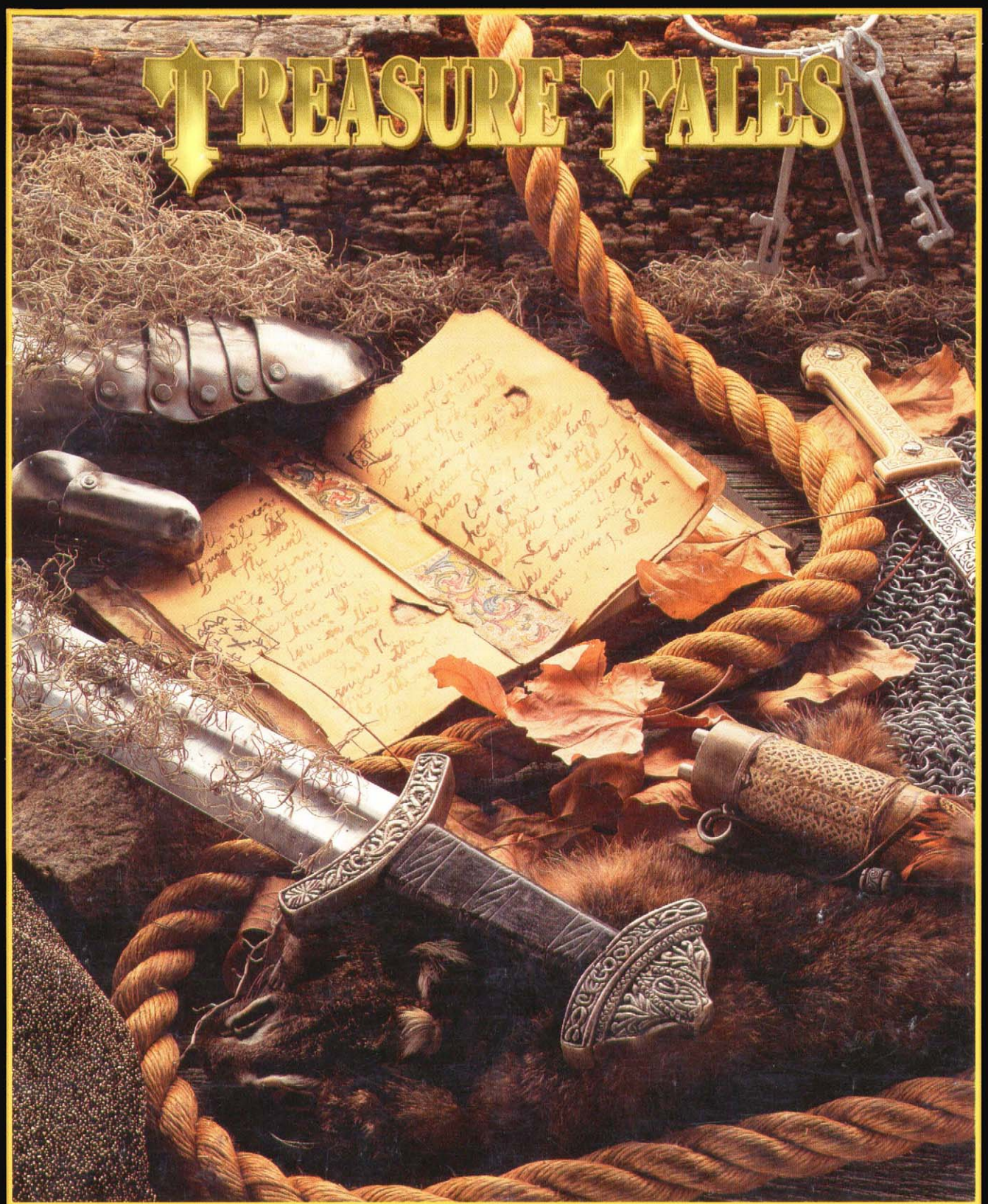
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Advanced Dungeons & Dragons®

Official Game Accessory

TREASURE TALES



The Adventures

The Games People Play: In this tournament, it's truly not whether you win but how you play that matters.

The Road Less Traveled: A traveling merchant remembers some profitable facts concerning the local trade routes.

A Priest's Woes: A maudlin priest tells of a village's destruction and the fortune now lost to his church.

In the Image of Man: When an old beggar tells one story too many, the adventurers are set on the trail of a ghastly conspiracy.

My Brother's Keeper: A traveling theater group acts out a tragic story and recounts a chilling tale of betrayal and riches.

From the Mouths of Babes: A childhood rhyme may hold the key to one of the greatest treasure vaults of all time.

Spoils of War: The plunder of several kingdoms may await discovery.

The Dragon and the Lady: Rescuing the princess Ariadne could bring great rewards; only a dragon stands in the way.

Throne of the Mountain King: A dying man's last words send the adventurers into the hills to seek a lost treasure.

Boxing the Compass: A strange symbol visible from the sky could point the way to a fabulous discovery.

In the Lair of the Pirate King: An adventure on the sea leads to a confrontation with pirates in their island lair.

Keepsake: Sometimes the obvious treasure remains untouched.

Dead Men Tell No Tales: A dead wizard's treasure sends the adventurers searching through the planes.

A Jailor's Terms: Somewhere close by lies a fortune in buried treasure, but the adventurers have to worry about who is still wearing it.

Impish Behavior: A lost imp bargains for its life.

Around the Campfire: A late night visitor shares the adventurers' fire and talks of a local nightmare.

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Introduction

Welcome to *Treasure Tales,* the fifth in a series of special accessories for the AD&D® game. If you're like most Dungeon Masters, you probably spend much of your time crafting adventures, weaving together the various storylines in your campaign, and otherwise preparing hours of entertainment for your avid players. This accessory is specifically designed to make your job less time consuming.

Treasure Tales provides you with basic adventure skeletons that can easily be transformed from simple encounters into several linked adventures or even a grand quest! This accessory contains two full-color game aids for each of its 16 adventures. The DM™ aid consists of an illustration (often a map) with background and encounter information listed on its reverse side. The players' sheet has an illustration that leads the player characters into the adventure. The reverse side of the players' aid contains pertinent information not obvious from the illustration and also lists several rumors that the player characters have heard. Many of these rumors contain clues that can help the PCs complete the adventure, while others serve to mislead or confuse the PCs.

The adventures described herein are not based on any particular TSR world or campaign, and can easily be adapted to any of the following settings:

- The AL-QADIM® setting.
- The BIRTHRIGHT™ campaign.
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- The DRAGONLANCE® world.
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- The MYSTARA® campaign
- The RAVENLOFT® realm.
- The RED STEEL® setting
- The SPELLJAMMER® universe.
- and any other AD&D game worlds.





The Games People Play

Player Character Information

The Tale

Early this morning, merchants brought word into town. Jonas Ving, swordsman and lord of the newly constructed Foley Keep, has formally announced his retirement.

This announcement is no surprise to those who know Jonas; he has hinted for over a year that his wandering days were drawing to an end. Not many people believed him, though, as he often told tall tales. When construction began on his keep, however, most people accepted that as proof that Jonas was indeed planning to retire.

In honor of Jonas' retirement, the village closest to Foley Keep is hosting a festival and a tournament. Jonas will be the overall judge, and what's more, he has offered to give up his falchion—the sword he has worn for years—as the prize.

Jonas' falchion is a much coveted weapon as most people believe it to be powerfully enchanted. Several eyewitnesses have reported a blazing red light that surrounds the stunning weapon immediately before Jonas employs his "trademark" finishing manuever— decapitation. The grizzled fighter always ends his fights by severing the head of his opponent. With such a mighty sword to be won, how can any prospective adventurers stay away?

Research & Rumor

- The winner of the sword will not necessarily be the tourney's victor. Jonas has publicly stated that "style means everything," and that the falchion will go to whomever amuses him most.

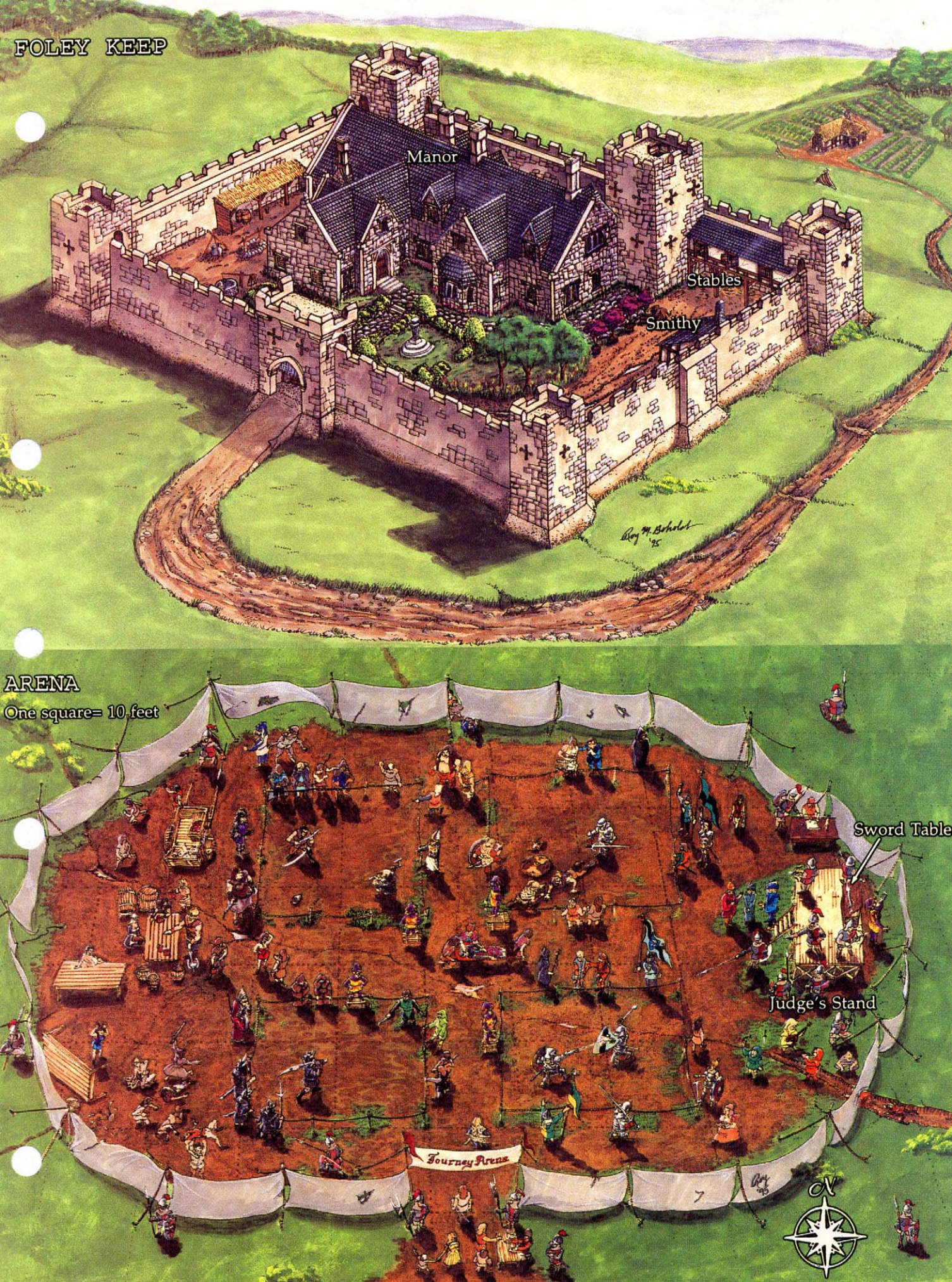
- The tourney is open to all character classes. Several priests and even a few wizards have entered the tourney in hope that their flashy displays will score points with Jonas.

- There are reports that Jonas possesses another magical sword; this might account for his willingness to part with the falchion.

- Several warriors are offering large sums of money (5,000–10,000 gp) to buy the sword from the winner.

- Jonas Ving has said that he might duel the winner of the tourney, and while it is supposed to be non-lethal combat, it is sometimes hard to tell how far Jonas might take things.

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FOLEY KEEP
Manor
Stables
Smithy
Roy M. Beholder '95
ARENA
One square= 10 feet
Sword Table
Judge's Stand
Tourney Arena
N

The Games People Play (DM)

DM's Information

PC Illustration

This is an illustration of Jonas' falchion displayed in a glass case at the tourney.

DM Illustration

This is a map of the tourney arena and Foley Keep.

Notes

Despite its apparent power, the falchion is not a vorpal weapon, or any other kind of exceptional magical blade. Rather, Jonas' falchion is a simple *+1 sword* that he discovered while adventuring in the deserts. The workmanship of the blade is far from simple. It was given as a wedding gift to an ancient nomadic chieftain (the DM is free to embellish this story in any way that will add depth to the campaign) and was designed to be both beautiful and deadly.

Jonas' incredible success in battle has little to do with his magical sword and more to do with his technique. In combat he can try for a killing stroke by making a called shot (with a –8 penalty). The misconception about Jonas' sword was started by witnesses to a few of his first duels with this technique, and he allowed it to spread.

Jonas views this tourney as nothing more than another practical joke. He finds it amusing that such a celebration is being held in his honor, and that hundreds of would-be warriors are willing to beat each other senseless over a sword. He has other swords that are just as good or better, thus he gladly offered to donate his falchion to whomever amuses him most during the contest. To make things interesting, however, Jonas has made sure that news of the tourney and its prize has reached the attention of several disreputable warriors and the nearest thieves' guild. There are sure to be fixed fights, attempts to steal the sword, and several "accidental" deaths in the tourney.

Obstacles

After a day of exhausting duels, two wizards create confusion with several *darkness* spells while three thieves sneak in and steal the falchion. The wizards are abandoned and have only false information to offer. The thieves run for a good spot to hole up, preferably a deserted castle or some caves up in the hills, setting up a secondary adventure. Jonas makes the hunt interesting by offering a reward of 2,500 gp as well as the falchion to whomever brings the thieves to justice.

The second event is unplanned by Jonas Ving and comes as his just reward. While the tourney is being held, a small group of warriors gain control of Foley Keep and take Jonas prisoner when he returns. They plan to wait at the keep for the reward to be claimed and then take the falchion for themselves. They will invite the adventurers in and attack just inside the gate.

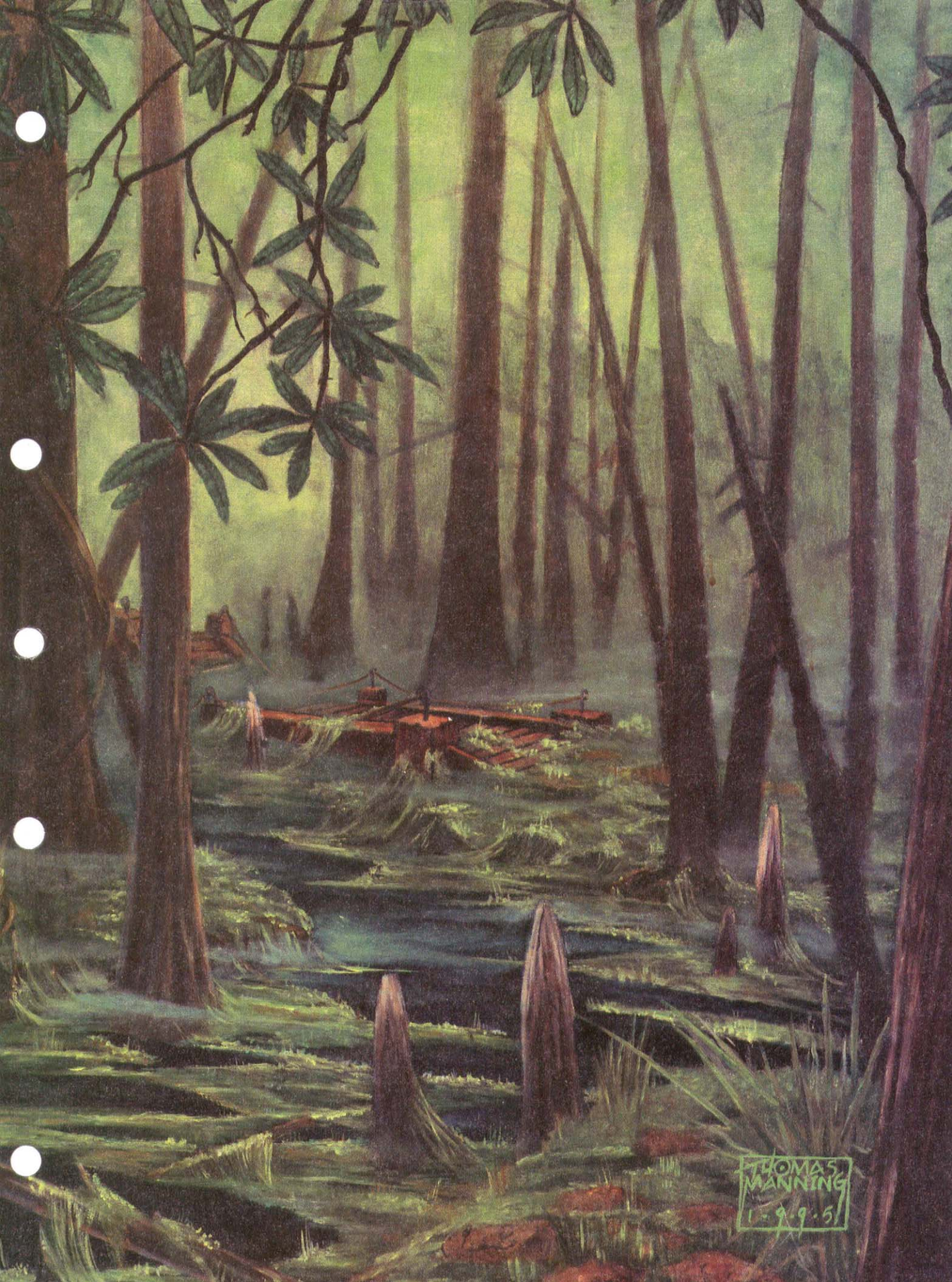
Thieves, hm T7 (3): AC 5 (leather and Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 39, 42, 36; THAC0 17 (15 bow); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (short sword or arrow); SZ M (5' tall); ML elite (13); Int highly (13); AL NE; XP 275 each.
Assign thieving skills as appropriate

Warriors, hm & em F6 (5): AC 2 (splint mail and Dex bonus); MV 10; hp 58, 44, 47, 47, 53; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+2 (long sword + Str); SZ M (6' tall); ML avg (10); Int avg (9); AL CN; XP 225 each.
Special Equipment: the leader has a *+2 long sword*.

The Treasure

The thieves have 4,000 gp (their fee for the theft). The warriors each have 50 gp. Jonas will give the PCs 7,500 gp and the falchion for rescuing him and liberating his keep.

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THOMAS MANNING
1995

The Road Less Traveled

Player Character Information

The Tale

The door to the inn creaks open and a rather stylishly dressed woman enters the establishment. The stranger peers questioningly around the room, until her eyes alight on your party. She then makes her way to your comfortable vantage point by the hearth, ignoring all of the rather simply dressed villagers drinking quietly in the common room of the Pig N' Poke. In a clear, no nonsense voice, the woman, who introduces herself as a young merchant named Davani, begins spinning a tale of a forgotten road and the fortunes that were lost upon it.

As she speaks, you discover that Davani's father, an extremely successful merchant, owned one of the largest trading companies in the kingdom. Much of her father's trade was transported along the Marshland Trade Route, a largely untamed trail that bordered the wild marshlands. This route was the fastest way to several of the large northern cities, and a daring merchant could gain several days on his competitors by braving the trade road.

About thirty years ago, Davani explains, her father disappeared along the Marshland route with a fortune in gold coin and trading goods. Reports of other missing caravans along the wild trade road began to circulate, and the Marshland Trade Route was soon abandoned. Nobody has dared its mysterious paths in over 25 years.

Davani continues her story by stating that her business interests are rapidly growing and she wants to reclaim her father's lost fortune to fund future endeavors. Smiling, she offers the party a substantial reward for locating the old trade route and recovering her father's fortune. A promise of gold, an exciting adventure, and the gratitude of a rich merchant—what more could any adventurer want?

Research & Rumor

- The merchant cannot remember exactly where the road ran, but if it was the straightest distance to the northern cities, it would have to cut almost straight through the middle of the marshlands

- The list of disappearances along the Marshland Route grows longer throughout the day as people add to it. Several caravans, the odd traveler, and a patrol of guardsmen from the next town over, all fell victim to the mysterious power of the swamp. One old timer seems to recall a treasury wagon belonging to some minor noble disappearing along that way.

