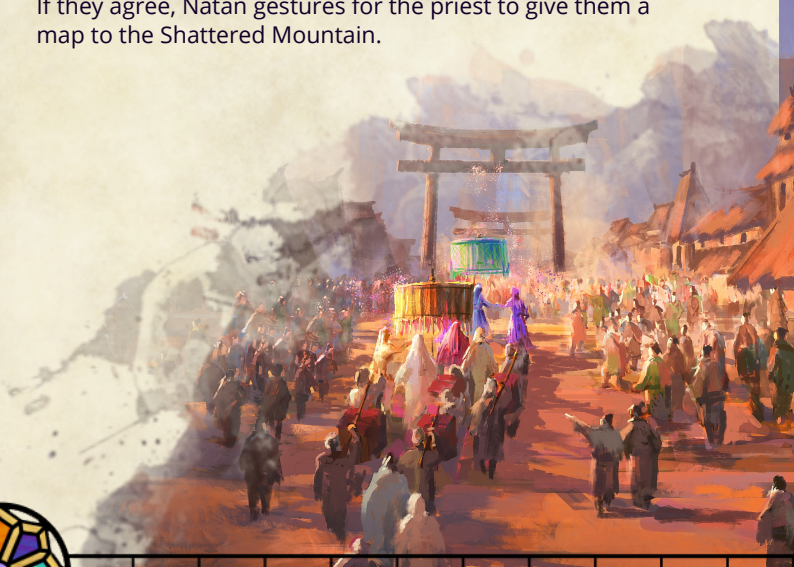
Encounter: Natan the Protector. The villain, Akuran the Ignoble (LE **incubus**) is playing the role of Natan the Protector. Having tricked the actual lamassu into leaving, and dressed as the priest, Akuran is using a *spell scroll* of *major image* (DC 18) to create an illusion of Natan.

Roleplaying Natan

Natan is an aloof, yet friendly lamassu who chose to protect the City of Jewels more than a century ago. As Natan, Akuran seeks to send the characters to raid the lair of Zaz-geman and steal the Flask of Kedaz the Fair. Akuran is careful with his speech and does not tell any lies while he explains the following:

- A cataclysm threatens the City of Jewels.
- The only means of stopping this cataclysm is the *wish* spell of a djinni.
- Atop the Shattered Mountain is the lair of Zaz-geman, a gorgon witch. The witch has an *iron flask* within which is trapped the djinni Kedaz the Fair.
- Climb the mountain, destroy the gorgon and take the flask. With it I will use the djinni's final *wish* to save the city. Please do not risk the djinni in combat.
- Natan is the city's last line of defence, thus he cannot leave.
- For retrieving the flask, Natan will pay the characters 250 gp. For retrieving the *iron flask* he will pay another 500 gp and the party may keep anything else they find.

If they agree, Natan gestures for the priest to give them a map to the Shattered Mountain.



The Shattered Mountain

The journey to the Mountain passes without event and the characters make good time, arriving after only one day of travel. They can camp in relative safety in a shallow cave at the foot of the mountain.

The lair of Zaz-geman is a grand dwelling, magically carved from the rock near the top of the mountain more than two centuries ago. The gorgon lives here with her servants and monstrous guards.

Climbing the Mountain

Climbing the mountain is possible, but difficult. Five successful DC 13 Strength (Athletics) checks are needed to climb to either entrance. Each failure of more than 5 results in one level of exhaustion.

Encounter: Congress of Baby Rocs. Five young rocs (use the **giant eagle** stat block) that usually reside in area 2b have just started to hunt the skies around the mountain. There is a 50% chance that the characters are attacked by the rocs. The rocs attempt to grab the characters off of the cliff face.

Falling. If a character is climbing the rocs have advantage on their attacks. If they are damaged while climbing a character must make a Strength save to hold on. The DC of these checks is equal to the damage they take. Should a character fall roll a d4 and multiply the result by ten to define the height of the fall.

General Features

Unless otherwise stated the areas within Shattered Mountain have the following features.

Floors and walls. The tunnelled passages are carved from limestone and are ten feet tall.

