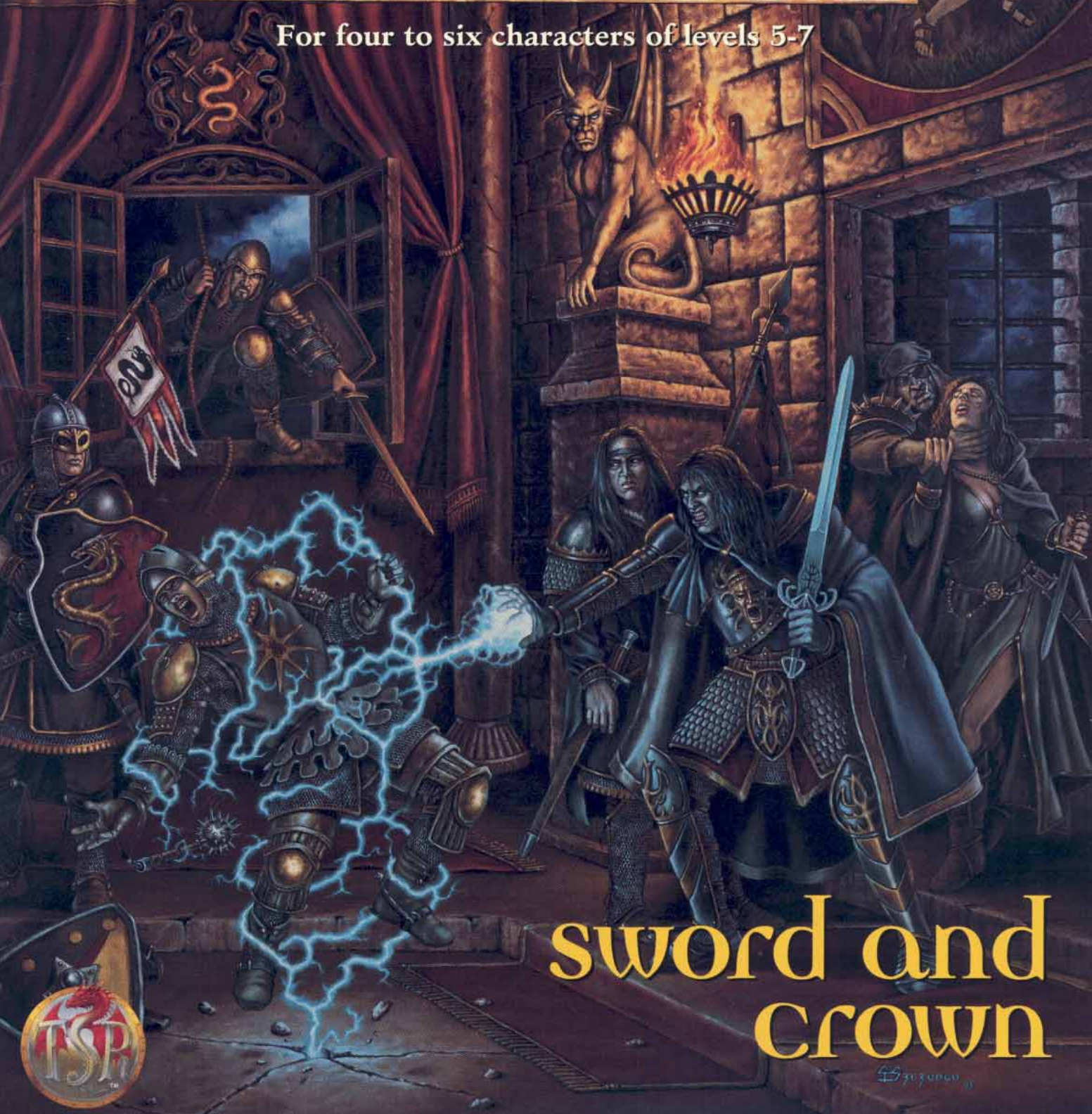


BIRTHRIGHT™

OFFICIAL GAME ADVENTURE

For four to six characters of levels 5-7



sword and
crown



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sword and crown

credits

Written by Colin McComb
Edited by Anne Brown
Creative Direction by Roger E. Moore and Karen S. Boomgarden
Conceptual Art by Tony Szczudlo
Interior Art by Ben Otero and John Dollar
Original Map Design by David Zenz
Page Backgrounds and Frames by Dee Barnett
Cartography by David Martin and Dennis Kauth
Graphic Design by Dee Barnett & Renee Ciske
Typesetting by Nancy J. Kerkstra
Ultra-Special Thanks to Rich Baker and David Zenz

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TSR, Inc.
201 Sheridan Springs Rd.
Lake Geneva
WI 53147
U.S.A.



TSR Ltd.
120 Church End
Cherry Hinton
Cambridge CB1 3LB
United Kingdom

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table of contents

Introduction	3
Escort Duty	6
Escort Duty Map	10
Confrontation	11
Pursuit	12
Elven Ruins Map	17
Under the Mountain	18
Dwarven Blockade Map	19
Under the Mountain Side View	25
The Mines Map	28
The Orog Vault	30
Orog Vault Map	35
In the Tower	43
Conflict in the Tower	56
Conclusion	58
Persons of Note	62
Magical Items	64



Politics in Anuire have always been something of a quagmire. Feuds and rivalries date back hundreds of years, often over forgotten or the most foolish of causes. And there are innumerable vendettas as the power-hungry struggle to eliminate opponents. One such rivalry is that between Avanil and Boeruine, as each struggles to be the first since Michael Roele to claim the Iron Throne. Both are serious contenders for the throne, and neither is willing to cede its position to the other. Though they rarely stoop to outright warfare, it seems that such a day is not far off—and they'll tear apart Anuire to get at each other, if need be.

Welcome to *Sword and Crown*, the first adventure for the BIRTHRIGHT™ campaign setting! It's designed for four to six player characters (PCs) of 3rd to 5th level; at least one character should be a regent of a physical kingdom. If all (or even most) of the PCs are regents, playing this adventure is not a problem as long as all of them get along fairly well. Otherwise, the DM may need to encourage some players to use secondary characters. If no PCs are regents, characters will need to agree to serve under the command of one of the regents present at the meeting of *Sword and Crown*.

By now, the PCs have no doubt experienced some of the politics and double-dealings that characterize Anuirean politics. Though not necessarily adept at these deals themselves, they are likely to be somewhat proficient in spotting a veiled threat, a honeyed tongue, or a sincere hand of friendship. They're going to need this understanding.

Because the events of the *Sword and Crown* last for one full month, this adventure will occupy all regents involved for one action round. The DM and players must consider this time element in the scheme of the domain turn and the campaign.

background

Long before any of the current regents came to power, Rhuobhe Manslayer sat in his blackened tower and contemplated methods of ridding Cerilia of humans. Unfortunately for him, he was wholly contained by Roele and his descendants, and later by the realms of Avanil and Boeruine. Though neither Boeruine nor Avanil are willing to work together to destroy Rhuobhe, the army of either is capable of containing the Manslayer. The Elf has labored for centuries to undo his enemies, but all these efforts have been in vain.

That is, until Prince Avan's daughter Aubrae, harboring her own hatred for Boeruine, offered Rhuobhe a way out of his deadlock. Making her way through the mountain passes and braving the Elf's domain, she secretly came to tower Ruannoch.

Though the Manslayer is not known for his gentle ways with humans, he was intrigued enough by the proposal from the daughter of his enemy to listen to her fully. Her story follows.

Aubrae explained that she was ashamed of her father's lack of initiative in destroying Boeruine

introduction

and was ready to take steps to remove her "hereditary" enemy. In order to discredit the archduke, she'd arrange for herself to be "kidnapped" by bandits dressed in Boeruine colors. This event would take place during a time in which all realms were supposed to be at peace. She would then flee to Rhuobhe's land and wait for the Anuirean realms to tear Boeruine apart. Naturally, the forces at Boeruine's border would fight back, ensuring that the attacking regents' armies would take this as a sign of Boeruine's guilt.

The inevitable result of all this would be the removal of one of the biggest obstacles to the Elf's extermination of humans in Cerilia, and a fair shot at retaking Boeruine's lands. What Aubrae offered to the Manslayer was a chance to carry out his plan with one of the main stumbling blocks removed. Of course, after the destruction of the archduke, Aubrae and Rhuobhe would go their separate ways and let the predestined battle between their two realms occur at some later date—without the interference of the Archduke of Boeruine.

What Aubrae didn't tell the Elf was that she had a backup plan; in the event that her plot to destroy Boeruine failed, she would assure the death of the Elf. If it were discovered that Boeruine's men were not in fact her kidnapers, the trail would lead inexorably to Manslayer. Aubrae's idea of a perfect resolution would be for Boeruine to be destroyed and for the ruse to be discovered too late. Of course, the outraged regents of Anuire would then have no choice but to punish

the offending awnshegh—and ideally, this would unite Anuire under the banner of Prince Avan.

Rhuobhe assented to the bargain as Aubrae described it and arranged for Aubrae to return home to her father. He has not survived nearly two thousand years by being foolishly trusting, however—especially not by trusting the daughter of an ancient enemy.

the sword and the crown

Every five years, the rulers of Anuire's baronies, duchies, and kingdoms declare a temporary end to hostilities that lasts for one month. During this time, regents from all over Anuire converge on a chosen kingdom to negotiate, make allies and enemies, and enjoy the company of their fellow rulers. The conclave is called "Sword and Crown" after the two unique items that symbolize this event. (To differentiate the objects from the event, the two are referred to as *the sword* and *the crown*.)

The sword is a replica of the Sword of the Empire, which was worn by Michael Roele in his battle against the Gorgon. The original now hangs on the Gorgon's wall, flanked by the severed heads of the numerous thieves who thought they could retrieve it. *The crown* is the actual crown worn by Roele (the progenitor of the line) during his days of conquering Cerilia. Neither item has any physical or magical power, but their symbolism carries a weight that more than compensates.

The sword and the crown represent the power of the old Empire. The regent of the realm in which the conclave is held is responsible for their safekeeping until the next gathering. That regent is also responsible for arbitrating peace throughout the lands of Anuire should any kingdoms petition for the regent's judgment. Though he

has no actual power over the Anuirean lands, the regents of other realms must, by Anuirean law, abide by his decision.

In such cases, each is judged on its individual merits; no precedents exist where the sword and the crown are concerned.

The keeper of the artifacts is expected

to be fair and impartial, though he rarely is. Still, the illusion persists that the sword and the crown grant the wisdom of Roele and the favor of Haelyn on those who hold them, so the regents of Anuire continue with this ritual.

The conclave of Sword and Crown is noteworthy for several reasons. First, inter-regent hostilities completely cease during this time. The main players in the various factions (law, guilds, temples, and magic) see to that, harshly punishing those who would break the peace. Wars in progress that carry into the conclave are allowed to continue, but provoking antagonism during Sword and Crown is strictly forbidden. Attacking an enemy during the conclave is a good way to ensure that the other regents of Anuire unite.

Second, the assembly is a chance for the regents of Anuire to gather and mingle, to sue for peace, and to celebrate old alliances. It's a way to make new contacts and arrange marriages.

Everyone who rules a domain is invited, whether they command a merchant house, a barony, or a collection of sources. Most rulers leave their holdings in the hands of trusted lieutenants or capable underlings while in attendance. Scions of Anuire are also invited, including the scions of old families and those who have only recently discovered their blooded potential.

The conclave is the event for anyone who is anyone in Anuire. Merchants who aren't part of the guilds, petty nobles, and the well-to-do across the Twelve Duchies all hope to finagle an invitation in order to be seen among the movers and the shakers. Of course, only a tiny fraction of these are ever invited, but those who are brag about it for years. Inviting such individuals to the Sword and Crown is a surefire way to guarantee their everlasting devotion.

The festivities of the Sword and Crown are decided by the hosting realm, but they usually include hunting, balls, banquets, and noble contests. There is generally little in the way of competitive events, since the rulers of the realms tend to have easily-bruised pride, taking slight at inoffensive events and actions. Thus, the organizers often steer clear of events such as jousts, archery, and swordsmanship. Meetings are also held to determine the course Anuire will take in the coming years, and special assemblies discuss the ideal shape of Anuire. Though these assemblies are rarely productive, they provide the regents with something to discuss throughout the month-long festivities.

The final activity of the conclave is to determine where the next Sword and Crown will be held. Only

rulers who command physical realms may attend this meeting, and no regent has a greater say than another in this decision, though many lesser regents try to appeal to Avan, Boeruine, the Mhor, and Baron Ghoere by voting with them. The course of the sword and the crown must pass through every realm of Anuire; thus, no realm can host the Sword and Crown twice before another realm hosts it once.