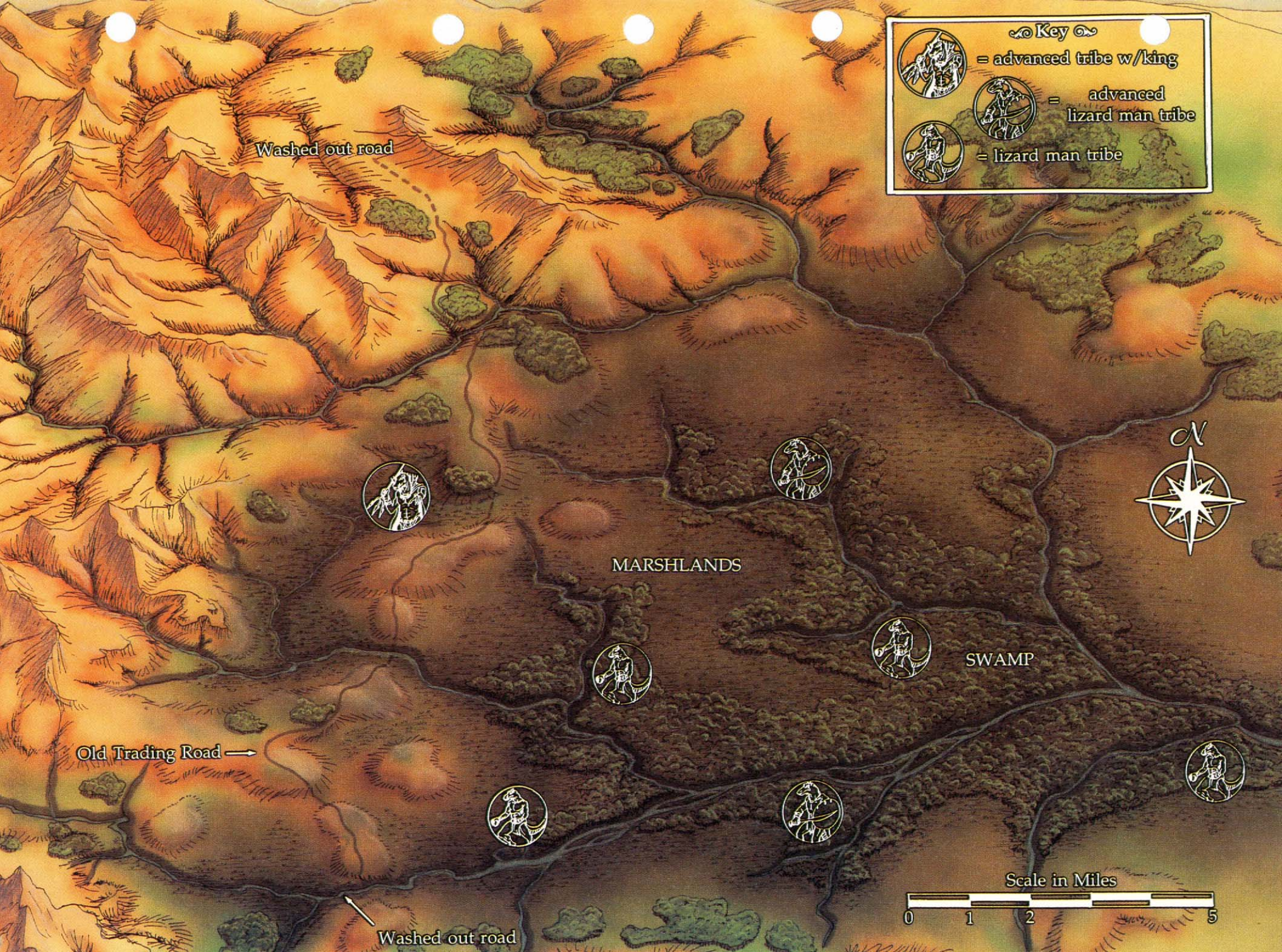
- Priests of a local church claim to have records concerning the marshland. They say it is infested with evil and that those who enter are subject to any number of ancient curses.

- Several of the older locals remember that the Marshland Route was only possible because of bog bridges—low and extremely long boardwalk-style bridges that linked the road over marshy areas.

- An older woman, known and highly respected for her knowledge of folklore, remembers that carrying a silver piece between your teeth was a guarantee of safe passage through the marsh. The pure silver masks your life force from evil creatures.

- The old road might have been washed out at some point. Fifteen years ago one of the rivers running into the marshland flooded.

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Key
= advanced tribe w/king
= advanced lizard man tribe
= lizard man tribe
Washed out road
MARSHLANDS
SWAMP
N
Old Trading Road
Washed out road
Scale in Miles
0
1
2
5

The Road Less Traveled (DM)

DM's Information

PC Illustration

This is a picture of an old, overgrown bog bridge.

DM Illustration

This is a map of the marshlands, including the location of lizard man tribes.

Notes

The trade route ran along the western border of the marshlands and not through its middle as suggested. The route does, however, cut through a part of the marshlands that runs close to a range of low hills that extends into the swampy area. Any old maps will show the general area in which the road exists, but not its exact location; adventurers will still have to hunt for it. Fortunately, there is still some evidence of the route left, namely the bog bridges that were used to span the swampy areas between the hills.

The marshlands is an area to which the PCs can return several times. Besides lizard men, a DM can load the swamp with anything from trolls to black dragons.

If the PCs take the old woman's advice, make them role-play the adventure with a silver piece clamped between their front teeth.

Obstacles

The main danger of the marshlands are the tribes of lizard men which live in the area. When the road existed, some of the tribes made frequent raids on caravans and other travelers for food. One tribe in particular gained dominance of the road, and its leader soon established himself as king of the marshlands. Once the route was abandoned, the lizard men moved into the western hills.

Lizard Man (8–15): AC 5; MV 6, Sw 12; HD 2+1; THAC0 19; #AT 3; Dmg 1–2/1–2/1–6; SZ M (7' tall); ML elite (14); Int low (7); AL N; XP 65.

Consult the MONSTROUS MANUAL™ tome entry for information on tribal shamans if the PCs attack or encounter a tribe of lizard men.

Lizard King: AC 3; MV 9, Sw 15; HD 8; hp 64; THAC0 12; #AT 1; Dmg 3d6+2 (trident); SA skewer; SZ L (8' tall); ML champion (16); Int avg (9); AL CE; XP 975.

The king presides over the entire marsh and can call support from any tribe. If pressed, he will draw together an army; SA—if the king's attack roll is 5 or more than needed to hit, his weapon inflicts double damage with a minimum of 15 points.

The Treasure

An individual lizard man will not carry treasure, but any tribe will possess 2,000–4,000 gp in various coin, 1d6 gems, and 1d4 pieces of jewelry. The bulk of the treasure and nearly all of the magic in the marshlands resides with the lizard king's tribe. This tribe possesses a treasure hoard of 13,500 gp in coin, 5d6 gems, 2d6 pieces of jewelry, and any 6 magical items.

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A Priest's Woes

Player Character Information

The Tale

When you walk into the Iron Fang Inn & Tavern, the innkeeper usually waves. Sometimes he even passes along information that can be of use to an adventurer. Usually he just wants to discuss the tab. Tonight, though, the innkeeper points out a customer dressed in leather armor with a holy symbol burned into it. The man is nursing the last few sips from a large mug, and by his unsteady gaze it doesn't look to be his first.

"You might want to talk to that man," the innkeeper advises as he sets out a fresh mug of ale. Waiting patiently for your payment, he continues, *"Give this to him, and listen to what he has to say."*

The man turns out to be a priest for the Church of Denarius, a religious order with very liberal views toward the acquisition of wealth. Most members of this priesthood wander the lands in search of converts, extracting heavy tithes from the faithful every six months. Advancement, it appears, has much to do with the contributions a priest can raise.

The priest begins to tell you of his sorrows; it is a tale you might almost consider laughable if not for the repeated mention of vast fortunes. For several months, he has been living with the Bloody Phlegm orc tribe up in the mountains. "Primitives," he calls them, "barbaric creatures that follow shamans and old superstitions as if these practices could replace the power of the gods."

According to the priest, this tribe simply throws away whole fortunes in offerings and silly rituals. They collect the leavings from their hunts, and the bodies of any deceased orc, and stuff them with silver, gold, and sometimes gems. For a month, these treasure-laden carcasses rot on stone slabs outside the village. On a specified night, the shamans elect some orc carriers and take the whole mess and toss it right into *The Well*, a large hole in the rocky ground outside of the village. The orcs believe that this appeases the spirits and keeps the tribe safe.

Seeing all this wealth thrown away before his eyes saddened the priest. He worked for months in order to gain converts, taking only seldom breaks to ride into town for supplies. Success would have meant securing a handsome tithe for his church, enough to possibly get him promoted. In addition, he would have brought enlightenment to a tribe of savage creatures. All of that is lost, now.

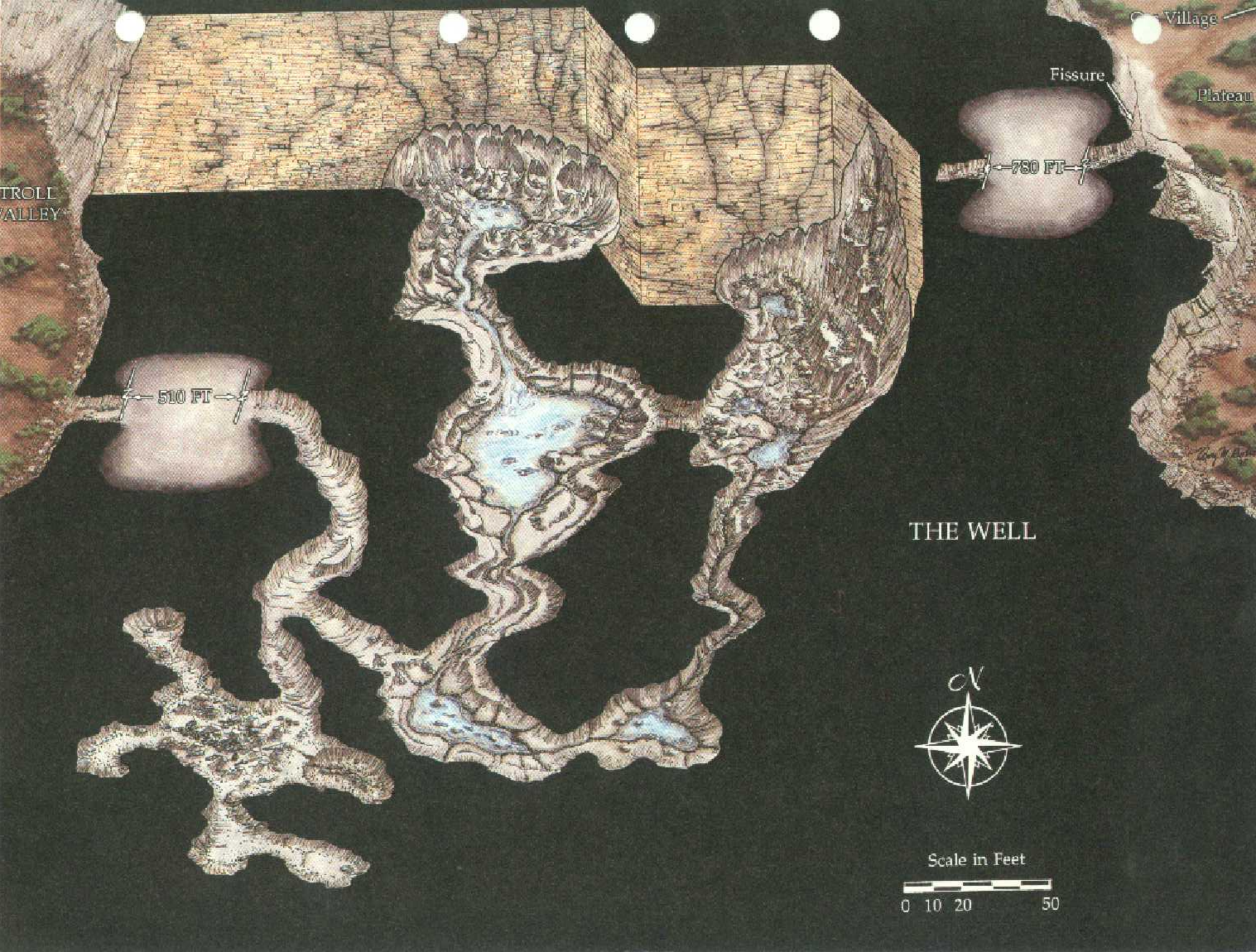
After returning from one of his trips into town, the priest discovered that the orc tribe had seemingly disappeared. Not one orc was left, and every item of any real value was gone. Furthermore, the whole village reeked with a foul stench. The priest searched the remaining huts and the surrounding area, but could only find 15 copper pieces and 2 silver coins. Not a week before, he had seen a treasure worth thousands of gold pieces.

The melancholy priest finishes his story and stares morosely into his ale. After a brief span of silence, he sighs and rises from the table. Before he departs, he says, "Somewhere up in those mountains a king's ransom awaits discovery. "

Research & Rumor

- Several orc tribes are known to inhabit the mountain range mentioned by the priest.
- The depth of wells up in the mountains usually depends on the location of underground springs. Anywhere from 15 to 50 feet is a fair assumption.
- The priest was never allowed at the monthly offering; he was restricted to his hut by the shamans. Most of what he knows about the offering was told to him by an orcish convert.

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Village
Fissure
Plateau
780 FT
TROLL
VALLEY
510 FT
THE WELL
N
Scale in Feet
0 10 20 50

A Priest's Woes (DM)

DM's Information

PC Illustration

This is a picture of the priest at a very low point in his chosen vocation.

DM Illustration

This is a map of *The Well*.

Notes

The promise of monetary treasure should be enough to hook your players into this adventure. If the players seem hesitant about traipsing off into the mountains, however, you can have the cleric mention several magical items that he knows were in the latest tribal offerings.

The adventurers must first locate and travel to the tribal village before discovering the secret of The Well. The priest is rather jaded and uninterested in continuing his relationship with the orc tribe. PCs can purchase a rudimentary map from the priest; a simple offering of 30 gp will be sufficient. The DM is encouraged to make the journey somewhat challenging for the players—after all, the PCs will be traveling into a major area of humanoid occupation. It may even be possible to throw in another of the adventures in this product as a side trek for the party.

The Well itself is a large fissure in the ground not far from the orc village. A community of trolls, led by a giant two-headed troll named Glazart, dwells inside of The Well. After some initial skirmishes between the orc tribe and the troll village, Glazart decided that it would be more profitable to strike an agreement with the orcs rather than waste time killing them. According to this agreement, the trolls will not eat any members of the orc tribe and will slay any unwelcome visitors in the area. The orcs, in turn, provide the trolls with a monthly offering of food and treasure.

This arrangement changed soon after the priest of the Church of Denarius came to stay with the tribe. A charismatic man, the priest succeeded in winning some converts. Many of the orcs began to question the shamans' doings and forced them to hold back more and more from the monthly offering. When the monthly offering didn't come, the trolls decided to attack and remind the orcs who was in control. In the end, the trolls decimated the entire village, carrying away all the bodies and treasure to The Well.

Obstacles

Once the players discover the orc village, they will notice a well in its center. This is, of course, not The Well, but the DM is encouraged to lay down false clues that will lead unwary players on the wrong track. A party of five trolls will attack every night until The Well is located or the adventurers are dead.

The Well has over 15 trolls down in it and can be replenished with more. The back entrance of The Well leads down into a wide, cave-ridden valley which houses several groups of trolls. The two-headed giant troll picks from the best of these caves and can restock them as necessary. There are a total of 30 trolls that live in these caves. The giant troll will fight at The Well, but will flee through the rear entrance and retreat to the lower valley caves if things go badly. If the PCs go after him, they will have to clear out each and every cave along the valley's floor.

Troll: AC 4; MV 12; HD 6+6; THAC0 13; #AT 3; Dmg 5–8/5–8/5–12; SD regeneration; SZ L (9' tall); ML elite (14); Int low (6); AL CE; XP 1,400.

Two-Headed Troll: AC 4; MV 12; HD 10; THAC0 11; #AT 4; Dmg 5–8/5–8/1–12/1–12; SD regeneration; SZ L (10' tall); ML champion (16); Int average (10); AL CE; XP 3,000.

SD—the troll regenerates 1 hp per round; only fire and acid cause it permanent damage; it is only surprised on a 1.

The Treasure

Each troll living in The Well will have 1–6 gems of varying value. Trolls in the lower cave will have 1–4 gems each. The total treasure located in The Well consists of 21,000 gp, 5d6 gems, 2d4 potions, and any four magical items. In the lower caves, the adventurers can expect to find caches of up to 7,000 gp in coin, 2d4 extra gems, and any 1 magical item per cave.

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In the Image of Man

Player Character Information

The Tale

Old Digger was harmless enough. He hung around taverns and inns, swapping stories for handouts and occasionally finding odd jobs for a few pieces of silver. Every so often, a gullible young adventurer might pay Digger for exact details concerning a treasure the old man claimed to have seen or heard about; the old sot would always embellish his tale in gratitude for the offering.

The other night, your party witnessed one of Digger's finest stories. In the wavering glow of a dying fire, the drunkard wove a dark and terrifying tale of conspiracy that he claimed was actually taking place within several of the larger nearby cities.

Digger had spoken of supernatural creatures that walked the streets of these large towns and cities. They took people for food and made evil pacts with men who would betray their neighbors for material wealth. These creatures counted on the greed of humans to keep their vile hungers at bay. Digger also claimed that these monsters could take on the form of any man or beast; they could even appear as the one person you would trust. In fact, the old man had said, some of these creatures might even be in the tavern room now, and no one would be the wiser.

After making such a wild statement, Digger had glanced fearfully about the room, like an animal that had smelled the scent of a hunter. The drunkard then bolted out of the tavern, heading for the shed where he'd spent most every night for years, ignoring the laughs that followed him.

He has not been seen in three days.

Research & Rumor

- The disappearance is noteworthy only because the owner of the inn discovered bloodstains on the shed floor.
- Digger's stories had grown wilder, almost desperate of late, presumably due to declining handouts.
- Digger used to talk about being in the militia. Several of his more believable stories concerned life as a soldier.
- Several local cities have had high numbers of missing people, but most of these were adventurers, or the traveling type who might have met more than their match in the wilderness.
- Most people are inclined to think that Digger finally moved on to a new town where his old stories might win more handouts.
- Digger is attempting some kind of hoax to gain attention and, thus, increase the size of handouts.
- A few concerned citizens found a ruby worth over three hundred gold pieces after looking in Digger's shed.

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In the Image of Man (DM)

DM's Information

PC Illustration

This is a picture of Old Digger in the midst of one of his stories.

DM Illustration

A Rakshasa readies itself for the attack.

Notes

The evil plot that Digger describes is actually real, so it is imperative that the Dungeon Master foster a sense of conspiracy and uncertainty once the players decide to investigate Digger's disappearance. The players should soon discover that things are not what they seem; this "invasion" of supernatural creatures is insidious and subtle. In fact, the DM is encouraged to stage encounters and create false leads in such a way that his players will not know who to trust.

It is also suggested that the DM place Digger in the campaign as a recurring NPC before running this adventure. After meeting this colorful drunk a few times previous to this adventure, the party will be more motivated to investigate his disappearance.

Dane Basal is Digger's real name. He was once a part of the conspiracy. At the time he worked as a guard in a large city and received large bribes for looking the other way when people vanished. His conscience eventually forced him to run away from Kresh and become a drifter. He has mostly avoided talking about his past until the other night; at that time, he spoke too much of the truth within hearing of several members of the conspiracy, including a Rakshasa. He was taken that night.

Obstacles

The supernatural creatures that Digger refers to in his story are Rakshasa, evil spirits reborn into flesh. They have a taste for human flesh and can easily gather treasure by preying on weaker creatures. Several years ago, they began to infiltrate human communities, paying out fortunes to administrators and militia leaders who looked the other way as people disappeared in and around their towns. Sometimes these humans even help to arrange 'accidents.'

Rakshasa that live in a given community of the DM's campaign use their ability of illusion to portray townspeople. At this point, there are several Rakshasa that occupy key positions in local and city government. The DM is encouraged to place these "duplicates" in positions that would increase the level of tension and surprise for the investigating party.

The DM should decide at the start how many towns and cities are affected. Each town or small city is under the control of 1d4 Rakshasa. A fair-sized to large city contains 2d4 of the creatures. Most of the humans in the pay of these evil creatures know very little of the actual truth and will not actively participate in aggressions; however, for every Rakshasa there will be at least three humans who will oppose the adventurers.

After the adventurers clear out at least three towns, or after they make the conspiracy credible to the public, the Rakshasa will organize a counter-attack. They will lure the adventurers into a small village and attempt to eliminate them. Ten Rakshasa will infiltrate the village; if this attack fails, the Rakshasa will abandon their plots and move away.

