

BLUE SCALES



D&D
ADVENTURERS
LEAGUE™

A Two-Hour Adventure for 5th-10th Level Characters

CCC-GLIP-02-01

William Beers, Iam Pace, & William Murakami-Brundage



Blue Scales

A behir has been hired to destroy the herds of aurochs necessary to feed the hobgoblin city of Glip Dak. Patrols and scouts continue to go missing, forcing the hobgoblins to hire mercenaries to track this behir as they recall their troops to the capital to maintain order as food riots break out.

Tier 2 CCC-GLIP-02-XX adventures can be played in any order.

A Two-Hour Adventure for 5th to 10th Level Characters



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Introduction

Welcome to *Blue Scales*, a D&D Adventurers League™ adventure, part of the official D&D Adventurers League™ organized play system and the *Tomb of Annihilation™* storyline season.

This adventure takes place in and around the Troll Hills of eastern Thar, and includes wilderness and underground encounters.

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 5th to 10th level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 8**. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure.

Adjusting This Adventure

This adventure provides suggestions in making adjustments for smaller or larger groups, characters of higher or lower levels, and characters that are otherwise a bit more powerful than the adventure is optimized for. You're not bound to these adjustments; they're here for your convenience.

To figure out whether you should consider adjusting the adventure, add up the total levels of all the characters and divide the total by the number of characters (rounding .5 or greater up; .4 or less down). This is the group's APL. To approximate the **party strength** for the adventure, consult the following table.

Determining Party Strength

Party Composition	Party	Strength
3-4 characters,	APL less than	Very Weak
3-4 characters,	APL equivalent	Weak
3-4 characters,	APL greater than	Average
5 characters,	APL less than	Weak
5 characters,	APL equivalent	Average
5 characters,	APL greater than	Strong
6-7 characters,	APL less than	Average
6-7 characters,	APL equivalent	Strong
6-7 characters,	APL greater than	Very Strong

Some encounters may include a sidebar that offers suggestions for certain party strengths. If a particular recommendation is not offered or appropriate for your group, you don't have to make adjustments.

Before Play at the Table

Before you start play, consider the following:

- Read through the adventure, taking notes of anything you'd like to highlight or remind yourself of while running the adventure, such as a way you'd like to portray an NPC or a tactic you'd like to use in a combat. Familiarize yourself with the adventure's appendices and handouts.
- Gather any resources you'd like to use to aid you in running this adventure--such as notecards, a DM screen, miniatures, and battlemaps.
- Ask the players to provide you with relevant character information, such as name, race, class, and level; passive Wisdom (Perception), and anything specified as notable by the adventure (such as backgrounds, traits, flaws, etc).

Playing the Dungeon Master

You have the most important role—facilitating the enjoyment of the game for the players. You provide the narrative and bring the words on these pages to life.

To facilitate this, keep in mind the following:

You're Empowered. Make decisions about how the group interacts with the adventure; adjusting or improvising is encouraged, so long as you maintain the adventure's spirit. This doesn't allow you to implement house rules or change those of the Adventurers League, however; they should be consistent in this regard.

Challenge Your Players. Gauge the experience level of your **players** (not the characters), try to feel out (or ask) what they like in a game, and attempt to deliver the experience they're after. Everyone should have the opportunity to shine.

Keep the Adventure Moving. When the game starts to get bogged down, feel free to provide hints and clues to your players so they can attempt to solve puzzles, engage in combat, and roleplay interactions without getting too frustrated over a lack of information. This gives players "little victories" for figuring out good choices from clues. Watch for stalling—play loses momentum when this happens. At the same time, make sure that the players don't finish too early; provide them with a full play experience.

Adventure Primer

"Life in Thar can be a bloody business for it is a bloody land."

- Korgoth Bayn, Kroth Magg Overlord

Adventure Background

As the Kroth Magg hobgoblins continue to expand their influence across southern Thar through shrewd diplomacy and subtle violence—often one and the same—a rival power is taking measures against this new threat. This adversary has sought to undermine the growth of the Kroth Magg capital of Glip Dak by cutting off their chief supply of food, auroch herds grazed on the verdant steppes south of the city.

This veiled foe has enticed a behir infamous for hunting dragons throughout the Sea of Fallen Stars beside the forces of Tymanther, where she earned a reputation for both her brutality and cunning. When the true leader of the Kroth Magg, the blue dragon Maelizarra, was revealed to the behir Stonejaws, she eagerly agreed and set out to meet with another agent, a duergar wizard named Yauch already fortified and waiting in the cliffs of the Troll Hills. There he has been observing Glip Dak since its founding, keeping track of its patrols and supplies from his hidden stronghold.

From this secret base, the behir and wizard began ravaging the herds rotated through the dreary grass lands, slaughtering the guards and herds alike and leaving their corpses to rot. These attacks have proven devastating to the stability of Glip Dak as the auroch meat is crucial to feeding the legions, slaves, merchants, and others hosted by the city. Yauch's knowledge of the area and the Kroth Magg's movements allowed the pair to strike the most vulnerable targets and vanish quickly, using the terrain and his magic.

Even as the hobgoblins moved to reinforce their remaining herds, guards en route were ambushed before they could rendezvous and consolidate their strength.

As the first waves of hunger are felt in the capital, the Kroth Magg have to make a hard choice—keep their soldiers within the city to maintain order, or risk losing the city to find this enigmatic foe.

Not all as been misfortune and defeat. A unit of Iron Shadow monks witnessed one of these ambushes and followed the behir back to her Troll Hills lair before she vanished into a cliff. When the Iron Shadows reported back, the overlords decided

to hire mercenaries to deal with this threat as they secure control of Glip Dak and what herds remain.

Who are the Kroth Magg?

A decade ago, six hobgoblins adventurers discovered a Netheril ruin in the tip of the northern Troll Hills. What they found within caused a schism in the band. A brief battle ensued, resulting in the victors exiling two of their former comrades. The remaining four turned to the worship of the true hobgoblin deities. From there, they used treasure obtained through their explorations and sellswording to construct a fort above the massive complex below.

This activity attracted Maelizarra, a curious blue dragon, who sought the secrets the ruins held. She saw potential in these hobgoblin adventurers and offered her wealth to back their endeavors if they swore fealty to her before their gods. They accepted and together they formed the Kroth Magg and built the fortress of Glip Dak to guard the ruins.

The Kroth Magg rose to prominence quickly, attracting many hobgoblins to their banner. With the dragon's clandestine guidance, they secured local resources and began to guard and tax the trade roads along the northern Moonsea.

Glip Dak is controlled by Maelizarra through her overlords, the remaining adventurers: Supreme General Korgoth Bayn, Iron Shadow Grand Master Kahl, Devastator Lord Balroth Sicar, and High Priestess Drakkla the Red. There are rumors of a fifth overlord, but such stories are violently refuted.

While powerful, the Kroth Magg have much to hide. They are apostates who have freed themselves from the leash of Maglubiyet and returned to the worship of Nomog-Geaya, their god of stoicism and conquest, and Bargrivyek, their god of duty and discipline. This they keep secret as such information would unite the goblinoids against them in a holy war, for Maglubiyet is ruthless and cruel and demands the same of his followers.

While the upper levels of the ruins have been opened to Glip Dak to serve as sewers and prisons, Maelizarra and her overlords continue to jealously guard the mysteries held deeper below, sealed by both gate and magic to all but themselves.

Location and NPC Summary

The following NPCs and locations feature prominently in this adventure.

Stonejaws (STOHN-jaws). A behir of above-average intelligence and an overdeveloped sense of grandeur. She is an experienced hunter of dragons.

Yauch (YOCH). A duergar wizard and skilled spy. He is a mercenary working with Stonejaws.

Glip Dak (GLIP DACK). The market fortress of the Kroth Magg clan of hobgoblins. Commerce is king in Glip Dak, and though all races are tolerated there, only goblinoids and their allies are fully welcome.

Hrogar (ROW-gar). Hobgoblin captain of the guard. Hires the adventurers to stop Stonejaws.

Vaws-fohaklyam (VOW FOE-bah-key-lie-am). A small river in the Troll Hills. The Ghukliak (Goblin) name translates to “Murderer’s Creek” in Common.

Thashlohk (THAS-low-keh). A backwoods trail used for moving auroch and other livestock across Thar. The Ghukliak (Goblin) name translates to “Bloated Trail” in Common, an old drover’s trail.

Adventure Overview

The adventure is broken down into three parts:

Part 1, A Little Help from My “Friends.” The adventurers are hired to go after Stonejaws.

Part 2. Choose a Part 2 path below

Part 2a, Over the River. The adventurers follow the Vaws-fohaklyam (Murderer’s Creek), as it goes underground where they must deal with predatory creatures and the harsh environment.

Part 2b, Through the Woods. Following up on a rumor, the adventurers travel to the Troll Hills and approach the cave hideout of the duergar wizard and behir.

Part 2c, Up the Cliff. Knowing the location of the cave hideout is the easy part. Climbing the cliff up to it is the hard part!

Part 3, In the Belly of the Beast. The adventurers infiltrate the hideout. Unfortunately, the duergar and behir are expecting such an incursion and have prepared accordingly.

Adventure Hooks

This adventure is part of a set of adventures that are located in the trade city of Glip Dak, in the steppes of Thar. Adventures in each CCC-GLIP tier, (GLIP-01-XX, GLIP-02-XX, etc.) can be played in any order.

Your players may recognize some of the NPCs or places from the other Glip Dak adventures. While that can give them a sense of familiarity with the locale, it won’t spoil any surprises!

Fresh Off the Road. This is the adventurer’s first time in Glip Dak arriving at the fortress market as part of a trading caravan, or as part the personal retinue of a minor Moonsea noble.

Now That the Mystery is Solved (CCC-GLIP -01-02). The adventurers recently befriended a Glip Dak faction with some work in the ruins below the city.

Paying the Ransom (CCC-GLIP-01-01). Some tendays ago, you set out from Hulburg with a mission to pay the ransom on Elias Vandover. Now that that mission is accomplished (for better or worse) you’ve been cooling your heels in Glip Dak,

hoping to find a way back to Hulburg that doesn’t involve you footing the bill.

Get Our Books Back (Lords’ Alliance Faction Assignment). Prior to being hired to spy on Glip Dak, many years ago, the duergar mage Yauch stole a valuable collection of dragon-lore books from the Saj family in Mulmaster.

Yauch disguised himself as Lumin Fetterbond, a respected dwarf cleric from Hulburg. When representatives of the Saj family caught up to Lumin, the deception was uncovered. Lumin volunteered his keen divining talents to locate Yauch for the Saj. Refer to Part 1, section C, where Lords’ Alliance players receive **Player Handout 3**.

Running this adventure at a convention (or anywhere with only two hours)

There are many paths to follow in Blue Scales, but if you are running it on a tight timeline, you will probably have to streamline it. Use the Adventure Primer on pages 3-4 and the Story Beats for each part as a roadmap and consider the below suggestions for running this adventure when you only have a two-hour slot.

- **Part 1:** Ask upfront if anyone has story awards from GLIP 01-01 or -02. If not, run sections D and E, adding C if any Lords Alliance faction members are present.
- **Part 2:** Omit the Cave Fisher encounter from the chosen track.
- **Part 3:** Remove Part B, or at least the gas spore, from that chamber.

If time is no object

If your play group has the time, this adventure can easily run four hours.

- **Part 1:** Ask upfront if anyone has story awards from GLIP 01-01- or -02. If not, run sections D and E, (adding C if any Lords Alliance faction members are present.) There are plenty of opportunities for roleplaying with Hrogar.
- **Part 2:** Run 2b followed by 2a. This will allow the adventures a trip through the Troll Hills, then the underground river to the final scene.
- **Part 3:** Be careful about piling too much stuff in the final battle, this can easily become a deadly encounter.