At the last such meeting five years ago (probably before the PCs came to power), the Conclave of Regents chose the kingdom belonging to one of the PCs. Now the time of the Sword and Crown draws near, and the PCs must prepare to host the greatest event in Anuirean politics.

the course of the adventure

While the PCs prepare for the Sword and Crown, great events are set into motion. Boeruine and his retinue march on the PCs while Prince Avan and his retinue make their preparations. Regents from all over Anuire ready themselves for this conclave. Meanwhile, Aubrae and Rhuobhe are in constant communication, readying their scheme.

If the PCs make no sidetrek, this is how the adventure should progress: First, Boeruine arrives outside the PCs' walls. He will not enter within the walls, preferring the security of his military-style encampment. Several other regents arrive with him, notably the Count of Taeghas and Thane of Talinie, mingling their entourages with Boeruine's.

Word comes to the PCs that Prince Avan is nearing their gates and demands a royal escort into the capital. The PCs ride out to find the prince under attack. The enemies wear the livery of Archduke Boeruine under clothing intended as disguises. While the PCs fight off these raiders, they notice some elves directing the combat. One of them fires a poisoned arrow into Prince Avan while another kidnaps Princess Aubrae.

The PCs must rush Avan to the city before he dies, and he beseeches them to

save his daughter. First, he demands that Boeruine be locked up pending a full investigation. Of course, Boeruine is affronted by this, but he has little choice; when faced with the disapproval of his fellow regents, he must acquiesce. However, he does not succumb without a word of warning for the PCs.

Avan insists on sending a company of knights with the PCs to capture the raiders. When Boeruine catches wind of this, he does so as well. The PCs can refuse, but only at the cost of possibly irritating the other rulers. If necessary, someone will demand that the PCs take along a company of men; they are, after all, pursuing a band of brigands.

The PCs soon pick up a trail. Following this, they find a dying bandit who tells them of the elves' treachery. Before he dies, he points out the direction the elves took.


By following this trail, the PCs arrive at an ancient elven ruin and, upon some exploration, discover a portal that deposits them in front of a set of massive stone doors high in the mountains. Entering the tunnels beneath the mountains, the PCs fight some dreadful creatures of the dark and eventually emerge above Rhuobhe's tower of Ruannoch.

The PCs enter the tower in search of the lost princess. Meanwhile, Rhuobhe and his elves begin to scour the tower, looking for the invaders. The surviving knights fight a delaying action and the PCs discover Aubrae. Rhuobhe comes upon them, tells them the tale of the princess's treachery, and sends the regents back to resolve the matter.

DMs are strongly advised to become familiar with the skirmish rules in the BIRTHRIGHT boxed set. These rules will be especially handy when the PCs explore the tunnels under the Seamist Mountains. Hordes of goblins, orogs, and elves lurk there that will eventually need to be confronted by someone with a firm hand.

Now then . . . the opening gambit has been made, and it's the players' move. The Sword and Crown awaits.





Before this adventure can begin, the DM must choose one regent who commands a physical kingdom to host the Sword and Crown. The other PCs are assumed to be friends or compatriots of this regent, but may be regents of their own realms. In that case, they have time at their leisure until the conclave begins. They may opt to arrive at the Sword and Crown early to aid with preparations if they wish. With that, the adventure can begin!

Summary: First, the PCs are informed of the Sword and Crown, as well as the fact that one of them will host this event. Offers arrive from Mhoried, Ghoere, Avani, and Boeraine to help offset the cost of the conclave. The PC (or PCs) have little choice but to accept responsibility for the event.

When the conclave draws nigh, Archduke Boeraine is the first of the regents to arrive; he snubs the traditional royal greeting. He has Thane Thuriene Donalls in tow (unless the PCs are playing Talinie, in which case he has another priestly regent in tow). He sets up camp outside the city.

Prince Avan arrives not long after and demands the royal greeting. As the PCs ride out to accompany him into the city, they are attacked by forces wearing Boeraine's livery, and Avan's daughter is kidnaped. The PCs must return Avan to the city, apprehend Boeraine himself, and ride out after the princess.

DM's Notes: Certain elements of this section are purposely vague so that the DM can fit the events into any BIRTHRIGHT campaign. No exact kingdom location is mentioned, so it should be fairly easy to adapt this adventure to any situation.

the adventure begins

To start things off, a rider from the previous holder of the sword and the crown arrives. Unless the PCs are playing Cariele, the former conclave took place in that kingdom. If they are playing Cariele, it was celebrated in Dhoesone five years earlier.

The Carielean (or Dhoesonean) messenger wastes little time in attempting to reach the PC

escort duty

ruler. The court herald announces, "Your Grace! From Cariele, Jaim Rendier, the Baronet of Mhellivene, Warder of the Stonecrowns, and messenger from the Duke of Cariele!" With a flourish of trumpets, Jaim Rendier (M human; F2; N) strides into the room.

He awaits the regent's audience before delivering his message. When he is allowed to speak, he bows low, stands straight, closes his eyes, and recites, "Your Grace, greetings from a fellow ruler. Know that I, Entier Gladanil of Cariele, in the person of Jaim Rendier, wish you good health and felicitous tidings. I send this messenger to you to remind you of your duty to the regents of Anuire; to wit, the hosting of the conclave known as the Sword and Crown. Five years ago, it was decided that your realm would be graced by the presence of the notables of Anuire; it is devoutly hoped that you will continue in the tradition of your predecessor by honoring this custom.

"Prepare your castle, I bid you, for your fellows shall be arriving within the month." Jaim produces an official-looking document signed by the regents of Anuire five years past, naming this realm as the next host of the Sword and Crown.

After handing the document to the regent, the messenger relaxes from his stiff pose and prepares to answer any questions the regent may put to him.

If the regent examines the document, he'll see that everything is in order; it's signed by his predecessor as well as all the lieges of Anuire from five years past. The PC can opt to back out of the entire thing, but will lose quite a bit of face

with the regents of Anuire; they've been anticipating this event for many years. (In effect, the PC regent suffers a -4 modifier to all diplomacy actions for a full year.) The remainder of the adventure is predicated on the PC accepting this honor, which falls among his duties as a ruler.

In order for the regent to host this affair (not that he has much choice), he must spend 6 GB (in addition to regular court costs) simply to provide everything his fellow regents might need. If he spends less, he'll suffer diplomatic consequences as if he had not maintained a court at all. Other regents will shun his company; most will strive to dissociate themselves from his realm for fear of losing face.

On the other hand, if the regent spends more than 6 GB on the festival, the other regents will remember that he's thrown a good party and will be more kindly disposed toward him. Except for those who've openly declared themselves to be enemies of this regent, the rulers of Anuire will tend to remember his realm fondly. This is worth a +2 modifier to all diplomacy actions for one year.

Soon after Rendier leaves, messengers arrive from Avanil, Boeruine, Ghoere, and Mhoried, all offering to offset the cost of the conclave. The messages all read something like this:

Sister (or Brother) Ruler:

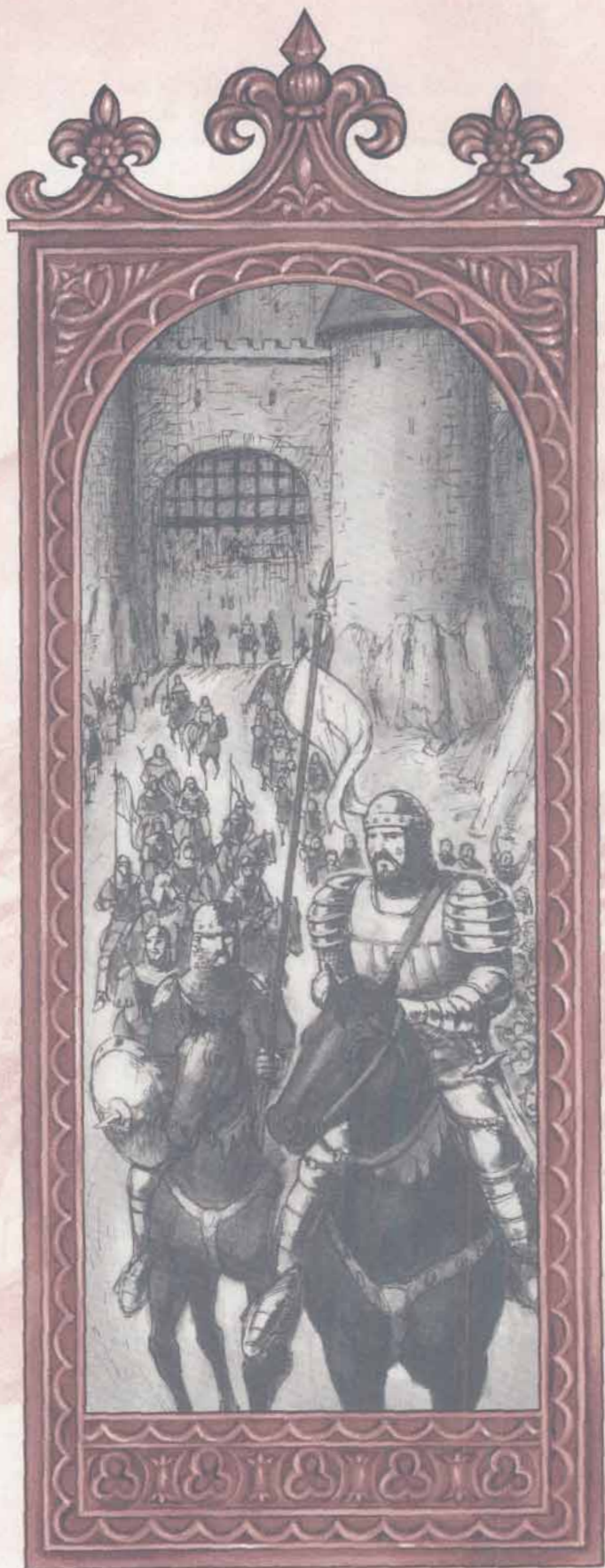
I know what a hardship hosting the Sword and Crown can be. It can drain a kingdom's resources and leave the land unprotected against foul enemies. Allow me to help take some of the sting from this event; I am prepared to offer 3 Gold Bars if you should so desire.

The PC regent might be tempted to take advantage of this offer. However, several factors should be considered (the regent's advisers will remind him of these).

First, the individuals who offer aid are unlikely to do so free of charge. They will expect to be repaid or will demand other considerations in return for this gesture. After all, as the holder of the Imperial Sword and the Crown of Anuire, the PC will be expected to moderate some disputes, and the big realms are more likely to be involved than the smaller ones.

Second, the larger realms stand to gain status for helping to host the event, at the cost of appearances for the PC's realm. The four donors are likely to point out to the rulers of other domains (subtly, of course) that the event was not entirely sponsored by the PC. Though this will have no immediate effect on the PC's realm, it's likely to have long-term consequences.

Of course, these considerations are all in the future. What's most important is now—the hosting of the Sword and Crown. Regardless of



whether the ruler accepts the help of the four donors, the conclave must occur.

The regent should be allowed some time to plan the conclave. When the DM determines that the character has had sufficient time, he may announce the arrival of the regents from all across Anuire.

the arrival of the kings

Read the following aloud to the players:

The first guest to arrive within the borders of the kingdom is the archduke Aeric Boeruine. You know of his arrival at almost the exact moment he crossed the border, because your scouts report that he's brought a small army with him—at least 200 soldiers travel in his company.

Shortly after your report from the scouts, a messenger from the archduke arrives. He begs your forgiveness for bringing such a force into your lands, but as a regent under siege by Rhuobhe Manslayer, he feels it necessary to travel with protection from the Elf's treachery.

He also wishes to forego the traditional royal escort into the city, preferring instead to camp his troops outside the city walls. He does, however, ask that you come out to greet him and direct him to the best spot for his men.

Naturally, the regent can refuse to extend his greeting, but to do so to a man of Archduke Boeruine's stature . . . well, it simply wouldn't be wise. If the PC refuses to offer his greeting, the DM should make a note of this; Boeruine will remember the slight.

Otherwise, the PC and his retinue (and the other PCs, if they are present) find that the archduke has indeed arrived with a large force. The archduke has dismounted, as have his guards, and he seems to be in a cheerful mood. At his side stands Thane Donalls of Talinie. "Greetings!" he calls as the PCs near. The thane echoes this, adding, "May the blessing of Haelyn be upon you!"

The archduke

greet each regent by name and pauses to learn the names of those who are not regents. He is unfailingly polite, and is almost deferential—this is, after all, the PCs' homeland. He asks the regent to point out a good site to make camp. He declines all offers of lodging within the city, saying that he refuses to burden the PCs further with his extensive retinue. Once he receives permission to camp outside the city, he signals his men, who ride to the selected site. They begin pitching tents and establishing camp immediately.