Light. Most areas were well-lit by torches.

Doors. Doors are made of wood reinforced with iron bands. They all have sturdy metal locks. It takes a successful DC 15 Dexterity check with proficiency in thieves tools to pick a lock or a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check to break down a door.

Silent Alarms. So paranoid is Zaz-geman, that she has a permanent **alarm** spell cast on the staircase leading to area 5. Thus she is aware of any intruders into her lair.

1 - Eyrie of Dhu Rasan

This massive cave is the roost of a monstrous bird that has been twisted by the witch's dark magic. Zaz-geman keeps the monster here as her first and strongest line of defence.

Encounter: Dhu Rasan. Dhu Rasan (see the sidebar below), meaning "the two-headed" in the language of the locals, attacks any creature, apart from her young, that attempts to enter area 1 without first blowing a special whistle, carried by Zaz-geman and her servants.

Dhu Rasan

Dhu Rasan uses the **roc** statblock except that it is a Challenge Rating of 12 monster (8,400 XP) and has the following action instead of the roc's normal Multiattack action:

- **Multiattack.** The roc makes three attacks: one with each beak and one with its talons. If both beaks hit the same target, the roc rends the target, dealing an extra 4d6 slashing damage.

Dhu Rasan also has these additional traits:

- **Two Heads.** Dhu Rasan has advantage on saving throws against being blinded, charmed, deafened, frightened, stunned, and knocked unconscious.
- **Wakeful.** When one of Dhu Rasan's heads is asleep, its other head is awake.

2a Nest of Dhu Rasan's Young

This subdivided area, is a collection of nests for Dhu Rasan's clutch of young rocs.

Encounter: Roc Babies! Unless already dead, three young rocs (use the **giant eagle** stat block) are present in this room. Apart from their mother, they attack any creature that enters without first blowing a special whistle, carried by Zaz-geman and her servants. The rocs in area 2b are alerted by any sound and will join the fight at the start of the second round of combat.

2b Nest of Dhu Rasan's Young

Encounter: Roc Babies! Unless already dead, two young rocs (use the **giant eagle** stat block) are present in this room. Apart from their mother, they attack any creature that enters without first blowing a special whistle, carried by Zaz-geman and her servants.

Treasure. Any character approaching the young rocs with a whistle that succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check, can mount and ride it. If the same character succeeds upon the same check every day for the following ten days, the roc will become a mount for this character.

3 - Storage Rooms

These areas are used for storage of foodstuffs and other essentials. There is nothing here of value.



4 - Guest Quarters

This plush and comfortable suite is occupied by the wizard and scholar, Obahn Ilvilexor (LN male high elf **mage**). Invited here by Zaz herself, the savant is studying an old *carpet of flying* with which Zaz intends to copy.

Encounter: Obahn the Scholar. Although he is welcome here, Obahn is sensible enough to realise that the fickle gorgon could change her mind at any moment.

Furthermore, the greedy old mage wishes to steal the carpet and escape. Rather than fight, Obahn will attempt to bargain with the characters. If the characters refuse his offer or attack, Obahn will cast *greater invisibility* and then attempt to escape the mountain with the carpet.

Obahn's Offer

Obahn offers an important piece of information about his employer in exchange for allowing him to leave with his belongings. He will not mention the carpet specifically. If the characters agree, Obahn will begin gathering his belongings into a backpack. Meanwhile he will tell them the following:

- His employer, the gorgon Zaz-geman, is a **medusa**.
- Zaz carries a number short-range teleportation spells on her that she uses to surprise victims.

Treasure. A 5 ft. by 7 ft. *carpet of flying* rests on a desk, covered in pages of notes written by Obahn. The notes detail the costs of creating more of the carpets. The mage also carries a pouch with 50 gp. Finally, the mage kept a steel mirror upon his person at all times.

5 - Puzzle Room

The room is plainly adorned with only a wooden table in its centre. Upon the table is a simple mortar and pestle, a small crystal chest, a piece of parchment, and five labelled jars that contain the following ingredients: Lymcis seed, Dorsey grass, Mugwort root, Gorcin extract and Lavender oil.