Hobgoblin Society

Who are the Kroth Magg?

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This activity attracted Maelizarra, a curious blue dragon, who sought the secrets the ruins held. She saw potential in these hobgoblin adventurers and offered her wealth to back their endeavors if they swore fealty to her before their gods. They accepted and the Kroth Magg was born with the completion of their fort, Glip Dak.

The Kroth Magg rose to prominence quickly, attracting many hobgoblins to their banner. With the dragon's secret guidance, they secured local resources and began to guard and tax the trade roads along the northern Moonsea.

Glip Dak is controlled by Maelizarra through her overlords, the remaining adventurers: Supreme General Korgoth Bayn, Iron Shadow Grand Master Kahl, Devastator Lord Balroth Sicar, and High Priestess Drakkla the Red. There are rumors of a fifth overlord, but such stories are violently refuted.

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While the upper levels of the ruins have been opened to Glip Dak to serve as sewers and prisons, Maelizarra and her overlords continue to jealously guard the secrets held deeper below, sealed by both gate and magic to all but themselves.

Glip Dak

- A few years ago, a clan of hobgoblins claimed a Netheril ruin as their stronghold. From that lonely outcropping of stone and crumbling battlements rose Glip Dak. Glip Dak is a lawful evil goblinoid fortress surrounded by a bustling tent city.
- At the trade gate, there is a wooden sign in Common, Giant, Goblin, and Orc that says: "Glip Dak - Kill not; Steal not". Below the sign is a pile of humanoid skulls.
- Outside the trade gates are stocks, manacles, and cages wherein criminals are punished. The gallows, dunking vats, and other public "spectacles" are near the market square.

Glip Dak Citizens

- Glip Dak citizens include many races, from goblins to drow, but the Kroth Magg hobgoblins squarely control the city, at least ostensibly.
- Creatures such as aberrations, monstrosities, lycanthropes, undead, etc. are considered vermin.

Justice and the Law in Glip Dak

- Breaking the laws of Glip Dak is punishable by lost downtime or a fine, but it does not end the adventure, nor does it prevent playing other Glip Dak modules.
- Some Glip Dak specific story awards can cause social shifts during other Glip Dak modules – the adventurers are raising suspicions, have caused problems, or are decorated allies.

The Heinous Crimes of Glip Dak

- Killing Glip Dak citizens or non-citizens.
- Being caught stealing from a merchant or citizen.

Decorations in Hobgoblin Society

- **Vadd Narkoz**, "Strong Warrior". In this public proclamation, the hobgoblins of Glip Dak acknowledge outsiders as worthy allies.
- **Lozz Nying**, "Pony Gift". In this public ceremony, a pony, bridle, and riding saddle are bestowed upon those that earned Lozz Nying.
- **Fezik Melko**, "Worthy Accord". A parade occurs, and those given the Fezik Melko are rewarded with a silver dagger.
- **Pakk Vit**, "Shield Bearer". Saving the life of a hobgoblin creates a blood debt. Until that debt is repaid, the hobgoblin that owes the debt is known as the Pakk Vit (shield bearer) to their rescuer.

Earning Decorations

The decorations may be earned by completing quests for the Kroth Magg, DM's discretion. They grant one of the following benefits:

- Advantage on Charisma (Deception, Intimidation, and Persuasion) checks with interacting with the Kroth Magg.
- A point of inspiration.
- A particular item or set of items, depending on the decoration.

Part 1. A Little Help

Story Beat

The adventurers are recruited (the method can vary based on the outcomes of other Glip Dak modules) and informed of the plight facing Glip Dak by the captain of the guard—a behir with unusual insight has been destroying the auroch herds needed to feed the city. The captain provides a map showing different routes to the behir’s supposed lair.

Estimated Duration: 15 minutes

Tip: Where to start

Depending on which (if any) Glip Dak story awards have been earned, this adventure can start in a number of ways;

- If any of the party have the story award **Glip Dak Lawbreaker**, go to **Part A**.
- If any of the party have the story award **The Bronze**, go to **Part B**.
- If any of the party is a member of the Lords’ Alliance, go to **Part C**.
- If the party is newly arrived at Glip Dak, go to **Part D**.
- If none of the above fits your party, try to develop a narrative that will motivate them to take this work from the Kroth Magg guards.

General Features

There is a sprawling tent city surrounding the fortress of Glip Dak. This tent city is composed of numerous elements, including less wealthy merchants, nomads who have come to trade, outcasts and refugees, and mercenary companies for hire. Located here are the public punishments such as stocks, hanging cages, dunking pools, etc.

Terrain. The tent city sprawls for several acres around the trade fort of Glip Dak. The ground throughout has been churned into mud. Dry grass has been scattered on the main paths, but the clinging earth and constant foot traffic make the paths difficult terrain.

Weather. Thar is high plateau terrain, harsh and cold. It snows most of the year. Light snow covers the ground, piling into taller snowdrifts in less traveled areas. During the day, it is cold. At night, it drops to freezing.

Light. Every merchant or camp has some kind of fire going, which serves as a heat source, cooking method, and light.

Smells and Sounds. The pungent scent of horses and other animals mixes with the smell of rare medicinal herbs, roasting meat, and brewing beer.

A. Glip Dak Lawbreaker

If a member of the party has this story award, read or paraphrase the following:

You’ve been in this room for over an hour now, waiting for the hobgoblin captain to return. Maybe this isn’t a cell? But the door is locked and the room bare. They haven’t brought something to eat in a while, and what they have brought has been watery gruel. There is begging for food coming from adjoining rooms, muffled by the stone. You have heard rumors of some sort of calamity befalling the great herds of auroch the city feeds itself with.

A jangle of keys outside the room’s one door announces the arrival of someone.

A tall hobgoblin in blue-streaked plate armor strides in, stepping to the center of the room, and places his hands on his hips. Slowly, he surveys each of you. Finally, he extends his right hand, knife-like at [the character(s) with the Glip Dak Lawbreaker story award].

“You have been judged by my peers and found guilty of breaking Glip Dak law. Normally your hands would be bound behind you, and a rat-filled sack tied about your head. Then you would be marched to the river and thrown in.

“However, I find myself in a position to offer you an alternative.”

Hrogar offers to commute the sentence of the offending character or characters if they find and slay the behir who has been menacing the Kroth Magg. **If an adventurer with the “Glip Dak Lawbreaker” story award completes Hrogar’s mission, the story award can be removed.**

“I have a dangerous task for you, and your companions, should they choose to join. At the base of the Troll Hills, just south of Glip Dak, a beast has been ravaging our auroch herds, and my patrols. I have too few legionnaires to spare at the moment as keeping order within the city at this time is paramount. So I’ve turned to lawbreakers.”

Please proceed to **E. The Problem at Hand**.

B. The Bronze

If a member of the party has this story award, read or paraphrase the following:

The streets are lined with beggars and breadlines as the hobgoblin military enforces strict rationing within the city. While Thar is too cold to ever be considered verdant, its steppes are often coated in grass good enough to graze large herds with if one is careful with rotations. But citizens and merchants talk that some sort of catastrophe has befallen the herds to the south where the richest grazing can be found.

While trying to make your way to one of Glip Dak's numerous tap houses, a hobgoblin guard approached you and presented you with a summons to report to Guard Captain Hrogar at "your earliest convenience." When a hobgoblin guard-captain requests your presence at "your earliest convenience", it means "immediately."

On that premise, you soon find yourself in the anteroom of Captain Hrogar's office. You aren't there long before you hear a deep voice in harshly accented Common say, "Send them in!"

A goblin peeks his head out the door, waving you forward, nodding his head up and down rhythmically. "Come, come. Yes, yes. Come, come!"

As you enter, the tall hobgoblin behind the desk gets up, coming around the desk to greet you. He extends a calloused hand. "Good to see you again," he says, broad smile revealing incongruously white teeth. You think he might even mean it.

"I am glad you are still around. I have another problem that outlanders with skills like yours might be able to handle.

"At the base of the Troll Hills, just south of Glip Dak, a beast has been ravaging our auroch herds, and my patrols. I have too few legionnaires to spare at the moment as keeping order within the city at this time is paramount. So I've turned to outlanders."

Please proceed to **E. The Problem at Hand**.

C. The Missing Books

If any of the adventurers are members of the Lords' Alliance, hand them **Player Handout 3**, and read or paraphrase the following:

Seeing the Lords' Alliance recognition sign come from a hobgoblin was a bit of a surprise, but all the protocols were followed, and the seal on the scroll he gave you puts away any misgivings.

From here, have the party proceed to **Part A, B or D**, whichever is most appropriate.

D. New in Town

If the adventurers are newly arrived to Glip Dak, read or paraphrase the following:

Well, they were right about one thing, Glip Dak is cold. There also doesn't seem to be much work in the market, at least for non-goblins, and the prices for even meager rations is absurd, nearly eightfold what they should be. The barkeep at your inn, sensing your dilemma, let you know that the Kroth Magg constabulary often has work that is open to "outlanders," especially now that the city is facing a food shortage crisis. Some speak of a calamity that has befallen the great herds of auroch south of the city.

Following that tip, you soon find yourself in the anteroom outside Guard-Captain Hrogar's office. You aren't there long before you hear a deep voice, in harshly accented Common say, "Send them in!"

A goblin peeks his head out the door, waving your forward, nodding his head up and down rhythmically. "Come, come. Yes, yes. Come, come!"

Behind a heavy wooden desk sits a large hobgoblin, resplendent in polished bronze plate.

"Outlanders, your presence here tells me you are looking for work. I have work that needs doing. Great risk for great reward.

"At the base of the Troll Hills, just south of Glip Dak, a beast has been ravaging our auroch herds, and my patrols. I have too few legionnaires to spare at the moment as keeping order within the city at this time is paramount. So I've turned to outlanders."

Please proceed to **E. The Problem at Hand**.

E. The Problem at Hand

Hrogar relays the following information to the party during the meeting:

- A behir moved into Troll Hills south of Glip Dak a few tendays ago. Since then it has ambushed patrols and helped itself to the Kroth Magg auroch herds, feasting and then slaughtering what it couldn't gorge itself on
- Patrols have been sent out to kill it, but with no success. If the patrol is too small (ten or fewer) they are attacked by the behir. If the patrol is larger, they find nothing but dead aurochs.
- The food shortage has already caused riots within the city, and the Kroth Magg have had to recall nearly all of their remaining patrols to the city to

keep order, leaving their holdings outside vulnerable.

- Most recently, Kroth Magg Iron Shadows were able to follow the behir to the base of a 300-foot-tall cliff. They watched as the behir, half a cow in its mouth, scaled the rock face. Up the cliff, a large stream exits a cave, water cascading from it. The scout continued to watch as the behir crawled into this cave.
- As a reward, Hrogar tells the adventures that in the behir's treasure is a fine shield, emblazoned with the Kroth Magg symbol. The leader of one of the ambushed Kroth Magg patrols had a magic shield that was missing when Hrogar's troops went out to recover the bodies. "You kill the behir, and that shield will be fair compensation!"
- He offers no additional pay, merely saying "You can take the behir's treasure."
- He requests the adventurers bring the beast's head back to him as proof. If they object, he suggests bringing back its lower jaw. "It can't eat our herds missing half its mouth, ha!"
- Hrogar also suspects something more behind these attacks. They are too surgical—well timed and accurate. He directs the adventurers to find clues as to the behir's true motives and if it has support.
- If asked about what possible wealth a behir could have from raiding auroch herds, the captain replies that it also ambushed and looted supply lines, including those carrying coin.