Before Boeruine retires to his large golden tent, he invites the PCs to dinner that evening. He bids them an affable farewell and immerses himself in preparations for the Sword and Crown.

If the PCs counter Boeruine's invitation with an offer to dine in the palace, he accepts. During dinner (wherever it takes place), he speaks of nothing in particular, but seems especially interested in the PCs' pet projects, and offers his aid on those things. He's honest about expecting something in return, but remains friendly. The only topic guaranteed to turn his mood ugly is discussion of the Iron Throne and his right to sit on it.

more arrivals

Over the next few days, more regents pour in. Many of them forego the escort, though a few ask for a twenty-man entourage with the PC regent at its head. They fill up the palace and all surrounding inns with their personal servants and their retinues, and mingle among themselves. This is a good chance for the DM to introduce gossip about what's happening in the campaign and for the PCs to renew friendships and rivalries.

The third day after Boeruine's arrival, a messenger arrives in the livery of Prince Darien Avan. He reports that the prince has arrived and requests the traditional royal escort. The messenger reports that Avan is about five miles south of the city and is accompanied by a force of about 20 men, along with his daughter, Princess Aubrae. The PCs should be able to intercept him a few miles from the city. The PCs would be wise not to anger this man by refusing an escort (not to mention that such a denial is considered inexcusably rude).

As the party rides out, the captain of the guard mentions that his men are growing awfully tired of providing escorts for all these nobles, not to mention watching them like hawks to ensure that no one gets into trouble. Throughout the ride, the captain updates the regent on problems with the

Brigands (30): AC 7; MV 12; F1; hp 6 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (long sword); SZ M; ML Average (9); Int Average (9); AL CE; XP 15.

other regents. Several duels have already been broken up, and the guards are being stretched fairly thin. The captain says that he doesn't know whether his guards can protect against everything happening in the kingdom right now.

As if to underscore the captain's words, the clash of arms and the cries of wounded men suddenly drift over the next hill. The captain awaits the ruler's permission to investigate, then spurs his horse into a gallop. The rest of the guards ride on as well. When the PCs crest the hill, read the following to the players:

The scene about 100 yards ahead is one of utter chaos. Prince Avan's knights rally around him and his daughter, struggling to keep away the attackers swarming around them. From what you can see, at least 30 brigands are still mounted, but only five of Avan's men are still able to hold a sword. Avan himself is furiously swinging a sword; an incandescent aura plays about his form.

The PCs can join the battle and appear to affect its outcome, but the end result should be the same; three criteria must be met.

First, regardless of the PCs' skill, the attackers somehow manage to spirit Aubrae Avan away. The PCs won't know it at this point, but the princess does her best to make sure she's captured. She will not do anything foolish to destroy her plan, but she does not want to see her father dead; she's genuinely concerned for him.

Second, Prince Avan's guards are whittled down severely, leaving only two. The first is a veteran old knight named Sir Uridise; the second is a fresh young man named Lord Morthan, who's recently gotten his spurs.

Third, Prince Avan is rendered helpless by a poisoned arrow that finds his belly. Though the PCs' castle may be home to healers aplenty, none can bring Avan back to full health in time to pursue those who have stolen his daughter. Avan is forced to request aid of the PCs.

The brigands are not interested in harming the PCs. Their goal is to grab the princess and make a clean escape. They care nothing for the regents.

Elves: Numiaith Leafdancer and Bassanaer Llynrait, F4 and F5: AC 4 and 3; MV 12; hp 31, 39; THAC0 17, 16 (or 16, 15 with racial bonus); #AT 2 or 1; Dmg 1d6 (bow) or 1d8 (long sword); SZ M (6'5"); ML Elite (14); Int High (13); AL LE; XP 420 and 270.

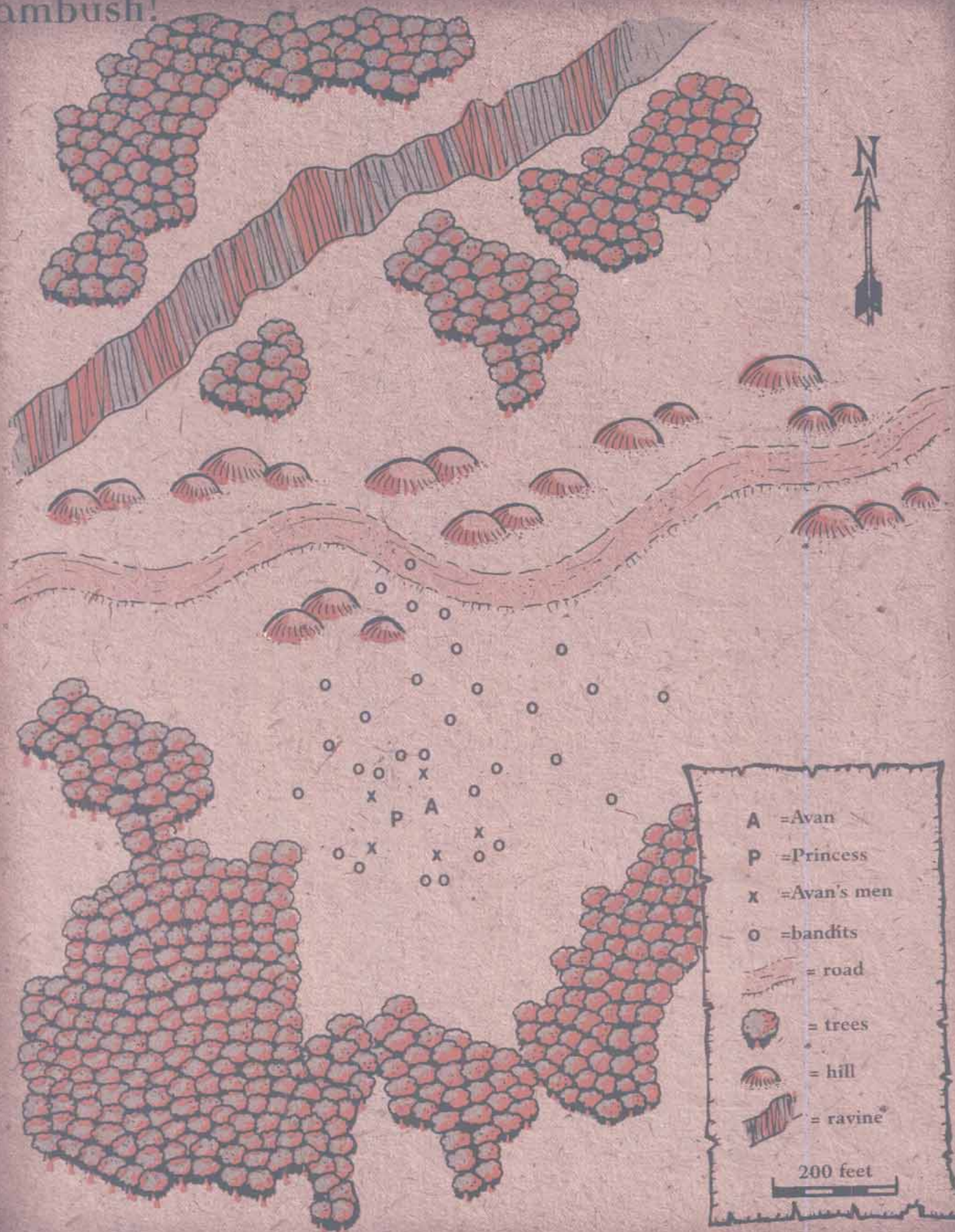
During the battle, the PCs are allowed a Wisdom check with a -6 penalty. Anyone who succeeds notices a pair of elves directing the battle. One unleashes the arrow that finds Avan. As soon as the princess has been seized, the other elf signals the retreat. The elves avoid combat at all costs.

If the PCs have any ideas about pursuing the fleeing elves, a few of the bandits stay behind to fight a delaying action. They will not surrender; rather, they will kill themselves rather than be taken alive. Anyone near them can see that they are totally terrified by this battle as well as the idea of capture, but they seem to have no control over themselves even as they fall on their swords.

While the elves and brigands flee with their prize, Avan's knight, Lord Morthan, points out that Avan's wound is turning a terrible shade of purple, as if it were infected, or more likely, poisoned. He requests immediate assistance for the fallen prince. Also, he asks that more men be sent after the brigands. If the regent sends guards after the attackers, the guards never return. The PCs will find their bodies later, when they pursue the bandits in earnest.

Should the PCs think to search the bodies of the brigands, they discover something of great import: The "bandits" are wearing Boeruine's livery underneath their rags! If the PCs do not think to take one of these garments back to the conclave, one of Avan's knights will. The knights push their mounts hard to return to the castle. They have grim tidings for the regents.

ambush!



- A =Avan
- P =Princess
- x =Avan's men
- o =bandits
- = road
- = trees
- ⌒ = hill
- ▨ = ravine

200 feet

map #1

When the PCs return to the castle with Avan, the other regents of Anuire watch in amazement; they've never thought that Avan could be harmed. While in the midst of this crowd, Avan demands that the PCs arrest Boeruine. He insists that Boeruine has violated the truce surrounding the Sword and Crown, and must be locked up until the truth of the matter can be determined. The nearby regents nod and mutter their assent—even those who have openly allied themselves with Boeruine. It wouldn't be wise to be too openly supportive when Boeruine is clearly in the wrong.

confrontation

Boeruine is the only dissenter and seems mightily angry that even his allies would turn on him. He staunchly maintains his innocence until the PCs produce some evidence that his hand was at work, and the garments taken from the dead men serve this purpose nicely. He then allows himself to be shackled, but only under protest. He loudly proclaims that he will not forget this, and makes ominous mutterings about foolhardy diplomatic incidents and how his men will free him from his prison (even if the ruler puts Boeruine in a suite, he refers to it as a prison).

Should the PCs think to cast a *detect lie* spell on Boeruine, they can establish his innocence. Otherwise, they are likely to keep him locked away until they return. Following are Boeruine's responses to the most likely questions the PCs will put to him. He is truthful in all cases.

About his involvement: "I've got no idea what you're talking about."

About the elves: "I would *never* trust an elf! After all these years fighting the Manslayer, do you honestly think I could? Any of them might be in league with the Elf, and I won't take that chance! If you saw elves, that means that I'm being framed! I don't know how or why, but I'll bet Avan is behind it. If not him, then his daughter. I can't prove it, but I'd wager this is a plot to discredit me."

About the livery: "A group of my men went missing a few days ago. I sent them out to forage for food or buy some cattle, and they should have returned by this evening. All my commanders will verify that, but of course you won't believe them."

About who may wish to frame him: "In all modesty, you know I am one of the most powerful men in Anuire. I am next in line for the Iron Throne. Obviously, I've made myself some enemies in my time. Though Prince Avan is my most obvious enemy, this may have been an attempt to get rid of both of us. Perhaps it was Tael of Ghoere's doing. . . ." Once Boeruine has been questioned and locked away, Prince Avan sends for the PCs, bidding them to come to his room at once. Once they arrive, read the following:

Prince Avan lies on his bed, wan and listless. Though most of the poison seems to have been cleansed from his body, he's obviously still weak. His physicians and healers flutter nervously around him; he is, after all, an heir apparent to the Iron Throne, and their futures die as soon as he does. As you enter the room, he sends his attendants away.

"I'm glad you were able to save me," he says with the ghost of a smile. Concern tinges his voice. "But I must ask two more favors of you. First, please keep Boeruine incarcerated until we can formally determine his guilt or innocence. I know that he's powerful, but I can protect you if he threatens you. Justice must be served.

"Second, since I know I can trust you, I formally beseech you to rescue my daughter. I would send my knights after her, but nearly all of them are dead. I will command them to accompany you, and I ask that you take a few of your own as well. However, time and speed are of the essence, and so I suggest that you take only twenty or thirty men. If time were not a consideration, I would go myself—but I *must have my daughter back!*"

He lies back, panting with the effort of raising his voice. "Naturally, I am not without the means to repay you. I would not impose on anyone else to depart the Sword and Crown, but I do not trust the other regents here. I do not know the capabilities of your knights, but I have seen you fight, and I believe you to be the best choice. Please help me. Will you find her?"

If the PCs refuse, they have made an enemy for life. Avan must then send his messengers among the regents gathered for the Sword and Crown, begging for their aid. Word spreads among the castle of the PCs' cowardice, and they are shunned by most Anuirean regents from that point on—except for those who delight in mayhem and ill politics. Such reaction may seem heavy-handed, but the PCs are the obvious choice for the quest; it will

be apparent to would-be allies that they cannot rely on the PCs for matters of great import.

