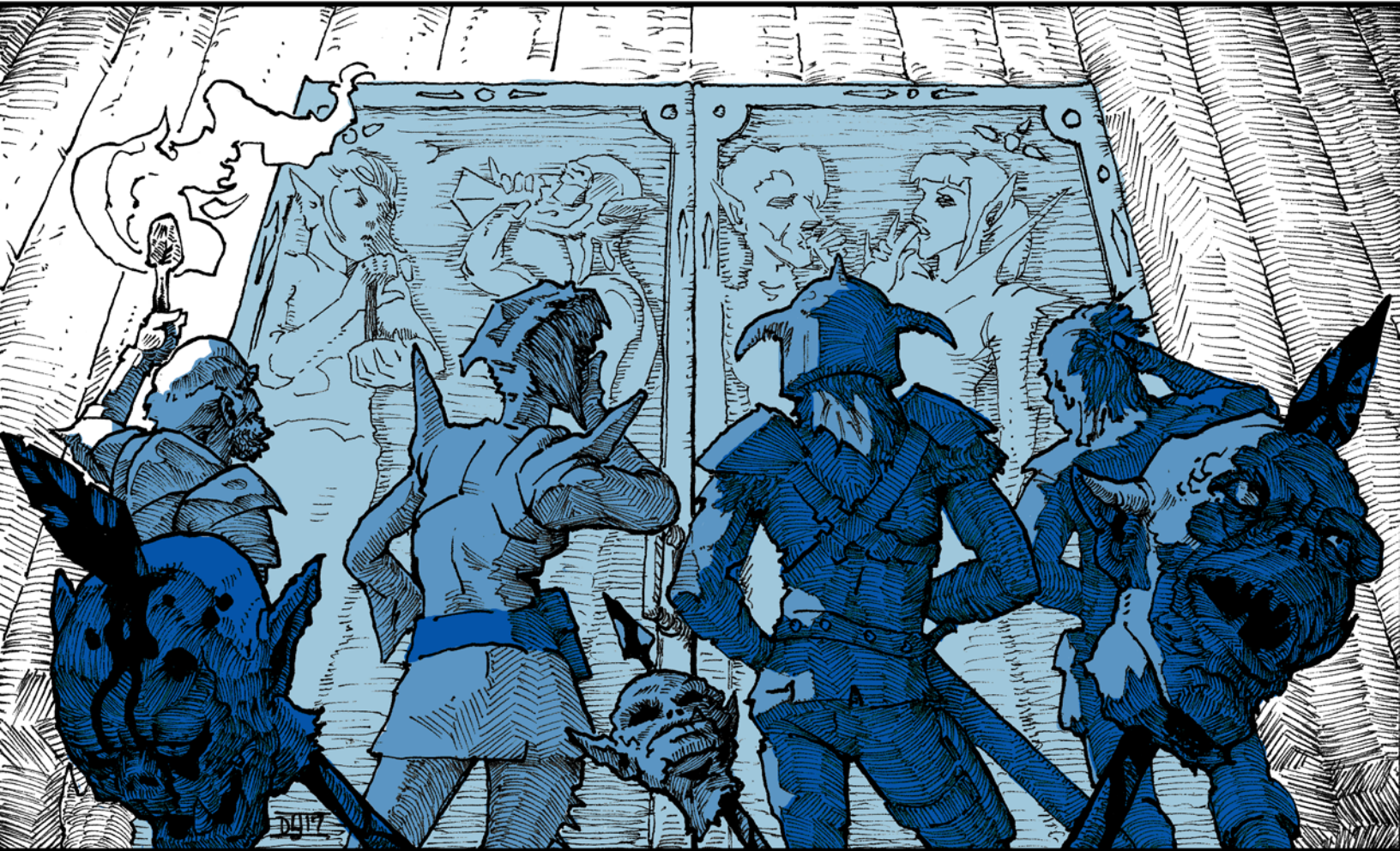


ORCS IN TARODUN'S TOMB



A 5th Edition adventure for Characters levels 1-2
by Kiel Chenier

FROM THE ARCHIVES OF
DYSON'S DODECAHEDRON

ORCS IN TARODUN'S TOMB

A D&D 5e adventure for 1st to 2nd level PC's

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Adventure Design & Writing

Cartography

Editing

Cover Art

Layout Design

Interior Art

Kiel Chenier

Dyson Logos

James Patterson

DL Johnson

Jensen Toperzer

DL Johnson; Publisher's Choice Quality

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INTRODUCTION

A sepulchral tomb. Magical tricks and traps. Brutish orcs guarding a vast underground treasure. These things and more are happened upon by an unlikely band of adventurers.

If that doesn't sound like a first-time fantasy adventure, I don't know what does.

Orcs in Tarodun's Tomb is an adventure for first time players looking for a quintessential first-time D&D experience: orcs fill the role of the classic fantasy monster, and it takes place in a dungeon filled with challenges, traps, and puzzles that can be solved in a number of ways. The adventure can be finished in a single session, and provides a decent start to new campaign.

Just because it's purposefully generic doesn't mean it's boring or unoriginal though. For experienced players and game masters, this adventure has a unique random table for generating orcs, as well as an original lock puzzle that can be taken and added to your own dungeons.