Hrogar suggests one of the following three approaches to the cave, and give them a crude map (**Player Handout 4**) that shows the route to each:

- Following the Vaws-fohaklyam (Murderer's Creek, so named because of the trolls that stalk the area) from its headwaters as it goes underground, to eventually exit the cliff cave, (**Part 2a. Over the River**).
- Follow the Thashlohk ("Bloated Trail" in Common, an old drover's trail) into the Troll Hills and look for Yauch, a duergar hermit who is rumored to know the hills inside and out (**Part 2b. Through the Woods**).
- If neither of those two options appeals to the party, Hrogar offers them two *potions of climbing* and suggests a frontal assault, up the cliff. He laughs loudly at this idea. (**Part 2c. Up the Cliff**).

Other things Hrogar knows that he may divulge to the adventurers:

- He suspects that the behir has been lured to the area to cause trouble for the Kroth Magg, but not by whom.
- The behir is rumored to be named "Stonejaws." A DC 18 Intelligence (History) check (dragonborn and those with the sage or hermit background have advantage on this role) recall that Stonejaws is a behir infamous for hunting dragons throughout the Sea of Fallen Stars beside the forces of Tymanther, where she earned a reputation for both her brutality and cunning. Behirs are known to hate dragons, and the two creatures attempt to slay each other on sight.
- Signs of magic (unusual burning, acid puddles) were discovered around the sites of several of the raids. Hrogar is unsure of what this means. Either Stonejaw has magic at her disposal or she might have allies.

Part 2a. Over the River

Story Beat

The adventurers follow the map to a small lake that is the source of the infamous Murderer's Creek. They are to follow this waterway underground and eventually to the behir's lair. However, trolls and cave fishers stalk this region.

Estimated Duration: 45 minutes

General Features for the Troll Hills

Most of Thar is cold moor or grassy steppes save for a few especially verdant areas, such as the region of the northern Troll Hills.

Terrain. The land becomes increasingly rocky and sharp with periodic plateaus of rich grazing land. There are many frozen ponds and running streams woven through the ravines. Despite the harsh conditions, there are still trees growing in the steppes, forming small copses.

Weather. Cold and often overcast during the day but clear at night with a biting wind that pulls at anything in the open.

Light. Bright during the day and well illuminated at night by Selûne and her tears.

Smells and Sounds. The vibrant scent of damp earth fills the land, and the trickle of water from the many streams can be heard.

Extreme Cold

Whenever the temperature is at or below 0 degrees Fahrenheit, a creature exposed to the cold must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw at the end of each hour or gain one level of exhaustion. Creatures with resistance or immunity to cold damage automatically succeed on the saving throw, as do creatures wearing cold weather gear (thick coats, gloves, and the like), and creatures naturally adapted to cold climates.

A. There's Trolls in Them Thar Hills!

As the adventurers make their way higher into the Troll Hills, they learn why it has that name.

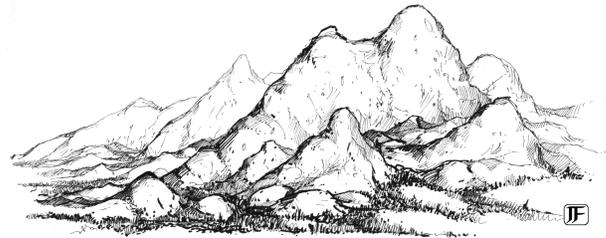
Hrogar's map leads you higher and higher into the Troll Hills. At this elevation, the wind is bitterly cold, and all but the hardiest trees have given up.

After hours of climbing, the land levels off. You come a frozen lake filling a small valley. It is marked as "Grim's Tarn" on your map. The lake is completely frozen over, except for what can only be the Vaws-fohaklyam creek meandering away down a ravine.

The lake and stream are 10 feet deep. The simplest way for the adventurers to get to the Vaws-fohaklyam is to cross the lake ice on foot. See **Map 1**.

As the party approaches the lake, four **ice trolls** pick up the adventurer's scents. The trolls are gnawing bones from their last meal and begin to follow the adventurers at a distance. The trolls are not very stealthy and are noticed on a successful DC 11 Wisdom (Perception) check.

If they are not noticed, or if the party ignores them, the trolls will follow until the adventurers reach the lake. At that point, the trolls will rush the party.



Environmental Hazard—Crossing the Ice

From the closest point on the shore, the mouth of the creek is 100 feet away. Moving across requires a DC 15 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check (small creatures have advantage while large creatures or those in heavy armor have disadvantage). Failure results with the creature plunging through the ice into the deadly cold water. Creatures fallen through the ice require a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check to climb out.

Every round spent in the frigid water requires creatures to make a DC 12 Constitution save or they take 4 (1d8) cold damage and gain a level of exhaustion. Creatures take half as much damage and no exhaustion on a successful save. Creatures with resistance or immunity to cold damage automatically succeed on the saving throw with no ill effect.

Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** Remove two **ice trolls**
- **Weak:** Remove one **ice troll**
- **Strong:** Add two **ice trolls**
- **Very Strong:** Add three **ice trolls**

Tricks of the Trade

Consider the following guidance:

Ice Trolls. Ice trolls are not big on subtlety. They charge in and gang up on the weakest looking adventurer.

Using the Ice Against the Trolls. The trolls can be lured onto the ice with a DC 14 Charisma check, or if attacked at range. The trolls are large (disadvantage on their Dexterity (Acrobatics) checks to cross). The adventurers have advantage to attack trolls who have fallen through the ice, but the trolls are immune to the effects of the cold and water.

Treasure

The ice trolls have little that the adventurers would value. One troll, however, has a belt pouch with a *potion of diminution* he was too afraid to use (his fellows would have gobbled him up), 150 gp worth of uncut amber, and a set of humanoid knuckle bones that can be used as the material component for casting *augury*.

B. Down the Creek

The characters will be able to follow the creek on the bank for the first mile, but then it enters a low cave, and they must either wade in the river, or get clever!

Following the creek to the cave takes an hour, ensuring at least one Constitution save from the group for the freezing weather.

General Features for the Troll Hill Caverns

The area is rough. Mostly moss-covered rock. Vaws-fohaklyam, Murderer's Creek, cuts through a shallow ravine. Several copses of trees grow throughout the area.

Terrain. The creek nearly fills a shallow ravine, leaving little room along the shore. There are a few trees growing throughout area. The cave itself is smooth from eons of erosion, but the entrance is small.

Weather. Cold and often overcast during the day but clear at night with a biting wind that pulls at anything in the open. The air is still and far less frigid within the cavern.

Light. The caves are completely dark.

Smells and Sounds. Vaws-fohaklyam flows along with a quiet slushing and splashing. The air smells heavily of damp earth.

The shallow ravine the creek flows through leaves little room along the shore, forcing you into a single file. There are a few trees growing from the thin banks and on the lip of the ravine above.

Ahead, the creek flows into the mouth of a low cave and disappears into the darkness beyond. If Hrogar's scouts are correct, this creek leads to the behir's lair, and then out the cliff on the far side.

The creek water is very cold, only its movement keeps it from becoming ice. Figuring out a way to move down the creek while keeping dry is paramount.

The opening is 10 feet wide and 5 feet tall, but the cold water presses to the edges. The stream is 10 feet deep.

The party has many options to proceed down the creek:

- Tough it out and attempt to swim.
- *Tenser's floating disk, water walk*, or similar water transportation magic.
- *Fly, levitate, a flying carpet*, or similar magic.
- Build a raft from the surrounding trees.
- Try one of the other approaches Hrogar mapped out for them.

XP Award

For figuring out a way to move the party down Murderer's Creek without getting wet, award each adventurer 250 experience points.

Developments

Proceed to Fishing in the Dark, (section B of Part 2b) below. If you have less than 45 minutes left to play, skip Fishing in the Dark.

C. Into the Cave

Murderer's Creek runs another quarter of a mile underground before entering the behir's lair. Read or paraphrase the following:

The creek widens and slows as it approaches a large cavern. The rocky area has stalactites and stalagmites reaching from the floor and ceiling. On the air, you catch the odor of rotten meat. On the far side of the cavern, roughly 150 feet away, the creek spills out of the cave mouth into the air.

From here, the creek leads to **section A in Part 3**.

Part 2b. Through the Woods

Story Beat

The adventurers follow the Thashlohk (“Bloated Trail”) into the Troll Hills. They pass through a dreary forest spotted with massive boulders until they come to Yauch’s hut, but he is no longer the occupant—poachers have moved in. The poachers may hold important information. Yauch himself has been living in the cave for the last few years, as the cabin no longer afforded enough space for his research and spying. The duergar still keeps an eye on things at his old cabin via *clairvoyance*.

Estimated Duration: 45 minutes

General Features for Troll Hills

Most of Thar is cold moor or grassy steppe save for a few especially verdant areas, such as the region of the northern Troll Hills.

Terrain. The land is a rugged combination of rocky hills and copses of trees.

Weather. Cold and often overcast during the day but clear at night with a biting wind that pulls at anything in the open.

Light. Bright during the day and well illuminated at night by Selûne and her tears.

Smells and Sounds. The vibrant scent of damp earth fills the land, and the trickle of water from the many streams can be heard.

Extreme Cold

Whenever the temperature is at or below 0 degrees Fahrenheit, a creature exposed to the cold must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw at the end of each hour or gain one level of exhaustion. Creatures with resistance or immunity to cold damage automatically succeed on the saving throw, as do creatures wearing cold weather gear (thick coats, gloves, and the like) and creatures naturally adapted to cold climates.

A. Yauch’s Hut

Getting to the hut takes two hours hiking south from Glip Dak along the Thashlohk. The boulders and trees block the chill wind—Constitution saves against the cold weather have advantage.

Read or paraphrase the following:

The wind remains chill and cutting, but the trees and boulders block the worst of it.

Hrogar’s map, though simple, is eerily accurate. He said it would take about a quarter day walking the Thashlohk before you reached the hut. Sure enough, there is a small, rustic cabin just off the trail ahead.

A small but steady column of smoke rises from the hut’s chimney. Save for a lone raven cawing, it suddenly seems very quiet.

See Map 2.

The lone raven cawing is actually a hobgoblin poacher (**veteran**) signaling to her comrades the approach of the adventurers. A DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check will identify the call as not avian in origin. Kenku or Aaracokra adventurers have advantage on this check.

Inside the hut are five poachers (**veterans**). The group has recently moved into the Troll Hills to trap crag cats for their pelts and hunt meat to sell back in Glip Dak at inflated prices. When the adventurers get within 60 feet of the cabin, one of the poachers calls out for them to stop and identify themselves.

The group’s leader is Getha, a half-orc native of Thar. She and the rest of her crew are wary of strangers; they know they are operating in the Kroth Magg’s fief and are not interested in paying duties on the furs they harvest.

While talking with the adventurers, the trappers in the hut have their crossbows trained on the party with readied Attack actions. If the adventurers initiate combat, the trappers will shoot.

Getha will start the interaction suspicious of the party and will press them with questions to make sure they are not associated with the Kroth Magg government. If the adventurers reveal they are working for Hrogar, she will turn aggressive, but not hostile.

Smooth talking will bring Getha back to merely suspicious. If the party offers valuables or goods (especially food) to the poachers, Getha will become friendly. If the party contains orcs or half-orcs, Getha will address those adventurers first. She will share the following information if asked:

Who are you?

“Getha’s me name, and trappin’s me game. And who do you be?”

Why do you sound like a pirate?

“I spent me youth aboard *Windhammer* raiding the Nelanther Isles. Eventually we were sunk, and I lost two of me best fingers. Well, that be a long story, and for another time.”

How long have you been up here?

"Between two and three tendays, near as I can figure. Once word came of the slaughtered herds, we smelled trouble and set out on our own to hunt meat and sell it for a killing back in Glip Dak. Heh, get it? The joke I mean. Killing? No? I guess the cold can drain anyone's sense of humor."