If the PCs take the time to investigate Boeraine's claim regarding his knights and his feelings toward elves, they can discover two things. First, Boeraine has hated elves ever since he took the throne (though he has learned to trust a few half-elves). Second, 50 of Boeraine's guards were discovered dead in a ravine not far from the battle with Avan and his knights.

When Boeraine learns that Avan is sending a pair of knights with the PCs, he insists on sending two of his own to ensure that his interests are fairly represented. He preemptorily summons the PCs to his "jail" before they depart on the mission and demands that two of his knights accompany them. He explains that his knights await the pleasure of their company in his camp and that they are fully prepared to leave at a moment's notice. He tells the PCs nothing of how he sent word to his men, leaving them to figure it out for themselves if they so desire. (Boeraine promised a title to a servant in the castle if she would report on the PCs' movements and carry messages for him).

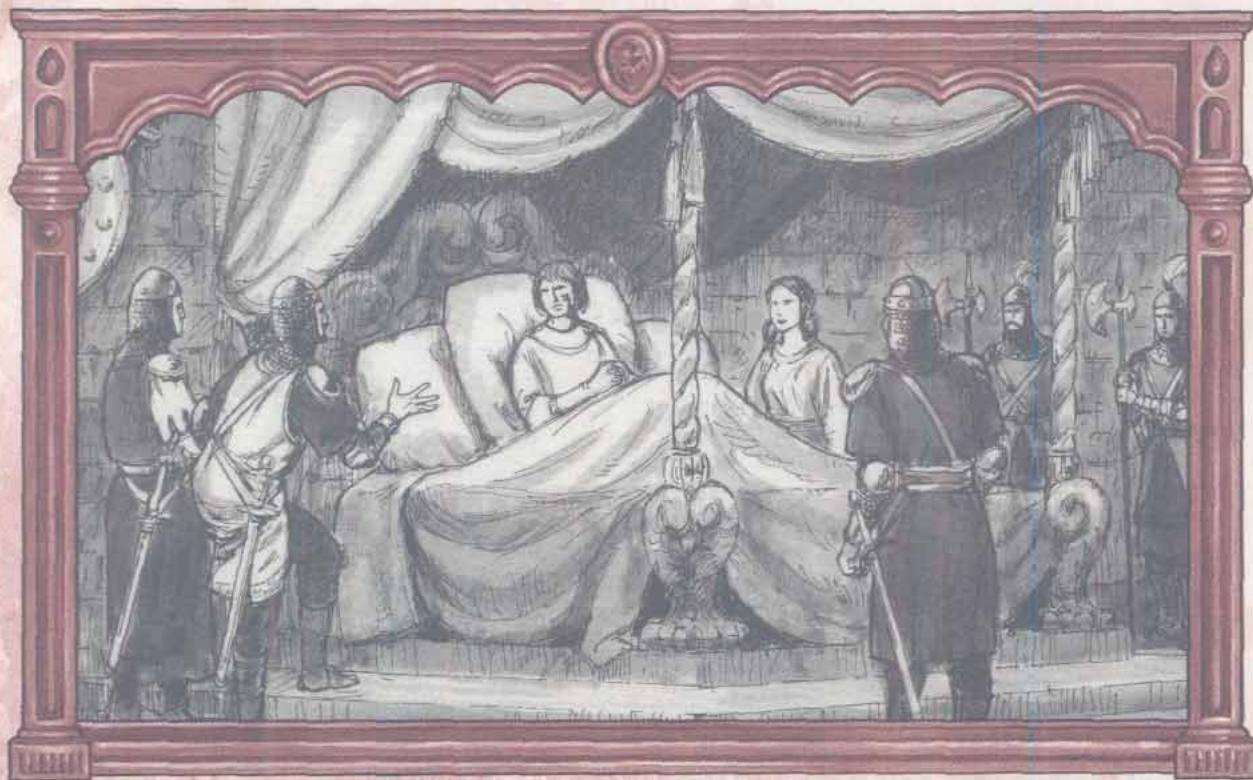
When the PCs begin preparations for the journey, they find that everything they need is packed and ready. Apparently, someone anticipated their needs, but none of the servants who packed the gear can tell the PCs who ordered the work done.

The servants received word that the PCs would be departing and would need supplies, but no one seems to know who gave the order. Twenty-five of the PCs' knights, a scout, and two of Avan's knights await the command to ride out. Their statistics appear at the end of this book.

pursuit

As the PCs ride past Boeraine's camp, his soldiers stand in a silent row in front of their tents. The line of soldiers parts to allow two knights in Boeraine's tabards to gallop forth. The Boeraine knights fall in at the rear of the PCs' entourage with nary a word. They bring the party's total to 29 knights and a single scout. If the PCs request that the knights remain behind, they will not leave, nor will they succumb to force. If the PCs try to coerce them or tie them up, the older of the pair, Sir Taresien, declares, "Laying a hand on us is tantamount to a declaration of war. Do you want a war with Boeraine?" It's obvious that the Boeraine knights are unwilling to leave without a fight.

Eventually, the PCs arrive at the site of the battle where the princess was taken. At the party's approach, crows squawk and flap away from the corpses, settling again in a ravine not far



distant. The scout dismounts immediately to look for a trail to follow.

Meanwhile, Sir Taresien and his fellow, Sir Belladaen, begin to examine the corpses of the bandits. Without even flinching, they pick up each dead man's head by the hair, look closely at the face, then move on to the next. When they are finished, they stand before the PCs to make a report.

"Your Highness," says Sir Belladaen, "I can personally attest that not one of these men is from the camp of Boeruine. I know every man with whom we have traveled by sight, if not by name, and I recognize none of these."

"Of course not," sneers Lord Morthan, the younger of Avan's knights. "To do so would be to admit to your ruler's guilt!"

Unless he is prevented, Belladaen quietly challenges Morthan to a duel immediately, for the sake of the honor of his lord. Morthan will beg off, claiming that the quest is more urgent. He's afraid of Sir Belladaen, but does not wish to show it. Belladaen scoffs at him and turns back to the investigation of the corpses, hoping to find more clues.

Meanwhile, Sir Taresien and Sir Uridise investigate the ravine where the crows have gathered. When Belladaen and Morthan finish their squabble, the two older knights call the PCs and Belladaen over. They point out approximately 50 dead men, nearly naked, in the ravine. Belladaen climbs down into the ravine, looks at one of the men, and climbs back up.

"It is as you thought, Sir Taresien," he reports. "That man was Captain Donalien. The rest of the men appear to have been part of the troop. It is clear to me that they were set upon by bandits, their clothing taken so that they might implicate the archduke, and left here for dead."

Sir Taresien begs the PCs leave to return to the castle with this information, so that the archduke might be released from his jail. Sir Belladaen volunteers to remain with the PCs in their quest to help uncover evidence regarding the culprit and clear his lord's name. If Sir Taresien is not given leave, he accompanies the party without further argument. Should he return from the journey alive, he will report this detention to his lord.

At this time, the scout comes jogging back to the party. "M'lords," he reports, "I've found the trail the bandits used when they made their escape. It's not hard to follow, since so many men were in the party. Begging your pardons, but did you not say that there were elves with this party?"

They've either left no trace or your eyes deceived you; I can find only traces of humans here." The other knights mount up immediately; again, they await their ruler's signal to ride forth.

a minor skirmish

The scout takes the lead, though there's not much need for his abilities. The trail left by the bandits is clearly visible, and the party makes good time following it.

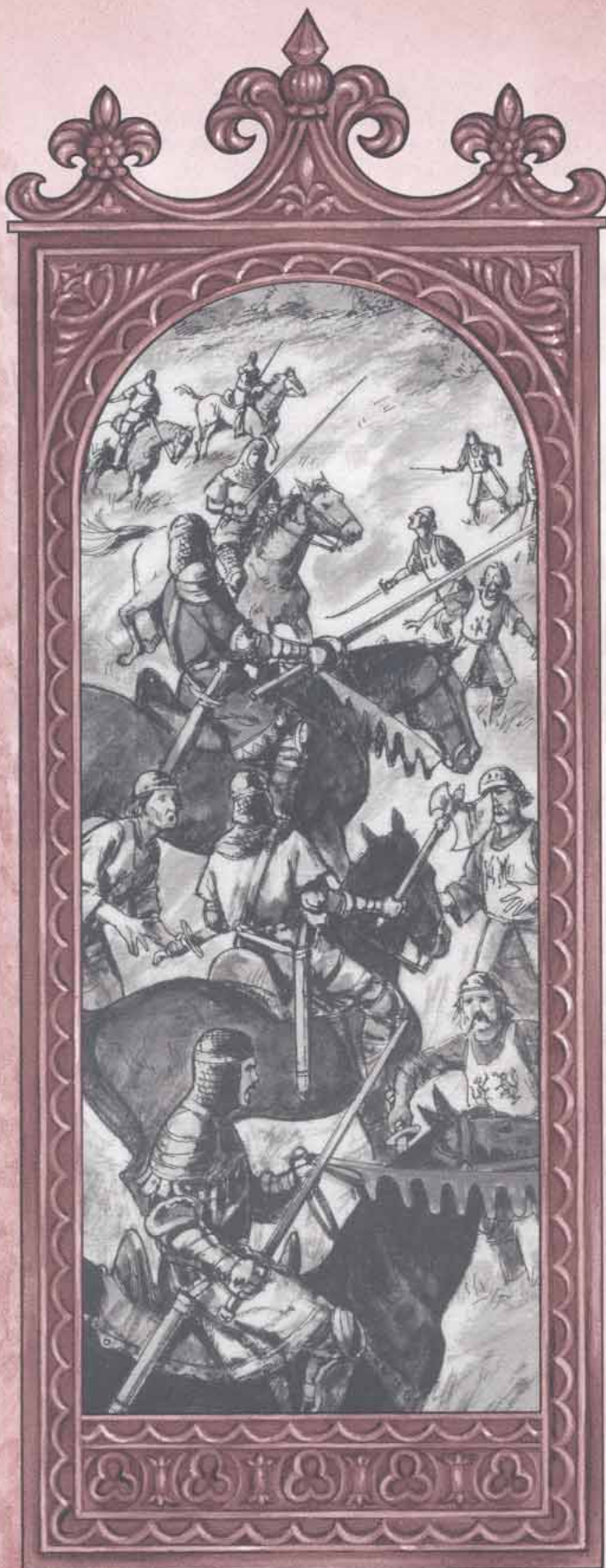
They are alone on the trail for less than two miles when they must roll for surprise. Rounding a hill is a group of unkempt warriors wearing Boeruinean tabards. Sir Belladaen does not pause to parley; he spurs his horse toward the offenders, his mace swinging. Even as he does so, the brigands claw frantically for their weapons.

Brigands, male humans, F1 (20): AC 5 (chain); MV 12, 21 mounted; hp 7 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1 or 2; Dmg 1d8 (long sword) or 1d6/1d6 (short bow); SZ M; ML Average (10); Int Average (10); AL CE; XP 15.

The bandits fight desperately, but are hardly a threat to the PCs and their knights. They obviously haven't trained together much, for they fight raggedly and individually rather than as a coordinated unit. No one among them calls any orders, and thus the men have no one to rally around. This is especially obvious if half the group is killed or incapacitated, for the rest try to escape with their lives.

If the party keeps any of them alive for questioning, the PCs may deduce that these brigands are not under the influence of a *geas*, as were their fellows. They are willing to talk in exchange





for their lives. One of the men who is captured is a greasy-haired lout with an unshaven face who calls himself Cloban.

He says, "If you guarantee our lives and freedom, I'll tell ya where we came from, and how to get there. . . ." He whispers, "Or you can just guarantee my life. Deal?"

He'll continue to talk if he gets an assurance from the regent that his life is safe. On the other hand, he'll talk if he is merely threatened; he's a coward who's made a living from sneak attacks and dirty mercenary actions. He wants as much as possible from the PCs if he can get away with it.

Cloban has several pieces of information. He and his companions were among the party hired to attack Prince Avan. However, they were first ordered to attack the Boerunean soldiers and take their uniforms, in order to wear them under their outer clothes. He doesn't know who hired them, since the old mercenary captain (now gone missing) was the one who negotiated the deal.

This particular group of men is fleeing because it hoped to avoid the inevitable hunting party. In addition, the men were aware of some disagreement between the elves (who were not part of the band) and the mercenary leader; these bandits decided to leave before things got ugly. They were headed back to their base in the Five Peaks, but unfortunately, they ran into the PCs.

Cloban points out where they came from—a camp about eight miles up the trail beaten by the bandits' horses. "On second thought," says Cloban, "it probably wasn't such a good idea to come back the way we came. Hmm." He knows nothing more of interest to this case, unless the PCs desire information useful in raiding bandit camps in the Five Peaks.