BACKGROUND

Centuries ago, an Elven warrior named Tarodun was a decorated member of the last great Elven Empire's upper class. When he died, rather than being buried along with his rich and powerful kin, he was entombed in a small mausoleum under a hillside, along with a portion of his riches and his faithful servants, as would befit an elf of his station. What has been lost to history is the reason why—Tarodun was killed by his own people!

While the elves remember him as a hero, he was actually a genocidal maniac who urged his people to wage war against not just the orcs and goblins of the country, but against the humans as well. Only a handful of historians know just how much Tarodun hated humanity. The elves could not stand to see their people go to war with humans, so he was assassinated in secret.

Tarodun's Tomb, his *true* tomb, is a closely guarded secret. In life, Tarodun was a vicious

warrior, but in death he persists as a literal nightmare. His undead remains imprisoned within a sarcophagus of iron, locked in a room protected by magical traps and a complex locking mechanism. The elves who killed him and imprisoned his remains hope this is enough and Tarodun's Tomb will be overtaken by the woods and buried forever.

Unfortunately, the tomb has been happened upon by Grogma Ironjaw's band of orcs...and the player characters.

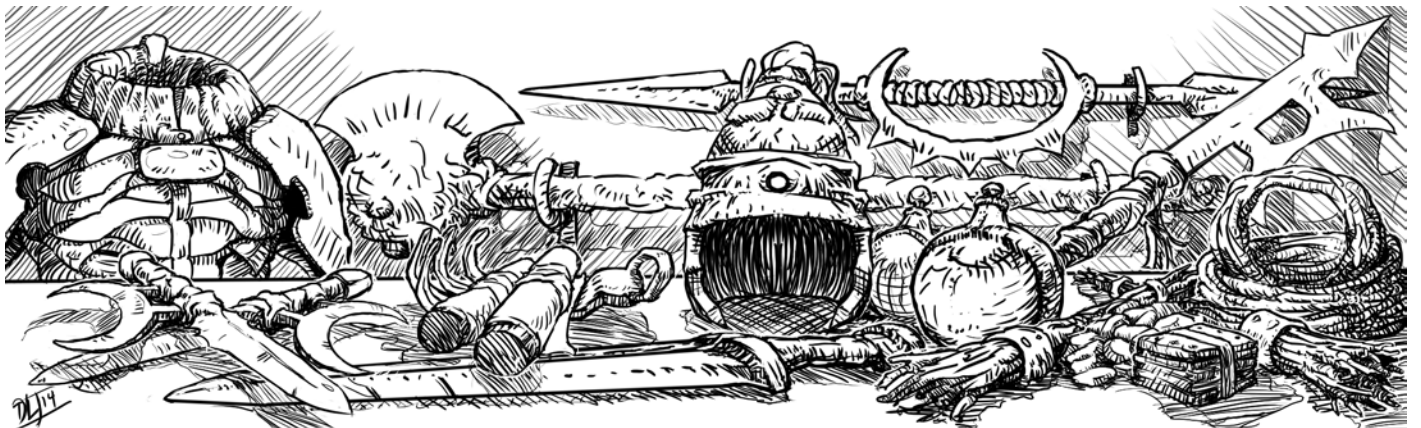
SET UP

Adventure Hooks

Orcs in Tarodun's Tomb is intended to be an introductory adventure for 1st level characters. As such, how the PCs came across the orc-filled tomb and deciding to investigate aren't especially important. The adventure could just start with the PCs, a motley crew of adventurers, happening across the invaded tomb while they're lost in the woods or on the road.

However for extra motivation for checking out Tarodun's Tomb, here are some adventure hooks:

- **Fey Prince's Concern** (best for an elf PC). Fey Prince Allundara has had a premonition of Tarodun's return. The prince is forbidden from leaving his castle, and his advisors and family do not take his premonitions seriously. Thus, he has instructed his pet falcon, Cornwall, to deliver a message of his premonition and the location of Tarodun's tomb to an elf of adventurous spirit (or someone close enough), asking them to look into it. The message promises a handsome reward from the prince (100gp) if the issue is taken care of.
- **Orcs on the Move** (best for a dwarf, fighter, or cleric PC). The nearby town has heard reports of a band of orcs moving across their borders. The town's mayor, Lady Presumptua, offers a reward to adventurous sellswords for investigating these reports and returning with the orcs killed (10gp per orc head).
- **Promise of Treasure** (best for a rogue PC). There are stories of a long abandoned elven tomb hidden somewhere in the region. In a game of cards, a scrap of canvas with a rough map to this abandoned tomb is wagered and lost to a party member. The gambler who lost this map said the tomb is supposed to be jam-packed with riches from the last great elven empire, but that it's also haunted.