Have you seen a dwarf/duergar around here?

"We've seen an old duergar from time to time. He passes by on the way up that trail," she says, pointing, "and glares at us as he goes by. Don't say a word to us, though. I think he used to live in the hut."

Why do you think he used to live in the hut?

"Well, 'cause I don't need the eyes of Gruumsh to see the tables and such are all dwarf-sized!"

Where does he go?

"If ya follow the trail over there, it heads up farther into the hills. Just before it peters out, it passes a cave. I think that's where he goes, all mutterin' to his'self. I haven't been in it though, not gonna find crag cats in a cave, now are ya!"

Have you see strange tracks (or a behir, or dead aurochs)?

"Aye, we've seen some nasty beast's prints, and the slaughtered aurochs, and the slain patrols too. We stayed out of sight and far away. Don't want to be blamed for what we didn't have a hand in doing. Rumor is that it was from a behir, and I believe it too. I've seen the tracks with me own eyes. They lead towards the waterfall cliff, not far from here."



The Cabin

Inside the hut are the trappers' sleeping pallets, a pile of furs, and traps hanging on the walls. The table and chairs in the middle of the room are dwarf-sized.

Burned into the wooden beams are hundreds of Draconic characters. Adventurers who can read Draconic will recognize some of the characters as numbers and letters of the Draconic language,

though arranged haphazardly, and not spelling out any words that make sense. Fully half of the images appear to be Draconic. The remaining glyphs are of unknown origin. A DC 19 Intelligence (Investigation) check (those proficient in thieves' cant or calligraphy tools have advantage) recognize it as a cypher explaining that Yauch has moved from here because the cabin became too small, and obvious, for him to carry out his assignments. He moved into a cave on a cliff with a waterfall.

If one of the party casts *detect magic* and searches the cabin, a small mammal skull, hanging on the wall, gives off an aura of divination magic. If asked, the trappers will say that the skull was hanging on the wall when they arrived. Yauch uses this skull as the target for the invisible sensor of his *clairvoyance* spell.

If the adventurers peacefully deal with the poachers, Getha offers the party a *potion of fire giant strength* if they promise to keep her bands' activities and whereabouts secret. If combat ensues, Getha will attempt to use the potion herself. If she is captured or killed before she has a chance to, the potion is in her belt pouch.

If beaten in battle and then captured, the poachers will reveal the above information, but in a sullen manner.

XP Award

For peacefully dealing with the poachers, award full combat experience.

Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** Remove two **veterans**
- **Weak:** Remove one **veterans**
- **Strong:** Add two **veterans**
- **Very Strong:** Add three **veterans**

Tricks of the Trade

Consider the following guidance:

Tactics. After warning her comrades, the poachers (**veterans**) will wait, hidden with their crossbows ready until hostilities commence before firing. They will target adventurers who are obvious spellcasters, the more lightly armored, the better. The poachers will remain in heavy cover (firing out of the cabin's windows, from behind boulders) unless forced out (for example, by a *stinking cloud*). They also will not pursue any adventures who break off contact.

Treasure

Fighting the Poachers. The poachers have a combined 150 gp worth of various coins and gems between them. One also possesses a dice set. Getha possesses a *potion of fire giant strength*.

Peaceful Resolution: *potion of fire giant strength*.

Developments

Following the trail that Getha mentioned will lead the adventurers to the mouth of a cave. This cave branch connects to the subterranean Murderer's Creek. From the cave entrance, it takes only 10 minutes of walking to reach the creek. Proceed to **B. Fishing in the Dark**, listed below.

Part B. Fishing in the Dark

Story Beat

The adventurers make their way down the river cavern, they pass through the feeding grounds of a cluster of four **cave fishers**.

If you have less than 45 minutes left to play, skip this section.

Read or paraphrase the following:

As the creek rounds another bend, you can feel the air moving upwards. The ceiling is much higher here, at least 60 feet in some places.

All along the floor are scattered bones, mostly animal, but some look humanoid.

See **Map 3**.

Adventurers don't need to make Constitution saves against the freezing weather while in the cave.

On either side of the creek, 50 feet above the river, are ledges on which four **cave fishers** perch. The creatures are difficult to spot, requiring a successful DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check. The cavern is completely dark, so unless the characters are projecting light 50 feet, possess *devil's sight*, or have darkvision, they cannot notice the cave fishers until the cave fishers attack.

On the cave floor below the fishers are the scattered bones from previous prey, including unfortunate adventurers. Mixed in with their remains are a silver amulet of Tymora, 60 gp worth of adventuring gear, 90 gp in various coins, a non-magical silver mace, and a quiver of 10 *+1 arrows*.

Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** Remove two **cave fishers**
- **Weak:** Remove one **cave fisher**
- **Strong:** Add one **cave fisher**. Each has 70 hit points.
- **Very Strong:** Add two **cave fishers**. Each has 90 hit points.

Tricks of the Trade

Consider the following guidance:

Cave Fishers. Using their stealth and blindsight, and likely with advantage, the cave fishers will use their Adhesive Filament action on the first turn, attempting to grapple a random adventurer. On subsequent turns, they will use the Filament action to reel their prey up and attack it with their claws, provided that the target weighs 200 pounds or less.

Treasure

Searching the pile of bones amassed by the cave fishers will yield 90 gp worth of various coins, 60 gp worth of adventuring gear, a silver holy symbol (amulet) of Tymora, a non-magical silver mace, and a quiver of 10 *+1 arrows*.

Developments

If playing from Part 2a, Over the River return to Part 2a, section D. If playing from Part 2b, Through the Woods continue to section C below.

C. Into the Cave

Murderer's Creek runs another quarter of a mile underground before entering the behir's lair. Read or paraphrase the following:

The creek widens and slows as it approaches a large cavern. The rocky area has stalactites and stalagmites reaching from the floor and ceiling. On the air, you catch the odor of rotten meat. On the far side of the cavern, roughly 150 feet away, the creek spills out of the cave mouth into the air.

From here, the creek leads to **area A** in **Part 3**.

Part 2c. Up the Cliff

Story Beat

The adventurers make their way directly for the behir's lair, up the cold, hard cliffs to confront the enemies within. Along the way, they find a Kroth Magg scout battling for her life.

Sometimes, adventurers like to do things the hard way!

Estimated Duration: 45 minutes

General Features for Troll Hills

The hills grow ever more sharp and precarious. Numerous tiny waterfalls splash throughout the area.

Terrain. The land becomes increasingly rocky and sharp with periodic patches of trees or small fields. There are many streams and falls woven throughout the region, most frozen solid.

Weather. Cold and often overcast during the day but clear at night with a biting wind that pulls at anything in the open.

Light. Bright during the day and well illuminated at night by Selûne and her tears.

Smells and Sounds. The vibrant scent of damp earth fills the land. Little can be heard over the whoosh and howl of frigid wind.

Extreme Cold

Whenever the temperature is at or below 0 degrees Fahrenheit, a creature exposed to the cold must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw at the end of each hour or gain one level of exhaustion. Creatures with resistance or immunity to cold damage automatically succeed on the saving throw, as do creatures wearing cold weather gear (thick coats, gloves, and the like,) and creatures naturally adapted to cold climates.

It should take three hours to arrive by foot, unless methods are taking to shorten travel time. Each hour requires a DC 10 Constitution saving throw (see **Extreme Cold** above).



A. From the Bottom

Far above the adventurers is the lair of Stonejaws. From the bottom, there is nowhere to go but up.

Read or paraphrase the following:

Gone is the shelter brought by the trees and boulder-laden hills, which had blocked the freezing, clawing wind. You stand in the open below a wall of jagged stone pockmarked with caves. The largest is far above you, a waterfall cascades from its dark mouth. There are several smaller falls frozen into long sheets of ice. There look to be a few ledges along the way, but only a few.

The 240-foot climb facing the adventurers is not necessarily hard, but it is long. Characters with a climb speed do not need to make any checks. Those without a climb speed need to make a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) with disadvantage to complete the climb. If the characters are using climbing gear, rope tied off by climbers above, or the like, this check is made normally. On a failed check, the adventurer falls 10-60 feet (1d6 x10) and takes 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage for every 10 feet fallen. Characters can only fall once; assume they safely ascend afterwards.

Development

When the first character is halfway up the cliff, they hear the sounds of combat coming from a small cave in the cliff face. See **section B.** below.

Tricks of the Trade

Taking too Long: If the party lacks a member who can climb quickly and reliably, or who can fly, to anchor a rope for the group, halve the height of the cliff—it isn't heroic fun to plummet to death from a cliff face.

Make the Strong One Do It: An adventure can pull the rest of the party up with a rope. The adventurer makes a DC 10 Strength (Athletic) check to heave a companion up the cliff. The character can pull two up at a time with a DC 15 check. If the rope isn't anchored, a failed roll results in a fall.

Players Gonna Play: This is Tier 2, and it is possible your adventurers will have a *flying carpet*, *winged boots*, *fly*, etc. that afford them a means to ascend the cliff quickly and easily. Let them flex this muscle here.

B. Halfway

When the first character is halfway up the cliff, they hear the sounds of combat coming from a small cave in the cliff face.

Read or paraphrase the following:

As you pass one of the smaller caves, halfway up the cliff, a shout from inside grabs your attention. “Back, back! Back I say! I won’t go out like this!” A woman’s voice echoes through the cave, carrying a thick Thar accent.

A humanoid female stands near the entrance, throwing knife in one hand, the other outstretched before her as she slowly backs towards the entrance. Cautiously advancing, matching the woman step-for-step, are several massive, blue-tinted spiders.

As you watch, the air behind the woman shimmers, and a hulking blue and white spider materializes behind her.

The woman is Shallora, an undercover **hobgoblin Iron Shadow** keeping an eye on the behir’s lair after her unit located it. She is garbed as a falconer. The Iron Monks use falcons to communicate long distances. She is on the cliff investigating a cave that has spooked her falcons, make them hesitant to return to her and slowing down communications. . Shallora stumbled onto a nest of six **phase spiders**, who now intend to make her their next meal.

Farther than 20 feet into the cave (see **Map 4**), the surface of the cave is covered in webs per the *web* spell.

Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** Remove three **phase spiders**
- **Weak:** Remove two **phase spiders**
- **Strong:** Add two **phase spiders**
- **Very Strong:** Add three **phase spiders**

Once all the spiders are slain, and/or the area is secured, Shallora may provide information:

Who are you?

“My name is Shallora, a falconer and scout stationed here to observe the behir’s movements. We keep in contact with the city with our falcons. I was told you would be arriving. It seems you came just in time, at least for me, for that I thank you.” She offers the adventurers a *potion of greater healing* for the rescue.

What were you doing in the cave?

“My falcons were acting strangely, hesitant to come near this cliff, especially this cave. They wouldn’t return to me unless I moved far enough away, which put my position at risk and slowed down communications. I wanted to investigate what might

be spooking the falcons, so I climbed up to clear this cave when these monstrosities ambushed me.”

How long have you been up here?

“We only have had success tracking the behir a few days ago. Since then, what scouts could be spared have setup in the area to keep track of the beast’s movements while we wait for reinforcements from Glip Dak. I guess those are you. Not that I am complaining, you did just save me.”

Have you seen a dwarf/duergar around here?

“Yauch? No, I haven’t seen him. But I can tell you this—the behir doesn’t appear to be working alone. Tracks were found accompanying it, walking beside it. Dwarf tracks. Also, signs of heavy magic use were discovered at several of the ambushes.”

What do you know about the dwarf/duergar?

“He is supposedly an exile and sage, a hermit who keeps to himself, occasionally buying goods and arcane components from Glip Dak’s markets. He has been in the area as long as Glip Dak has, which isn’t saying too much as the city is fairly new.”