The PCs must now decide what to do with the captured bandits. They can execute the criminals (they are the rulers here, after all), they can tie them up and leave them here, or they can leave some of the knights to guard the bandits while another knight rides back to the castle for reinforcements to take them into custody. Whatever they choose, they still have a long way to go before they can catch the kidnapers.

10
9/15

the remnants

Eventually the PCs reach the place where Cloban directed them. They discover carnage; bandit bodies lie everywhere, with arrows protruding from their throats and sword slashes across their bellies. At a glance, there look to be about twenty brigands here, and no clue as to their attacker. Their horses graze contentedly 100 yards away. If the PCs examine all the dead closely, they find a pair of elves among them, also dead.

A few bandits are still alive; their moans echo piteously across the field. The knights move among them, dispatching those who are too far gone to answer questions and binding the wounds of those who might be able to survive. One of the victims asks a knight to fetch the ruler for him.

If the ruler chooses to speak to the unfortunate, the bandaged robber says, "M'lord (or M'lady), I was once a loyal subject of your land. I can say that it's still a fair land. I went away for a time to try my hand at somethin' other than farming, and fell in with these boys. I can tell you what happened here, but . . . I hope you'll do somethin' for me first."

If the PC agrees, the man continues.

"My parents don't know if I'm alive or dead. They're Alain and Miliene Cooper, near the river. Tell 'em their second son sends his regards.

"Now, what I was going to tell you. Here's what happened. We was hired to kidnap the princess. Corgin, our leader, cut the deal with these elves. We got back here, and Corgin decided he wanted more money, or wanted to ransom the princess himself. I think the princess talked him into trying to double-deal the elves; she's got a honeyed tongue, no doubt about that.

"Anyway, the elves got mad in a hurry. One of 'em waved his finger in the air, and all a' the sudden, about twenty elves rose out of the grass and from behind the trees. I thought we'd searched the place well enough, but apparently not. They massacred us; I think we got maybe two of 'em.

"They took the princess and headed to the north. Said something about ruins about a mile that way. I hope you nail 'em. They played us all for suckers. Kill 'em for us, would you?"

Contrary to expectations, the bandit doesn't die immediately after telling his story. He has nothing more to add, but he certainly is in no shape to ride with the party. Again, the PCs must decide what to do with the brigands before setting off after the elves.

The scout, who has been searching the battlefield, comes back and mentions that tracks made by two human boots leave the clearing heading the north, but he found no other marks. Apparently, the elves have been careful not to leave trails.

the ruined tower

The trail made by the human boots leads to a tower in a ring of low-lying, forested hills. On the way, the scout excitedly calls the PCs' attention whenever he catches glimpses of the tracks of the elves, impressed with his own skills. About half a mile from the tower, the scout announces that the PC party is no more than eight, maybe ten hours behind the kidnapers.

As the party nears the site, it becomes apparent that one of the hills is actually the ruin of which the wounded bandit spoke. The ruins blend almost seamlessly into the hills, and the PCs might have walked right past if they hadn't been looking for it. There is a palpable menace radiating from the place; the ruins somehow reek of corrupted magic and tainted ideals. The tracks lead directly to it.

The remains of this building have stood this way for hundreds of years, and though the elves built it well, it is barely structurally sound anymore. It was once an elven raiding outpost, but time and looters have taken their toll on this place. The ceiling has collapsed almost entirely, leaving the building open to the stars and the sky. The floor is in a similar state of disrepair; in several places, it has collapsed into the basement, and in many other places, the floor seems destined for collapse at any time.

Little of value remains here; a layer of dust and grime covers the floor. Distinctive tracks indicate where the group of elves, numbering about twenty, dragged their victim. The footprints lead directly to a staircase down to the area marked 13 on the map.

The weakened floor can hold only a certain amount of weight at one time. On Map #2, the weakest areas of the floors are marked with crosshatching. When the party crosses these areas, unless they have spread their ranks fairly thin (no more than four people per 10 feet), all must save vs. paralysis or crash through to the basement. The fall itself causes 2d6 points of damage; scrapes and scratches from broken timbers and such cause an additional 1d8.

If the party chooses to explore the rest of the ruin instead of tracking the footprints, the following descriptions are a guide to the points of interest in the ruin. All the rooms are labelled on the map; only those with items of interest are described.

3a: Secret Room

Apparently, in all the long years that this outpost has been abandoned, no one has discovered this room. It hides the former elf chieftain's chain mail (elven, of course, though not magical), and a sharpened long sword that has lost none of its luster due to age. Anyone in the party who can read elvish can see that the inscription on the blade reads "Goblinbane." If the sword passes within 30 feet of any goblin, it glows with a pale green light.

7: Staircase

Two stairways are here: One leads up into the no-longer-existent second floor, and the other leads down into the darkened basement.

the basement

Like the main level above, many places here have suffered from the collapse of the ceiling. If the party investigates the piles of rubble, they might disturb things best left untouched.

11: Rats' Nest

This room is home to a large family of rats. Though they are of ordinary size, they carry a degenerative disease; anyone bitten by a rat must save vs. poison or temporarily lose one point of Strength and Constitution per day. This can be alleviated by a simple *cure disease* spell or by a successful Healing proficiency check. If the afflicted individual goes more than one week without treatment, the loss of ability points becomes permanent.

The rats live in a pile of wood stacked in the corner, apparently brought in by someone who, many years ago, thought this would make a good hideout. There is no sign of such a person.

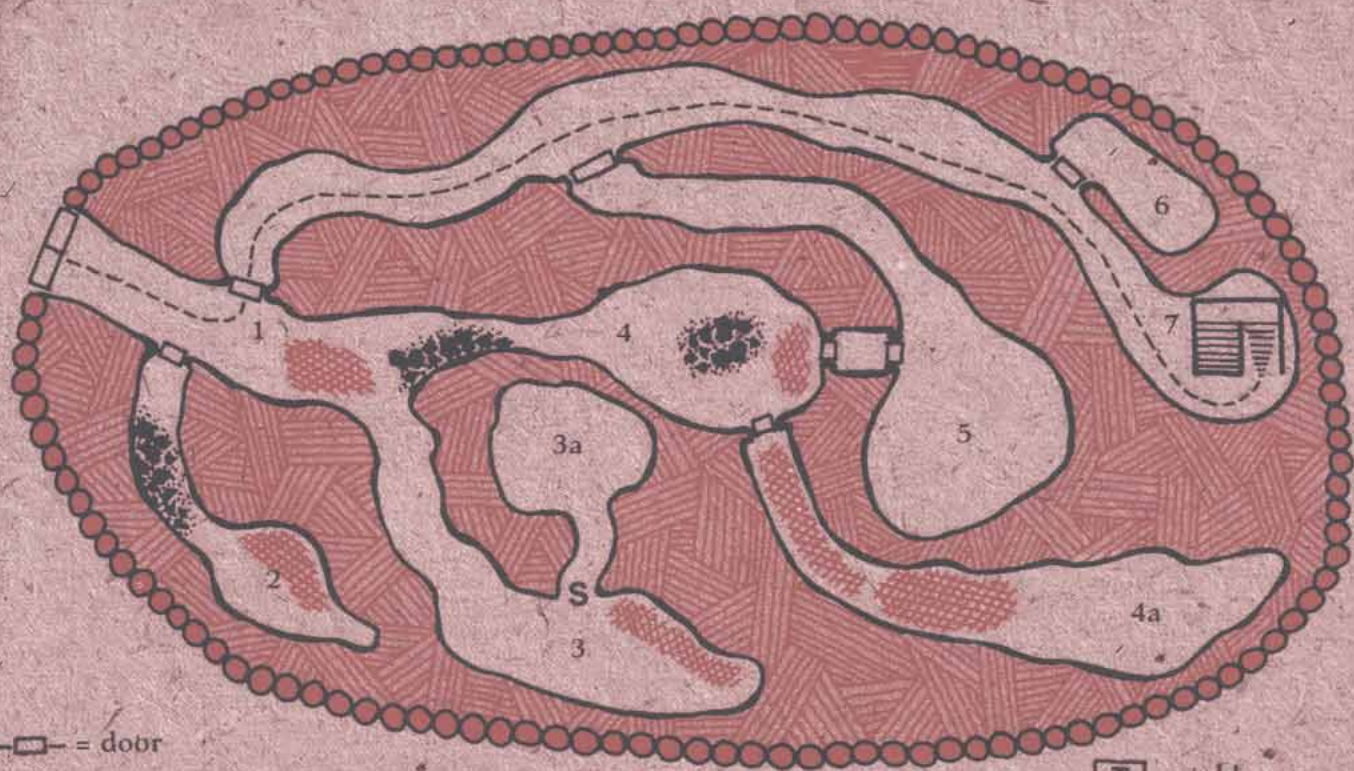
Rats (50): AC 7; MV 15; HD 1/2; hp 1 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1; SA disease (see above); SZ T; ML Unreliable (2); Int Animal (1); AL N; XP 7 each.

13. Secondary Laboratory

The elven tracks lead directly into this room and into the back wall, where they disappear. From the direct line of the footprints, there does not appear to be any hesitation by the elves in walking straight into the wall. If any PCs walk in the path of the footprints, they find themselves transported to the Seamist mountains. Of course, their companions don't know this; they simply appear to have vanished into the wall.

The knights automatically follow the lead of the PCs. They will not volunteer to walk the path first. They will walk the trail of footprints if commanded.

elven ruins



—□— = door

S = secret door

▨ = trapped floor

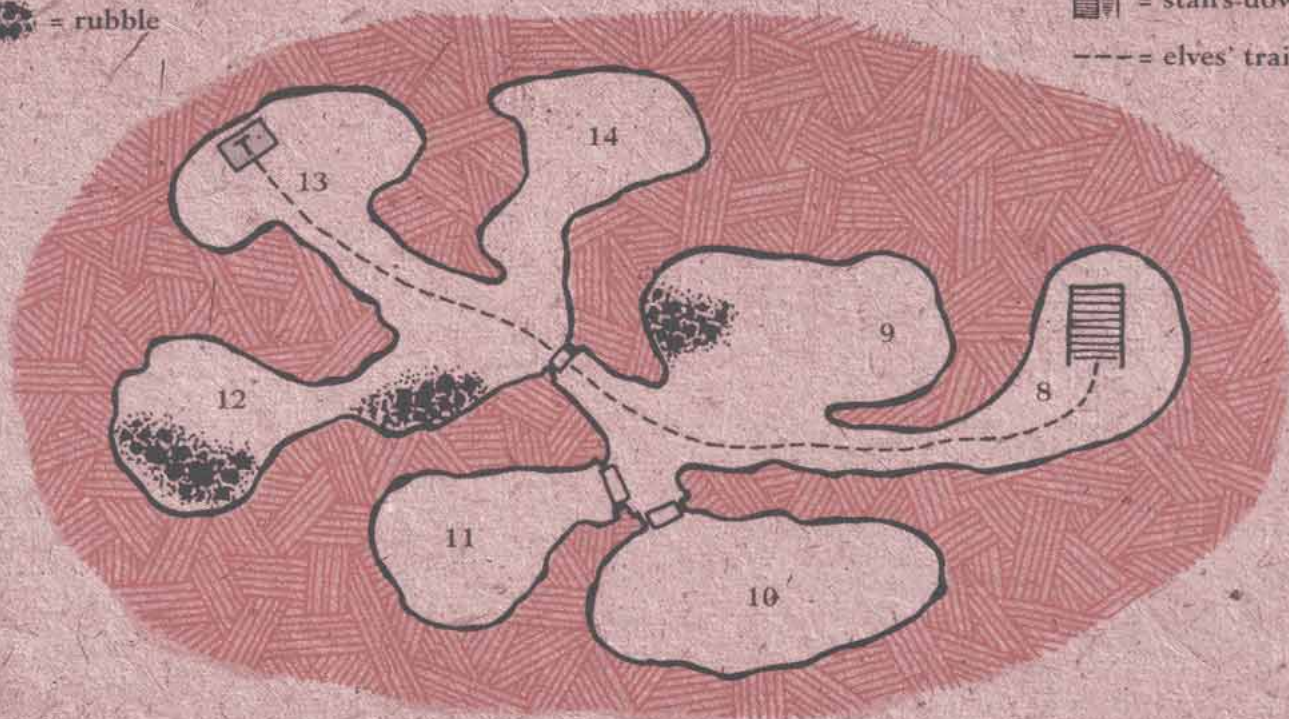
● = rubble

□T = table

▨ = stairs up

▨ = stairs down

--- = elves' trail



map #2

Summary: After following the elven footprints, the PCs are magically transported and arrive before a pair of massive stone doors. A small group of elves guards these doors and they attack immediately. One of them attempts to flee into the bowels of the caverns to alert his superiors.