Leading towards the east and south of the room are two metal doors. These doors do not have handles but a strange square keyhole.

Crystal Chest. The crystal chest is not locked but does not exist on this plane, instead it exists on the Ethereal Plane. Only the use of *oil of etherealness* or the spell *etherealness* allows a creature to open the chest and retrieve the key. Once out of the chest, the key appears on the Material Plane.

Metal Doors. These doors are locked with both a magical and mundane lock. The magical lock needs to be dispelled with a spell such as *knock* or *dispel magic* and then the mundane lock can be picked with a successful DC 16 Dexterity check made with proficiency with thief's tools. Or they can be unlocked with the key in the crystal chest.

Potion Puzzle. If mixed in the correct order (lavender, gorcin, mugwort, lymcis and finally dorsey), these ingredients will create a limited amount of *oil etherealness* (about enough for a medium creature's hand), this will allow them to grab the key in the crystal chest.

Recipe for Oil of Etherealness. Labelled with the title 'Recipe for Oil of Etherealness' the parchment has the following instructions.

Gorcin will spark if mixed while dry.

Lymcis must never be added before mugwort.

Dorsey grass can only be added first or last.

Mugwort is always added third.

Lavender must be removed from Dorsey by at least two steps.

Poison of Still Life (Inhaled). As soon as the characters enter this room a silent and scentless poisonous gas fills the air. After one minute, any creature that inhales this poison must make a DC 20 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned.

While poisoned in this way the creature takes 2 (1d4) poison damage per round. If the poison reduces the creature to 0 hit points, the creature is stable but poisoned for one hour, and paralyzed while poisoned in this way. If the creature leaves the room they may repeat the save with advantage at the end of each turn.



6 - Vault of Wonders

While not quite as full as it once was, Zaz's strongroom is nonetheless a sight to behold. The space is filled with rich tapestries, fine furniture and sculptures. Towards the back of the room are four chests and three short pillars with a vial of potion, a helmet and a flask.

Sculptures. When Zaz petrifies her enemies she only keeps the most beautiful, having the others crushed into powder. Three statues remain, that of a small boy; a beautiful woman and a strikingly handsome orc warrior.

These creatures can only be freed by the *greater restoration* spell. The small boy is Habiz Berisalata (LG human male **noble**) and was, two centuries ago, the heir to the throne of Kingdom of Jum. The woman is Dianna Carter (NG female halfling **commoner**) who was petrified only a year ago, but is from the city of Pamor, thousands of miles to the west. Finally, the handsome warrior is Keth (CE male **orc**) who will attack the first creature he sees if freed.

Treasure. One small and three large chests stand side by side, from left to right they contain 100,000 cp, 6,000 sp, 1,700 gp, and the smallest contains 130pp and eleven gems each worth 100 gp. On the three pillars rest a *potion of fire resistance*, a *helm of comprehending languages* and the *iron flask* containing the **djinn** Kedaz the Fair.

7a - Zaz-geman's Throne Room

This large L-shaped room is dimly lit and mostly bare. The north-eastern corner is sectioned off from the rest with a partition wall, behind which is a small but opulent boudoir that contains a bed and lady's vanity desk.

Towards the eastern end of the room proper is a raised dais with a simple throne made of marbled quartz.

Encounter: Zaz-geman. Zaz-geman, the **medusa** witch is seated on her throne awaiting the arrival of her guests. Two **nasnas** (see appendix for details) guards flank the dais.

Zaz will call for reinforcements on her first turn. She will then use the *spell scrolls of misty step* she carries to move about the room and to surprise the characters into looking at her and use her Petrifying Gaze.

In the second round of combat, four more **nasnas** will come out of the 7b areas. Working in pairs the nasnas will attempt to grapple characters, and then force them to look at Zaz.

Treasure. Zaz-geman carries three *spell scrolls of misty step* and a special whistle.

7b - Servant Quarters

These areas are, from left to right, a kitchen, bathroom, and finally a small barracks. A single whistle hangs from a hook on the wall of the barracks, but there is nothing else of value. Four **nasnas** are here until called into action by Zaz-geman.