The Treasure

Any town or city with a Rakshasa presence can be expected to have a community stash of up to 6,000 gp in coin and 1d6 gems; the treasure will be located in an accessible place for all Rakshasa. There is also a 30% chance per town or city that the treasure stash will include 1d6 magical items.

When the counterattack comes, the attacking Rakshasa will have 1d6 gems.

Rakshasa: AC –4; MV 15; HD 7; THAC0 13; #AT 3; Dmg 1–3/1–3/2–5; SA illusion; SD magical weapon to hit; SW *blessed* crossbow bolt; MR immune to all spells lower than 8th level; SZ M (6' tall); ML champion (16); Int very (12); AL LE; XP 4,000.

SA—rakshasa have a limited form of ESP which allows them to use their powers of illusion to appear as someone the victim will trust; they must drop this illusion to attack;

SD—PCs will need a +1 or better magical weapon to hit the rakshasa, and any weapon lower than +3 will inflict only half damage.

SW—A *blessed* crossbow bolt will kill a rakshasa instantly.

Magical Abilities: wizard—up to four 1st-level spells, up to three 2nd-level spells, up to two 3rd-level spells; priest—up to three 1st-level spells.

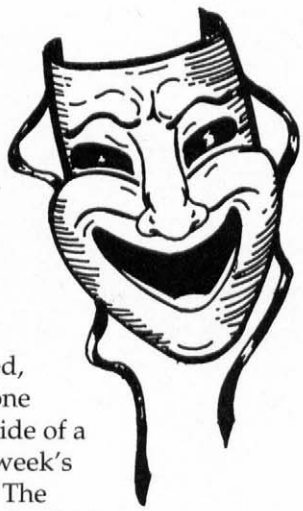
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My Brother's Keeper

Player Character Information

The Tale



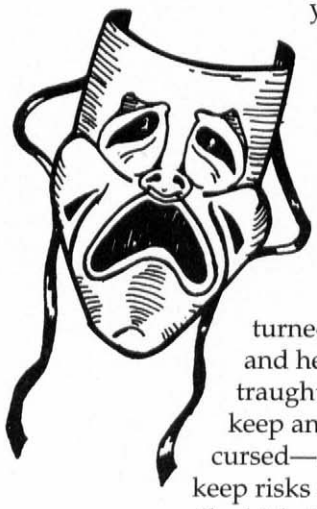
The Caulladen Troupe is skilled indeed. In their closing performance tonight they offered their rendition of *The Tragedy of Dreyfeld Manor*. The play is based on a true-life story which occurred, they say, not quite one year ago today outside of a remote village one week's ride from the town. The play is a haunting tale which chills the soul. However, there may just be enough truth in it to warrant further attention.

Act I. According to the performance, Dreyfeld Manor was an abandoned keep purchased and restored by a noble elf family whose name "is left unspoken out of respect for their loss." There had always been rumors of haunts and stories of the strange circumstances under which the keep was abandoned; the elves, to their great loss, did not heed these tales. Under the guidance and generous treasury of the elves, both the family and the village prospered.

Act II. The main trouble began when the younger of two brothers was afflicted with fever and delirium. His resulting madness concerned both family and villagers, and soon much of the townsfolk's good will began to fade. The elder brother of the elf family tried to deny the severity of the situation, and attempted to placate the villagers through promises and handsome donations. Soon, however, he accepted the need to confront his ailing brother.

While his parents were in the village, the elder brother confronted his mad sibling. Angered by his brother's "betrayal," the insane young man slew him in front of their maiden sister and dragged the body down into the manor's cellars. The maiden elf, with tears of grief, ran to the village and recounted the horrible events that she witnessed.

Act III. The elf parents, saddened by the madness and tragedy that struck their family, returned to the keep with a large number of townsfolk. The group discovered the younger brother wandering the main hall, brandishing a short sword. During the confrontation, the mad elf shattered an oil lamp in the doorway and defended the exit until the fire consumed all but one villager.

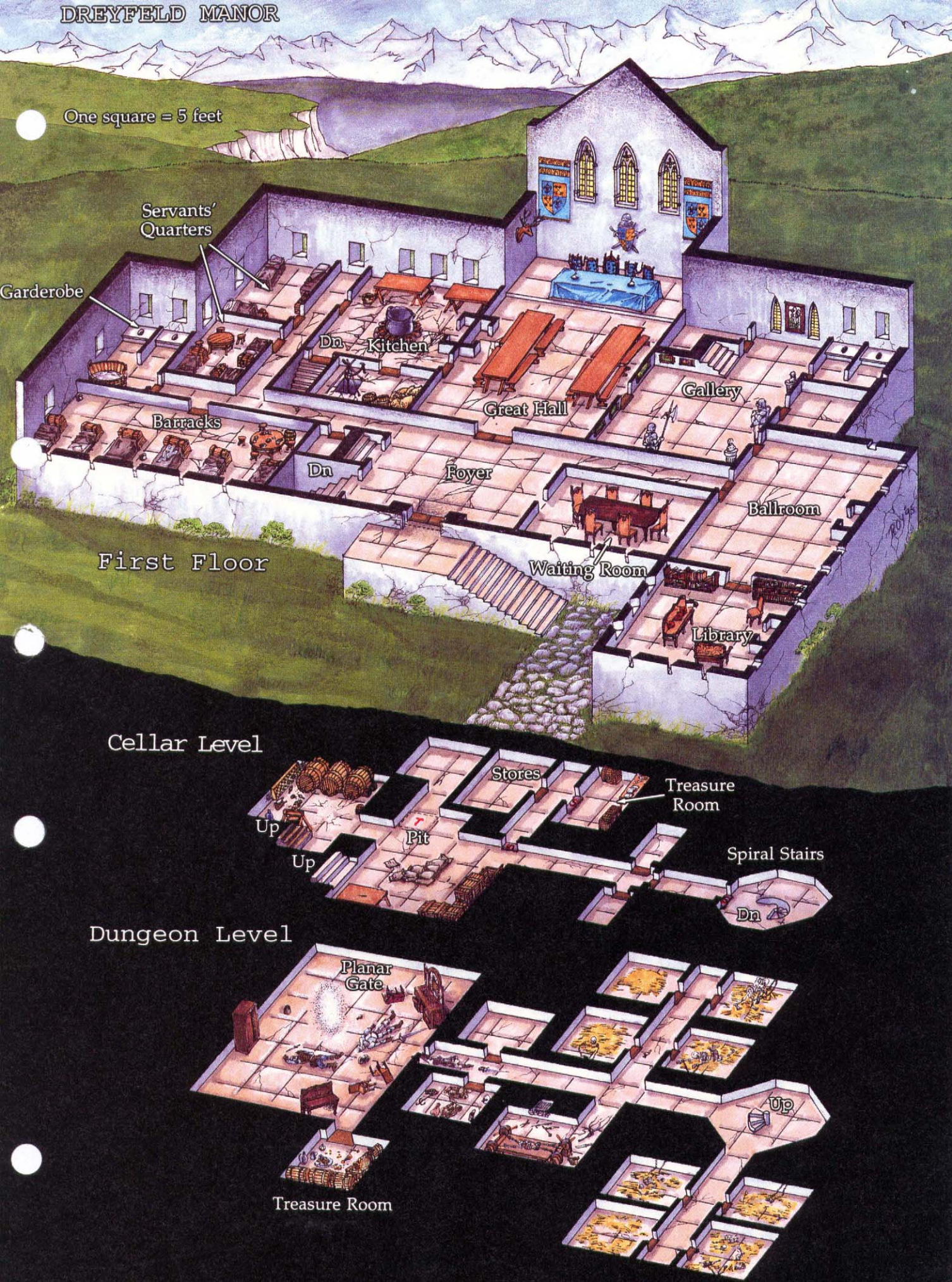


Act IV. The maiden returned to find her family dead and her home destroyed. Distraught, she pronounced the keep and its surrounding lands cursed—anyone who enters the keep risks falling beneath the same evil which destroyed her family.

Research & Rumor

- The only elf named in the play is the elder brother, Sayel.
- The senior member of the troupe claims to be an historian but will not part with any information concerning the keep's location.
- Other members of the troupe will only give ominous warnings that evil and death awaits any person who seeks out the manor.
- The name Dreyfeld does not appear in any source of local information.
- After the play, a merchant remarks that his wagons once passed near a burned-out keep, and that several men caught a strange fever. He can only remember that it was far to the north, possibly near the village of Nayce.
- One of the wagon drivers for the troupe claims to have been with them for almost two years. In all that time, he has seen no proof that Dreyfeld Manor exists.

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DREYFELD MANOR
One square = 5 feet
Servants' Quarters
Garderobe
Dn
Kitchen
Great Hall
Gallery
Barracks
Dn
Foyer
Ballroom
First Floor
Waiting Room
Library
Cellar Level
Stores
Treasure Room
Up
Pit
Up
Spiral Stairs
Dn
Dungeon Level
Planar Gate
Up
Treasure Room

My Brother's Keeper (DM)

DM's Information

PC Illustration

This is the climactic scene of the third act of *The Tragedy of Dreyfeld Manor*.

DM Illustration

This is a map of Dreyfeld Manor.

The Truth

Dreyfeld Manor rests a few miles outside the village of Nayce. Though the tragedy actually took place over five years ago, the villagers refuse to discuss it. Any adventurers who press the issue will quickly find themselves getting the cold shoulder throughout the village.

Dreyfeld Manor was originally built by a long forgotten cult that worshipped ancient creatures of evil and dedicated their efforts to recreating this evil and releasing it into the world. Their experiments eventually consumed them; the cult disappeared several decades prior to the arrival of the elf family. Although the cult was destroyed, their dark practices created a gate between the planes. It wasn't long before a creature from the netherworld found its way into the Prime Material plane.

It was this creature that possessed the young elf in the tragedy, driving him to those acts of insanity and rage. The hapless elf was the creature's first victim; this inexperience prevented full control of the body. This time the creature is better prepared; it lurks in the darkened halls of Dreyfield Manor, waiting for its next victims.

Obstacles

Dreyfield Manor and its surrounding land can be stocked with any number of evil creatures that have been attracted by the dark creature.

The evil of Dreyfield Manor is not fully corporeal; it exists primarily on the Ethereal Plane in much the same way as a ghost. There it bides its time, hoping to find a victim that will allow it full access to the Prime Material plane. The ability to see into the Ethereal Plane or *detect magic* will show its monstrous outline; otherwise the creature will be invisible. Its tenuous presence on the Prime Material plane allows for the use of its spell effects requiring touch, but makes it vulnerable to magical weapons (though it only takes half damage from these). In this half corporeal state it is immune to spells unless they are cast from the Ethereal Plane.

The dark creature will become aware of any intruder within one hundred yards of the ruins. At this time, and until the gate is destroyed, adventurers are subject to its influence. It will attack first with spell effects such as *cause disease* and *fear*, and will also direct nearby creatures to attack. In addition, it will attempt to gain possession of the strongest member of the party. A targeted PC must make a saving throw vs. spells at a –4 penalty. Failure means that the creature has taken control of the PC and can use all of the PC's special abilities save those that derive from worship of a deity. The planar creature can only possess a single being at a time; PCs who resist the mental domination can never be possessed by that specific creature again.

The monster will take great care to preserve the life of any body it possesses, and if necessary, it will retreat to the lower dungeons. If pressed, the creature will make its last stand in the room with the planar Gate. While in the Gate room, it can project about half of its original form into the Prime Material plane. This enables it to make a 2d10 physical attack while remaining in possession of a body. This projection, however, renders the creature more vulnerable to physical weapons. In this form, it can be struck by silver weapons and spells for half damage, or magical weapons for full damage.

Evil One (1): AC –6; MV 14; HD 10; hp 80; THAC0 12; #AT 2; Dmg 2d10; SA spell abilities; SD insubstantial form; MR 50%; SZ H (8' diameter); ML fanatic (18); Int Godlike (21); AL CE; XP 17,000.

SA—these abilities are innate and do not require casting as per a spell: *cantrip, dancing lights, shatter, dispel magic, confusion, fear, withdraw, cause disease* (reverse of *cure disease, curse, heal* (3 x day).

SD—the creature can not be hit with normal weapons; magical weapons only inflict half damage.

The Treasure

There are actually two treasure rooms in the keep. The first is located behind a secret door in the cellar level. This is the treasure of the elf family which includes coins and gems valued at 6,500 gold pieces, and various family heirlooms and histories that would be equally as valuable if a surviving family member can be located.

The second treasure room is located at the dungeon level, just off the room with the spiritual gate. To get at this treasure, the adventurers will have to destroy the creature and subdue any adventurer under its control. The value of this take is 12,750 gp in gems and various coin, a *long sword +1, flame tongue,* and any four miscellaneous magical items.

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From the Mouths of Babes

Player Character Information

The Tale

After a hot, tiring day on the road, your party makes its way into a small village square. After drawing water from a cool well, you decide to take a much needed rest. Before you can settle down, the sound of children's voices reaches your ears. The childish voices grow louder as a group of youngsters draws closer to the village square. By now, you can make out the words of a song that the skipping children are singing:

Dip into the valley, hold it up to see;
scepter of the land, all follow me.
Falling down the mountainside,
sweeping into town;
weeping over ashes, all fall down.

An old man notices your interest in the song; he glances back at the children who are still at their play. *"Songs of such innocence often hold unexpected knowledge,"* he says cryptically.

The children continue their song:

Meadow full of children, thunder on the ground;
raise a fence of pickets, all circle 'round.
Rising from the meadows, no one left to play;
ride into the morning, all go 'way.

Seeing your puzzled reactions to his words, the old man smiles and says, *"That childhood rhyme is actually based on one of the darkest times this land has known: the rule of Kainus, the warlord."*

You nod in understanding to the wizened man. The legends of Kainus are well known. They still haunt the area in the forms of campfire tales and prophecies of doom, but it's the stories that still circulate among the inns that truly raise interest. Over a century ago, Kainus' warhost sacked town after town. He used the treasures to support his armies and the empire he was carving out for himself; a large portion of the war spoils were carted back to his mountain stronghold for safe keeping. Kainus was finally stopped at Coldwell Valley by the combined armies of two kingdoms. These kingdoms then marched on his stronghold to reclaim what treasure they could for the people.

That treasure, thought to be one of the greatest fortunes ever assembled, was never found. Now, even the actual location of Kainus' stronghold has been lost to time. Is there enough in the rhyme to point the way? Could the treasure still be up in the mountains, waiting for discovery?

Down into the valley, empty out the sack;
start at the beginning, all turn back.
hiding in the valley, saddened at the end;
wait until it's time, all start again.

Research & Rumor

- The old man can only remember the tales of horror told to him by his father. He can recall that once a band of young men, barely more than children themselves, tried to form an army. Kainus rode over them at the Battle of Hensted Meadows.

- There are mountains in three different directions, but the rhyme seems to suggest that the stronghold should lay to the east, toward the morning sun. This would make the Ebonguard Mountains a possibility.

- About a year ago, rumors traveled up from the southern regions that Kainus' treasure was discovered by orcs and funneled down to the orc homelands to finance their border skirmishes.

- The old man does see one thing others might not. The *falling down the mountainside* line could also describe a waterfall, which would become a river *sweeping into town.*

- The rhyme's end is a little vague, but it could mean the final battle of Coldwell Valley. The last line definitely plays along the lines of the legends—namely that Kainus still lives and will one day come again to finish what was started.

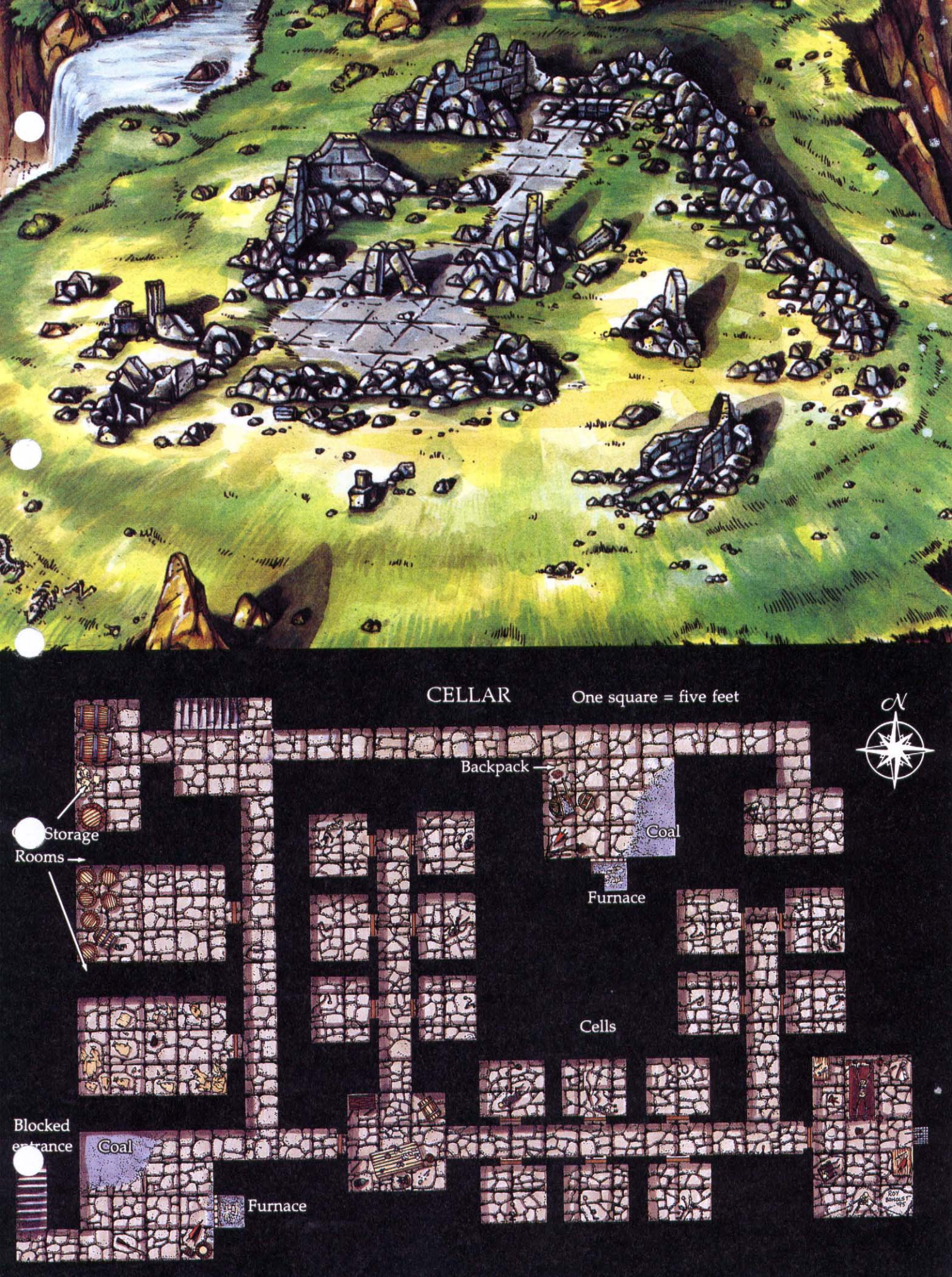
- No one is sure what town was the first to fall to Kainus, but it can be narrowed down to three; all of the villages are within a day's ride of the Ebonguard Mountains.

- Kainus' personal stronghold was torn to the ground. No treasure, other than normal stronghold valuables, was found.

- A sage who specializes in history claims that Kainus built huge treasure vaults within the mountains. He has no proof except supposed personal accounts of escaped slaves.

- Interestingly enough, another band of adventurers came to the sage almost a year ago and asked after the treasure vaults. They also asked several questions about orcs.

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CELLAR
One square = five feet
N
Backpack
Storage
Rooms
Coal
Furnace
Cells
Blocked
entrance
Coal
Furnace

From the Mouths of Babes (DM)

DM's Information

PC Illustration

This is an illustration of children weaving around the town well and singing.

DM Illustration

This is a picture of the rubble of Kainus' mountain stronghold and a map of the cellar.

Notes

Kainus' stronghold is actually on Mount Tapre in the Ebonguard Mountains. As it so happens, a waterfall does fall past the stronghold. The river then flows into the area which Kainus first invaded. The stronghold is no more than a pile of stones, a few walls, and a cellar/dungeon that houses a collection of undead known as shadows.

The incredible fortunes of the legends are indeed locked in Kainus' treasure vaults. Unfortunately, these vaults were not built near the stronghold; they are actually located in a narrow valley at the foot of the mountain. This valley is the one referred to both times in the rhyme, but there should be no way that the adventurers could figure that out.

Another party of adventurers tracked the stronghold down before the arrival of the PCs, but this group fell victim to the shadows. If the PCs can clear out the shadows, they will get a few clues as to the location of the treasure vaults.