Generating Orcs

With the exception of their leader, Chieftess Grogma Ironjaw, all of the orcs in this adventure have randomly generated names, titles, and distinguishing features. Either ahead of time or in play, generate the 12 orcs that occupy this dungeon. The orcs' genders/sex is entirely up to you. The author of this adventure thinks it'd be a cool idea if all the orcs were women, but that's just his opinion, man:

1d20	Name	Title	Distinguishing Features
1	Bolg	The Fat	No hair, bulging eyes, always grinning.
2	Burbotch	Bone Licker	Missing one ear, hard of hearing.
3	Dunwak	Skullcrusher	Covered in boils, high pitched voice.
4	Fulgore	The Fiend	Always scratching, horrible rash.
5	Falzun	Beast Rider	No hair, metal plate in skull, scar tissue.
6	Gunch	Pie Master	Hearty laugh in battle, afraid of dwarves.
7	Grimbo	Halfling Lover	Incredibly fat, waddles, long braided hair.
8	Hurdloz	The Unclean	Incredibly thin, bony, cackles when hurt.
9	Kolgoth	The Heinous	Foodie, always talking about food.
10	Kazmuth	Plague Bringer	Deep voiced, eloquent, carries a book.
11	Kuga	Bone Snapper	One eyed, Sharpened teeth like fangs.
12	Mulmath	The Boiler	No nose, covered in scars, mute.
13	Morgoth	The Long Blade	Speaks in rhymes, shrill voice.
14	Rawrog	Stabs-a-lot	Heavily muscled, wears only a loincloth.
15	Rotgut	The Fire-Breather	Peg-legged, speaks like a pirate.
16	Sosoth	The Burned	Chokes and gurgles, covered in tumors.
17	Tootsbo	The Foul	Reeks of onions, dirt covered, toothsome.
18	Tuthoth	The Hungry	Speaks in whispers, licks weapons clean.
19	Utha	Ash Puddle	Missing fingers, ragged cough, nosy.
20	Vurmog	Foot Licker	Thick tongued, sticks out of mouth, fat.

TARODUN'S TOMB

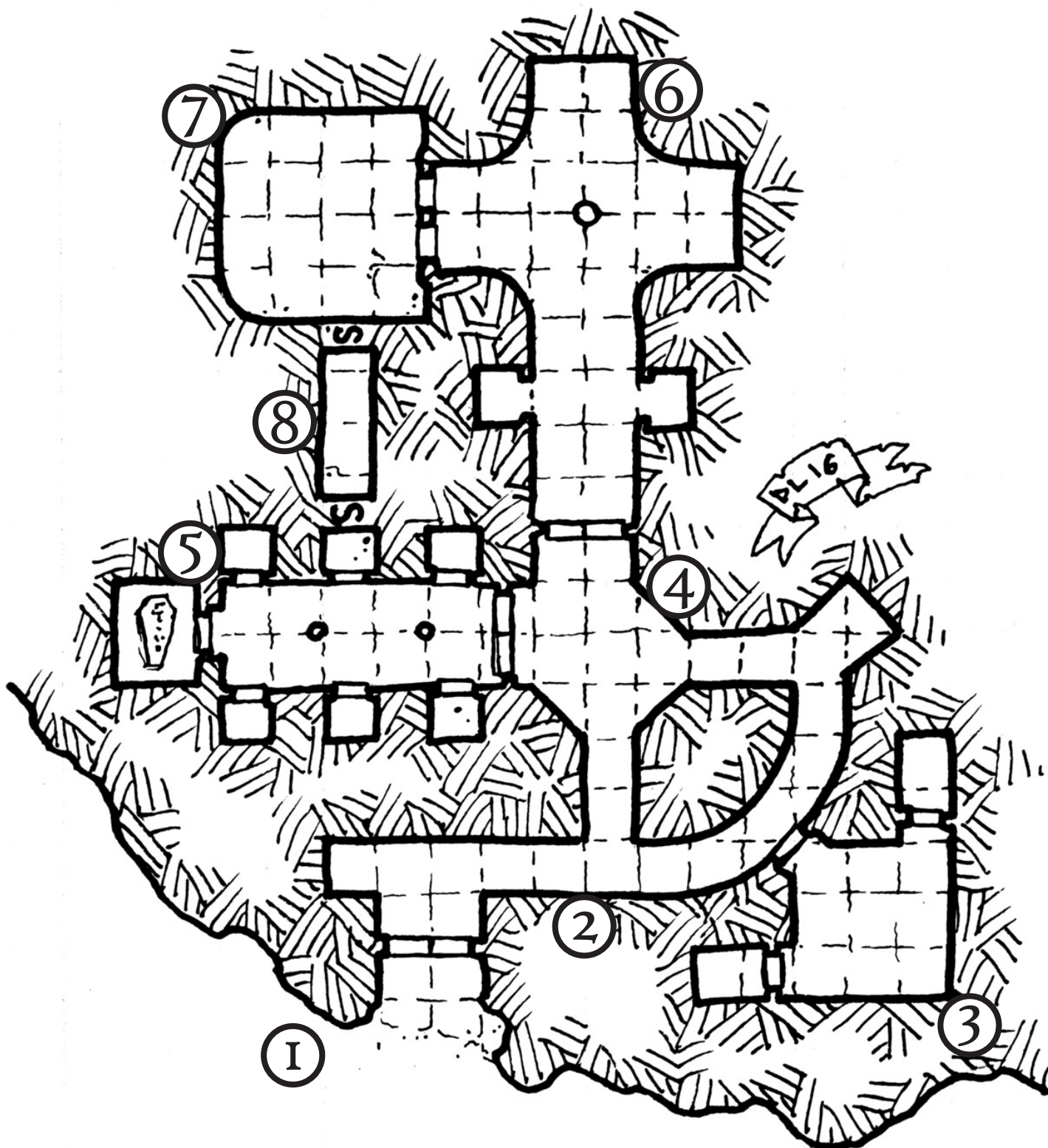
Unless stated otherwise, the Tomb has the following characteristics:

Floors. The floors are smooth flagstones made of marble.