How about the behir?

“The behir has been quiet the last two days. I don’t know if this is because we have presented fewer vulnerable targets when we withdrew the remaining aurochs and soldiers to Glip Dak, or if it is waiting to attack, readying itself.”

Treasure

The spider lair contains 250 gp worth of various treasures. Potentially a *potion of greater healing* from Shallora.

Development

If she survives, Shallora is grateful for the timely rescue, and freely gives the party a *potion of greater healing*, listed above.

From here, the adventurers must make their way up the rest of the cliff to the behir’s cave.

Tricks of the Trade

Phase Spiders Tactics. The phase spiders will attempt to paralyze and attack immobilized creatures. They also use their *Ethereal Jaunt* to attack vulnerable targets, bypassing harder to hit opponents.



C. Into the Cave

As the characters climb onto cave's ledge, the cavern mouth looms above them.

Read or paraphrase the following:

A swift stream flows from deeper in the cave, spilling out of the mouth to fall the hundreds of feet to the ground. The rocky cavern has stalactites and stalagmites reaching from the floor and ceiling. On the air, you catch the odor of rotten meat.

From here, the creek-side passageway leads to the behir's cave in **Part 3**.



Part 3. Behir, Done That

Story Beat

The adventurers infiltrate the lair of Stonejaws. Unfortunately for them, the behir and her duergar ally Yauch are more than ready for such an incursion. In a chest waits a correspondence between Yauch and the mysterious foe who hired the behir and him.

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

General Features for Stronghold lair

The entrance is quite large. The cavern appears natural, cut by the gushing water. Mineral deposits have formed a

number of formations, such as the large stalagmites and stalactites.

Terrain. Mineral formations dot the area in jagged groups. The ground is smooth from erosion, but wet and icy.

Weather. The massive cavern is damp and cold, but a reprieve from the wind.

Light. The cavern is gloomy. The large entrance permits enough ambient light to make the main chamber dim and all chamber directly connected to the main chamber.

Smells and Sounds. The loud rush of water fills the cavern, reverberating from the walls.

Draconic Glyphs

Yauch and Stonejaws know that someday the Kroth Magg will come in force and have prepared themselves and their lair. The duergar has seeded the lair with *magic mouths* and *glyphs of warding*. The *magic mouths* are to give warning. The magical glyphs are to either harm intruders or provide protections for the wizard and his behir ally.

Characters can spot a *glyph of warding* with a successful DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check. Once a glyph is spotted, a successful DC 14 Intelligence (Arcana) check will reveal the school of magic of the contained spell.

You choose where, how many, and what type of glyphs to use. Guidance on how many can be found in the "Adjusting this Encounter" sidebar. Where and what type guidance is given below.

Glyphs of Warding, what type? You can use *the glyphs* to directly damage the adventurers with lightning damage (Stonejaws is immune to lightning). Other offensive uses include a glyph with *web*, *stinking cloud*, *cloudkill*, *banishment*, *polymorph*, *wall of fire*, *confusion*, *darkness*, *Evard's black tentacles*, or other arcane spells.

If you are using a glyph to keep Yauch or Stonejaws alive, consider using *blur*, *blink*, *greater invisibility*, *stoneskin*, or similar defensive magic.

Glyphs of Warding, where? Yauch keeps a glyph near his workshop that casts *protection from energy (lightning)* on himself. Explosive lightning *glyphs* will be located at choke points. A *web* and *cloudkill* pair of *glyphs* is an effective way to lock down half of the cavern. By this point, you know your party and how best to challenge them.

Remember who the heroes are. It is possible to tailor the glyphs to completely shut down a party. Challenge your adventurers for sure, but make sure they have a chance to be the heroes. Giving Yauch and Stonejaws *greater invisibility* may be just fine for a party of six 9th-level characters but would be devastating for a party of five 5th level characters.

A. The Main Gallery

The party will end up entering the cave by one of two distinct routes. Yauch, a **duergar mage**, has set an *alarm* spell at the entrances to the main cavern. If

any party member has *detect magic* in effect, that character will see a 20 foot by 20 foot abjuration aura outlining the alarmed area. Dispelling the alarm will alert Yauch just as effectively as setting it off.

Read or paraphrase the following, depending on how the party gets to the main chamber:

A large cavern opens up before you, roughly 110 feet by 60 feet, bisected north-south by a swiftly flowing stream. The cold, dark water pools on the east side of the cavern, near a cluster of stalagmites.

On the northern wall is a large opening, leading deeper into the cavern. On the south end, the stream flows a short distance before spilling out of the mountainside.

The west wall holds two ground-floor passages, and three ledges 20 feet off the ground that are 30 feet wide. One of the ledges has a passage leading away from it.



A DC 19 Wisdom (Perception) check spots the following ambush. Because of the magical wards installed throughout the area, it is highly unlikely the adventures will get the drop on the readied wizard and behir, even if *invisibility* or *teleport* are used. An exception could be made for moving through border planes (Ethereal, Shadowfell, etc.) to gain surprise.

Alerted by Yauch's wards, the two have prepared an ambush. As the party enters the cavern, a number of things happen:

- Yauch, near passage split between **E.** and **D.**, will cast *greater invisibility* on himself, then walk over a *glyph of warding* that will cast *protection from energy (lightning)* on him as well.
- Stonejaws hides on the ceiling in the mouth of the passage leading to area **C.**
- When the first adventurer gets within 10 feet of the ledge Stonejaws is hiding on, Yauch will launch a *fireball* at the party.
- At that signal, Stonejaws will descend from the ledge and attempt to **constrict** the nearest adventurer. Whether that works or not, the behir

will then try to **swallow** the same adventurer before retreating back up to the ledge.

- The stalagmite cluster on the east side of the pool contains a **roper** that will attack any creature within its 50-foot reach when combat breaks out. It will also attack any creature that moves within 5 feet of the water (excluding Yauch and Stonejaws, they feed it!)

Tricks of the Trade

Consider the following guidance:

Stonejaws. The behir prefers hit-and-run tactics. Once she has one creature in her gullet, she will continue to constrict, then bite anyone in her reach. Once a creature is grappled, she will drag it off into a passageway or onto a ledge, to kill it without interference. If she can line up two adversaries in a 20-foot line, she won't hesitate to use her lightning breath. If a lightning *glyph of warding* is nearby, Stonejaws will stay near it to lure in adventurers who will set it off, as she is immune to lightning damage.

Yauch. Once shrouded in *invisibility*, the duergar wizard will *counterspell* or *fireball* where he can to support the behir rampaging about the cavern. If Stonejaws is defeated, Yauch will make his way to the cave mouth, drop *greater invisibility* and cast *fly*, trying to make good his escape.

Roper. The roper will attack any creature in its reach that moves within 5 feet of the water. When combat breaks out, the roper will attack any hostile creature within its 50-foot reach.

Glyphs of Warding. The cavern is littered with *glyphs of warding*. DMs choice, see sidebar.

Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak:** Yauch, has only one 4th level slot, and no 5th level slots. Stonejaws has 100 hit points. Remove the roper. 2 *glyphs of warding* present.
- **Weak:** Yauch, has no 5th level slots. Stonejaws has 128 hit points. Remove the roper. 3 *glyphs of warding* present.
- **Average:** Yauch. Stonejaws has 128 hit points. Roper. 4 *glyphs of warding* present.
- **Strong:** Yauch. Stonejaws has 200 hit points. Roper. 5 *glyphs of warding* present.
- **Very Strong:** Yauch. Stonejaws has 240 hit points. Roper. 7 *glyphs of warding* present.

Developments

After the brutal battle, the adventures have a chance to investigate the lair and gather treasure.

Yauch has the key to the chest in **Area C.** in his belt pouch.

B. Spores, Molds, and Fungus

Only include this area if you are running this adventure in a time slot longer than 2 hours.

This small cave lies off the main cavern.

Read or paraphrase the following:

This passage way is dark, and leads to a smaller cavern, roughly 20 feet by 30 feet. The floor of the cavern is covered in mushrooms. Looking about you see nothing out of the ordinary until you look up. Above, you see the one central eye of a beholder gazing down at you!

The creature is a **gas spore**. Characters who don't immediately shoot it and instead choose to examine it will identify it as such on a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check. Left alone, the gas spore will move to the nearest character and attempt to touch it.



C. Stonejaws' Hidey Hole

Stonejaws likes to hide in this passage, clinging to the roof.

Read or paraphrase the following:

The floor of this passage is slick and wet, water dripping down from the ceiling. It extends downwards at roughly a 30-degree angle into the darkness.

Adventurers able to see more than 30 feet in the dark will see that the passageway opens into a chamber at the bottom of the slope.

The passageway is slick. Characters that attempt to walk down at more than half speed risk falling and sliding to the bottom. To move at normal speed requires a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. On a failure, the character slides to the bottom of the passage, landing prone, but taking no damage.

Climbing back out is a challenge, requiring the same Dexterity saving throw as above to move at more than half speed.

D. Yauch's Workshop

Yauch's workshop was both his bedroom and research lab.

This chamber is surprisingly well furnished and clean with plush fur carpeting, a bed layered with soft pelts. There are heavy chests, a writing desk, and several benches and tables holding alchemist tools—bottles and beakers, crystals and mirrors, and powders and oils.

The lab is 25 feet by 15 feet.

Yauch's correspondence with his employer were handled mostly through magical means; however, within the shop is a locked chest. The chest requires a successful DC 16 Dexterity check made by using thieves tools or DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check to open, or Yauch has the key. It contains detailed notes on the Glip Dak's growth and construction, movement of troops and goods, visiting envoys and people of prominence, and much more. There is also a cyphered letter.

The cypher requires a DC 19 Intelligence check to crack (grant advantage if the adventurers solved the previous one in the cabin). Proficiency in Thieves' Cant or calligrapher's tools grant advantage.

Although brief, the cyphered letter is a correspondence with an agent working for a frost giant warlord in the Galena mountains named Vornjolnir. The letter speaks of recovering an artifact held by the Kroth Magg, a misshapen bronze sphere that beats rhythmically called the Heart of Automation. Hrogar would be quite interested in this.

Treasure

The workbench holds 250 gp worth of spell components, alchemist's tools, and a healer's kit.

Developments

Laying on the writing desk is the set of dragon-lore books that Lords' Alliance faction members have been tasked to get back.

E. The Den of Stonejaws

Stonejaws uses her den to sleep and store her pilfered loot.

Read or paraphrase the following:

The first thing you notice is the smell, putrid flesh. The second is the grizzly sight of bones. The floor is covered with remains in various states of decay. You see mainly auroch skeletons but more than a few are humanoid. Most of the bodies have been picked clean of flesh, testament to the ravenous nature of behirs.

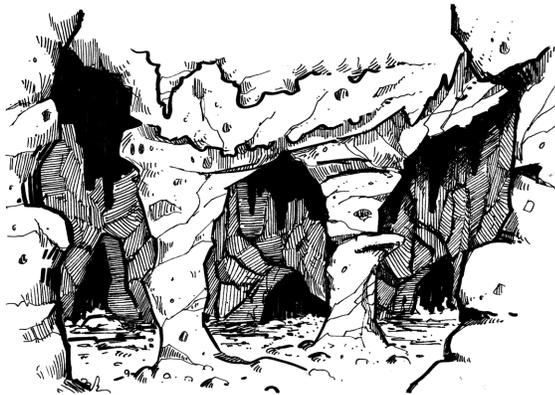
Piled in the northern corner are barrels and crates with the Kroth Magg sigil, a silhouette of a dragon. In the eastern corner is a section clear of bones and refuse, clean except for a few shed scales.

The chamber is roughly 35 feet by 20 feet.