Obstacles

The difficulty level and length of the journey to Mount Tapre is left to the DM's discretion. Monsters and obstacles that the party must overcome should be appropriate to hilly and mountainous regions.

At the stronghold itself, the adventurers will discover a group of shadows which have claimed the cellars and dungeon of the stronghold for their own.

Shadows (14): AC 7; MV 12; HD 3+3; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 2–5 plus special; SA strength drain; SD +1 weapon or better to hit; SZ M (6' tall); ML special; Int low (7); AL CE; XP 650.

Shadows are immune to *sleep*, *charm*, and *hold* spells and are unaffected by cold-based attacks; they are 90% undetectable in all but the brightest lighting; shadows are very reluctant to leave their lair, but can be turned by a cleric;

SA—with each blow, a shadow also drains away one point of strength; lost strength points return 2–8 turns after being touched; if an adventurer reaches zero strength or zero hit points, he becomes a shadow;

SD—shadows require a +1 weapon or better to damage.

The Treasure

There was little left after the stronghold was torn down, but a few unlucky adventuring parties have met their doom in this area. The shadows have not kept their treasure, as it reminds them of their mortal life. In this case, the shadows have thrown all their treasure into the waterfall where most of it rests in the tiny lake at the waterfall's base. If the adventurers manage to find the treasure, they will recover up to 9,000 gp in coin, 3 large gems (1,000 gp base value) and any three magical items that would weigh enough to keep them from being swept away by the current.

The party will also discover some rags and a backpack in a corner of the cellar floor. The only things inside the backpack are a few scribbled pages of notes and a faded tapestry depicting a fierce warrior; these are items which just might lead them to Kainus' treasure (see **Spoils of War** on page 26).

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Spoils of War

Player Character Information

The Tale

Kainus the Undefeated is a name that still haunts the region in the form of legends, prophecies, and general campfire stories. The adventurers last brush with those legends has uncovered much more of the true story, perhaps enough to locate Kainus' lost treasure vaults.

Over 100 years ago Kainus led his warhost out from their mountain domain; this force brought the land under his control city by city and kingdom by kingdom. As the conquered people were pressed into service and his armies grew, Kainus' power increased until it seemed that he would be unstoppable. This period is considered one of history's darkest times—the cruel, despotic reign of a most vicious warlord.

Kainus was finally stopped at the Battle of Coldwell Valley, where the combined forces of two kingdoms met his warhost and decimated it almost to the last man. Under such a crippling loss, the mighty juggernaut stalled. Slowly, the empire which had been built on fear and supported by constant military expansion crumbled, leaving in its wake a legacy of stories. Tales still abound concerning Kainus' string of ruthless victories, the atrocities which occurred under his rule, and, most importantly, the treasures taken by his armies as spoils of war.

Research & Rumor

- Certainly a large portion of the spoils were used to expand Kainus' war efforts. However, it is thought that the fortunes of several kingdoms might still lay in wait to be discovered.

- Though accounts of the final battle do conflict, most agree that Kainus was not present at Coldwell Valley. This might explain why his warhost was destroyed.

- The pages recovered from the stronghold cellar relate messages that were supposedly passed between Kainus' commanders. Several are requisitions for supplies from the *vaults*. Several more discuss the plans of battle for Coldwell Valley.

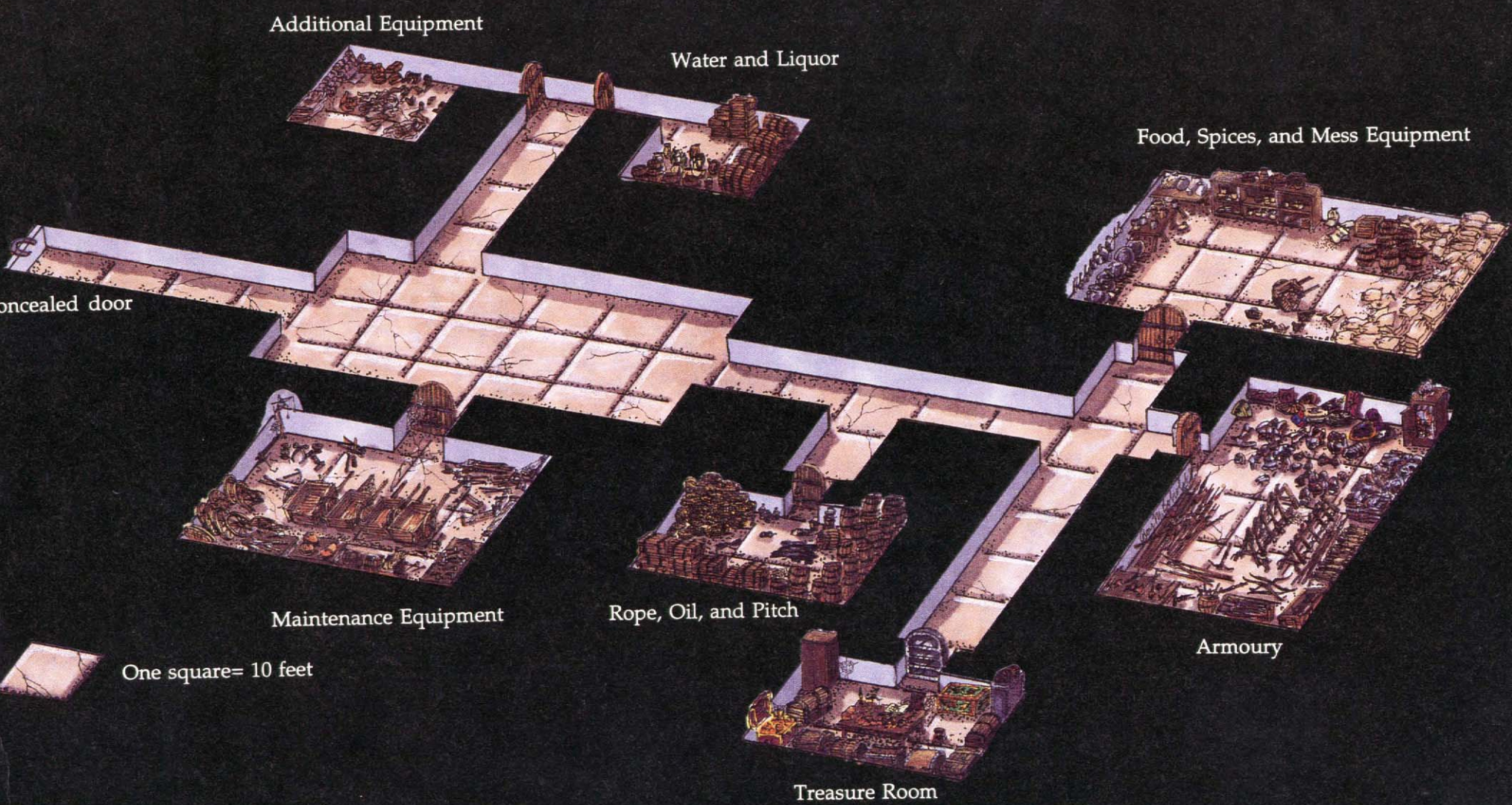
- It is widely accepted that the victorious kingdoms tore the stronghold down and appropriated any treasure.

- The recovered tapestry might have once hung in Kainus' stronghold and has weathered surprisingly well considering its age. The remnants of a magical dweomer, some type of preservation spell, still cling to the fabric. It is likely that the warrior depicted in the tapestry is Kainus, and the light surrounding his helm is the type of divine-right appearance most warlords want to foster.

- The valley in the tapestry does not compare with Coldwell Valley, but the sword Kainus is holding up has been identified as the *scepter of the land* referred to in the children's rhyme. Kainus is said to have named it himself.

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VAULTS OF KAINUS



Spoils of War (DM)

DM's Information

PC Illustration

This picture shows the tapestry found at Kainus' mountain stronghold. It supposedly depicts Kainus reviewing his troops before the Battle of Coldwell Valley.

DM Illustration

This is a map of Kainus' treasure vaults (where Kainus awaits the party).

Notes

Almost everything the PCs learn has a grain of truth in it, the most dramatic fact being that Kainus is not dead. Rather, the ancient warlord still walks the earth as a powerful warrior lich. Kainus has survived the centuries through the use of a powerful artifact and the tenacity of his will to finish his plans of conquest. The warlord was shut away in his vaults by a treacherous commander who thought to raise himself to Kainus' position. The defeat at Coldwell Valley ended those aspirations along with the empire, and Kainus has waited for release ever since. That release came just over two years ago.

A tribe of orcs seeking shelter in the valley discovered the hidden entrance and quickly fell under the domination of Kainus. They believe themselves to be the heirs of the legacy, and they slowly gather and train in the Ebonguards for the coming war. They are fanatical, having built a shrine at the entrance to the vaults (marking it clearly for the PCs), and adopting the legends of Kainus as a pseudo-religion.

Obstacles

The valley lays around the back side of Mount Tapre, an area the adventurers have yet to penetrate; the trip can again be filled with as much peril as the DM sees fit. The PCs should begin to discover orc settlements close to the valley. The adventurers have the option of attacking the humanoids or skirting the villages. The orcs, however, will definitely attack if they discover the intruders. The orcish battle cry resembles the name of "Kainus." This should clue the players that the orcs might know something about the vaults, and if role-played correctly, might actually point the PCs toward the correct valley campsite. The orcs will take whatever steps are necessary to protect the vaults; there will be at least two to six orcs on guard at the shrine at any given time. Due to Kainus' training, they are more dangerous than normal orcs.

Once inside the vaults, the adventurers will have to deal with Kainus. The orcs will remain outside unless specifically called by their master. If the adventurers make their presence known, Kainus will show up and challenge each PC to single combat in random order. If Kainus is discovered in the treasure room, he attacks one person at random until that person falls, and then moves on to the next. If Kainus is taken to 0 hp, he will fall to the ground for three rounds, after which he gains the effect of a *heal* spell. This power is in effect so long as he wears his helm.

Orc Warriors: AC 6; MV 9; HD 2+1; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1–10; SZ M (6' tall); ML fanatic (17); Int avg (9); AL CE; XP 35.

Refer to the MONSTROUS MANUAL™ tome for information on shamans and orc chieftains.

Kainus (warrior lich): AC –5; MV 9; HD 12; hp 112; THAC0 9 (7 with sword); #AT 2; Dmg 1d12+2; SA paralysis; SD +1 weapon or better to hit; SW turned as other undead; SZ M (6' tall); ML fearless (20); Int genius (17); AL CE; XP 9,500.

Special Equipment: Kainus wields a huge *two-handed sword* +2 that hits for 1d12 points of damage (plus magic bonus).

SA—if struck by Kainus' sword, a character must save vs. paralysis or be paralyzed for 1d10 rounds;

SD—Kainus is immune to *charm, sleep, enfeeblement, polymorph, cold, electricity, insanity,* and *death* spells; he is also immune to non-magical weapons;

SW—a priest of 8th level or higher can attempt to turn Kainus.

The Treasure

Ironically, most of Kainus' great treasure is now spoiled or obsolete. The bulk of it consists of materials and supplies meant to further his military goals. These supplies were worth several king's fortunes, but they are hardly worth anything now. Several large rooms contain rations that went bad decades ago. Vaults of armor and weapons suffered similar decaying effects; the vaults were never meant for such long-term storage.

Fortunately, there is some hope left for the adventurers. Besides the treasure that can be taken off the orcs, there is one small hidden room with coin and gems. The treasure's total value is 12,000 gp. There is also the *Helm of Kainus*, an artifact of some power that has helped to sustain his life and is responsible in some part for his leadership skills. The DM can tailor this artifact to suit the needs of the campaign, but some abilities to consider are any that extend life or provide major Charisma bonuses to followers.

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The Dragon and the Lady

Player Character Information

The Tale

Messengers brought news through town that is sure to spark the interest of adventuring parties for weeks in every direction. Gerrard Cathelix, King of the Hinterlands, has desperate need of a clever and resourceful band of adventurers. His daughter, the princess Ariadne, has been taken captive by the copper dragon Tremelo and stands in need of rescue. He is offering a large fortune—20,000 gold pieces—for her safe recovery.

This news lifts the protection that Tremelo has lived under for decades; the copper dragon has been left in peace by Royal Decree as long as he remained within the mountains. That time is apparently past; the dragon, and his hoard, are now fair game to any adventurers with courage in their hearts.

All that stands in the way is one little dragon.

Research & Rumor

- Over 30 years ago Gerrard Cathelix defeated over a dozen dragons in his efforts to tame the Nohrkhan Mountains.
- Gerrard does not demand the death of Tremolo. The only thing that he is concerned about is Ariadne's safe return.
- It is said that Tremelo enjoys human company, and that on the night of a new moon he will receive visitors for a riddle contest.
- Ariadne was ill before her capture and was rarely seen outside of the palace for the last year.
- Gerrard was known as "King Dragonbane" for years following his program to rid the area of dragonkind.
- There are suggestions that Tremelo has taken other captives before, and that Gerrard overlooked those indiscretions until it involved his own family.
- The truce with the dragon originated when Gerrard defeated him in heroic combat. It is thought that the dragon wishes to confront Gerrard again now that it has grown stronger.
- Tremelo has been sighted making midnight flights around his mountain lair and raiding local farms for cattle.
- Ariadne was actually taken almost six months ago.

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The Dragon and the Lady (DM)

DM's Information

PC Illustration

This is the portrait of Ariadne that King Gerrard has ordered the servants to show aspiring adventurers.

DM Illustration

This is a map of Tremolo's lair.

Notes

Ariadne is not a captive of the dragon. In fact, the opposite is true; Tremolo has been enslaved by the princess. The blame for this circumstance lies squarely with King Gerrard the owner of several artifacts known as *Orbs of Dragonkind*. It was with these artifacts that Gerrard was able to tame Tremelo and clear away other dragons from the Nohrkhan Mountains. He used a *wish* to absorb the artifacts into his body so that he would never be surprised by a dragon while he was away from the orbs. The king saw no reason to expel the artifacts once the dragons were defeated.

Then Ariadne was born. As early as 10 years of age, the young princess exhibited strange symptoms that were curiously reminiscent of the side effects of using the orbs. The power of the artifacts had apparently been transferred to her. Gerrard did nothing to remove these powers, deciding that such a gift would be an excellent legacy for his descendants.

At 18, Ariadne began to share the thoughts and emotions of dragonkind. She possessed little control over the ability, however, and over the next few years it slowly drove her into a state of madness. She rarely went out in public, and when she did the results were often disastrous; it seems that Ariadne's personality reflected many draconic traits. Tremelo, being the closest dragon, had the greatest influence on the young princess. From his mind, she learned of the *Orbs of Dragonkind* and came to the conclusion that she should be in control of every dragon.

The day after her 20th birthday, Ariadne left secretly to seek out Tremelo. Once within range, she summoned him and used her power to crush his will and force him into servitude. By this time, her mind was set into a pattern so similar to a dragon that she went with Tremelo back to his lair and made it her home. Now she forces the copper dragon to raid passing merchants to increase his—now her—treasure hoard. When rescuers approach or enter the lair, the crazed princess defends it with ruthless efficiency. Ariadne has no intention of ever returning to the castle. Instead, she plans on venturing out to find other dragons and create her own kingdom of dragonkind.

Obstacles

The trail leading up to the dragon's lair is left to the DM's design. Unless very special precautions are taken, however, Ariadne will discover the approach of any rescuers and act accordingly. Even if she is caught unawares, Ariadne will still be difficult to overcome. The young woman has forced her way into the minds of numerous spell-using dragons and is now a fully capable wizard. She is also brilliant, although her mind is unstable. If Ariadne has any weaknesses, it is in her desire to toy with her victims before destroying them.

Her greatest advantage is that everyone thinks she is the captive, and she plays this for all it is worth. If caught by surprise, she will tell the rescuers that a magic spell holds her prisoner and only winning a riddle game against Tremolo will set her free. In this way, she gets the poor fools to wander right up to the dragon, which she then mentally commands to attack. Once the attack is under way, Ariadne joins in from a hidden position.

There are many variations on what could happen. If Tremelo is found first, the rescuers might destroy him before learning the truth. If they try reason, Tremelo will be unable to explain (he is under mental restriction not to speak of the situation to anyone) but will do his best to convey the helplessness of his situation.

Ariadne, hf M8: AC 6 (Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 32; THAC0 18 (16 with dagger); #AT 1; DMG 1d4+2 (dagger +2); SZ M; ML steady (12); AL CE; XP 3,000.

S 12, D 18, C 15, I 17, W 12, Ch 16.

Special Equipment: *dagger +2.*

Spellbook (4/3/3/2): 1st—*audible glamer, burning hands, charm person, magic missile*, sleep*, spider climb;* 2nd—*darkness 15' radius*, invisibility*, mirror image*, web;* 3rd—*blink*, delude, lightning*, fly, slow*;* 4th—*dimension door, ice storm*, polymorph other*, wall of fire.*

* indicates favored spell.

Tremelo (adult Dragon, Copper): AC –4; MV 12, Fl 30(C); HD 16; hp 120; THAC0 9; #AT 3 plus special; Dmg 1–6+7/1–6+7/5–20+7;

SA see MONSTROUS MANUAL™ tome; SD see MONSTROUS MANUAL tome; SZ G (60' body); ML elite (14); Int high (14); AL CG; XP 16,000.

The Treasure

If both Ariadne and Tremelo are destroyed, the players can claim the entire treasure hoard—which amounts to 60,000 gold pieces worth of coin and gems, and any six miscellaneous magical items. It is much more likely, however, that Tremelo will survive this encounter and reward the characters with one half his hoard for winning him his freedom.

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THOMAS
MANNING
1-9-7-61

Throne of the Mountain King

Player Character Information

The Tale

Mosby, an old and respected warrior, lies on his deathbed. He has been many things in his life: an adventurer, a soldier, a military consultant, and most recently, the commander of the town guard. His life has been filled with many travels, if not treasures, and he has never evidenced any regret. He has asked specifically for your party to be present during his final moments.

"I've lived a good life," he says, nodding as if to agree with himself, *"but there is one thing I have yet to do, one thing that I vowed I would finish. It could have made me a fortune, too."* The dying man smiles hesitantly, *"It could also have killed me. I think that I simply decided, somewhere along the line, that living was more important to me than any treasure. But I know of those who prefer greater risk."* His eyes pass around the room. *"So I leave it to those with courage enough to finish what I began."*

He talks then of the Hall of the Mountain King, the fabled underground fortress built by ogres and hill giants when they controlled the mountains to the west. Mosby found it, he claims, while employed as a soldier for the city of Wisteran. The city routinely sent patrols up into the mountains to scout out any possible goblin or orc activity in the area. Mosby led the patrol down through a shallow valley, and it was there that one of his elf scouts came back to report a concealed cave entrance.

"We decided to check it out. Or rather, I made the decision and ordered the others inside. The entrance was concealed by fallen boulders and loose rubble at the bottom of the cliff face. It was an extremely large entrance, and I began to wonder about the legends of the mountain king. The further we traveled, the more I became convinced that we had found the hall. That probably explains why I wasn't paying as close attention as I should've."

His eyes mist over but he blinks it away, his face set hard against any emotion. *"They let us find the throne room before attacking."*

The dying man describes the throne room as he best remembers it, which isn't too well considering the number of years that have passed. He does, however, remember the throne. *"It's probably still there,"* he says. *"The throne was left behind when the ogres and hill giants fled the caverns. It was a stunningly beautiful piece of craftsmanship, made from silver and heavily chased with gold. The rarest gems of the mountains adorned it as well, making your heart ache to possess it. We were still standing there, staring at the treasure-laden throne, when the attack came.*

"Vile creatures of the dark swarmed over us; they took down the two torchbearers first. They weren't giants either. These monsters were small and fast, and seemed to be everywhere at once. They were deadly shadows with barbs, spikes, claws, and teeth that tore us apart." The grizzled warrior has to stop and calm himself, but his breathing is now very labored and his eyes are staring vacantly at the ceiling. *"We lost five men just getting out of the hall and back into the passages, but the black demons followed us. Jase, my best friend, went down at the first bend, buying us time. One of the elves went down in the final run toward the entrance; the unlucky fellow was pulled back from right alongside me. What was left of our group stumbled out of the caverns and into the blessed sunlight. We kept running until we were clear of the valley, and then we walked all night to put more distance between us and that nightmare. I didn't even notice who had survived until the next morning— me, Klintoc, and the other elf, Llesilan."*

"Ten of us went in, three came out. We vowed never to talk about what really happened. We were going to wait and think on it, and maybe go back and get the throne while we avenged our friends. Meanwhile, we told everyone that some griffins attacked us at night and killed most of our party.