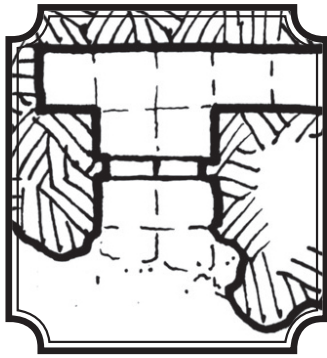
Doors. The doors are unlocked and made of heavy stone with brass fittings and locks.

Ceilings. Cracked marble panelling, often with frescoes of elven glades.

Light. There are silvered metal sconces on the walls without torches. All of the rooms in the tomb are pitch black.



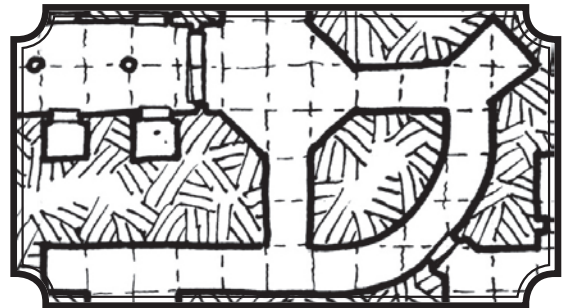
I. ENTRANCE



- Tarodun's Tomb is built into a grassy hillside. Bushes and vine overgrowth keeps the tomb hidden from the naked eye. Its stone entrance doors are decorated with a silver inlay in the shape of flames.
- **3 orcs** guard the entrance of the tomb: two in front of the doors and one patrolling on top of the hill, acting as a lookout. If attacked, the orcs call out for help, summoning the wolves in **Room 2** and the orcs in **Room 3**.
- If the PC's are stealthy, they may overhear bits of conversation between the two door-guarding orcs. Depending on what they talk about, they can be questioned or distracted by these subjects:



2. AXE HALLWAY



- The walls here are lined with ancient axes, still as sharp as they day they were forged.
- **2 wolves**, trained by orcs, wander this hallway. They are bone thin and hungry. While they attack PCs on sight, they can be calmed and tamed with a DC 16 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check.

1d6 What are the orcs chatting about?

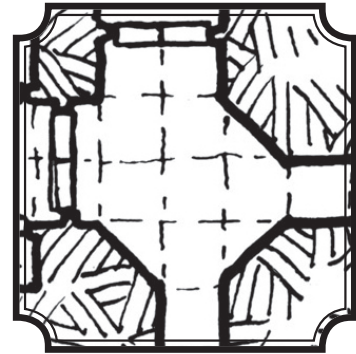
- 1 "How long before Ashka can open the crypt? We've been waiting for days!"
- 2 "I'm starving. That halfling better be cooked up nice and good soon. Haha!"
3. "You sure those knife-eared elves 'ain't gonna come 'round? I'd love a chance to crush their skulls".
4. "Eh, you think there's wolves in these parts? I hate wolves. Scared of em' I am!"
5. "You ever want to plough a human?" "No. You?" "N-no...I mean...course not...It's not like I'm into them or anything...s'weird..."
6. "Hey, do you ever...um...just want to look pretty?" "A-are you serious? Because, yeah"

3. EMBALMING ROOM



- The door to this room is locked. The orcs haven't touched it.
- A holy room devoted to the preparation of bodies for the afterlife. Long tables line the walls, covered in an assortment of embalming tools, and full and empty urns.
- Storage rooms to the north and west are locked. They can be forced open with a DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check, or their locks can be picked with a DC 15 Thieves' Tools (Dexterity) check.
- **Treasure:** In the room is 72gp worth of coins and small gems hidden amid the ashes in the full urns. There is also a large pyramid-shaped bottle labelled 'Embalming Fluid' in Elvish. This fluid is part of a key to the door in **Room 6**. Behind the locked doors are 2d4 sealed bottles of elven embalming fluid (as slippery and flammable as lamp oil, but foul smelling). This fluid is toxic to dwarves and humans, reacting like acid.

4. HALL OF ASCENSION



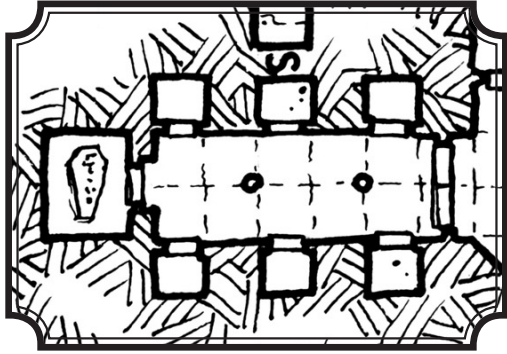
- The stone walls and ceiling are painted with detailed frescoes of the elven afterlife, showing the souls of elves rising from their bodies towards the ceiling. Elves who look upon these frescoes must make a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw. Failure causes them to break down and cry at their majesty.
- **3 orcs** busy themselves around a campfire and spit. They have a small **half-elf woman** stripped nude, tied up, and about to be roasted on the spit over the fire. The orcs are basting her with sauce and debating what sides to eat with her.
- The half-elf woman is Noctia Vermeth, a burglar. She slipped into Tarodun's tomb to plunder its elven riches, but was caught by the orcs when they broke in. She has been a captive for a few days, doing her best to stall the orcs from killing/eating her.