The behir slept in the cleared northern section and piled her loot in creche in the west wall. The piled loot comprises a number of trade goods, assorted coins, and captured jewelry worth 900 gp. In the loot is an *arrow-catching shield* that bears the Kroth Magg symbol.

Treasure

Stonejaws horde consists of 900 gp worth of trade goods, assorted coins, and jewelry stolen in her raids, and an *arrow-catching shield*.



Conclusion

Read or paraphrase the following:

You return to Glip Dak, once more braving the cold, rocky land. With the Kroth Magg soldiers recalled, the city remains orderly despite the riots throughout the last tending.

Hrogar seems surprised to see you, then, after a long pause, pleased. "Sit, relax a moment. I would like to hear your report." After listening he stands and salutes you. "You have my gratitude, and the gratitude of the city. I wish we could provide a better answer to your success and the trials you overcame, but—for now—please accept these medals of honor. Carry them with you and know that if ever you need a haven to rest and resupply, Glip Dak shall remain open to you."

Each adventurer receives the story award **Honor of the Kroth Magg**.

If Yauch escaped, read the following:

Hrogar frowns. "That is unfortunate, but the threat has been eliminated, for the moment. I dislike the notion that the dwarf has escaped with such knowledge of our activities, but we will adapt as we always have."

Each adventurer receives the story award **He Knows Your Faces**.



Rewards

Make sure players note their rewards on their adventure log sheets. Give your name and DCI number (if applicable) so players can record who ran the session.

Experience

Total up all combat experience earned for defeated foes, and divide by the number of characters present in the combat. For non-combat experience, the rewards are listed per character.

Combat Awards

Name of Foe	XP Per Foe
Archer	700
Behir (Stonejaws)	7,200
Cave Fisher	700
Gas Spore	100
Ice Troll	1,800
Duergar Mage (Yauch)	2,300
Phase Spider	700
Roper	1,800
Veteran	700

Non-Combat Awards

Task or Accomplishment	XP Per Character
Crossing Murderer's Creek	250
Parlaying with the hunters	as per combat XP

The adventures minimum and maximum XP awards are located on the Adventure Rewards document. Note that DDAL adventures award a maximum of the "target XP" award. Only epics may grant the "maximum" amount.

The **minimum** total award for each character participating in this adventure is 2,250 **experience points**.

The **maximum** total award for each character participating in this adventure is 3,000 **experience points**.

Treasure

The characters receive the following treasure, divided up amongst the party. Treasure is divided as evenly as possible. Gold piece values listed for sellable gear are calculated at their selling price, not their purchase price.

Treasure Awards

Item Name	GP Value
-----------	----------

Part 2a. Area A.	150 gp
Part 2b. Area A.	150 gp
Part 2c. Area B.	250 gp
Area C.	150 gp
Part 3. Area D	250 gp
Part 3. Area E	900 gp

Consumable magic items should be divided up however the group sees fit. If more than one character is interested in a specific consumable magic item, the DM can determine who gets it randomly should the group be unable to decide.

Permanent magic items are divided according to a system detailed in the *D&D Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Arrow-Catching Shield

Armor (shield), rare (requires attunement)

While holding this shield, you have a +2 bonus to AC. This bonus is in addition to the shield's normal bonus to AC. In addition, whenever an attacker makes a ranged attack against a target within 5 feet of you, you can use your reaction to become the target of the attack instead.

This item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

+1 Arrows

Weapon, uncommon

This item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Potion of Diminution

Potion, rare

This item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Potion of Giant Strength (Fire)

Potion, rare

This item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Potion of Greater Healing

Potion, uncommon

This item can be found in the *Player's Handbook*.

Potion of Climbing

Potion, common

This item can be found in the *Player's Handbook*.

Story Awards

During the course of this adventure, the characters may earn the following story awards:

Honor of the Kroth Magg Story Award: While most of the civilized world views hobgoblins as no better than orcs or goblins, you have learned otherwise. While they can be cruel and tyrannical, there is also a deep honor and profound discipline to them. They seek to pay back all debts and they find lying to be beneath them.

More information can be found in **Player**

Handout 1.

He Knows Your Face Story Award: Yauch remains alive and active, plotting and preparing as he always has, but now he knows your face and has sworn vengeance against you.

More information can be found in **Player**

Handout 2.

Renown

Each character receives **one renown** at the conclusion of this adventure.

Members of the Lords' Alliance that recover Yauch's notes earn **one additional renown point**.

DM Reward

In exchange for running this adventure, you earn DM Rewards as described in the *D&D Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide* (ALDMG).

Appendix. Dramatis Personae

The following NPCs are featured prominently in this adventure:

Stonejaws (STOHN-jaws). A behir of above-average intelligence and an overdeveloped sense of grandeur. She is an experienced hunter of dragons. Stonejaws has been recruited by an unknown (at this point,) rival of the Kroth Magg. Convincing her was easy once she learned that the hobgoblins' patron was one of the behir-kind's ancient enemies, a blue dragon.

Yauch (YOCH). A duergar wizard and skilled spy. He is a mercenary working with Stonejaws. Yauch has been a surface dweller for more than 50 years and being out in the sunlight no longer hinders him.

Yauch is an avaricious wizard and hopes that this assignment will allow him access to a defeated dragon's hoard.

Hrogar (ROW-gar). Hobgoblin captain of the guard. He has been on many campaigns with the Kroth Magg legion, but his job now is law and order. Proud but practical, Hrogar will ask for help to get a job done. He is by-the-book and can be counted on to keep his word. As civilized and cultured as he might appear, he is a cunning warrior at heart.

Appendix. Monster/NPC Statistics

space within 10 feet of the behir. If the behir dies, a swallowed creature is no longer restrained by it and can escape from the corpse by using 15 feet of movement, exiting prone.

Behir (Stonejaws)

Huge monstrosity, neutral evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 168 (16d12 + 64)

Speed 50 ft., climb 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	7 (-2)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)

Skills Perception +6, Stealth +7

Damage Immunities lightning

Senses darkvision 90 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Draconic

Challenge 11 (7,200 XP)

Actions

Multiattack. The behir makes two attacks: one with its bite and one to constrict.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 22 (3d10 + 6) piercing damage.

Constrict. Melee Weapon Attack: +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one Large or smaller creature. Hit: 17 (2d10 + 6) bludgeoning damage plus 17 (2d10 + 6) slashing damage. The target is grappled (escape DC 16) if the behir isn't already constricting a creature, and the target is restrained until this grapple ends.

Lightning Breath (Recharge 5–6). The behir exhales a line of lightning that is 20 feet long and 5 feet wide. Each creature in that line must make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw, taking 66 (12d10) lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Swallow. The behir makes one bite attack against a Medium or smaller target it is grappling. If the attack hits, the target is also swallowed, and the grapple ends. While swallowed, the target is blinded and restrained, it has total cover against attacks and other effects outside the behir, and it takes 21 (6d6) acid damage at the start of each of the behir's turns. A behir can have only one creature swallowed at a time.

If the behir takes 30 damage or more on a single turn from the swallowed creature, the behir must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw at the end of that turn or regurgitate the creature, which falls prone in a

Cave Fisher

Medium monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 58 (9d8 + 18)

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	3 (-4)	10 (+0)	3 (-4)

Skills Perception +2, Stealth +5

Senses blindsight 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages --

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Adhesive Filament. The cave fisher can use its action to extend a sticky filament up to 60 feet, and the filament adheres to anything that touches it. A creature adhered to the filament is grappled by the cave fisher (escape DC 13), and ability checks made to escape this grapple have disadvantage. The filament can be attacked (AC 15; 5 hit points; immunity to poison and psychic damage), but a weapon that fails to sever it becomes stuck to it, requiring an action and a successful DC 13 Strength check to pull free. Destroying the filament deals no damage to the cave fisher, which can extrude a replacement filament on its next turn.

Flammable Blood. If the cave fisher drops to half its hit points or fewer, it gains vulnerability to fire damage.

Spider Climb. The cave fisher can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

Actions

Multiattack. The cave fisher makes two attacks with its claws.

Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Filament. One creature grappled by the cave fisher's adhesive filament must make a DC 13 Strength saving throw, provided that the target weighs 200 pounds or less. On a failure, the target is pulled into an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the cave fisher, and the cave fisher makes a claw attack against it as a bonus action. Reeling up the target releases anyone else who was attached to the filament. Until the grapple ends on the target, the cave fisher can't extrude another filament.

Duergar Mage (Yauch)

Medium humanoid (duergar), neutral evil

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 40 (9d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +6, Wis +4

Skills Arcana +6, History +6

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Draconic, Giant, Undercommon

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Duergar Resilience. The duergar has advantage on saving throws against poison, spells, and illusions, as well as to resist being charmed or paralyzed.

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the duergar has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Spellcasting. The duergar mage is a 9th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). The duergar mage has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt, light, mage hand, prestidigitation*

1st level (4 slots): *detect magic, mage armor, magic missile, shield*

2nd level (3 slots): *misty step, suggestion*

3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell, fireball, fly*

4th level (3 slots): *greater invisibility, ice storm*

5th level (1 slot): *cone of cold*

Actions

Dagger. Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

Duergar Racial Abilities

Yauch possesses the duergar racial attributes Duergar Resilience and Sunlight Sensitivity.

Gas Spore

Large plant, unaligned

Armor Class 5

Hit Points 1 (1d10 - 4)

Speed 0 ft., fly 10 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
5 (-3)	1 (-5)	3 (-4)	1 (-5)	1 (-5)	1 (-5)

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities blinded, deafened, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned, prone

Senses blindsight 30 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 5

Languages --

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Death Burst. The gas spore explodes when it drops to 0 hit points. Each creature within 20 feet of it must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or take 10 (3d6) poison damage and become infected with a disease on a failed save. Creatures immune to the poisoned condition are immune to this disease.

Spores invade an infected creature's system, killing the creature in a number of hours equal to 1d12 + the creature's Constitution score, unless the disease is removed. In half that time, the creature becomes poisoned for the rest of the duration. After the creature dies, it sprouts 2d4 Tiny gas spores that grow to full size in 7 days.

Eerie Resemblance. The gas spore resembles a beholder. A creature that can see the gas spore can discern its true nature with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Nature) check.

Actions

Touch. Melee Weapon Attack: +0 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 1 poison damage, and the creature must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or become infected with the disease described in the Death Burst trait.

Hobgoblin Archer

Medium humanoid (hobgoblin), lawful evil

Armor Class 16 (studded leather)

Hit Points 75 (10d8 + 30)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)

Skills Acrobatics +6, Perception +5

Senses passive Perception 15

Languages Common, Goblin

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Archer's Eye (3/Day). As a bonus action, the archer can add 1d10 to its next attack or damage roll with a longbow or shortbow.

Martial Advantage. Once per turn, the hobgoblin can deal an extra 7 (2d6) damage to a creature it hits with a weapon attack if that creature is within 5 feet of an ally of the hobgoblin that isn't incapacitated.

Actions

Multiattack. The archer makes two attacks with its longbow.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.

Longbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage.

Racial and Language Modifications

Martial Advantage is a hobgoblin racial ability. The hobgoblin archer also speaks Common.

Hobgoblin Veteran

Medium humanoid (hobgoblin), lawful evil

Armor Class 17 (splint armor)

Hit Points 58 (9d8 + 18)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Athletics +5, Perception +2

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Goblin

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Martial Advantage. Once per turn, the hobgoblin can deal an extra 7 (2d6) damage to a creature it hits with a weapon attack if that creature is within 5 feet of an ally of the hobgoblin that isn't incapacitated.

Actions

Multiattack. The veteran makes two longsword attacks. If it has a shortsword drawn, it can also make a shortsword attack.

Longsword. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage, or 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage if used with two hands.

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

Heavy Crossbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d10 + 1) piercing damage.