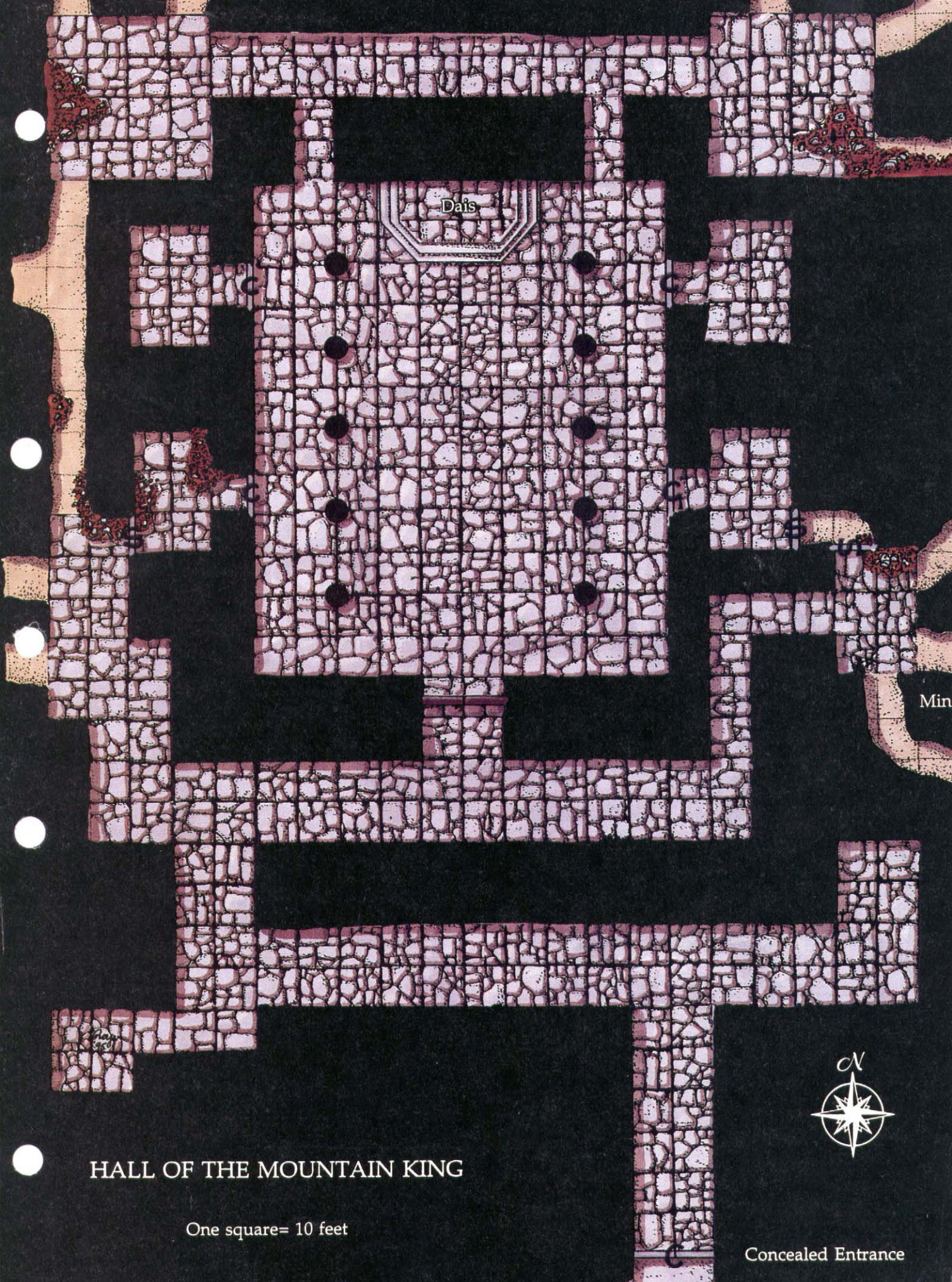
"Please, my friends, go back and finish what I started. I. . . ."

The veteran fighter gives out a gurgling cough . . . and dies.

Research & Rumor

- The mountains nearest Wisteran are fairly well mapped, but there is no indication as to which valley Mosby referred.
- There have been other reports of adventurers discovering the old Hall of the Mountain King and finding it deserted or guarded by spirits.
- The last report of an ogre or hill giant in those mountains was over seven years ago.
- Mosby's surviving companions have not been seen in almost a decade.

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HALL OF THE MOUNTAIN KING

One square= 10 feet

Concealed Entrance

Throne of the Mountain King (DM)

DM's Information

PC Illustration

This is a picture of the jeweled throne as described by Mosby.

DM Illustration

This is a map of the mountain hall.

Notes

The mountain hall was originally built by hill giants and ogres in order to guard their mines which honeycomb the mountain behind the hall. They kept control of the hall for decades, until a large band of gargoyles roamed into the valley and discovered the presence of the ogres and giants. As they were only damaged by magical weapons, the gargoyles resisted most of the giant attacks and quickly overran the hall and claimed it, and the valley, as their own.

Nearly two decades later, a dao (genie) discovered the gargoyles and quickly subjugated them. Under his direction the mines were reopened and the gargoyles were put to work acquiring gems that were used to support the genie's interest in extraplanar trade. The dao increased his hold on the hall by enslaving a number of ogres who were put to work in the deep mines. The gargoyles are now used for supervision, defense, and basic tasks that keep the hall functioning.

Obstacles

Dangers in reaching the valley are at the discretion of the DM, but the valley itself should be rather free of danger so long as the adventurers do not alert the gargoyles to their presence. Once inside the mountain, though, the dao will be aware of the presence of the PCs and he will either send gargoyles to attack or he will personally lure the adventurers into a trap with the aid of his *change self* ability. The great hall is the preferred place of attack since the gargoyles can bring their greater numbers to bear; there are also several concealed rooms off of the main hall. The dao will first create a *wall of stone* to trap the PCs in the great hall and then will lounge comfortably on the throne to enjoy the carnage. He will not enter combat unless the gargoyles are clearly losing. If he does enter the fray, the dao will use a *rock to mud* spell before engaging in physical combat.

If the adventurers penetrate deep into the mines, the ogres found there will be more interested in fleeing their captivity than fighting. The ogres will happily turn over the mines to the adventurers in exchange for freedom.

Dao (Genie): AC 3; MV 9, Fl 15(B); HD 8+3; hp 64; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 3–18; SD immune to earth spells; SW holy water; SZ L (10' tall); ML champion (15); Int very (12); AL NE; XP 4,000.

Spell Ability— the dao can use the following spell like powers one at a time, and once per day: *change self, detect good, detect magic, assume gaseous form, become invisible,* fulfill another's *limited wish* (in a perverse way), *cause misdirection, passwall, spectral force, wall of stone, rock to mud* (three times a day), and *dig* (six times/day). The dao performs all magic as if 18th level.

SW—holy water has twice its normal effect on Dao.

Gargoyles: AC 5; MV 9, Fl 15(C); HD 4+4; THAC0 17; #AT 4; Dmg 1–3/1–3/1–6/1–4; SD +1 weapon to hit; SZ M (6' tall); ML steady (11); Int low (7); AL CE; XP 650.

The Treasure

The throne is the greatest piece of treasure; it is worth an incredible 47,000 gp (although it should be incredibly hard to transport). There are also small caches of gems and coin hidden back in the labyrinth of tunnels behind the great hall. The caches are worth up to 80 gold pieces and contain 1d4 gems each. There should be one cache for each gargoyle. The dao's personal treasure is not available as he sends it back to the Elemental Plane of Earth.

The value of the mines is also left to the discretionary powers of the DM, but a monthly income of 5,000 to 20,000 gp (after expenses) would not be unreasonable. The DM should strictly regulate this site as it creates a potentially unbalancing income for the PCs. Should this ever cause a problem, the mountain area could become unstable, earthquakes could end the mining operation, or a rich noble could offer to buy the mines for a low sum (20,000 gp). Alternately, the mines might break open into the Underdark. This would open up a new area in the campaign, and possibly end the PCs' "unlimited" access to wealth as derro, deep gnomes, and drow storm the mines.

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Boxing the Compass

Player Character Information

The Tale

It has been a difficult journey through the forest, and your party has decided to stop for a mid-day rest. With a sigh, you set down your heavy packs and begin to relax. Before you drift off into a restful nap, one of your companions loudly exclaims that he has found something interesting. With a weary shake of your head, you walk down to the area in question. What you see is truly an enigma.

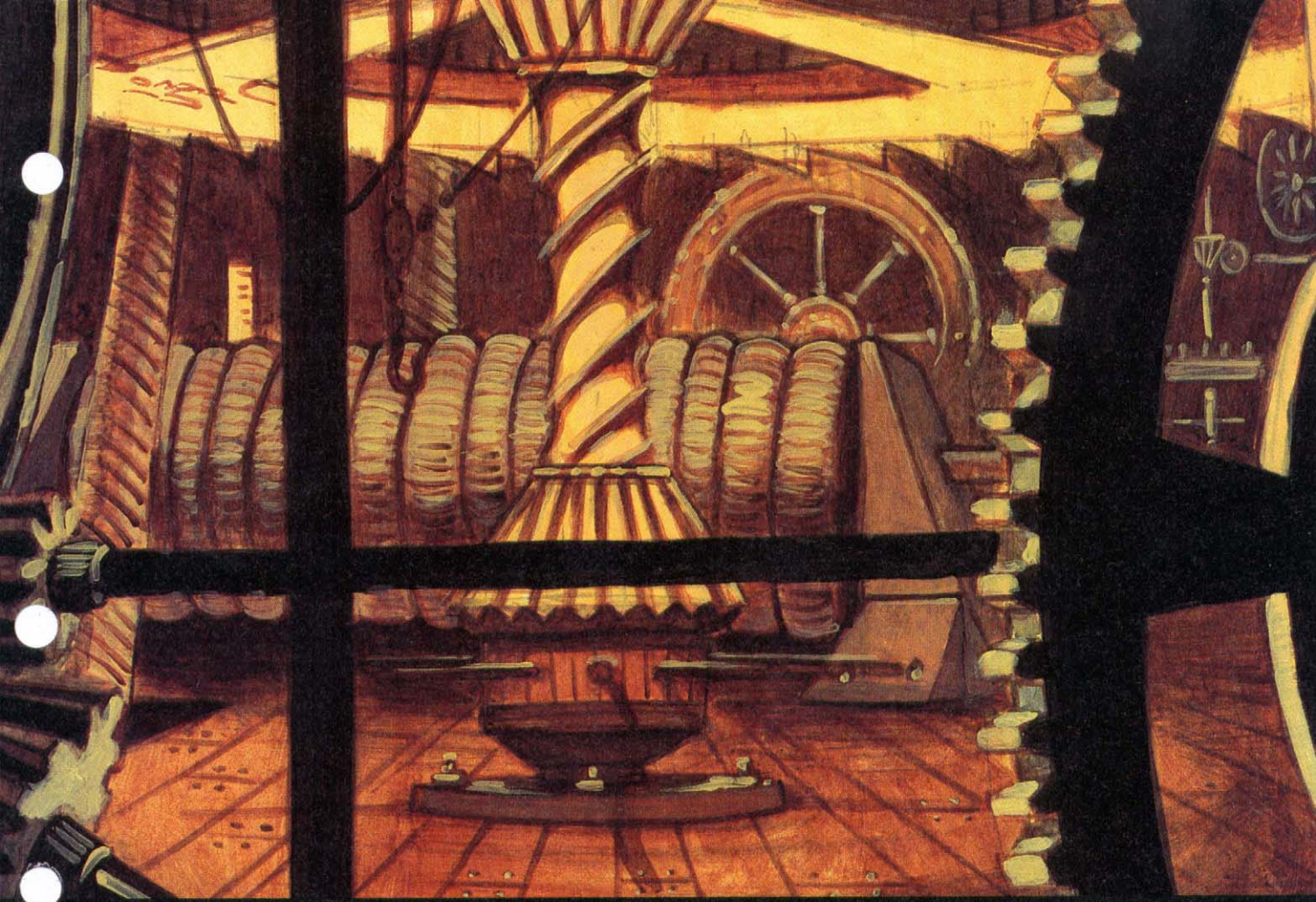
The trees in the area do not thin, they simply stop as if to mark the edge of a clearing. Nothing seems to grow in this area which looks to be at least 100 feet across. The bare earth of this clearing appears to be hard-packed, and a number of stones are arranged in careful piles. These piles are stacked three feet high and obviously set into some kind of pattern. The puzzling clearing also has an outer border which appears circular. Several lines originating from the center of the clearing intersect the border. If anything, the whole affair suggests an arcane pattern built by a giant.

According to your map, a trail to the northeast leads to the town of Cristan Glade. It seems likely that the town locals will have more knowledge concerning this large design.

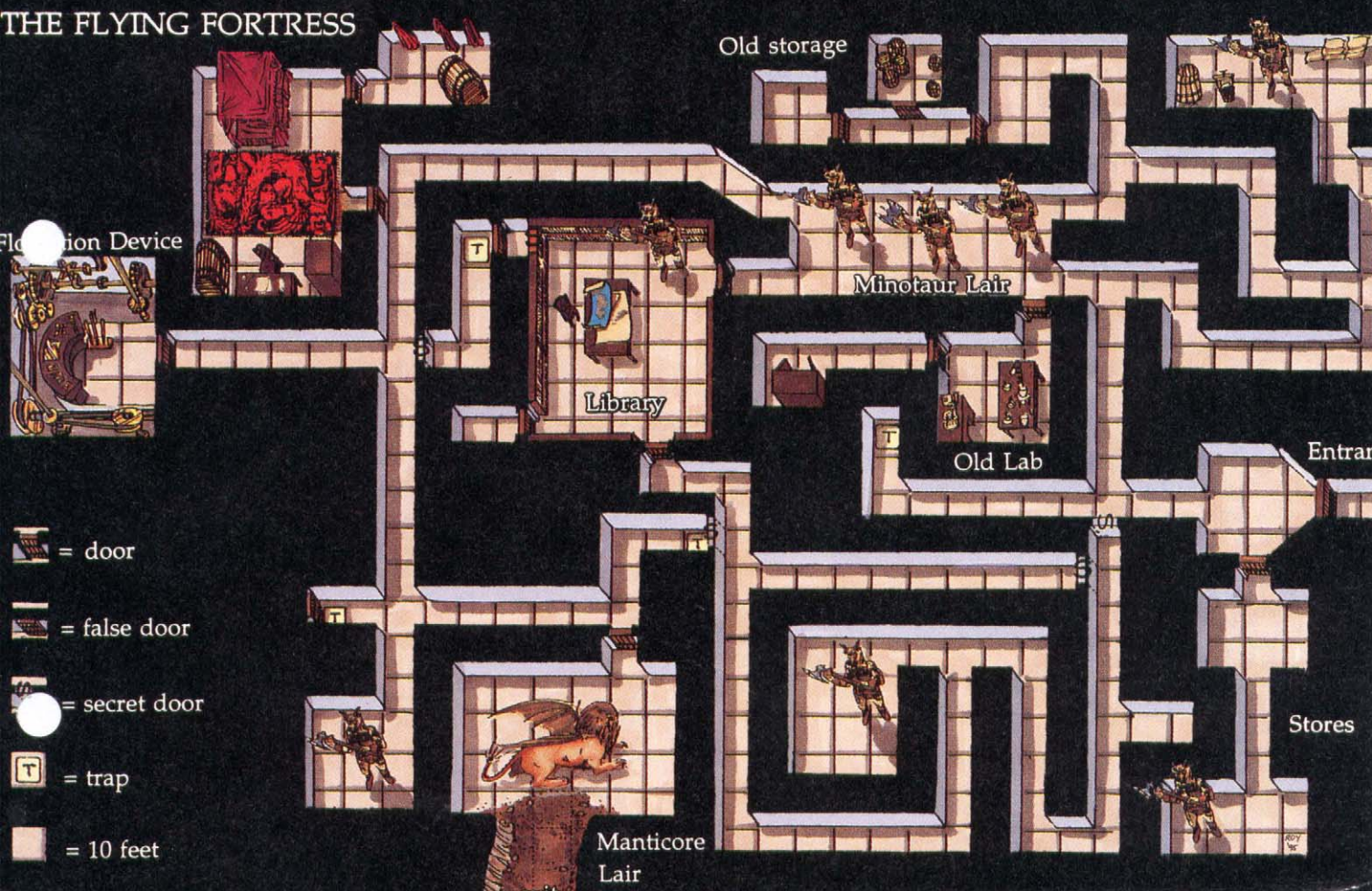
Research and Rumor

- Half a century ago, a powerful wizard created a flying fortress; the wizard used this floating citadel to exact "tribute" from the surrounding towns.
- The wizard soon demanded the construction of strange earthworks near each town or village.
- Every year the wizard came for his money. Finally, the villages hired their own wizards to do battle with the evil magic-user. However, the dark sorcerer never reappeared.
- Some say that the wizards fortress was actually kept aloft by a team of dragons; these dragons must finally have broken free of the wizard's control and destroyed him.
- Most of the locals do not care to speak the wizard's name out of superstition, but a few will whisper it— Jynn Kalist.
- The wizard used the earthworks to channel incredible magical forces in rituals that would sometimes last for hours. A few of the locals always thought that the earthworks were meant to keep his fortress in the air.
- After the first year the fortress always approached from the northwest and left either to the southwest or straight south.
- The wizard's minions were rarely seen, but the tales do speak of two different types— great horned beasts of brutal strength, and winged fiends.

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THE FLYING FORTRESS



Boxing the Compass (DM)

DM's Information

PC Illustration

This is an illustration of the earthworks.

DM Illustration

This is a picture of the floatation machinery of the fortress, as well as an interior map of the fortress.

Notes

The earthworks are a navigational aid used by Jynn Kalist to pilot his fortress. They are built along the lines of a compass, with only the one mark pointing north. The main arrow, which points just north of west, leads back to the mountain from which the fortress was carved. The northwest, southwest, and south marks all point the way to other earthworks which map out the fortress's route of travel. Near each earthwork is a town or village from which Jynn Kalist once demanded tribute.

The fortress still exists deep within the mountains to the west. To find it, the adventurers must travel to the next site of earthworks to the southwest. From there, they have to follow the route which leads straight back to the reference mountain. The fortress will be discovered hovering above a small valley just before the reference mountain. There will be no trace of Jynn Kalist, but the manticores and minotaurs who once served him are still present and pose a threat.

Obstacles

The minotaurs are trapped within the fortress, but the manticores have ranged outward along the valley walls. Depending on how much opposition the DM wishes to create, there should be at least five lairs along the valley; 1d4 manticores inhabit each lair. There is also one lair containing 1d6 manticores inside the fortress.

Once inside the flying fortress, adventurers will also have to deal with the minotaurs. There are eight of these large monsters and all of them carry axes. They will use the secret passages of the fortress to their best advantage, usually sneaking around behind intruders. Two minotaurs will always stay in the room with the floatation machinery.

Minotaurs: AC 6; MV 12; HD 6+3; THAC0 13; #AT 2; Dmg 2–8/2–8 or 1–4/3–12; SA charge; SD +2 bonus on surprise roll; SZ L (8' tall); ML elite (13 plus special); Int low (5); AL CE; XP 3,000.

Minotaurs will retreat only if intruder is obviously stronger.

SA—a minotaur may charge and do double head butt damage if it is over 30' from its opponent;

SD—infravision; a minotaur has a 50% chance to track its quarry by scent.

Manticores: AC 4; MV 12, Fl 18(E); HD 6+3; THAC0 13; #AT 3; Dmg 1–3/1–3/1–8; SA tail spikes; SZ H (15'); ML elite (13); Int low (6); AL LE; XP 1,400.