Noctia, the PC's, and the tomb's riches

Noctia tries to get the PC's attention and earn their trust. She claims to be an adventurer (Like them), and says she will aid them however she can in return for saving her from the orcs. She knows the layout of the tomb decently well, and speaks a little bit of the orcish language.

In truth, Noctia is just biding her time until she can turn on the PCs. Once they defeat/kill the orcs and discover the riches in **Rooms 7** and **8**, she turns against them. Noctia only cares about leaving this place much richer than when she entered it, and it's hard to be rich when you need to split treasure four or more ways.

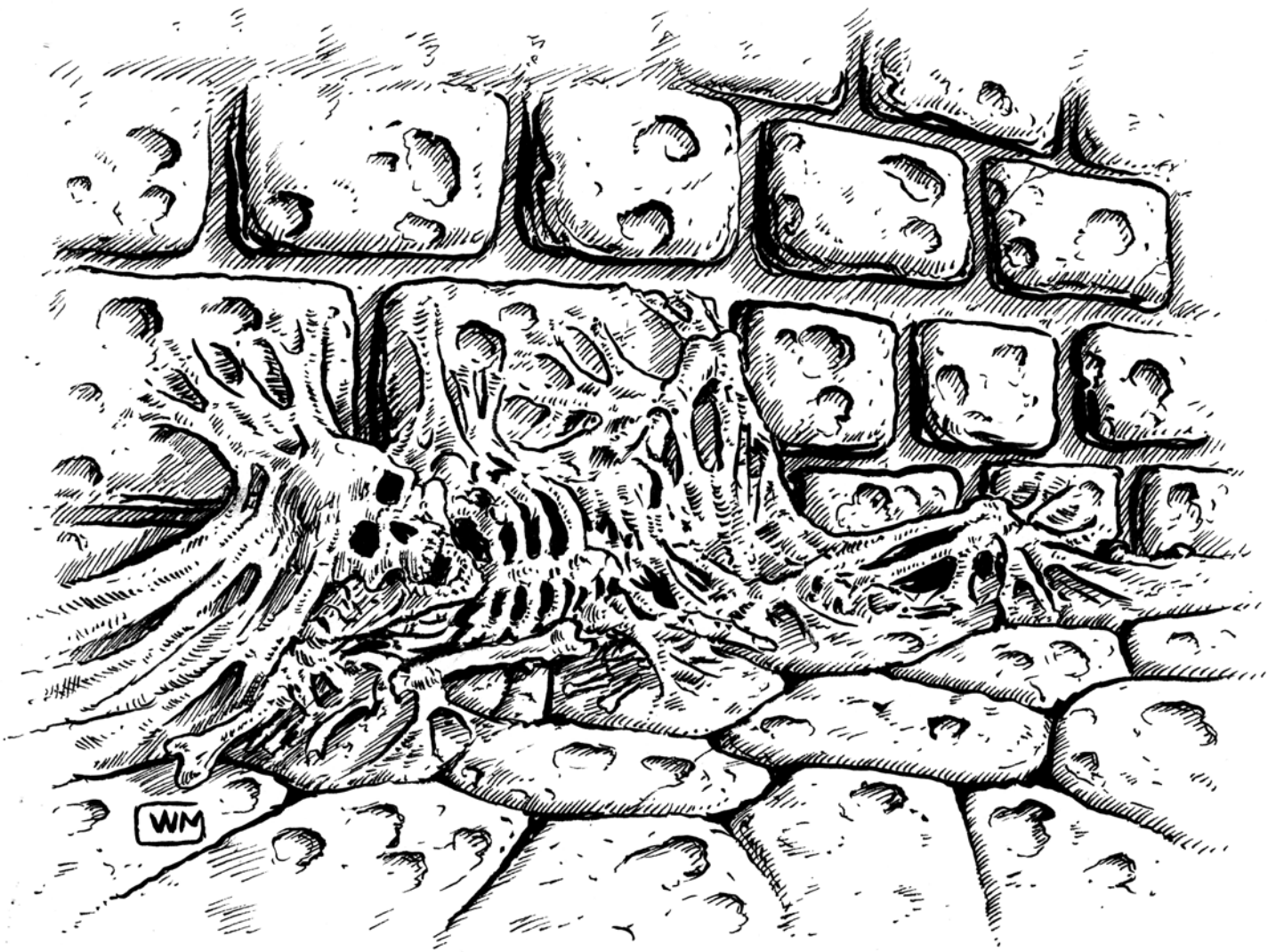
5. MAUSOLEUM



- This room is dry and dusty. Speaking is difficult, as creatures' mouths and throats grow dry and cracked here.
- There are seven sealed crypts in this room. Six of them contain the desiccated remains of elven servants, standing upright in servant garb or fancy dress. The crypt doors require a crowbar, a similar tool, or a DC 16

Strength check to open. Each of the six elven corpses has the following treasures on them:

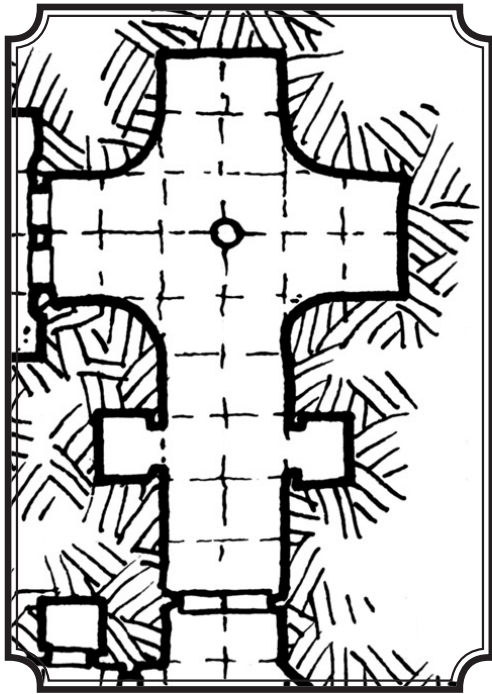
- Kallus, an elven man. No treasure.
- Tel'ania, an elven woman. Gold ring on her finger (15gp).
- Victus, an androgynous elven eunuch. His head looks swollen. His brain contains the *Brain Fluid* needed to open the door in **Room 6**.
- Avra, an elven woman. Her left eye is false. It's actually a spherical silver container holding the *Eye Fluid* needed to open the door in **Room 6**.
- Kindallus, an elven man. Dressed in concubines' clothing and jewelry (34gp worth).
- Pallanta, an elven man. Buried with an ornamental short sword studded with garnets (50gp).



- The seventh crypt, the big one to the west, holds Tarodun's sarcophagus. It's heavy, made of porcelain and gold, with blue painted trees on fire covering it. The sarcophagus is extremely fragile and incredibly valuable. Intact its worth 2000gp to the right buyer. If fetches half as much if broken. If opened, a terrible miasma is released that fills the room. Everyone within must make a DC 16 Constitution saving throw. Failure causes them to be poisoned.
- **Secret Door:** There is a sliding stone door hidden inside the northern middle crypt behind the corpse. It takes a DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check to notice. It leads to Tarodun's secret treasure hoard (**Room 8**).



6. Cross Hall



- This hall is constructed in the shape of a holy cross. Its walls are tiled with obsidian panels. A holy brazier in the centre of the hall is filled with floral smelling oil. The fire that burns from it is silver in colour. Two silver plated iron doors rest in the western part of the cross, decorated with complex bas reliefs (See below).

- **8 Orcs** occupy the room. This is the room they've been sleeping in. Straw sleeping mats, supplies, and travelling bags are stuffed in the corners of the room. Seven orcs stand around while their Chieftess, **Grogma Ironjaw**, assaults the doors trying to get them to open. These orcs won't hesitate to attack and subdue the PCs if they encounter them.
- **Magical Trap:** The obsidian panels in this room warp and distort all magic cast in this room. This is to prevent magical tampering with the doors. Any creature that casts a spell in this hall must make a d100 roll: 91–100 causes the spell to function normally, 11–90 causes the spell to be half as effective (half damage, half its duration, half its effect, etc), 01–10 causes the spell to backfire upon its caster.



- **Silver Bas Relief Doors:** The doors are carved with a bas relief that spreads over both of them. The relief depicts a macabre scene of fancy elven nobles from a bygone age toasting and drinking to each others' health. The relief shows clues as to how to obtain the small key needed to unlock this door:
 - There are four elves in the relief. All of them are holding cups or bottles that show a key inside of them. All but one of them is drinking out them.
 - An elven woman drinks out of a round bottle. Her left eye is missing. She touches the eye socket with her other hand.
 - An androgynous elf drinks out of a thin vial. His head is split open and his brain is exposed. He touches his brain with his other hand.
 - An elven man drinks out of a large pyramid shaped bottle. His body is thin and gaunt like a corpse. He looks dead.
 - An elven person, gender unknown, cuts their hand and lets the blood into a chalice. This person has this chalice in their other hand.

The Bas Relief Door Puzzle

The Silvered bas relief doors cannot be opened by ordinary means. They cannot be bashed open with brute strength. They can be expertly picked by a DC 25 Thieves' Tools (Dexterity) check.

The key to these doors requires obtaining four precious fluids:

Eye Fluid. On a female elf's corpse in **Room 5**, one of her eyes is false. It's actually a silver orb with a tiny cork. It contains a precious silvery fluid.

Brain Fluid. An androgynous elf's corpse in **Room 5** can have its skull smashed open to reveal its brain. Squeezing this brain leeches out a golden fluid.

Embalming Fluid. In **Room 3** there is a large pyramid shaped silver bottle filled with embalming fluid. It is identical to the bottle depicted in the bas relief.