Hobgoblin Racial Ability

Martial Advantage is a hobgoblin racial ability.

Ice Troll

Large giant, chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 84 (8d10 + 40)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	13 (+1)	20 (+5)	7 (-2)	9 (-1)	7 (-2)

Skills Perception +2

Damage Immunities cold

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Giant

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Keen Smell. The ice troll has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Regeneration. The ice troll regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn. If the troll takes acid or fire damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the troll's next turn. The ice troll dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

Actions

Multiattack. The ice troll makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.

Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage.

Phase Spider

Large monstrosity, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 32 (5d10 + 5)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)

Skills Stealth +6

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages –

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Ethereal Jaunt. As a bonus action, the spider can magically shift from the Material Plane to the Ethereal Plane, or vice versa.

Spider Climb. The spider can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

Web Walker. The spider ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.

Actions

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 7 (1d10 + 2) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, taking 18 (4d8) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If the poison damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the target is stable but poisoned for 1 hour, even after regaining hit points, and is paralyzed while poisoned in this way.

Roper

Large monstrosity, neutral evil

Armor Class 20 (natural armor)

Hit Points 93 (11d10 + 33)

Speed 10 ft., climb 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	8 (-1)	17 (+3)	7 (-2)	16 (+3)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception +6, Stealth +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages --

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

False Appearance. While the roper remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a normal cave formation, such as a stalagmite.

Grasping Tendrils. The roper can have up to six tendrils at a time. Each tendril can be attacked (AC 20; 10 hit points; immunity to poison and psychic damage). Destroying a tendril deals no damage to the roper, which can extrude a replacement tendril on its next turn. A tendril can also be broken if a creature takes an action and succeeds on a DC 15 Strength check against it.

Spider Climb. The roper can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

Actions

Multiattack. The roper makes four attacks with its tendrils, uses Reel, and makes one attack with its bite.

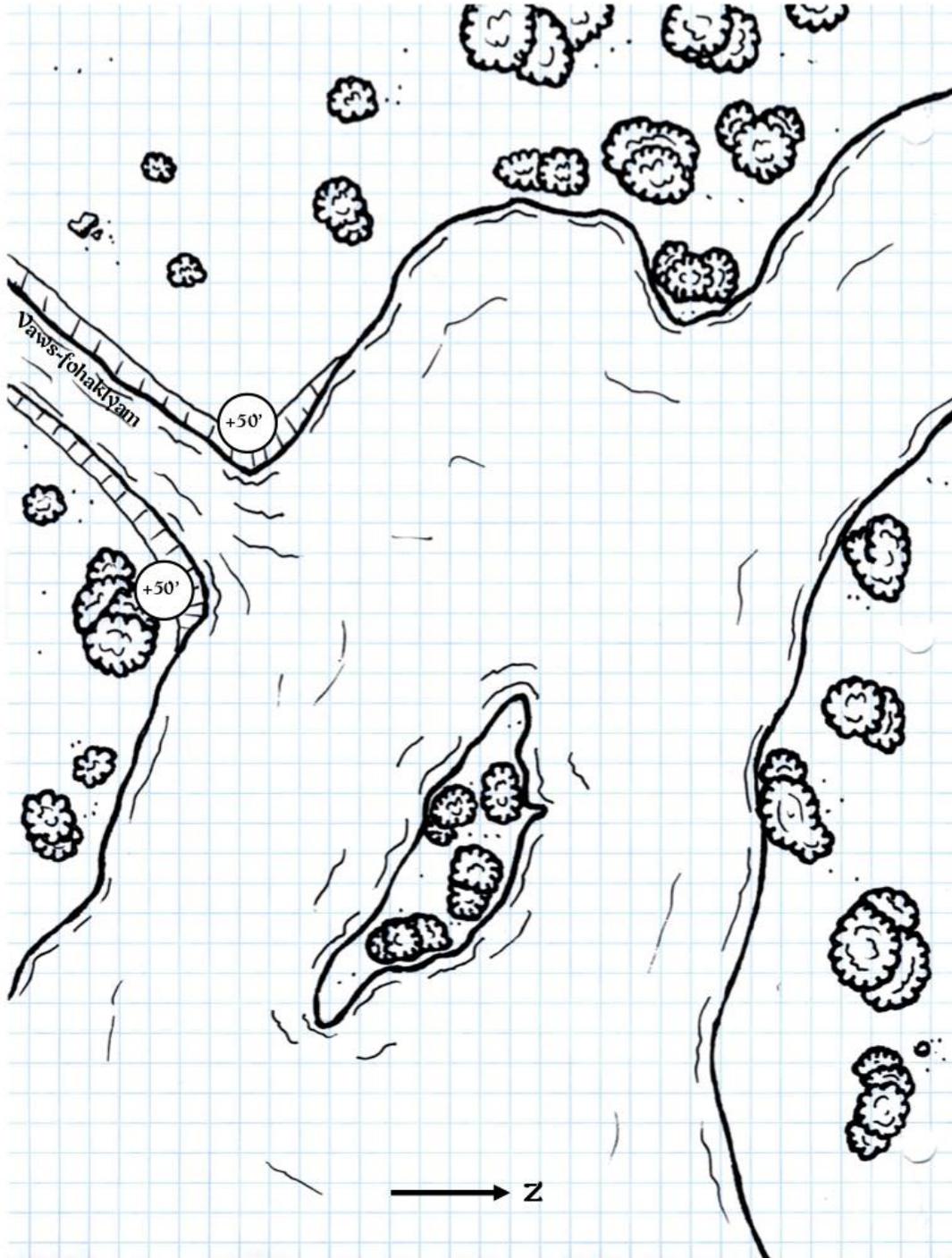
Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 22 (4d8 + 4) piercing damage.

Tendril. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 50 ft., one creature. Hit: The target is grappled (escape DC 15). Until the grapple ends, the target is restrained and has disadvantage on Strength checks and Strength saving throws, and the roper can't use the same tendril on another target.

Reel. The roper pulls each creature grappled by it up to 25 feet straight toward it.

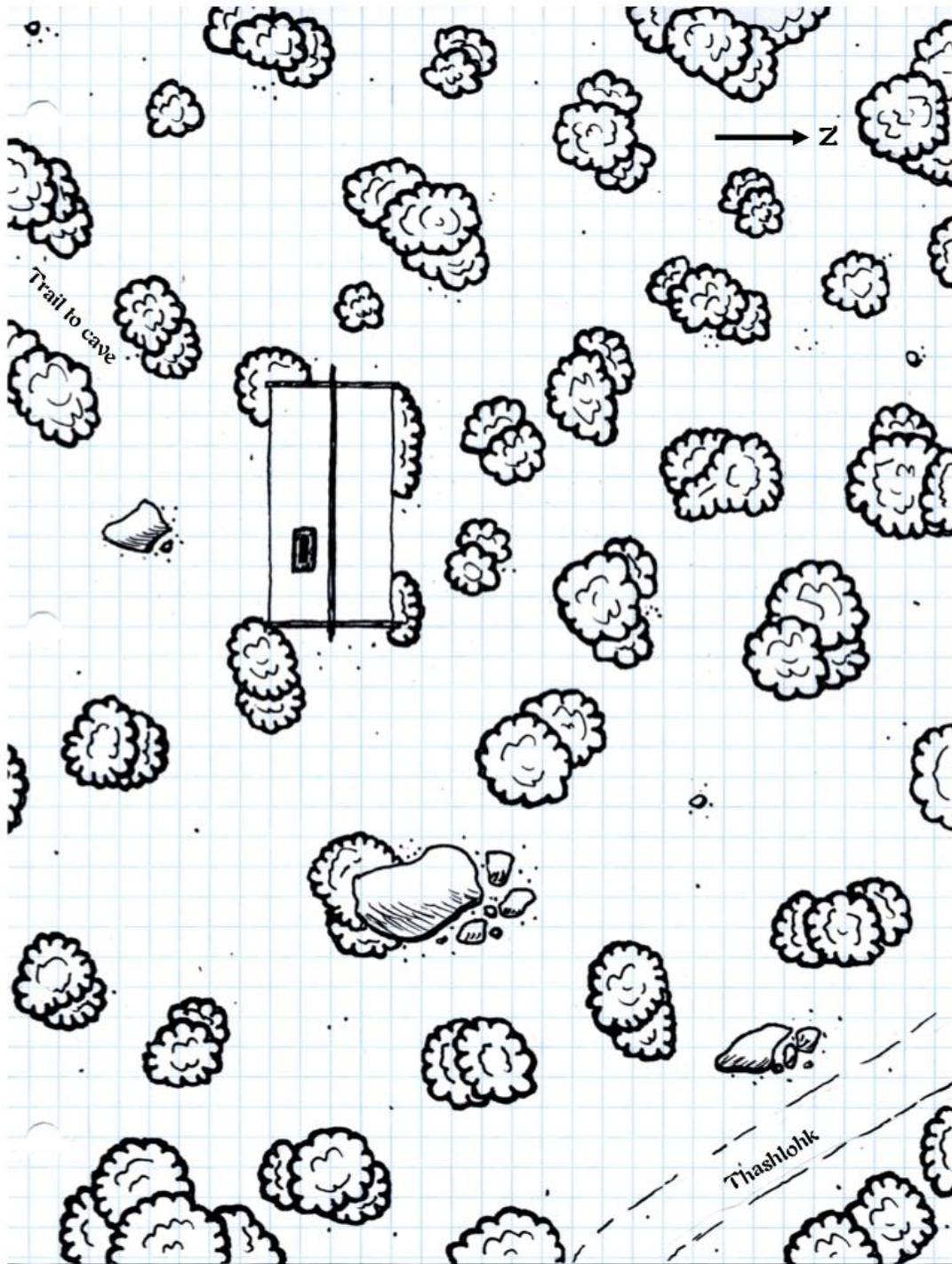
Appendix. Map 1

(One square = 5')



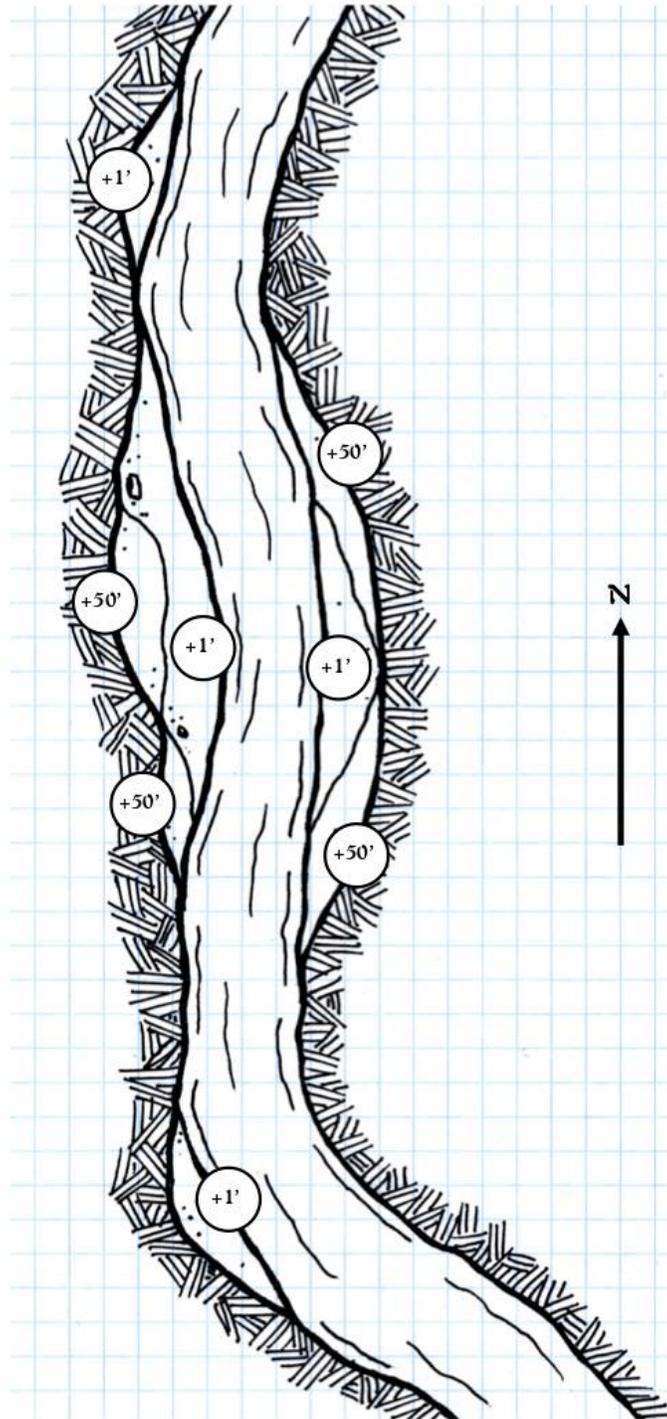
Appendix. Map 2

(One square = 5')