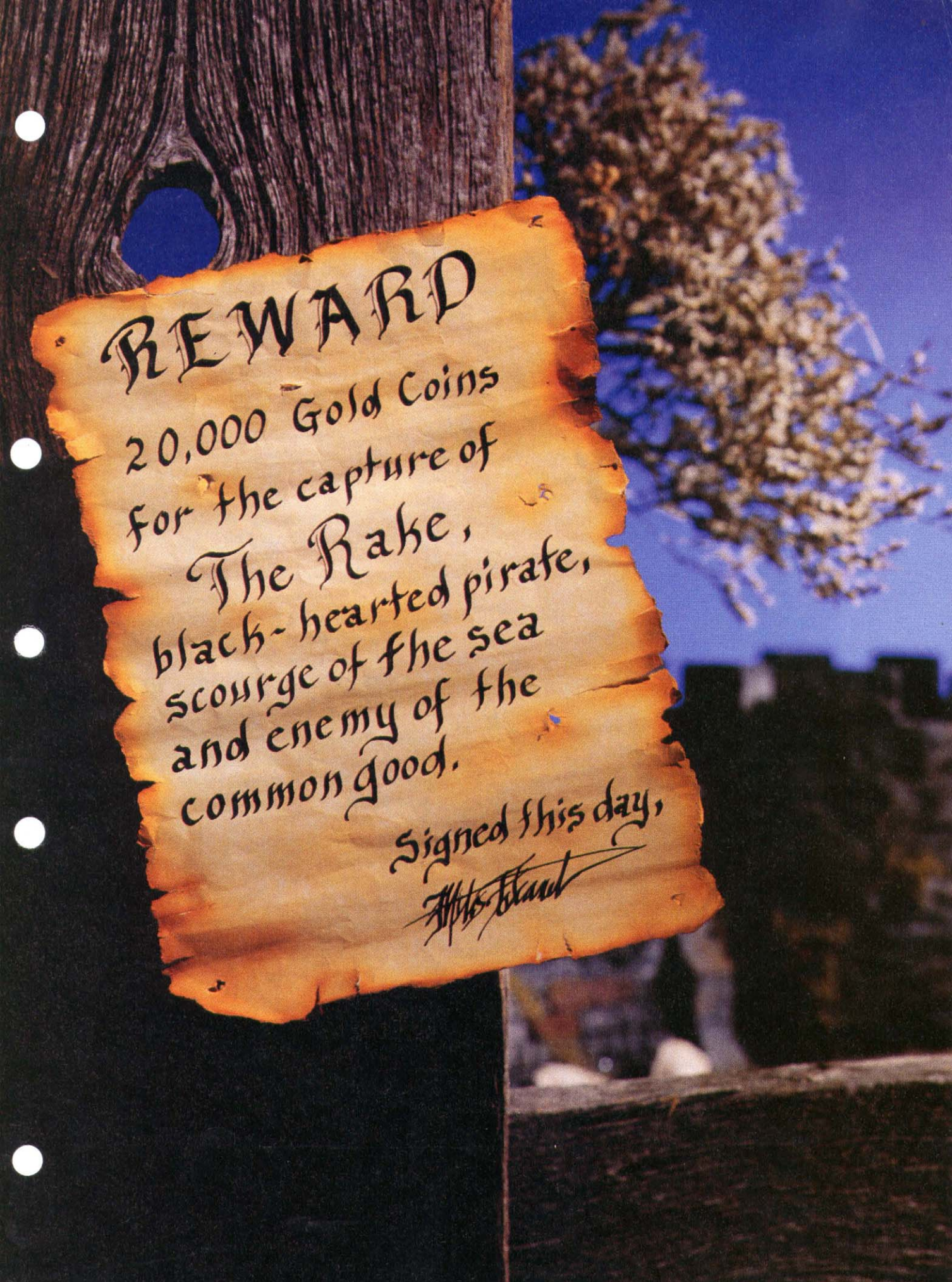
SA—manticores will use tail spikes at least once before attacking; they can fire four volleys of 1d6 tail spikes per day for 1d6 points of damage per spike.

The Treasure

The huge fortune in tribute has disappeared along with Jynn Kalist. Each minotaur, however, has 2,000–3,000 silver pieces and 1d4 gems. The manticore have fared somewhat better, as they are able to raid the surrounding lands and collect treasure. In each manticore lair, adventurers can expect to find around 1,000 gp worth of coin, 1d4 gems, and any one magical item.

The main treasure of the fortress is its floatation device, a large golden network of gears, cogs, and other strange machinery. Enough has been scavenged to make the "engine" useless for travel, but it is still valuable. If the machinery is scavenged for its parts, however, the floatation magic will fail and the fortress (including the adventurers) will plummet to the ground.

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REWARD
20,000 Gold Coins
for the capture of
The Rake,
black-hearted pirate,
scourge of the sea
and enemy of the
common good.
Signed this day,

In the Lair of the Pirate King

Player Character Information

The Tale

Cosswell Port was supposed to be a place for rest and recreation after a long trek through the surrounding wilderness. Even from the outskirts of the town, though, you can detect a general sense of unease in the way people act. Sailors in particular seem overly nervous, glancing over their shoulders and shying away from any crowds.

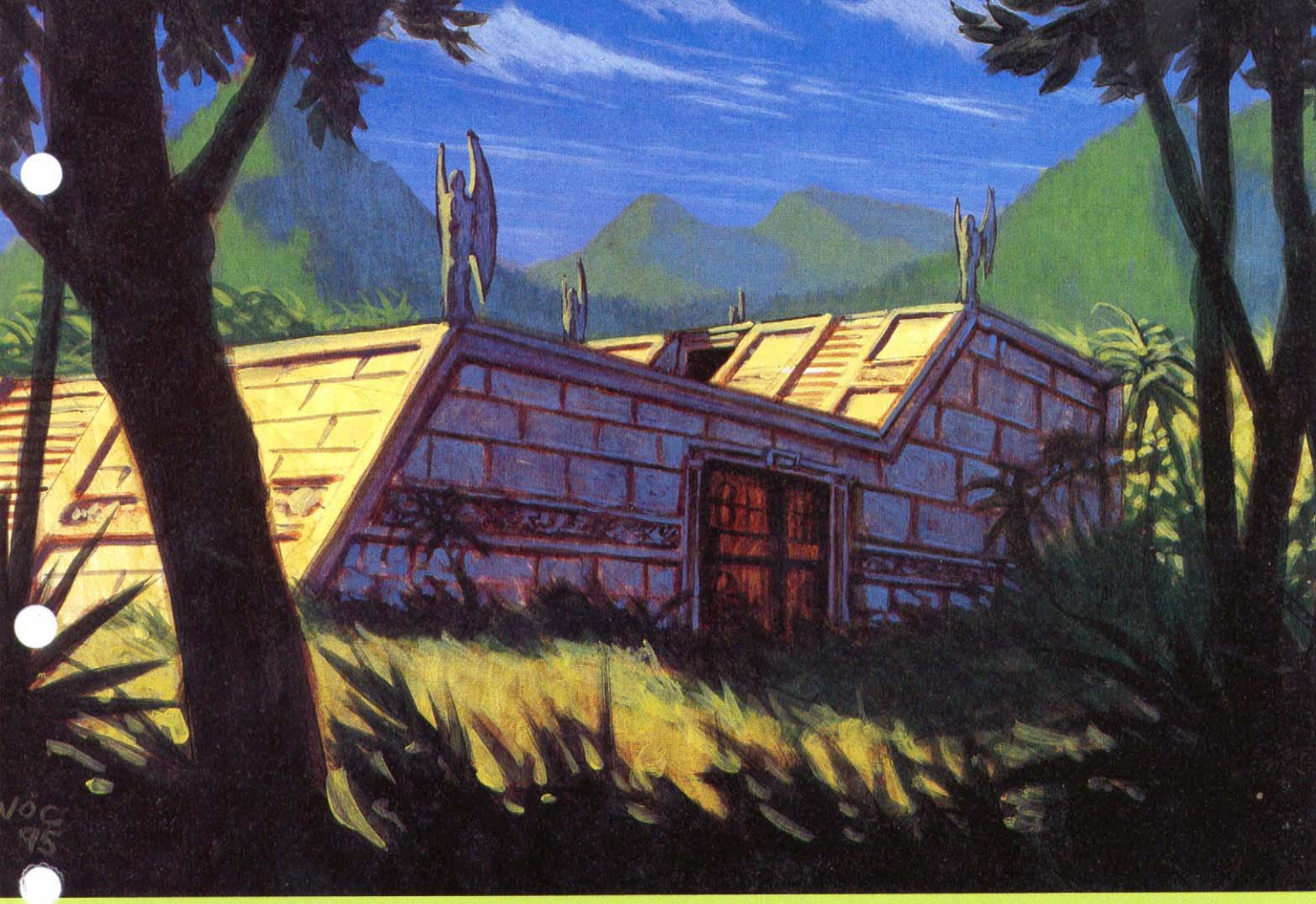
The reasons for this nervousness become quite apparent as the party makes its way to the waterfront—a three-masted warship bristling with catapults and ballistas floats in the deep-water portion of the harbor.

Gradually, you piece together the story, and it looks to be one that offers an interesting opportunity for a courageous band of adventurers.

Research & Rumor

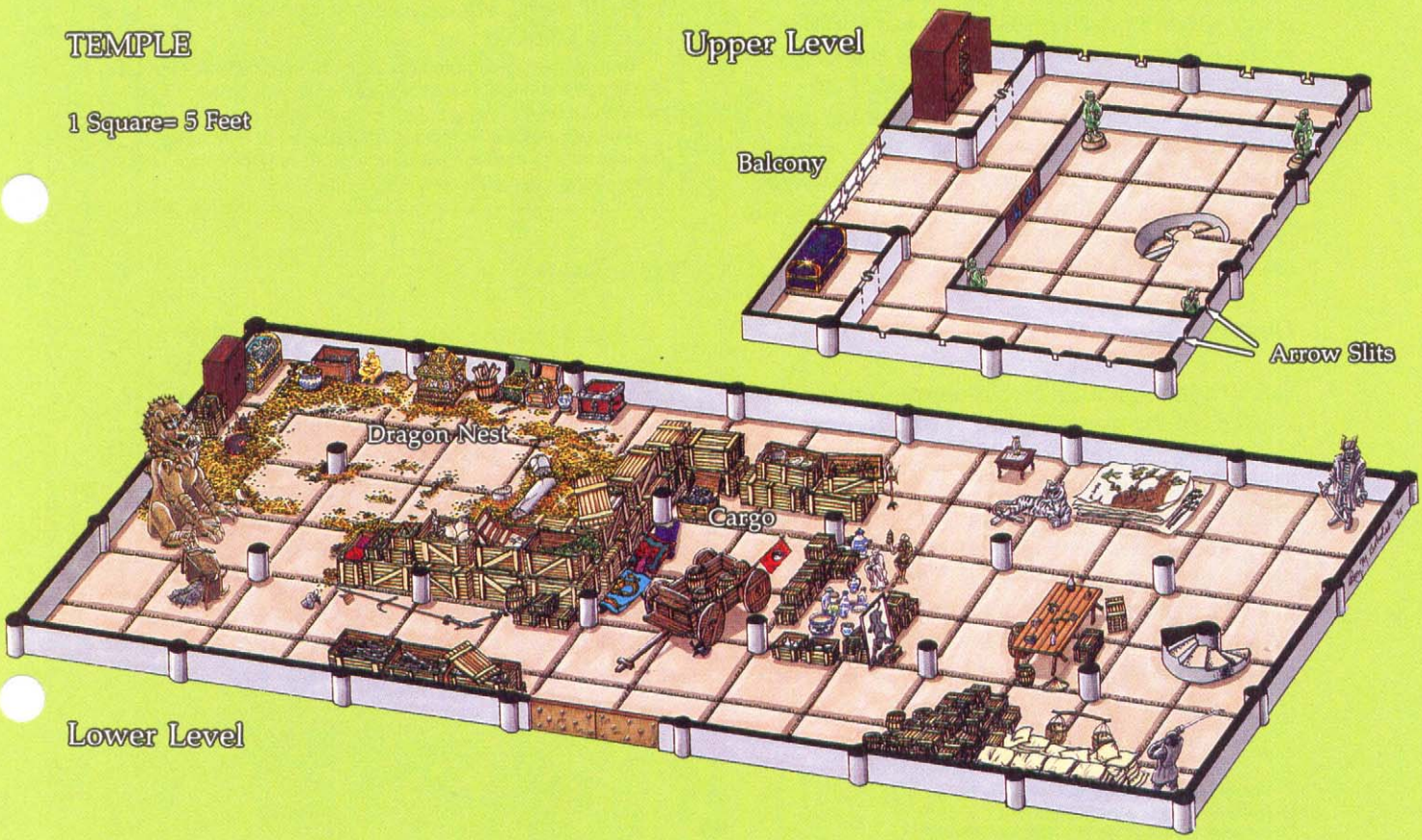
- A pirate known as The Rake has been raiding shipping lanes off the coast.
- Most of the plundered ships have been found drifting listlessly, bereft of any crew.
- Several large trading houses have pooled their resources to bring in a heavy warship. However, the warship has only been successful in causing the pirates to flee; it has been unable to penetrate the brigand's lair.
- The warship is currently in town for supplies, then it will embark once more in an attempt to catch the pirates.
- The mercantile houses have put out a 20,000 gp reward for the head of The Rake.
- Sailors will let it be known that there were once three of these warships. One was lost trying to enter the island harbor of The Rake—it rammed a submerged set of large spikes. The other ship went up in flames when it tried to land a large party of soldiers on the island's south beach.
- Years ago, before its use by the pirates, the island was still considered taboo by the sailors. Many ships were lost in that area for no apparent reason.
- Snake-like creatures live on the island; it is said that they can kill a man with their gaze alone.
- The warship has resupplied, but many of the crew jumped ship. Sailors are being rounded up in any way possible now in order to get the ship underway.
- The Rake is obviously a wizard who can use magic against any ship that approaches his island.

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TEMPLE

1 Square= 5 Feet



In the Lair of the Pirate King (DM)

DM's Information

PC Illustration

This is a picture of the reward notice posted for the capture of The Rake.

DM Illustration

This is a picture of the temple lair of Cobalt and a map of its interior.

Notes

If the PCs don't seem inclined to sign up for duty on the warship, the DM can always have them shanghaied or otherwise impressed into service. This might actually provide opportunities for future plotlines or role-playing situations.

The fearsome pirate known as The Rake is actually a blue dragon named Cobalt. For decades this dragon has made his lair on the island, protected from meddlesome humans by the ocean and the island's indigenous creatures. Then, a pirate ship discovered the secluded bay on the island's northern side and thought to make it their hidden base. Rather than destroy the bothersome humans, Cobalt realized the potential for some profitable mischief.

Using a *ring of polymorphing,* the dragon transformed himself into human form. In this guise, Cobalt was able to challenge and defeat the pirate leader and assume control of the band. He then began to raid nearby shipping lanes in hopes of keeping the majority of humans further from his lair while increasing his hoard. The pirate town that has grown along the northern bay is a small price to pay as Cobalt enjoys his assumed role and the wealth it brings.

Obstacles

Cobalt's lair is within an old temple a mile inward from the pirate haven. The bulk of the stolen cargo is here, guarded by Cobalt and 7–12 of the most trusted of his pirate followers. Cobalt will remain in human form for as long as the guise is advantageous, but will revert to dragon form as necessary.

Over 50 pirates are located in the pirate haven, which is a fortified town on the northern bay. Only a few of them have safe passage to the temple, so in the event of any trouble, a majority of the brigands will head for the pirate ship. The bay is well protected by large submerged spikes and several dart engine towers.

The rest of the island is in the control of yuan-ti. They know of Cobalt and leave the dragon and his human settlement alone in return for the same courtesy. Anyone discovered in their domain without Cobalt's letter of safe passage is subject to attack.

Cobalt (Dragon, Blue): AC –2; MV 9, Fl 30 (C); HD 16; hp 137; THAC0 8; #AT 3 plus special; Dmg 1–8/1–8/3–24; SA see MONSTROUS MANUAL™ tome; SD see MONSTROUS MANUAL tome; MR 25%; SZ G (80' body); ML fanatic (16); Int very (12); AL LE; XP 10,000.

While in human form, Cobalt can not use his breath weapon and is limited to attacking as a 10th level fighter; Cobalt will stay in human form as long as possible to protect his identity.

Pirates: AC 7; MV 12; HD 2+1; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1–8; SZ M (5' tall); ML steady (12); Int Avg (10); AL NE; XP 45.

Yuan-ti: AC 4; MV 12; HD 7–8; THAC0 13; #AT 2; Dmg 1–10; SA spells; MR 20%; SZ M or L (10' long); ML elite (14); Int genius (17); AL CE; XP 6,000.

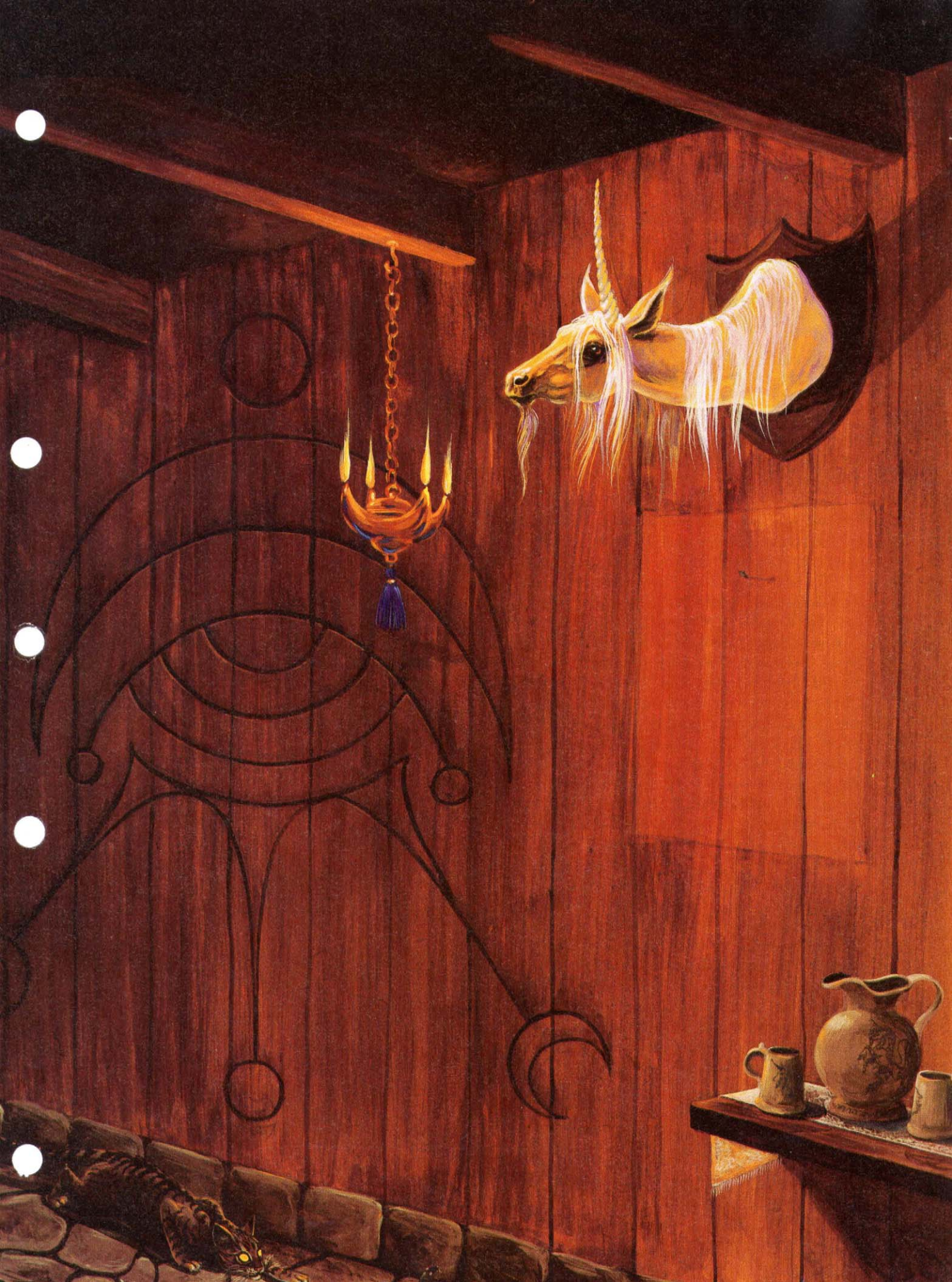
Yuan-ti are a snake/human abomination; consult the MONSTROUS MANUAL tome for variations; assume all yuan-ti can wield a long sword in combat.

SA—can cast the following spells once per day: *cause fear, darkness 15' radius, snake charm, sticks to snakes, neutralize poison, suggestion, polymorph other.*

The Treasure

Cobalt's treasure hoard is actually small for a dragon of his age. It contains only 37,000 gp in coins, gems, and artwork. In magic, the dragon has done slightly better than average, accumulating 2d6 potions, 1d6 scrolls, and any other six magical items that the DM wishes to include. The bulk of Cobalt's fortune lies in the cargo stored in the temple: teak wood, silks, wine, and spices are among the valuables. Unfortunately, the cargo can best be taken care of by the merchants; the PCs will have to settle for a percentage of the cargo's value—approximately 16,000 gp.

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Keepsake

Player Character Information

The Tale

Darkness blankets the chill autumn evening as you make your way into Grissom Vale, a tiny hamlet at the edge of the Kapris Hollows. Seeking some measure of comfort from the seasonal chill, the party makes for a small wooden building that functions as an inn for this sleepy village. Entering the common room of the inn, you are struck by the nervous fidgeting and sidelong glances of the establishment's 20 or so patrons. It is clear that strangers make these villagers uneasy. In an attempt to draw out the townspeople, you inquire after the tavern's most prominent feature—a large design, vaguely eye shaped, that has been burned deep into the wood on the wall of the inn.