Returning to Rhi Maksura Betrayed!

Once they have dealt with Zaz and retrieved the flask, the characters should return to Rhi Maksura.

Heading back to the temple they find everything as it was once before. Akuran is once again posing as Natan and if the characters bring him the flask and proof of Zaz's death, his priest will gladly pay them the reward. Then read or paraphrase the following:

"Thank you adventurers." Mutters Natan, but something different about his voice. Unstopping the flask, the priest waits as a thick blue mist pours from the container, pooling and coalescing on the ground, before forming into the shape of a man.

Before this finishes, however, he speaks hurriedly. "Mighty djinn, I wish for the power and control to make this city soar into the clouds."

As the djinni becomes fully solid, he bows and says simply "Your wish is my command Master."

Meanwhile, the priest drops the flask as his body transforms and two dark, leathery wings sprout from his back, tearing his robes free. The ground begins to rumble as the city begins to tear itself aloft.

Encounter: Akuran the Ignoble. Akuran the **incubus** will take flight and call forth his minions to deal with the characters. Two **cult fanatics** and four **harpies** step out from their hiding places and attack.

On his first turn Akuran uses his new power and wrenches the entire city of Rhi Maksura into the sky. The ground shakes and the sound of screams fill the air. On each of his subsequent turns Akuran must stay on the Material Plane and spend his action concentrating on this or the city will fall.

The city rises 30 feet per round and heads east. If Akuran is injured he must make a Constitution saving throw to maintain concentration, as if concentrating on a spell. If he fails the city does not move for one round. If Akuran drops to 0 hit points the city falls at a rate of 60 feet per round.

If it hits the ground, every creature on the surface of the city takes 1d6 bludgeoning damage for every ten-feet the city falls.

Akuran will use his interaction to point out to the characters that if he dies, the city falls and most of its inhabitants will die.

The **djinni** meanwhile, is unable to work against his master, but he will not intervene unless Akuran orders him to. Akuran will only command the djinni to cast protective magic on him, such as *invisibility*.

Stuck between a city-sized rock and a hard place.

The only likely means of stopping Akuran is to force him into the empty *iron flask* and then command him to lower the city safely. His minions will do everything they can to stop this. Furthermore, while he is in the flask the city will fall.

Treasure. If it can be found, the *iron flask* is a powerful tool. If the djinni Kedaz the Fair is still bound to the flask he will ask the characters to free him, but can offer them nothing in return.

Adventure Conclusion

With heart, soul and steel the characters have prevailed over Akuran and his minions, but that there is a greater chance of failure for the party. They might also choose to flee and save themselves.

If Akuran succeeds he flies the city towards the capital, where he plans to ransom both cities for all their worth, including perhaps, control of the Kingdom of Jum itself.



Appendix

Nasnas

Medium humanoid, lawful evil

Armor Class 15 (hide armor, shield)

Hit Points 22 (5d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)	8 (-1)	10 (+0)	7 (-2)

Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Half-Men. A nasnas is literally half-humanoid, possessing only a single arm and leg. The nasnas has disadvantage on ability checks and saving throws that require Strength.