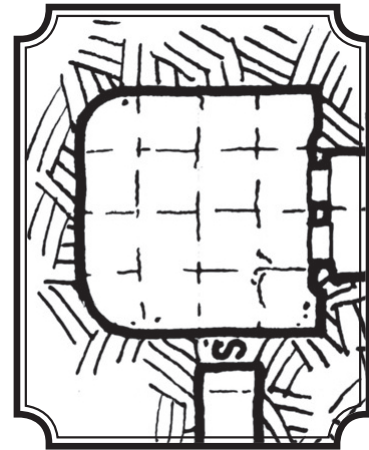
Fey Blood. The fourth fluid needed is the blood of a Fey creature: elves, drow, half-elves, any will do. If there are no Fey PCs in the party (or none of them are willing to share), the half-elf burglar Noctia offers to give some.

How do we get a key out of these fluids?

Any creative way the players can think of using these fluids to open the door will feasibly produce a key. Mixing all four of the fluids together causes them to congeal into a solid silver key that fits the doors' keyholes perfectly. Drinking the combined fluids causes the imbiber to be able to open the doors as if they were unlocked. Pouring all of these fluids onto the doors causes them to melt away.

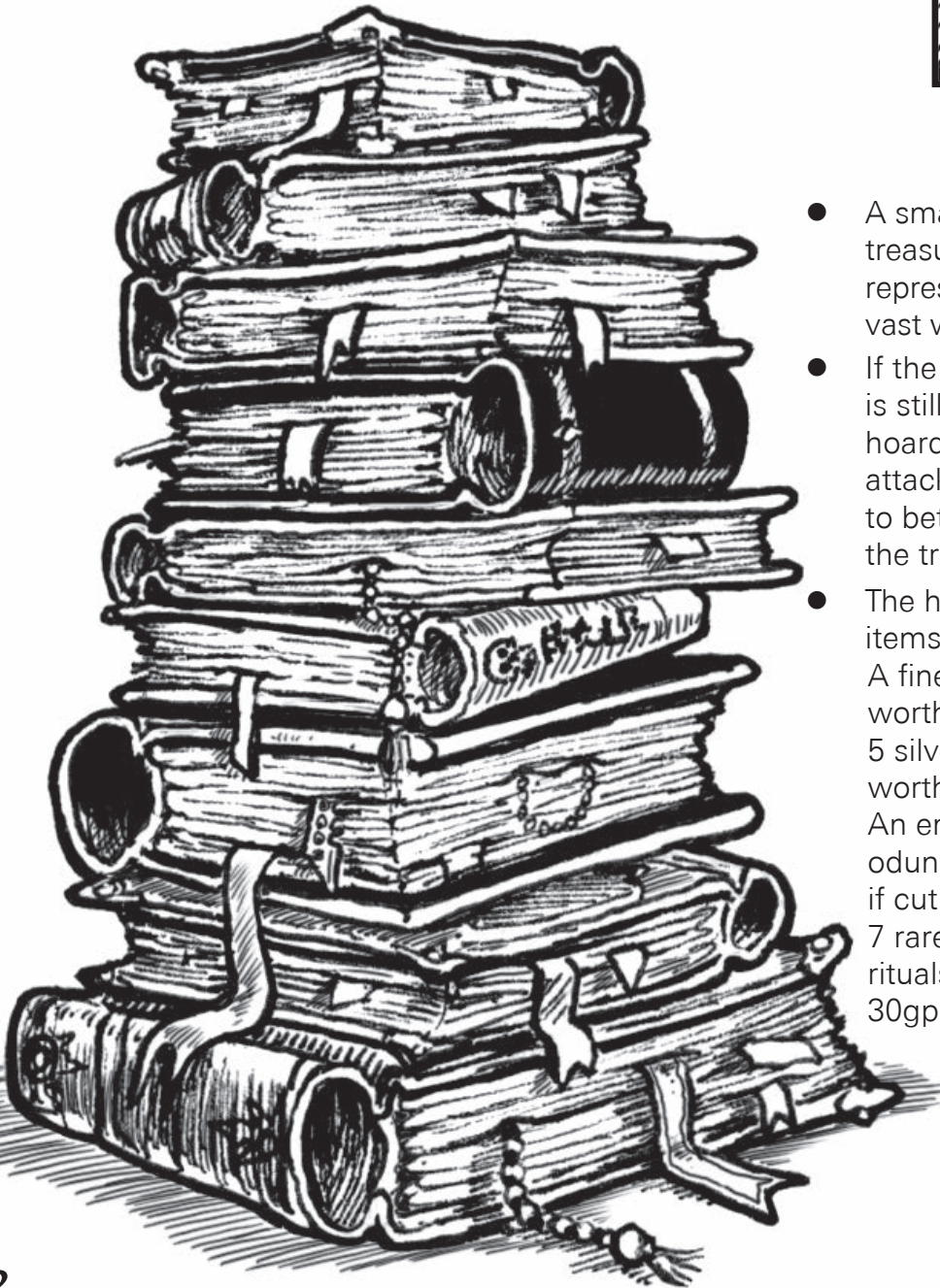
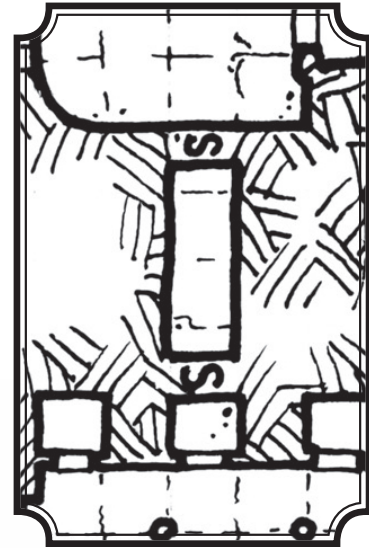
The doors can also be opened or bypassed using spells or clever ideas that your players have. They just cannot be conventionally smashed open or picked with tools.