The silence which follows your question is broken only by the snap of the fire which burns on the hearth. It is the owner's wife, backing away from tending the fire, who answers.

"The holy symbol of the Dark Watch that is. It's supposed to ward against evil. It was there when we took over the place, and it gives the inn a little history.

She shrugs and tries to leave it at that, but too much interest remains for the subject to be abandoned; she continues, *"The Dark Watch guarded the surrounding land, centuries ago. They had churches all over the countryside, but their high priest, Arjen, lived in a keep high on a mountain peak somewhere in the hollows. The high priest directed the missionaries and priests who traveled to spread the word and collect the tithe due the Dark Watch from his keep. The Dark Watch was said to be a rich church, and the bulk of its fortune supposedly went right into Arjen's keep. No tale I've heard has ever said what happened to all that treasure."*

"The religion itself faded away over a century ago, and no one's quite sure what happened. When the church abandoned the area, the hollows became a dark and dangerous place. Now no one goes in if they're right in the head. Mind you, a few have tried, no doubt lured down there by the promise of treasure. Not one person has ever come back." The old woman finishes her story and returns to her work at the bar.

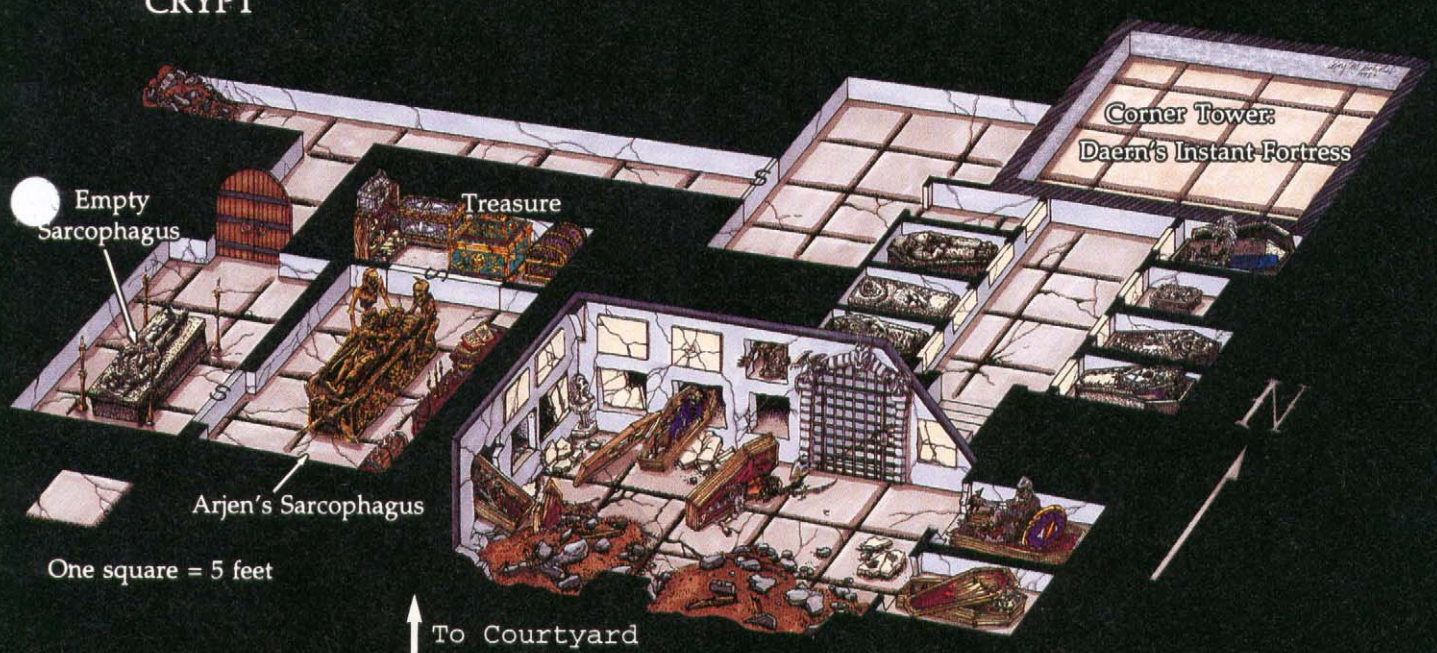
Research & Rumor

- The religion might have died out a century ago, but the inn—and the symbols—can't be more than 10 years old.
- There is a faded spot next to the large design where an icon of Arjen once hung. The icon was stolen a few years ago.
- There are no ruins of any of these churches, and no one can really say where one might have stood.
- No large creatures are known to inhabit the hollows, and no animal trails lead into the foreboding area.

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CRYPT


Corner Tower:
Daern's Instant Fortress
Empty Sarcophagus
Treasure
Arjen's Sarcophagus
N
One square = 5 feet
To Courtyard

Keepsake (DM)

DM's Information

PC Illustration

This is an illustration of the Dark Watch icon as it appears on the wall of the inn.

DM Illustration

This is an overhead view of the ruins of the keep and a sketch of the crypt and treasure rooms.

Notes

The keep is the lair of the vampire, Arjen, and the hollows are full of other undead which act as his guardians.

The Dark Watch was a false religion, started by Arjen and administered by his human minions. There were never any churches, only traveling missionaries who brought back treasure (tithe) and victims (supposed initiates). It was all a game played by a powerful undead creature. Arjen eventually tired of the game and did away with the Dark Watch, deciding instead to simply retain control of the hollows until such games appealed to him once again.

Arjen will be difficult to locate until the adventurers notice what has been staring them in the face. The northeast tower of the keep is actually a *daern's instant fortress* disguised with vines and rubble to look like nothing more than an intact part of the outer fortifications. All other towers were built to look like the fortress, but careful inspection (or a check for secret doors) will reveal that the tower is not actually joined to the walls on either side. *Detect magic* will also make this fact readily apparent.

Arjen and his treasure rooms are located under the tower; they are only accessible if the fortress is shrunk (which the PCs cannot do), if one can assume gaseous form and seep through cracks in the cobblestone courtyard (which Arjen can), or if an enterprising character can tunnel underneath the keep. The PCs will find the space just off the tower wall which begins the first blind run.

Obstacles

The hollows can be filled with as many undead as the DM sees fit; zombies, yellow musk creepers, and other lower forms of undead are recommended.

The keep has weathered time fairly well. Only one tower and two outer walls are in bad shape; the main house is still mostly intact. Inside the main residence, the adventurers will discover up to 16 wights; at night these creatures roam the courtyard and surrounding area. The interior of the residence is otherwise a gutted shell, any furnishings or decoration have been destroyed by the ravages of time, the elements, and the wights.

The hidden vaults have several secret doors and blind runs, including old caved-in tunnels that the PCs might spend a lot of time trying to excavate.

Wights (16): AC 5; MV 12; HD 4+3; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1–4; SA energy drain; SD silver or +1 weapon to hit; SW sunlight; SZ M (5'); ML elite (14); Int avg (9); AL LE; XP 975.

Wights are immune to *sleep, charm, hold*, and cold-based attacks.

SA—wights drain away one level of experience from an adventurer.

SW—Wights, while not harmed by sunlight, will avoid it at all costs.

Arjen: AC –1; MV 12, Fl 18 (C); HD 8+3; hp 64; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 5–10; SA energy drain; SD +1 weapon to hit; SW holy symbol, sunlight; SZ M (6'); ML champion (16); Int exceptional (16); AL CE; XP 3,500.

Arjen is immune to *sleep, charm, hold* and paralysis; he is also unaffected by poisons. Cold- and electrical-based attacks cause only half damage; he can *spider climb*, assume *gaseous form*, and *shape change* into a large bat. Anyone looking into Arjen's eyes must save at a –2 or be *charmed*.

SA—Arjen drains two levels of experience with any successful hit.

SD—vampires require +1 weapons or better to damage; they also regenerate 3 hp per round; if reduced to 0 hp, Arjen automatically assumes gaseous form and flees to his coffin for eight hours.

SW— Arjen can be held at bay with garlic, mirrors, or lawful good holy symbols presented with courage and conviction; a vial of holy water or a LG holy symbol causes 2–7 points of damage on a successful hit; Arjen must spend the daylight hours in his coffin as the sun will destroy him.

The Treasure

The *daern's instant fortress* represents a treasure all in itself. Underneath it is the vampire's crypt and a treasure vault which contains 28,000 gp in various coin, 22 gems of minimum 100 gp base value, and any four magical items. The command word to the fortress, "Nocturum," is inscribed on Arjen's coffin.

The wights have a modest treasure of their own—3,000 gp in coin, 1d8 gems, and 1d4 art objects of durable nature.

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Dead Men Tell No Tales

Player Character Information

The Tale

Toward the end of a long, overland journey, your party stumbles upon a decomposing corpse. The tattered robes resemble those normally worn by wizards and the gold thread embroidery suggests a wizard of decent standing. One question comes to mind—why would a wizard travel through hostile country alone?

From the looks of it, the body has been laying there for some time, months at least, but something has kept the animals from it. Still, such minor mysteries are unimportant next to the item clutched in the hands of the deceased. The pattern has the polished, beautiful look of gold, and from the dark inner areas a blue glow pulses every few seconds like a heartbeat. Obviously, the item is one of arcane power!

The deceased also has two rings of value, and a rotten leather pouch. The pouches contents, however, are far from worthless; it contains 67 platinum pieces, 14 gold pieces, and two rings.

Despite the small fortune, you can't shake the mystery of the arcane item from your mind. What was this item of magic, and just how did this wizard meet his end? Now, just miles from civilization, you eagerly anticipate the answers to this enigma.

Research & Rumor

- The coins are newly minted and bear the seal of the kingdom of Sithra. One of the rings also bears this seal.

- Everyone seems to feel an affinity toward the mysterious item. Perhaps they are drawn to it by its beauty or promise of riches?

- The item could be a *Landiss gate*—a type of *portable hole* with a vault door—known for the treasures normally stored within. All *Landiss gates* presently investigated have yielded incredible fortunes in coin, knowledge, and magic.

- The Landiss were an ancient, nomadic, magic-using race which traveled the many planes of existence. They died out over a thousand years ago.

- A sage can identify the ring as one worn only by members of Sithra's high court. On seeing the item, the sage whispers, *"Landiss,"* and refuses to talk until the item is removed from his shop. He says, *"The gate will eventually kill you unless its mystery can be solved."*

- In his notes, the sage finds reference to what might open the *Landiss gate*. Three pieces of knowledge are necessary: the True Name of the item's creator, the command word for the gate, and the exact place of its creation.

- A local wizard differs in opinion, believing that a *Landiss gate* might actually be a doorway to wherever the landiss currently reside.

- The landiss often used null dimensional spaces, such as portable holes, to aid their nomadic existence; the landiss were among the first to make such items. The *Landiss gate* was the pinnacle of their achievements.

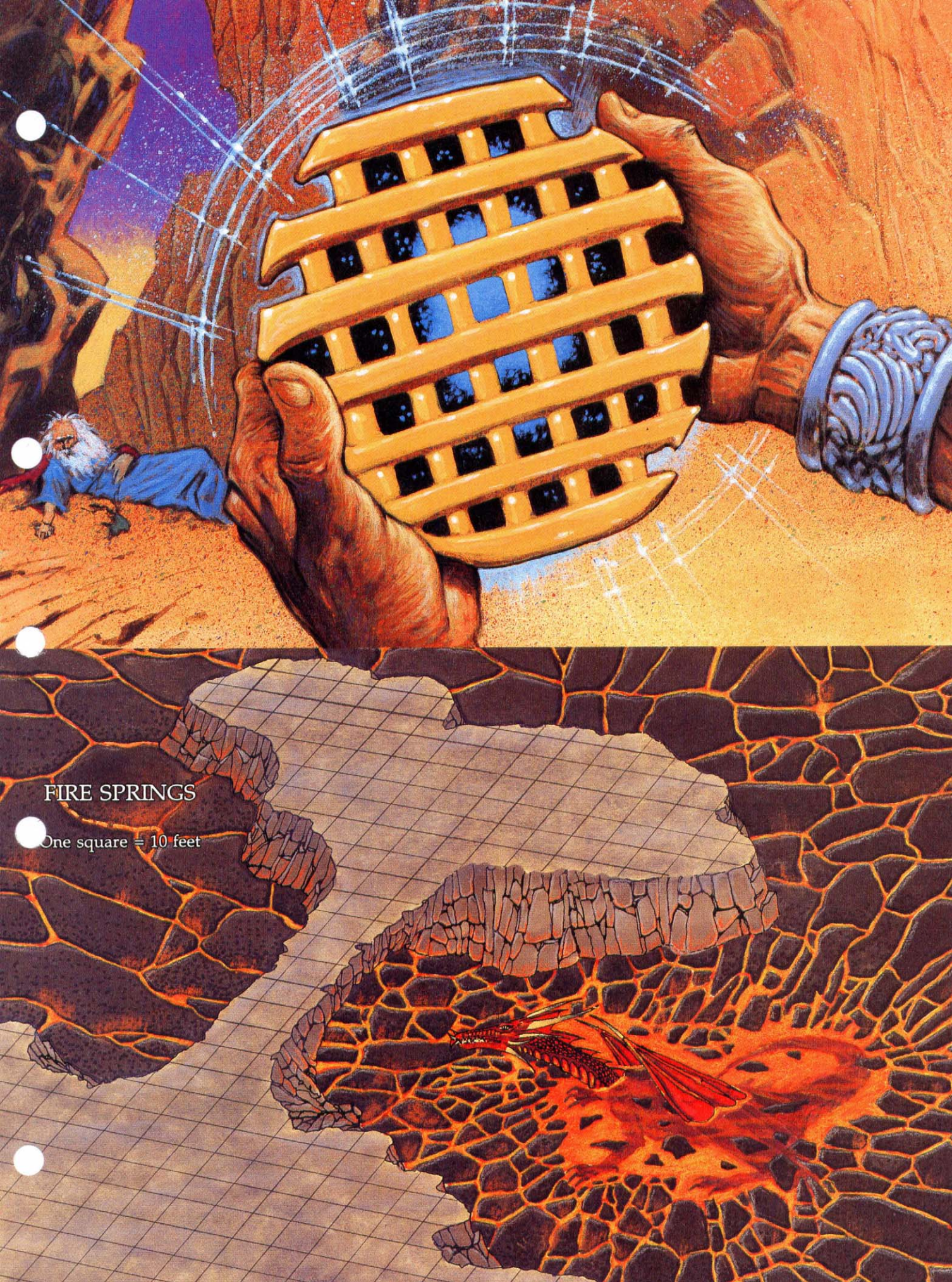
- A *Landiss gate* is rumored to be intelligent and can converse with its owner.

- The *Landiss gate* is an artifact of evil. Coming into contact with one brings about your death.

- The pattern of a *Landiss gate* is a puzzle, the solution of which will open the null dimensional space beyond.

- A local bard and storyteller remembers that a *Landiss gate* was discovered in the kingdom of Sithra. The king sent an army of his warriors, priests, and wizards out to unlock its secrets.

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FIRE SPRINGS
One square = 10 feet

Dead Men Tell No Tales (DM)

DM's Information

PC Illustration

This is a picture of the dead landiss wizard holding the *Landiss gate*.

DM Illustration

This is a map of the Fire Springs and a close-up of the *Landiss gate*.

Notes

The DM should begin this adventure with the party stumbling upon the body. This will afford ample opportunity to build up the mystery of the magic *gate*, thereby motivating the PCs to uncover useful information on the magical item. It is important to note the detrimental effects of the *Landiss gate* (consult the **Obstacles** section of this adventure for more details).

The previous holder of the *Landiss gate* was a wizard from Sithra. A group of warriors in service to Sithra's king acquired the gate, subjecting themselves to its detrimental effects. The king ordered the wizard to accompany the warriors on a journey to discover its secrets. The wizard was the last one to gain physical possession of the gate, and, therefore, was the last survivor.

The *gate* does have a limited intelligence, and while it can not converse, it does have a resistance to magical attacks. Each attempt to use magic on the gate automatically fails and causes the gate to throw a *trap the soul* spell. Magic resistance, or a save versus rod, staff, or wand at –4, will nullify the effects of the spell. If, however, the PC fails a save, he is imprisoned in the golden pattern. A trapped person can be freed when a rightful owner opens the gate. If the item is destroyed, anyone trapped within the cube will be transported to the Ethereal Plane.

The sage is correct in that it takes three knowledge keys to open the gate. Where the first two keys are hidden is up to the DM. These can be used to extend the DM's campaign and increase the difficulty of the adventure. To move on quickly to the third and final obstacle, assume the wizard was in possession of the first two knowledge keys and allow the PCs to recover them via a *speak with dead* spell. The wizard was traveling back to Sithra to figure out where the item was created when the gate finally claimed him. Divination and testing will reveal that the item's place of origin is an area called the Fire Springs. It is here that the item's material (adamantium and gold) could be mined (with great difficulty and danger) and mixed.

Obstacles

Except for the final guardian, the *Landiss gate* is the greatest obstacle the adventurers are likely to face. As soon as the PCs take possession of the gate, they become *bound* to it. Anyone bound by the gate, regardless of range, suffers a sensation of weariness and is subject to the effects of a vicious *geas* spell. The *geas* command is very specific: victims must relentlessly search for the three intimate details of the gate's history that will allow the gate to become active. The victim's life energy will be slowly drained away until the gate is activated. The recommended rate of decline is one point of Constitution every seven days until the character is dead, but a DM should pace this with the relative speed of the campaign. If a bound person is also in physical possession of the gate, the process is twice as fast. There is no way to recover Constitution while bound to the gate.

There are only two ways to sever the tie that binds a person to the gate. A full *wish* can severe the tie to any one person. However, a PC that does this must divorce himself of the entire adventure or once again suffer the effects of the gate. The second way is for a rightful owner of the gate (one who possesses the three key pieces of knowledge) to command the *gate* to release the bound person(s). Any lost Constitution points will be regained at one point per day.

The Fire Springs are located on a lower plane and are very violent in nature; characters without magical protection from flame and heat will suffer 1 hit point of damage per round. The item must be taken to the springs by its new owner before it can be re-activated. The Fire Springs, however, comes with its own guardian—a venerable red dragon. It rises from the lava while the PCs are on the narrow land bridge.

Guardian (Dragon, Red): AC –9; MV 9, Fl 30(C), Jp (3); HD 19; hp 151; THAC0 9; #AT 3 plus special; Dmg 1–10/1–10/3–30; SA see MONSTROUS MANUAL™ tome; SD see MONSTROUS MANUAL tome; MR 55%; SZ G (160' body); ML fanatic (17); Int exceptional (15); AL CE; XP 18,000.

The guardian will try one breath weapon attack first, though PCs are likely to have protection from fire and heat. It will not fight to the death, preferring to retreat in the face of possible defeat.

The Treasure

Once control of the *Landiss gate* is gained, it makes an excellent treasure in itself. However, it is also filled with fortunes enough for any band of adventurers: 36,500 gp in coin, 4d10 gems, 1d8 art objects (worth 12,00 gp), and any eight magical items. In addition, there are histories worth good coin to a sage, and a set of spell books which contain spells up to 9th-level. The number of spells per level are as follows: 8/8/8/8/6/6/6/4/2. The Guardian's treasure is located deep in the Fire Springs and is unlikely to be recovered.

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A Jailor's Terms

Player Character Information

The Tale

Among the treasures recovered from behind the *Landiss gate* were the spell books and journal of a Landiss wizard. Most of the journal contained obsolete arcane knowledge—knowledge that any aspiring wizard's apprentice would possess today—but there were a few entries of interest. One of these entries hinted at a fortune in buried treasure.

Sort of.

. . . and Bateal led the reckless charge, trading his blood dearly for every foot of ground. When he fell it was Jakomba who stepped to the front, bearing the brunt of the Prince's attacks while attempting to get me within range. I began to doubt our survival.

Though the melee was fierce, I had the opportunity to study our adversary from behind the relative safety of Jakomba and his warrior's frame. The Prince was bedecked in a fortune of jewels, gems, brooches, and rings. The creature's attire spoke of vanity in its purest form. I looked into the Prince's burning eyes and saw unadulterated greed; I knew at that moment that his attack was for no other purpose than to increase his personal wealth. It was also then that I understood how I must defeat such an enemy, one who would tempt us to an evil end even should we emerge victorious this day.

Jakomba stepped away a moment later, as did Phineou who had remained at my side. They continued to draw the Prince's attention while I prepared our reprisal. The spell was new, and I had only theory and instruction on which to base my attack, but it seemed our only hope. I cast the spell with an ease I had not expected, and it enveloped the Prince in a swirl of energy. Realization of its predicament came too late for the creature, and it howled with rage as the sphere of energy rose from the ground to encase it. The Prince hung in the air, an evil chrysalis wrapped in a cocoon of arcane gold, and then it sank into the earth.