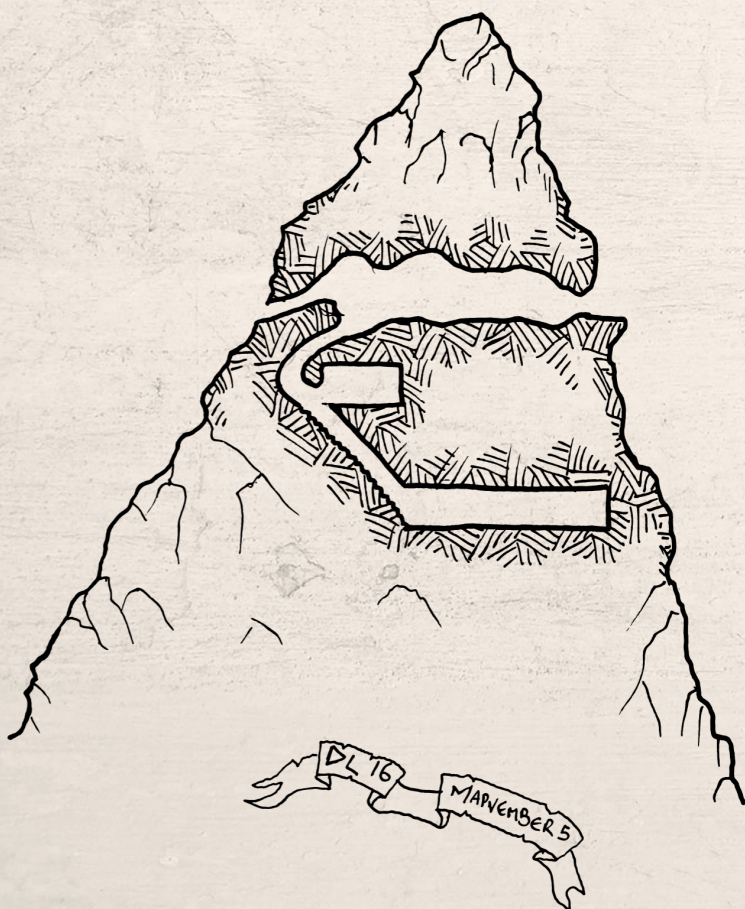
Actions

Hoot. The nasnas hoots and screams incoherently while it isn't incapacitated. This wail has no effect on constructs and undead. All other creatures within 30 feet of her that can hear her must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, a creature is paralyzed until the start of the nasnas' next turn.

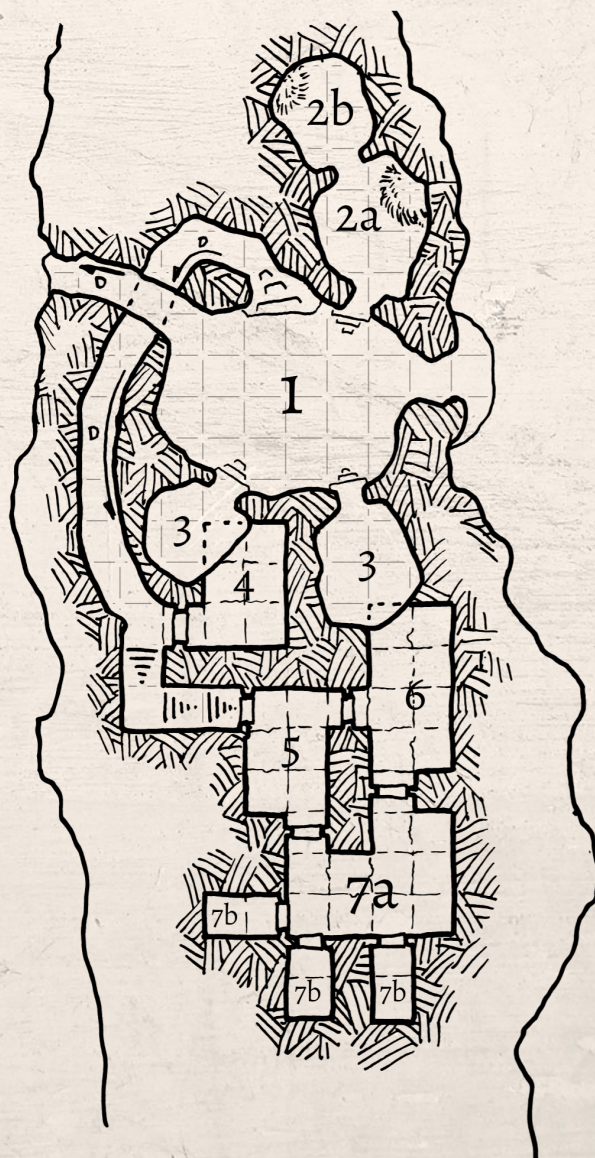
Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage.

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The Shattered Mountain



1 square = 10 feet



Credits

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