When the PCs enter the doors, they find themselves in an ancient dwarven fortress. After some exploration, they discover caverns under the mountains beyond the dwarven mines.

After some time exploring under the mountain, they emerge from the caverns and spy Tower Ruannoch, the home of the Elf, Rhuobhe Manslayer.

the ledge

Read the following to the first PC through the teleporting device:

You experience either a moment or an infinity of disorientation—a sudden vertigo that grabs time and stretches it and squeezes it in all directions. You hover in inky blackness forever; a second later, you find yourself kicking frantically in the air. A fall of about six inches causes you to stumble, then you find yourself standing on a 40-foot-wide, flat ledge high in some mountain range. A dropoff of hundreds of feet is at your back. A narrow trail leads off to your left—it looks wide enough to hold a single cart, but not much more.

The air is biting and the wind whistles around your ears. The cold gray granite seems to mock you. Then you realize the reason for this—there are, in fact, faces carved in the granite about 30 feet away from where you stand. You suddenly realize that the faces are carved on doors—then you realize that four elves are guarding those doors. These elves even now advance toward you with arrows nocked to string or long sword drawn from sheath.

Before the character can take any action, he must first roll a save vs. spell or suffer a -2 penalty to his attack rolls for 1d6 rounds because of nausea (a side effect of teleporting leagues away). If other characters teleport through, they suffer the same effect, but they land in different places around the ledge.

The elves press the attack only if they have the numerical advantage. Once they've lost that, they retreat to the safety of the stronghold and draw the doors shut behind them—unless they're stopped.

Elf warriors, F4 (4): AC 3; MV 12; hp 29 each; THAC0 17 (16 with specialization); #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d8 +2 (long sword); SZ M; ML Steady (12); Int High (14); AL NE; XP 175 each.

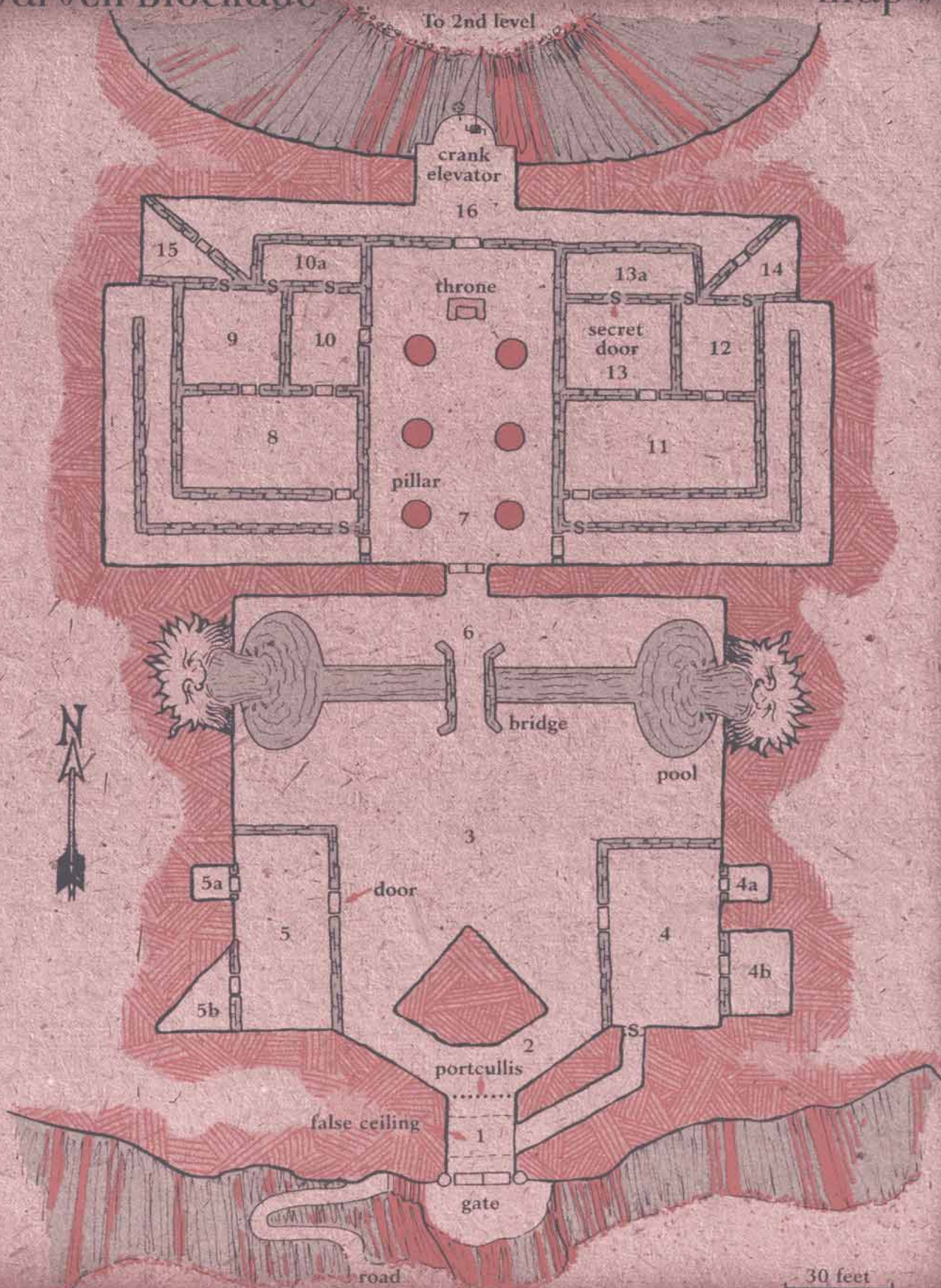
under the mountain

The elves are on guard here to protect against just such an incursion until the kidnapers can cover their steps. They fight fiercely, trying to drive their opponents off the ledge, but they also work as a team. They cover each other's backs and work together to make a sensible retreat if necessary.

The doors are dwarven-carved stone and are 20 feet tall. They can suffer 400 points of bludgeoning damage before crumbling—plenty of time for any escaped elf guards to give fair warning to their brethren.

The rest of this chapter is written assuming that the PCs have the presence of mind to prevent the elves from escaping. If this is not the case, events unfold slightly differently throughout the chapter. The elves who are lounging about in the various rooms will be in states of readiness, and the orogs in the city below will be notified and will be prepared for the party's arrival. The party's success depends on how long it takes for them to break through the doors.

The PCs should also realize at some point that they are without supplies now (unless they had the presence of mind to carry their belongings into the elven ruin). They'll have to make do with the elves' supplies or find a way to go back and fetch their effects.



the dwarven stronghold

This old fortress was built long ago when the dwarves and elves worked together to contain the goblinoid threat. When the humans came to Cerilia, the dwarves continued their vigil here, having contained the orogs beneath the mountains. They began mining operations to sustain themselves so that they might trade their goods for food and other items they couldn't make themselves.

Eventually, however, they became somewhat lax in their duties. The orogs tunneled through the rock and burst in on the unprepared miners. The dwarves from the Upper Hall managed to hold them off for a time, but eventually fell. Though this gave the orogs an open route to the air, they didn't care to leave their underground homes. They rampaged in the dwarven hall for a time, then returned to their warrens.

When the elves of Rhuobhe began investigating the Seamist and Stonecrown mountain ranges, their tunnels soon encountered the orogs' tunnels. A short struggle for dominance ensued, and

Rhuobhe himself eventually had to step in. Binding a fiend to his will, he replaced the orog leader with this creature and forced the goblinoids into subservience. The elves now control the orogs through the fiend, and have free rein between Tower Ruannoch and the dwarven fortress. Though there are still

some creatures in the passageways that bow to no ruler, the elves are relatively unmolested in the underworld.

A total of twenty elves are stationed at various points around the stronghold in addition to the four guarding the ledge. Six are quietly resting in the barracks (areas 4 or 5) at any given time; the rest move around the dwarven fortress according to no predetermined schedule. They travel in groups of no less than two, so that at least one can flee to warn the others.

If these twenty elves are warned about the

intruders, all are awake and alert and take strategic positions throughout the fortress. Likewise, loud battle cries and the clash of weapons will draw all elves within earshot to the source of the conflict.

All the elves despise humans and will do their best to eliminate any humans in the complex. If elves or dwarves are with the party, Rhuobhe's elves will attack to subdue them. When all is finished, Rhuobhe's servants will attempt to turn any demihuman prisoners from humanity, and will release the captives if they vow to

make humans their enemies. The elf warriors will imprison humans only to make them slaves for the Manslayer.

If any of Rhuobhe's elves are captured alive by the PCs, they spit at their captors. They will not talk much except to promise that Rhuobhe will sweep over the human lands, crushing all the short-lived men like annoying insects. If they see any chance to escape, they'll take it. If not, they'll do their best to kill their captors, and barring that, themselves.

The elves know nothing of Rhuobhe's plans, only that they were ordered to guard this outpost. They were told that they would be relieved within a week, or at most, a fortnight. The elves refuse to speak of anything beyond the dwarven tunnels; they want it all to be a surprise.

They are fanatics, having been



brought up to hate the humans, and they do not care what becomes of them as long as they believe that Rhuobhe can eliminate humanity from Cerilia.

The strategic positions taken by the elves are marked with asterisks (*) in the descriptions that follow.

Elf warriors, F3 (20): AC 3; MV 12; hp 17 each; THAC0 18 (17 with specialized long sword or short bow); #AT 3/2 or 2/1; Dmg 1d8 +2 or 1d6/1d6 (long sword or short bow); SA poisoned arrows—save vs. poison or suffer 2d8 damage, successful save inflicts only 1d8; SZ M; ML Steady (12); Int High (14); AL NE; XP 120.

The warriors' leader is a wild-eyed elf named Chulain Thwnnysimiere.

Refer to Map #3 for the following descriptions.

1: Gateway

The gateway is the space between the outer doors and the inner portcullis. Dwarves will notice that the ceiling is not quite flush with the walls surrounding it, indicating that it's either a crushing block or a hiding place for suicide troops. Closer investigation reveals that it is the latter; the ceiling is actually cunningly painted wood with several weak points, where defenders of the keep can crash through to take enemies by surprise. Fortunately, no one is there currently.

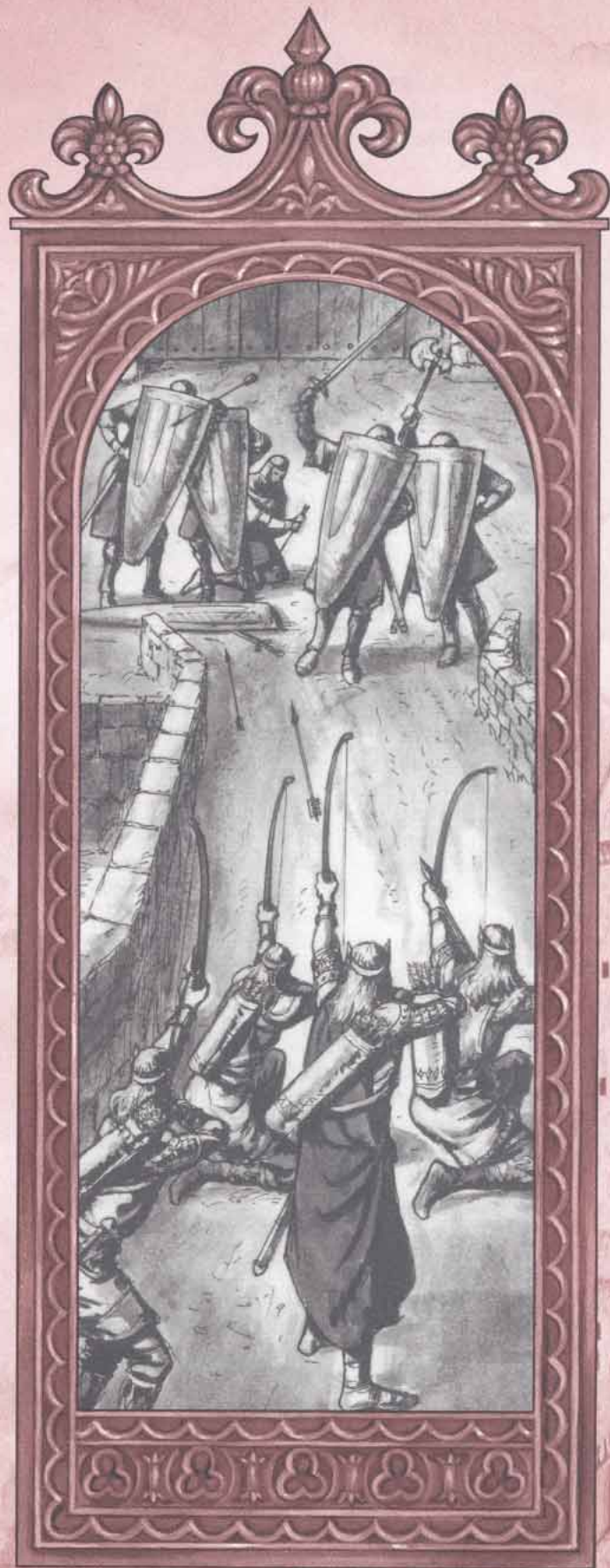
2: Entry*

A great block in front of the portcullis prevents attackers from seeing into the hall beyond, and forces them to split their ranks or risk an attack from behind. Also, if the portcullis is dropped (which will be the case if the elves have given the alarm), a few archers standing here can rain arrows onto attackers with little fear of reprisal. The portcullis can be lifted by two people who make a successful bend bars/lift gates roll.