Bateal, we discovered, was not dead and Phineou managed to revive him. We decided to travel down off Areshtyn before making camp and tending our wounds. I did mark the battlesite before leaving, should we ever decide to do away completely with such evil rather than hope the prison will endure. The plateau is located on the northern face, and the Prince in all his refinement is sunk into the earth approximately thirty feet west of center. Hopefully to stay . . .

Research & Rumor

- The preceding page of this entry, which would presumably have detailed the events leading up to the battle, is missing. This seems to be unfortunate circumstance rather than design as there are several pages throughout the journal which appear to have fallen out over time.

- Areshtyn can not be located on any map. However, the landiss were noted for their travel among the planes and the mountain may not be located on the Prime Material Plane.

- The spell which the wizard used on the Prince can easily be identified as an *imprisonment* spell. The reverse of this spell, *freedom* can be cast or read from the wizard's book just like a scroll.

- Anyone versed in the elven language will notice that Areshtyn may be derived from an old elven term *arshtine*, which means "black summit." The most probable location of the Prince would be Shadetop Mountain, known for the large quantity of coal once mined along its surface.

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A Jailor's Terms (DM)

DM's Information

PC Illustration

This is the journal page from which the passages concerning the treasure are found.

DM Illustration

This is an illustration of the Netherworld Prince.

Notes

Shadetop Mountain is the actual location of the battle recorded in the journal; the imprisoned Prince, and his fortune in jewels, still await discovery. The PCs may be thrown off the track by the landiss wizard's reputation for planar travel. The DM should not do anything to discourage the idea that Mt. Areshtyn may be on another plane.

"The Prince" is actually a farastu gehreleth that roams the Prime Material Plane in hopes of setting itself up as a powerful ruler. It gathers gems and material wealth to foster this goal. The Landiss wizard and his companions were surprised by the evil creature but were able to imprison it. Any *freedom* spell cast in the area will free the farastu.

Obstacles

Once released, the creature will think it is still under attack, and it will attempt to kill any living creature in sight. It will also concentrate its attacks on any wizard, as it does not wish to be imprisoned again.

In addition to its enraged state, the farastu will also exhibit slight disorientation upon being freed. This, coupled with the fact that it sustained some damage previously, can work to the PCs' advantage. Good preparation and smart tactics will also provide the PCs with an edge over the farastu.

The DM should note that the farastu's initial disorientation will prevent it from using its *gate* ability for 2 turns.

Farastu: AC –1; MV 15, Fl 30(C); HD 11; hp 70; THAC0 9; #AT 3; Dmg 1d6+1/1d6+1/3d4 or weapon +7 (strength bonus); SA battle frenzy, adhesive; SD adhesive, +1 or better weapon to hit; MR 50%; SZ M (7' tall); ML champion (15–16); AL CE; XP 14,000.

Special Equipment: *wand of fireballs* (8 charges)

SA—a farastu reaches battle frenzy after six rounds of combat or when reduced to half normal hit points. In a frenzy, the farastu doubles its number of normal attacks, and all attack rolls receive a +2 bonus. Farastu also secrete a black tarlike substance that is slightly adhesive (5% chance that anything it touches sticks) The farastu will gain a +4 attack bonus against all creatures that are stuck to it.

SD—if a weapon sticks to the creature, there is a 25% chance it is jerked from the attacker's grip; stuck weapons take one round to free.

Farastu can employ the following spell-like powers one at a time, once per round at the 11th level of magic use: *detect good, detect invisibility, detect magic, dispel magic* (twice per day), *ESP, fear, fog cloud* (three times per day), *invisibility, tongues, weakness* (3 times per day). In addition, farastu can *gate* in 1–2 farastu once per day with a 40% chance of success.

Additional information on farastu can be found in the first PLANESCAPE™ MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM® appendix.

The Treasure

The Prince is carrying only high quality gems and jewelry and a few magical items. There are 6d6 gems and 10d4 pieces of jewelry (art objects), all of which have a minimum base value of 500 gp. The farastu also carries a *bag of holding, a wand of fireballs,* and two other magical items.

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Impish Behavior

Player Character Information

The Tale

The fierce battle is finished and the netherworld prince has been defeated. His treasure, however, remains behind. Gem-studded clothing, necklaces, rings, and bracelets all lie scattered about the bloody battlesite. A curious bag also sits upon the ground. As you begin to gather the creature's treasure, you notice that the bag begins to move. Before you can even shout to your companions, a small, thin, winged creature with a barbed tail emerges from the bag. The creature slowly surveys the landscape and lets out a soft whimper. The curious creature clears its tiny throat with a raspy cough and speaks in a soft voice.

Its story is one of great sadness; this soon becomes apparent by the plaintive look of this pitiful creature. The creature's name is Ernhark; it was forced into service by the dark "lord." Now that the prince is dead, Ernhark can not travel back to his own plane. This means that the creature will slowly waste away until it dies. Meekly, Ernhark asks your party for aid in returning to its home. He will repay your party's kindness by guiding them to the prince's treasure room. The creature insists that there is a great deal of useful magical treasure in the prince's vaults—such as scrolls, armor, and weapons.

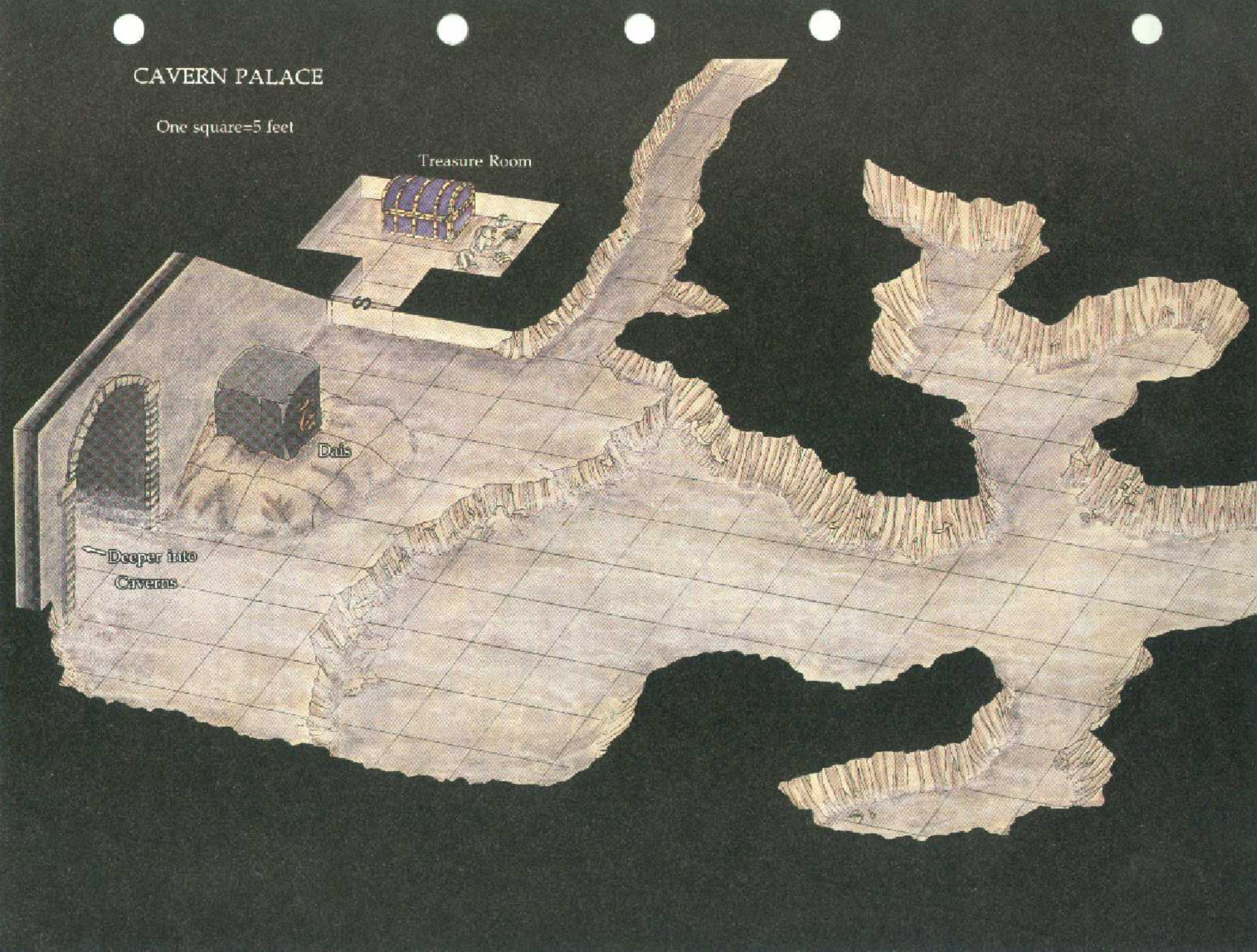
Ernhark continues to explain that the only danger will come in the form of creatures that guard one of the natural *gates* to the lower planes. Once on the plane, however, he can guarantee safe passage to the prince's cavern palace and its treasure room.

After completing its offer, the little creature cowers within the nearest shadow, obviously apprehensive about your decision. Its eyes are wide and unblinking, constantly darting from party member to party member. In an obvious attempt to allay the suspicions of the party, Ernhark tremblingly offers to submit to any magical test of truth. It is apparent that the little creature does not enjoy feeling so lost and alone.

Research & Rumor

- Magical detection will reveal that Ernhark is lawful by nature.
- Ernhark sticks adamantly to his story. Any magical detection proves that he is telling the truth.
- After studying some maps, Ernhark points out the nearest natural gateway to his plane of origin; it is at the bottom of a crater in an extinct volcano.
- Ernhark knows a little about the landiss. There used to be some landiss prisoners in the prince's cells. They may still be there.
- Ernhark will recommend that someone remove the brain from the prince's corpse. Under his direction, it can be made into a *potion of treasure finding*.

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CAVERN PALACE
One square=5 feet
Treasure Room
Dais
Deeper into
Caverns

Impish Behavior (DM)

DM's Information

PC Illustration

This is an illustration of Ernhark, the imp, cowering before the adventurers.

DM Illustration

This is a map of the relevant portion of a baatezu's cavern palace.

Notes

This adventure tests the gullibility of the PCs. Ernhark the imp never lies to the adventurers, but he is very careful about what he tells the party. Ernhark helps out with suggestions, such as making the *potion of treasure finding*, but he is really setting the adventurers up for disaster. Any chance he gets, the imp will attempt to sabotage the PCs' efforts, trying to get them killed. He will also be very careful so that he can deny any charges made against him. It's all in the wording.

Ernhark is upset at his current situation and has come up with a plan that will return him to the lower planes and cause much mischief. The treasure room he will guide the PCs to is not that of the defeated farastu; it is, in fact, the treasure room of a greater baatezu. The evil creature will not be present at the time of the PCs' looting. He will, however, track the PCs across the planes when he does discover the theft! The DM could develop this pursuit so that it becomes the focus of several adventures.

Obstacles

A pack of hell hounds guards the *gate* through which Ernhark plans to lead the adventurers. These creatures have the bottom of the crater ringed and will stealthily attack when the adventurers move into the open.

Once inside the treasure room, the PCs will be confronted by four additional hell hounds. Ernhark will go invisible and attempt to sting the PCs while they combat the attacking creatures.

Ernhark (imp): AC 2; MV 6, Fl 18(A); HD 2+2; hp 18; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1–4; SA poison sting; SD see below; MR 25%; SZ T (2' tall); ML avg (10); Int avg (10); AL LE; XP 650

SA—any creature stung by the imp must save versus poison or be instantly slain;

SD—Ernhark is immune to attacks based on cold, fire, or electricity, and he resists all other spells as if he were a 7 HD creature; he can be harmed only by magical or silver weapons, and he regenerates 1 hp per round.

Hell hound: AC 4; MV 12; HD 5–6; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1–10; SA fire breath; SD see below; SZ M; ML elite (13); Int low (6); AL LE; XP 540.

SA—hell hounds breathe fire in a range of 10 yards; this breath attack inflicts 1 point of damage per hit die of the hound; victims must save versus breath weapon for half damage; victims struck on a natural attack roll of 20 take both bite and fire damage.

SD—the hounds are immune to fire and are surprised on a 1 or 2. They have a 50% chance to see hidden or invisible creatures.

The Treasure

The positive side to this adventure is that the treasure room that Ernhark promises does exist. Inside the treasure room is a chest of gold (10,000 gp), 8 gems of 50–1000 gp base value, 15 gems of 500 gp base value, a +1 *luck blade* (one *wish* left), a suit of *plate mail* +3, 1d6 potions, 1d4 scrolls, and any other four miscellaneous magical items.

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Around the Campfire

Player Character Information

The Tale

The flickering light of your campfire holds the night at bay, and in the distance, you can hear the call of wild animals. With an exhausted sigh, your companions tiredly sink into their bedrolls. After such an arduous journey, you don't blame them.

Resignedly, you settle into your watch. Soon however, something large makes its way through the brush. Sword in hand, you begin to wake the party as you peer carefully into the darkness beyond the camp.

Before your party can form an adequate defense, a call sounds from beyond the clearing. The voice cracks with age but still rings with a hardy timbre. In the flickering light of the fire, you can make out a curious figure shuffling towards the camp. The figure carries a large pack upon its shoulders and seems to lean heavily upon a sturdy walking staff. As it draws closer to your now alert camp, the figure can quite obviously be identified as an old man. His iron gray, square-cut beard hides most of his face, but not the eyes which are aglow with firelight. Warily the man stares into your camp and asks if he might share the fire a moment before moving on.

You look to your companions, who shrug their shoulders noncommittally. With an exasperated sigh, you tell the old one that he may rest a bit at your fire. He gingerly moves to the fire, and sits down with a soft chuckle. *"Smart you are to keep watch tonight,"* the man offers to no one in particular.

A few of the party members look about worriedly. After a few moments of silence, the man continues, *"Well you're close to the hills, here. Not five, six hours travel by foot. Strange things are said to dwell there. Creatures—monsters some say; they wander down into these woods to wreak destruction. They say that these creatures can drive a man insane, or even mindless, with just a glance, and that they can easily rip you apart before you can draw weapons. Never seen them myself, mind you, and I like it that way. But enough folks have disappeared to make me believe that something is up there.*

There were some adventure seekers, maybe two years back, they went up there to see for themselves. There were seven of them. Mostly young pups, including that wizard's apprentice, Dauphil . . . but you wouldn't know him, would you? Anyway, only three of them came back, including Dauphil who was struck mindless as a newborn pup. Worse. The other two had a good pocketful of gems, but they were also scared out of their leathers. They said something about finding the Caves of Darkness, and that what little they took out would have to do because there was no way they'd go back. They moved away soon after, obviously wanting to put distance between them and those hills.

I was there at that time. It was from them, or at least the first repetition of their story by others, that I got the descriptions of those creatures I warned you about. That's why I don't camp in this area. I'd rather walk till dawn. And if you'll excuse me, that's just what I've got a mind to get started on again."

Research & Rumor

- The Caves of Darkness sound familiar, probably something you've heard in stories that were designed to frighten children.

- A bard once came through town and sang the tale of seven adventurers who challenged some "dark creatures" that lived hidden in a large cavern complex. In the story, only three adventurers made it back. If the story was true, the survivors abandoned a fortune in treasure in order to escape with their lives.

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Githyanki
Illithid Community
Drow
Staging Camps
Well of Generations
Striders
River Xanta
Githzerai
Staging Camps
Vortex (Kuo-Toa)
Great Cavern
Fallen Bridge
Wildalen River
Jerlaine Fracture
Mysyll Labyrinth
Bridge
CAVES OF DARKNESS
Traps
Scale in Feet
0
500
1000
2500
N

Around the Campfire (DM)

DM's Information

PC Illustration

This is an illustration of the old traveler approaching the adventurers' campsite.

DM Illustration

This is a map of the Caves of Darkness.

Notes

The Caves of Darkness are a series of caverns that rest along the fringes of the Underdark. Inside the caves are two entrances into that dark, subterranean world. This portion of the Underdark is dominated by illithid—the mindflayers—one of the most evil and dangerous races to be found. This particular community numbers over 600 illithid and an even greater number of slaves. The illithids control the tunnels and caverns for several miles into the earth and send raiding parties even deeper. The alien monsters will not tolerate intruders.

Obstacles

Immediately inside each cave is a double set of traps meant to discourage unwanted visitors. Both traps have a time delay to allow more than one person to wander into the trap area. The first trap is a simple deadfall; when someone steps on the floor release, several large stones drop from concealment along the ceiling. Victims must roll a Dexterity check or be crushed under the full weight of the stones. The trap causes 4d8 points of damage, and pinned characters will require 6 rounds to be dug out. A successful Dexterity check means that the PCs only suffer half damage as they avoid being pinned by the stones.

The second trap springs from the floor; dozens of sharp spikes shoot up from the floor. The trap only causes 4d4 points of damage, but anyone who takes this damage also has their movement rate halved. The second trap also triggers an alarm which warns the illithid that invaders have entered the caverns

After the trapped areas, the caves twist and sharply change elevation; the cavern geography never allows a straight run of more than 60 feet. This aids the illithids when they employ their mind blast (see monster entry). The illithid elder brain will sense any intelligent intruders by the time they have penetrated about a quarter mile into the caves; the elder brain will then telepathically communicate the intruders' presence to the rest of the illithid community. Thus, the illithids will *never* be surprised and will definitely use this fact to their advantage.

The illithid patrol their tunnels relentlessly, accompanied by their slaves. A normal patrol numbers 1–4 illithid, with one slave per illithid. This community has staged raids into the plane of Limbo and taken the dangerous slaadi as prisoners for use in battles. Only if the PCs penetrate deep into illithid community are they likely to see drow, kuo toa, or even human slaves. This event is unlikely, however, as the main community (and the pool of the elder brain) resides in a giant cavern over three miles from the entrance to the cavern.

There is a 20% chance that the adventurers will encounter a patrol immediately after the second trap. Afterwards, consult the map for encounter strength and probability.

Adventurers are beyond the range of the elder brain when they travel within the green colored tunnels. In addition, there is only a 15% chance of encountering a patrol within these tunnels.

Yellow bordered tunnels mark areas within range of the elder brain; here it will begin to direct illithid and slaves after the adventurers. There is a 20% chance for every 100 yards of tunnel that the PCs will encounter a patrol.

Red tunnels either lead to enemy communities, such as drow or kuo toa, or mark the point where the elder brain decides the adventurers might pose a real threat. The patrols here are stronger and more frequent; there is a 35% chance of an encounter per 100 yards. Also, an encounter along a red tunnel has a 20% chance of being a normal patrol, a 45% chance of being a strengthened patrol (2 slaves per illithid), and a 35% chance of being a raiding party (2–8 illithid with two slaves each).

Illithid (Mindflayer): AC 5; MV 12; HD 8+4; THAC0 11; #AT 4; Dmg special; SA mind blast; SW self preservation; MR 90%; SZ M(6' tall); ML champion (15); Int supra (19); AL LE; XP 8,000.

SA—illithid attack with four tentacles; these tentacles will burrow towards a victim's brain on a successful hit; the tentacles draw forth the victim's brain in 1d4 rounds, killing the unfortunate individual; an illithid can also employ a mind blast in a 60' cone which is 5 feet wide at its base and 20 feet wide at it end; all creatures within that area must save versus wands at –4 or be stunned for 1d10+2 rounds.

SW—illithids will attempt to flee, abandoning any treasure and companions if they are losing an encounter.

Mental Talents: (these abilities are performed at the 7th level of magic use) *suggestion, charm monster/person, ESP, levitate, astral projection,* and *plane shift.*

Slaadi: AC 5; MV 7; HD 8+4; THAC0 13; #AT 5; Dmg 2–16/2–12/2–12/2–12/2–12; SA magical abilities; SD defensive psionics; SW controllable; MR 40%; SZ L (10' tall); ML champion (16); Int low (7); AL CN; XP 2,750.

The slaadi are slaves, bent to the will of the illithid; they will sacrifice themselves if ordered and cannot be reasoned with.

SA— *telekinesis* (1,000 gp weight), *passwall,* and *hold* (one person).

SD—slaadi have a psionic strength of 47 and possess the *mind blank* and *thought shield* defense modes;

SW—the slaadi can be taken away from the illithid by means of *charm monster* or *psionic domination*; they are so used to manipulation that they save at –4.

The Treasure

Each illithid carries 1–2 potions or 1–2 scrolls, and often (75%) have 1d4 gems sewn into their robes. The slaadi carry no treasure. In addition, if a raiding party is encountered, there is a 20% chance it is carrying treasure from a raid and a 55% chance it is carrying extra magic. The value of such treasure will fall in a range of 1,000–4,000 gp worth of coin and gems.

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