7. DEATH CHAMBER



- This room is grimy and bare compared to the elven artistry of the previous rooms. A sealed iron sarcophagus hangs from the centre of the ceiling by chains. This is Tarodun's true tomb.
- **Aura of Undeath Trap:** Creatures moving within 5 feet of the iron sarcophagus triggers Tarodun's aura of undeath, causing them to take a 1d4+1 hit point loss. These lost hit points bring **Tarodun** back to life. He bangs on the sarcophagus lid and wails in Elvish to be freed.
- If freed, Tarodun is quick to attack and kill those who freed him. If there are elves in the party he will hesitate to kill them specifically, asking them to join him on his quest to rid the region of human life. Those who agree to help with this cause are spared.
- **Secret Door:** There is a sliding stone door in the southern stone wall. It takes a DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation) check to notice. It leads to Tarodun's secret treasure hoard (**Room 8**).

8. TARODUN'S SECRET TREASURE HOARD



- A small, narrow hallway filled with treasure chests and elven heirlooms. This represents the small portion of Tarodun's vast wealth he was buried with.
- If the half-elf burglar Noctia Vermeth is still alive, and she finds this treasure hoard, she will move to cover and sneak attack any remaining PCs. She intends to betray and kill them so she can take the treasure for herself.
- The hoard consists of the following items:
 - A fine wooden chest filled with 200gp worth of assorted coins.
 - 5 silver statuettes of Tarodun himself, worth 50gp each.
 - An enormous framed portrait of Tarodun, worth 100gp intact, half as much if cut out of its frame, folded, or rolled.
 - 7 rare books on necromancy, evil magic rituals, and elven supremacy, worth 30gp each.

MONSTERS & NPCs

ORC

Medium humanoid (orc), chaotic evil

Armor Class 13 (hide armor)

Hit Points 15 (2d8 + 6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	7 (-2)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Intimidation +2

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Orc

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Aggressive. As a bonus action, the orc can move up to its speed towards a hostile creature it can see.

ACTIONS

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d12 + 3) slashing damage.

Javelin. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

CHIEFTESS GROGMA IRONJAW

Medium humanoid (orc), chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (chain mail)

Hit Points 45 (7d8 + 10)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+4)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	7 (-2)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Str +6, Con +5, Wis +2

Skills Intimidation +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Orc

Challenge 3 (800 XP)

Aggressive. As a bonus action, the orc can move up to its speed towards a hostile creature it can see.

Intimidating Presence. Creatures who can see or hear Grogma Ironjaw have disadvantage on Wisdom checks and saves against her Intimidation checks.

ACTIONS

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d12 + 4) slashing damage.

Javelin. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.

WOLF

Medium beast, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +4

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages —

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Keen Hearing and Smell. The wolf has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing and smell.

Pack Tactics. The wolf has advantage on attack rolls against a creature if at least one of the wolf's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d4 + 2) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 11 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

NOCTIA VERMETH, HALF-ELF

BURGLAR

Medium humanoid (fey), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 13 (unarmored) or 14 (leather armor)

Hit Points 15 (2d8 + 6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)

Skills Acrobatics +5, Deception +4, Perception +2, Sleight of Hand +5, Stealth +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Elvish, Orc

Challenge 2 (500 XP)

Fey Ancestry. Noctia has advantage on saving throws against being Charmed, and magic can't put her to sleep.

Sneak Attack (1/Turn). Noctia deals an extra 7 (2d6) damage when she hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll.

ACTIONS

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

Hand Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

TARODUN, UNDEAD ELF

NIGHTMARE

Medium undead (fey), lawful evil

Armor Class 16 (chainmail)

Hit Points 60 (8d8 + 16)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex +4, Wis +2

Skills Deception +4

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Elvish

Challenge 4 (1100 XP)

Fey Ancestry. Advantage on saving throws against being charmed. Cannot be put to sleep by magic.

ACTIONS

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage.

Undead Grasp. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage and the target is restrained by the neck. The target must succeed a DC 14 Constitution save, taking 1d6 necrotic damage on failure.





Kiel Chenier is an independent game designer, writer, and illustrator. His adventure *Blood in the Chocolate* won Gold for Best Adventure at the 2017 ENnie Awards. He's written trpg content for official *Dungeons & Dragons*, *EN5ider*, *Lamentations of the Flame Princess*, and more. He currently works in Calgary, Alberta.

Jensen Toperzer is a freelance layout designer and editor, and can be convinced to write with enough money and strict deadlines. They are a normal human, and absolutely not three velociraptors in a trenchcoat.



Dyson is certainly not made of crosshatching and tentacles. That is just his disguise as he continues drawing maps at an inhuman rate from his secret lair in Gatineau, Quebec.

D.L. Johnson is a freelance illustrator, game designer, and animator living in the wilds of Montana. He's quick on the draw, slow on the road, and helps other creators make their awesome creations look darn good. He's assuredly never been mistaken for a redneck hobomancer.



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