Four elves defend this area, but they flee to the Battle Hall if the PCs show signs of breaking through. Each elf has 30 arrows that are smeared liberally with their poison.

3: Battle Hall*

This was the dwarves' third line of defense against attacks from the outside. Here the dwarves would make a stand against the invaders.



If overwhelmed, they could retreat across the bridge (6) and fight attackers two at a time. Intruders who tried to cross the river would find dwarven crossbows pinning them to the floor or dropping them into the water.

Water pours from hideous faces carved on the walls, pools in hollows directly below the faces then flows quickly toward the bridge and drains into an underground gulf. The flow is tremendously fast and strong—powerful enough to tumble a man wearing plate mail. The channel through which the water moves is about 30 feet deep. Beneath the bridge is a great gulf about 500 feet deep. Here, the water joins another river, which flows past the bridges and ore carts below, then vanishes into the lightless depths.

The elves employ the same tactics that the dwarves once did: Meet the foe in this room, and in the event of superior foes, fall back across the bridge. From the other side, the elves pierce their foes with poisoned arrows, and, if necessary, fall back into the Great Hall (7).

If freshly roused, six elves make a stand here. If warned, eighteen elves (in addition to any who survived the battle on the ledge) are here, ready for action. Two more are ready to draw the bridge back across the gulf.

4 and 5: Barracks

These rooms each house twelve elves. Throughout both chambers are clothes of elven make and fit as well as pouches, bags, and various personal odds and ends. The beds are simple bedrolls, but are softer than they look, and might make a valuable addition to the party's supplies. Approximately 100 gp are scattered about in various packs, along with some knucklebones and battered decks of cards. The PCs can also find some papers and charcoal and a book of elven poetry, still in the process of being written.

4a and 5a: Latrines

These facilities once had running water coursing through them, but as the dwarves disappeared, so too did the ability to repair the damage that occurred when pipes collapsed or

were crushed. These rooms are now unused, unless it's by the giant centipedes that have crawled into the pipes to dine on the lesser insects in the dwarven hall and below. The centipedes come boiling out of the pipes and attack if anyone enters this room. Otherwise, they remain hidden.

Centipedes, Giant (10): AC 9; MV 9; HD 2 hp; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg Nil; SA Poison—save vs. poison at +4 or paralyzed for 2d6 hours; SZ T; ML 5; Int Non; AL N; XP 35 each.

4b and 5b: Armories

These rooms, in addition to storing weapons and armor, each have an independent operating mechanism for releasing and raising the portcullis. If the two are in conflict for any reason, the one in 4b is defended first.

The two rooms are filled with elven weaponry and armor. Bundles of arrows line the floor, as well as jars of the poison they smear on the arrows. Some finely-forged swords lean against the wall, as well as some silver-headed spears. Breastplates are lined against another wall, and bows and shields round out the package. Each room holds enough equipment for twelve elves, but naturally, fewer items are here if the elves are on guard duty or expecting the party to pass through.

Room 5b is notable in that it holds a teleporter similar to the one in the elven ruins. It transports a user to the outside of the ruins amid a sparkle of green motes, and is located in the far southwestern corner of the room. It can be destroyed simply by digging up the stone in which it is set or by marring the magical lines that are part of its construction. Since it activates only when a living creature stands on it, it is safe to destroy.

If the PCs do not suggest using the device, the DM might allow one of their retainers to suggest the idea. The PCs might be wise to send for reinforcements—additional knights or soldiers to back up the party as it moves through the underworld. However, a messenger will have to travel a minimum of 10 miles to reach the PCs' castle, convince the lords there to send more soldiers, and travel 10 or more miles back. This whole process will take time;

it may be one or two days before any reinforcements can arrive. Since time is of the essence, supporting troops will appear only in time for a mop-up operation or a rescue mission. Still, the PCs may choose to set up a backup plan.

Alternately, the PCs might want to send someone for their supplies as opposed to relying on the elven equipment. This plan will work easily unless the DM can think of a good reason to disallow it.

6: Bridge*

A winch on the far side of the bridge allows the defenders to draw it back if the situation seems hopeless. The bridge is built in a spot where the acoustics of the rushing water are nearly deafening. It's impossible to hear anything on the bridge.

Two elves are here if they are warned of the battle previously, ready to draw the bridge back for their comrades described in area 3. They have their swords and bows close at hand in case the PCs try to circumvent their fellows. If only freshly roused, only one elf rushes here to operate the winch; he may not arrive in time, at the DM's discretion.

If all the elves have gathered in area 3, one of them stands ready to flee and warn the orogs and elves in the outpost to expect an influx of humans.

7: Great Hall

The hall of the dwarven thane is strewn with garbage and filth. The walls are crudely scarred and the floor is gouged and pitted. The skeleton of the dwarven thane still sits on the throne, his golden circlet on his head. The skeleton will not animate; it remains dead no matter what anyone does to it. It is resistant to destruction; only magical fire will harm it.

Once a place for meetings of the entire fortress, the hall is now useless. The pillars and walls are still strong, but nothing of use can be found in this hall anymore, except for the door leading to the mines.

8 and 11: Dining Areas

Once a dining room for half the dwarven community, these chambers have since been thoroughly ransacked. The dust of centuries has been recently swept away, but any further cleaning has been overlooked. Stone tables are overturned, their chairs smashed for kindling. Several dwarven skeletons lie on the

floor; it seems that the elves have arranged them in at least a small measure of dignity.

Nothing of value can be found in this room. It appears that the orogs and elves have cleaned out everything.

9 and 12: Sleeping Rooms

Splinters of wood and moth-eaten shreds that were once bedding are all that remain of the sleeping areas. Again, the skeletons of the many dwarves in this area have been neatly arranged. It seems that the elves have at least some respect for the dead (as long as they're not human).

The northwestern secret door in room 9 is a fairly recent addition, as is the northeastern door of room 12. These can thus be detected on a roll of 1 or 2 on 1d6. Dwarves notice a door on a 1, 2, 3, or 4 on 1d6, while elves detect a door on a 1, 2, or 3 on 1d6.

10: Kitchen

This kitchen serviced both the great hall and area 8. The crockery has been smashed and ground into dust underfoot, while the steel pots and pans have been stolen or dented and smashed beyond use.

10a and 13a: Retreat Rooms*

Long ago, this chamber served as a hiding place for dwarven forces to leap out and surprise their enemies. The elves have continued this tradition, and have stockpiled food and weapons here in anticipation of using them against all comers. The two secret doors in this room allow quick movement through the fortress; this chamber is the first place the elves will retreat, if they can, so that they can bedevil the PCs from behind throughout the rest of the underground.

13: Kitchen

Similar in design and function to room 10, this kitchen served the sleeping room nearby. It does not have a door leading to the Great Hall. The stove in this area is used by the elves to brew most of their poison; there's a stockpile of poison here for about 100 uses.

14 and 15: Guard Stations*

Formerly dressing chambers for miners, these now serve as guard posts for elves who want to harry intruders trying to work the crank elevator. Each room holds



two quivers of arrows, with each quiver holding 24 arrows. Two poison jars are available in each room, each with enough poison to coat 25 arrows. Several steel pickaxes and shovels remain here; they are in good condition.

16. Elevator

This is the mechanism by which the dwarves would descend 500 feet to the bottom of the mine shaft. It's a chain winch elevator, with the cranking mechanism mounted on a 20' x 20' stone slab. Four chains, one on each side of the slab, are attached to the ceiling with massive pulleys (the headgear). Each chain is equipped with its own winch, and each winch requires a total strength of 14 to operate; two people can work a winch at one time. The slab doesn't entirely fill the shaft; a person who stumbles or is careless could fall from it.

Unfortunately, the elevator isn't functioning right now.

The slab has jammed about 200 feet below; one of the chains

has somehow twisted in the winch. An individual with Strength 17 or better and either the Rope Use or Blacksmithing proficiency will be required to unjam it. Such an individual will first need to climb down 200 feet of chain, make the repair, then somehow winch it back up by himself. The descent will require the Mountaineering proficiency with a +30% bonus, or four successful Dexterity checks with a -2 penalty (one check every 50 feet). Failure indicates that the climber falls 300 feet or more all the way to the bottom.

A falling character has only two chances to save himself. The first is a Dexterity check with a -4 penalty to grab the chain before he falls any significant distance. The second opportunity is a chance to grab hold of the stone slab as he falls past it. If the victim succeeds a save vs. paralysis, he can grab hold of the stone. He'll suffer damage for the distance he falls (1d6 per 10 feet), but he won't fall the additional 300 feet to the bottom.

The elves have strung four ropes over the sides of the shaft; the ropes are made from an elven weave that can hold up to 300 pounds each. They reach down to the slab, where more ropes are tied to the chains. Climbing down a rope or a chain require equal degrees of skill.

If the PCs were unable to stop an elf from escaping to report, they may be able to catch her here, if they followed quickly. She has cast off the four ropes from the top of the shaft and is climbing down by hand. She can cover the 200 feet in about 15 minutes. Obviously, she's an easy target for spells or missile fire. However, the PCs must make a choice here: Take advantage of an enemy's weakness to kill her, or allow her to escape with their honor intact. Whatever they choose, they are likely to anger at least some of the knights accompanying them. Still, the knights are loyal and willing to abide by the PCs' decisions; they're the regents, after all, and the knights are under their command.

second level: the mines

Refer to Map #5.

The mines are, as one might expect, extremely dark. The PCs must figure out a system of illumination or, failing that, discover a way to keep the party together in the darkness. Lanterns can be found in the mine, as well as some casks of useable lamp oil. Still, there's probably not enough oil for the

miles-long trek through the underside of the mountain.

The mines are also dank, reeking of wet metal ore and sweating stone. Though the tunnels dry out further into the mine, here they are slick and offer treacherous footing. When crossing bridges over the river or performing other tasks that require sure footing, the PCs and their knights must make Dexterity checks to keep their balance. Otherwise, they lose their footing and go tumbling down. The fast-running river runs about 30 feet deep until it reaches area 7, at which point the depth plummets to more than 100 feet. Anyone who falls into the river may try to struggle to shore before the current and the weight of their encumbrances drag them under for good; the DM should adjudicate this depending on a character's abilities and proficiencies.