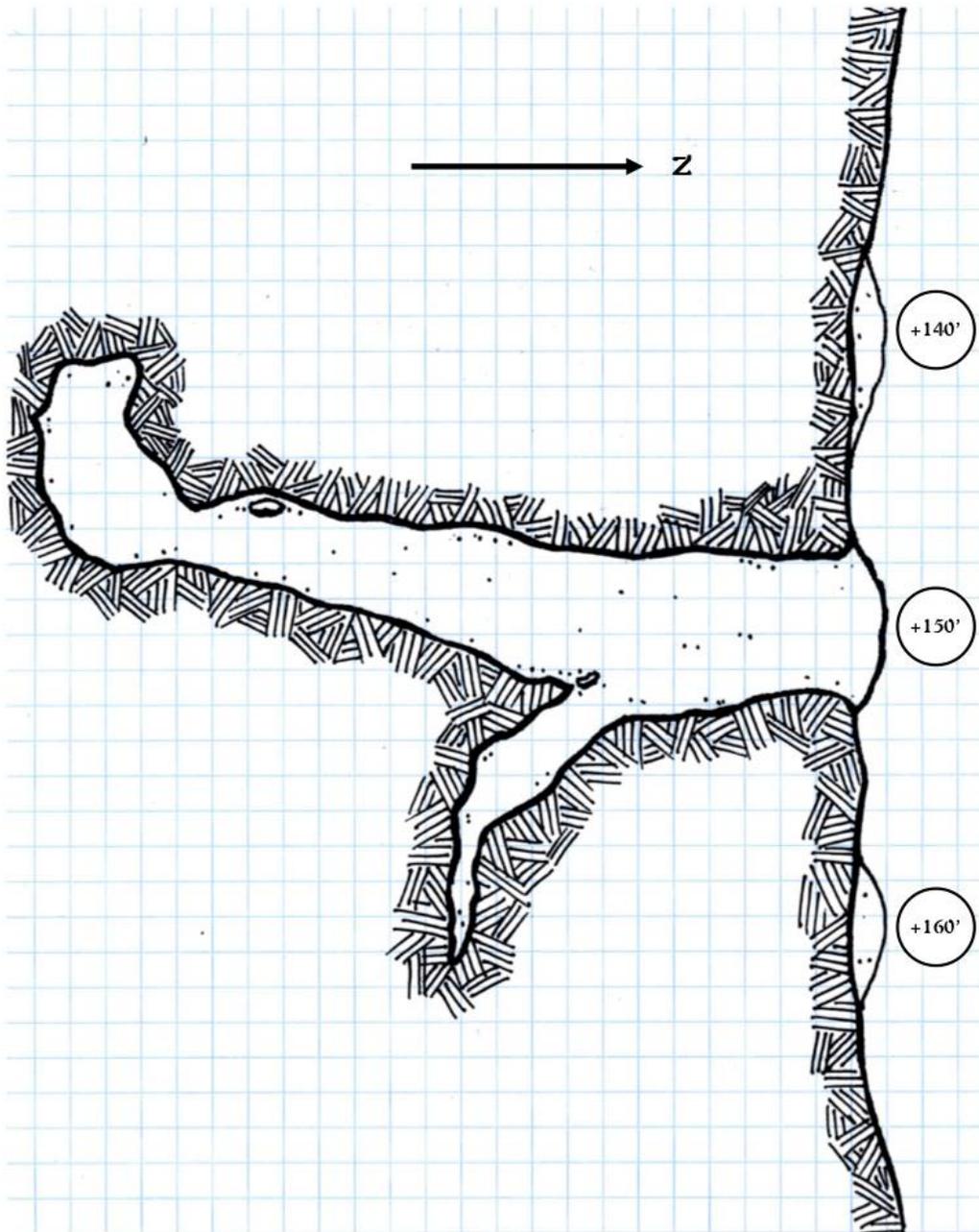
Appendix. Map 3

(One square = 5')



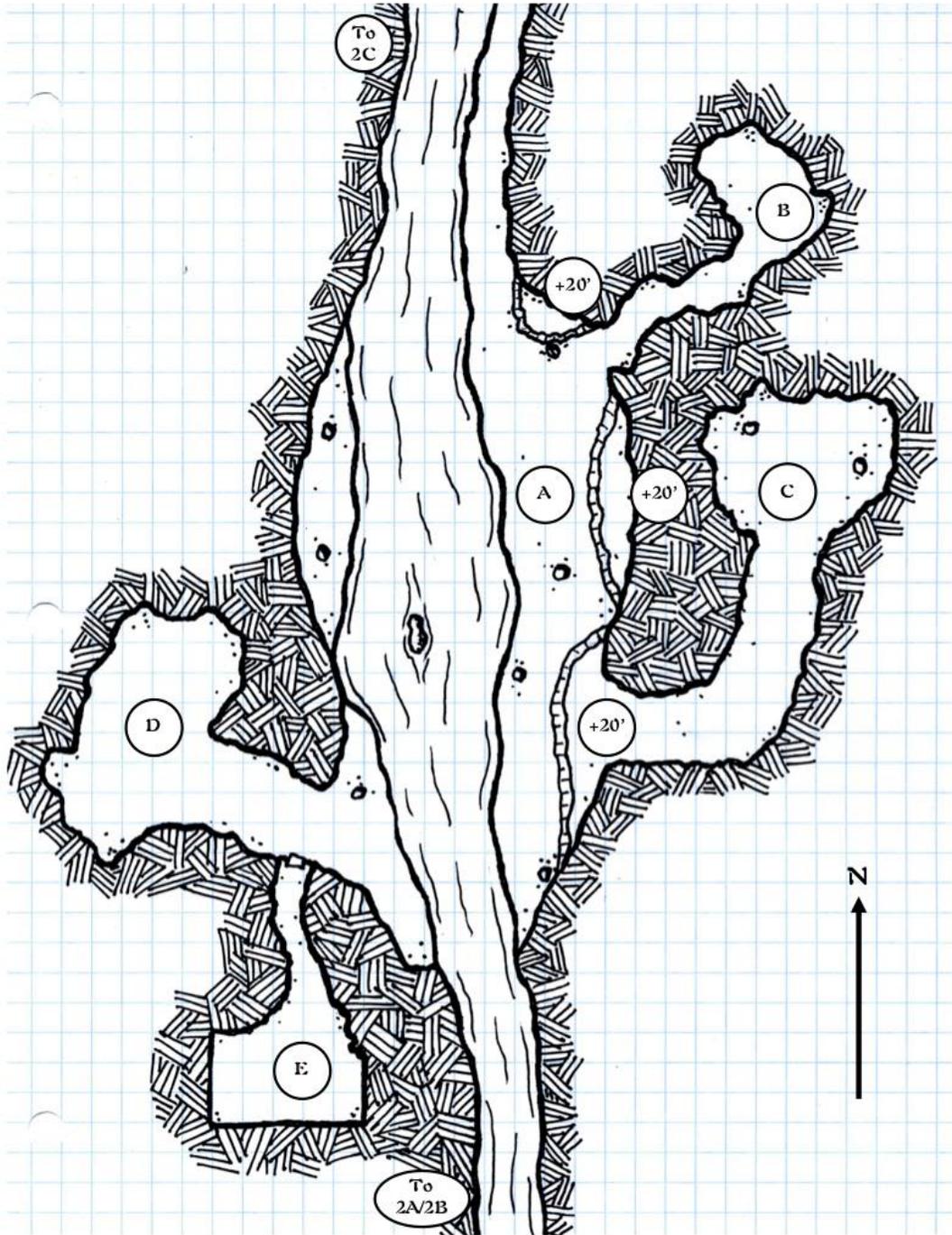
Appendix. Map 4

(One square = 5')



Appendix. Map 5

(One square = 5')



Player Handout 1. Story Award

During the course of this adventure, the characters may earn the following story award. If you are printing these out for your characters, print as many as you may need to ensure that any eligible character receives a copy:

Honor of the Kroth Magg Story Award

While most of the civilized world views hobgoblins as no better than orcs or goblins, you have learned otherwise. While they can be cruel and tyrannical, there is also a deep honor and profound discipline to them. They seek to pay back all debts and they find lying to be beneath them.

In future Glip Dak adventures, the heroes have advantage on Charisma (Persuasion) checks with the Kroth Magg, and goods 25 gp and under can be bought at half price in Glip Dak.

Player Handout 2. Story Award

During the course of this adventure, the characters may earn the following story award. If you are printing these out for your characters, print as many as you may need to ensure that any eligible character receives a copy:

He Knows Your Face Story Award

Yauch remains alive and active, plotting and preparing as he always has, but now he knows your face and has sworn vengeance against you.

Because of Yauch's thoroughness and foresight, adventurers have disadvantage on the first saving throw against a spell Yauch casts the next time they battle the duergar. This only occurs once.

Player Handout 3. Magic Item

During the course of this adventure, the characters may find the following permanent magic item:

Arrow-Catching Shield

Armor (shield), rare (requires attunement)

While holding this shield, you have a +2 bonus to AC. This bonus is in addition to the shield's normal bonus to AC. In addition, whenever an attacker makes a ranged attack against a target within 5 feet of you, you can use your reaction to become the target of the attack instead.

This bronze-inlaid shield bears the marching dragon symbol of the Kroth Magg hobgoblin clan.

This item can be found in the *Dungeon Masters Guide*.

Player Handout 3. Lords' Alliance Faction Assignment

Greetings,

*I need a Cloak or Redknife to track down some missing tomes that are rumored to be in area of Glip Dak. Three volumes of the *Encyclopedia Draconica* were stolen from the Saj family of Mulmaster. The Alliance has been charged with recovering them. Fortune has favored us; the famous augur of Hulburg, Lumin Fetterbond has used his divining talents to discover the whereabouts and identity of the thief, Yauch, a duergar.*

Lumin's spells have located Yauch in Glip Dak. My messenger knows the signs of our order and will present this missive to the first Alliance agent he sees.

Find this Yauch, secure the books, and bring them back to the messenger. "Encourage" Yauch not to steal from the Saj's again.

-Lord Pyotr Iredale

Greetings,

I need a Cloak or Redknife to track down some missing tomes that are rumored to be in area of Glip Dak. Three volumes of the Encyclopedia Draconica were stolen from the Saj family of Mulmaster. The Alliance has been charged with recovering them. Fortune has favored us; the famous augur of Hulburg, Lumin Fetterbond has used his divining talents to discover the whereabouts and identity of the thief, Yauch, a duergar.

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-Lord Pyotr Iredale

Player Handout 4. Hrogar's Map