The dwarven mines brought forth large quantities of ore and occasionally some silver. The dwarves laid cart tracks, even building high over the underground rivers, and dug caverns following the iron veins. They devised ingenious carts

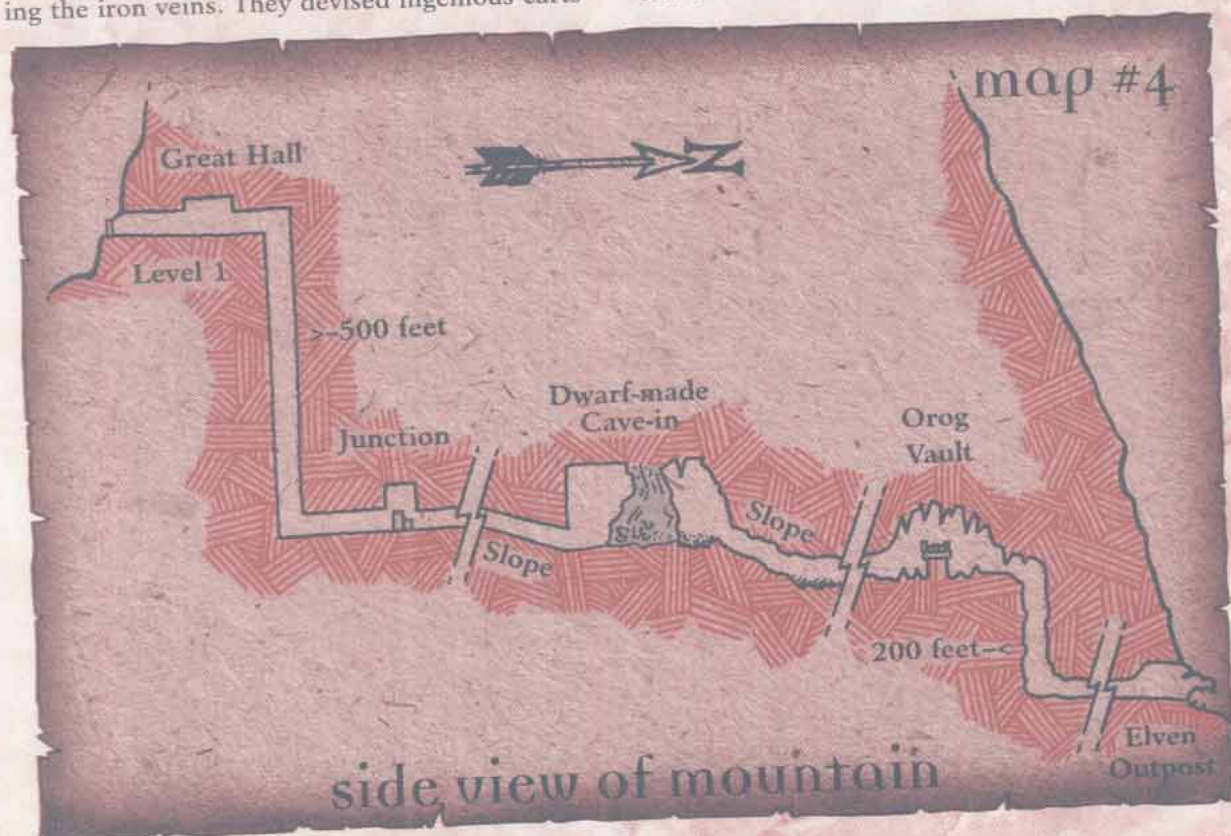
that allowed a driver inside to brake or build up speed, even uphill.

Of course, the tracks haven't survived unscathed over the years. Minor cave-ins have destroyed some of the lines, while other tracks have been ripped up by the orogs. The river has destroyed one of the lines, making it impassable by cart, though an ambitious climber could probably do the trick.

If the PCs choose to use the carts to navigate the tunnels, they'll need to be careful of these hazards. The DM should decide where to place these hazards; the players must determine how to watch for surprises awaiting them.

A successful Intelligence check is required to discover how the carts work; a successful Dexterity check is needed to operate them in time to avoid hazards they cannot see. A failed roll indicates a crash. Those involved in a crash must save vs. spell or be hurled 1d12 feet for 1d4 damage.

These lands below the earth are jointly controlled by orogs and elves. If the elves did not receive an alarm from above, approximately twelve are down here, roaming through the tunnels in pairs. A party of 20 orogs is also in the area, scouting for additional scrap ore to take back to Kal Antherak, the orog city. If the orogs can somehow isolate the elves, they have no



qualms about picking them off pair by pair. The orogs will flee from the humans, however, unless they can lure the human knights away individually. They pick their battles, and they're not stupid enough to assault a large group of knights.

Orog raiders (20): AC 3; MV 9; HD 3; hp 16 each; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 +2 (spear); SZ M (6½' tall); ML Elite (14); Int Average (11); AL NE; XP 120.

1: Drop Zone

The bottom of the elevator shaft is littered with the skeletons of orogs and dwarves. Some still have weapons lodged in their ribs or skulls, while the bones of others are shattered, as if from a great fall.

A path has been cleared among the skeletons leading to the squat mine sheds near the tracks. Inside are six rusted mine carts, each pocked and pitted from years of disuse. Five casks of lantern oil are stacked nearby, ready for the lanterns hanging on the wall. The oil burns well, but is a little smoky.

Pickaxes, shovels, and buckets are stacked neatly in the second shed. Though the buckets have warped over the years, the axes and shovels prove the skill of the dwarves who made them; they still hold an edge, and have only a little rust on them.

The carts will still function if their wheels are oiled a bit. The brakes on the first cart in line are chancy, adding a -2 penalty to any other modifiers that apply to the carts. Four people of average size can fit in one cart. Otherwise, it's not difficult to walk on the tracks.

2: Turnaround #1

The rounding platform for turning the mine wagons has rusted shut, but a little effort will get it turning again. A drift heads into the northeastern wall, following a vein of ore that's barely been tapped.

2a: Mine

Though every scrap of ore has been removed from this room, the chamber still serves a function. A pair of umber hulks (creatures almost unknown in Cerilia) have made this their lair, eating orogs and elves foolish enough to venture by. Of course, they'll be more than happy to make a slight change in their diet.

Umbur Hulks (2): AC 2; MV 6, Br 1-6; HD 8+8; hp 55, 43; THAC0 11; #AT 3; Dmg 3d12/3d12/1d10; SA Confusion (as per the spell); save vs. spell or suffer confusion; SZ L (8' tall, 5' wide); ML Elite (13); Int Average (8); AL CE; XP 4,000.

2b: Mine Intersection

The timbers supporting the ceiling here (the sprags) have been dangerously weakened by the diggings of the umber hulks. Everyone who enters this area must make a Dexterity check. Those who succeed trigger nothing, while those who fail cause enough vibration in the floor to give a final push to the timbers. Everyone in the area marked by dotted lines on the map must save vs. paralyzation to rush successfully from the room; those who fail suffer 4d6 points of damage from the collapsing ceiling.

3: Turnaround #2

If the orogs have heard the clamor of battle ringing through the mines, they will be exploring more cautiously and slowly. They hide in the carefully-dug passage here until they're sure the coast is clear of intruders; they'll try to pick off those who lag behind or forage ahead, but will take no needless risks. They have learned much in their time under the subjugation of the elves.

Since the orogs have concealed this passage with boulders and scree, their opponents suffer a -2 penalty to their surprise check if the orogs should choose to leap out. A dwarf has a 50% chance of noticing the passage without even looking (or will notice it with a successful Wisdom check, whichever is better). If checking for such passages, a dwarf will spy it automatically. Other characters must succeed a Wisdom check

with a -4 penalty to find it, though they can find it automatically if they take the time to search the area.

4: Junction

All the tracks eventually lead here. This area is where the largest amounts of ore first originated. The two major tunnels leading to the biggest veins of ore branch off from this junction, leading in twisting passages through the mountain. The track switch functions normally, as if it had seen some recent use. Even the turnaround seems fairly free of the neglect that years of misuse have bestowed on the rest of the track. There are no carts nearby, however.

5: Turnaround #3

This area was the site of one of the major invasions in the attacks on the dwarven lands. It is a well-traveled passageway, used by the elves and by the orogs; any dust that may have settled here has been brushed away by the passing of many boots.

6: Turnaround #4

This, like Turnaround #1, connects to a lesser mine. A single mine wagon rests here, its axles broken and its wheels scattered. An old lantern lies crushed into the ground.

6a: Mine

A heap of rubble half-fills the passageway here. Many of the rocks are brushed away to allow a crawlspace over the tumbled pile. Beyond the tunnel lies a cavern.

Inside the cavern is a tragic sight. A pair of dwarven skeletons, which could only be children judging from their size, lie within, each with an orog sword still lodged in its ribs. A forgotten band of gold lies near one skeleton's head, a circlet for a fallen princess. Some consolation can be found here, however; an orog skeleton lies nearby with a perfectly sharpened dagger lodged in its chest.

The dagger is of dwarven manufacture and elvish dweomer, a remnant of the days when the two races worked together. The dwarven runes on one side read "Peace-Forged," while the elven runes on the other spell out "Honor-Bound." It does not radiate magic, but under the correct circumstances it becomes a powerful magical weapon. When the wielder speaks the words written on the blade in the respective languages of the runes, the weapon becomes a dagger +3, +5 vs. goblinkin. Its name is *Oathmade*, and the dwarves of nearly any kingdom would pay dearly to have it returned to them.

7: Mine Chamber/Cave-In

This area was intended to be the main expansion into the mountain. However, it turned out to be the dwarves' downfall, for the orogs tunneled into the chamber and began slaughtering dwarven miners. To protect themselves until reinforcements could arrive, the dwarves collapsed the roof of this room, sealing in the orogs, or so they thought.

Unfortunately, the orogs had a back-up plan; they dug through to the junction rooms and flooded the fortress from there, proving the destruction of this room to be unnecessary. The bodies of the two engineers who collapsed the ceiling are still here, pinned under the rock from the cave-in.

No amount of effort will allow passage beyond the collapsed ceiling. The engineers did their job well; the weight of the mountain above presses down on the rocks here, making it an impenetrable wall. Though loose stones can be removed and discarded, this merely causes a shift in loose material above. It doesn't change the pressure on the wall.

8: Orog Tunnel

This cavern lies on the other side of the dwarven-made rockfall; it is a preliminary section of the mine which has never had its walls squared. It now serves as a camping area for orogs ready to venture into the old dwarven lands or for elves preparing for the long trek back to Tower Ruannoch through miles of underground tunnels. A firepit holds fresh ashes; cleared areas near the walls indicate where a significant number of bodies have spent the night.



others areas, the passage is as dry as a bone, with dust clouds rising from the floor with every step the PCs take.

The tunnel is perfectly straight, with no traps or tricks down its entire length. Though an occasional roaring might be heard (as from a river cutting through the rock nearby), or a tremor might be felt shaking the tunnel gently (whether caused by beast, earthquake, or something else entirely), none of it is designed to harm those who would walk these depths. The roaring subsides, leaving the tunnel quiet and echoing, reflecting back every clink and rustle the party makes, magnified a dozen times.

Occasionally, branches lead off the main tunnel. Some lead to dead ends after only a few hundred feet; others may lead as far as a few miles out of the way. They can be populated or not, as the DM desires. Caverns open up occasionally, with pools of water bubbling to the surface. Some of these are fresh; more often than not, they are too heavy in dissolved minerals to be potable. Fish live in the depths of the fresh ones, their eyeless heads occasionally breaking the surface of the water.

The PCs may even pass an infrequent cavern with light streaming in from far, far above. These underground cathedrals are usually home to bats and other denizens, which go into a mad flutter if the PCs' lanterns enter the caves.

This is a strange, exotic world which is exactly as dangerous as the DM deems it and the players make it. The characters should see these bizarre scenes in their nightmares for many months to come.

the orog vault

The shaft eventually leads into a vast cavern—a natural vault with ceilings that soar over 500 feet high. In some places throughout the vault, the slightest sound is magnified and reflected, rolling back and forth through the hollow for endless hours. In other places, any sound,

no matter how loud, is muffled almost immediately.

Stalactites and stalagmites decorate the place; the steady dripping of water has made some incredibly fantastic formations. Some of these have been harvested for use in weapons and shelters, while others have been spared to create a rock garden of stunning proportions.

This vast area is controlled by the orogs living in the city described in area 10. Unlike many of their brethren in other parts of Cerilia, these orogs have degenerated, losing much of their intelligence. There is a simple explanation for this: their best and brightest have gone to feed the hunger of the ruling marquis of the city—a fiend from the nether depths known by the name of Spiritrender.

Still, the orogs are fierce and worthy opponents. They are cunning if not bright, and their animal instincts serve them well in the harsh, lightless underworld. They place five patrols of two to six creatures around the vault (for a total of 20 orogs on patrol at any time). Each sentry carries a sounding horn of different tone so that the other orogs will know from which general area an alarm has come. The other patrols then congregate in a prearranged spot and move cautiously toward the location of the alarm. They try to flank the likely places of invasion and crush the intruders between them.

Approximately 100 orogs live in the city, though the PCs may have disposed of some of them by the time they reach the vault. At least 20 orogs are always on patrol; females are not excluded from this duty. Since life in the caverns is hazardous, everyone must take part in ensuring the survival of the city. Sadly, the greatest threat to the city is its ruler, but the orogs can do nothing about him.

Other creatures also live in the cavern, but they steer clear of the orogs; the humanoids have taught the beasts to respect them.

the ceiling will cause the whole thing to give way, causing 8d6 points of damage to anyone underneath.

9: Orog Ready Cavern

This chamber is still used as a supply room for orog explorers and scavengers. It holds casks of drinking water, sealed against the dust and rot of the caves. There are also chests of rations, carefully wrapped to prevent rodents and insects from burrowing into them. Finally, leather sacks hold changes of clothes, spare arrowheads and spearheads, a brace of six daggers, and half a dozen swords.

10: Old Mine

One of the farthest dwarven ventures into the mountain, this was also one of the worst. It opened the way for the orogs to gain entry into the dwarven stronghold at least a few weeks sooner than they should have. This chamber is now unstable, as any dwarf who enters the room can immediately tell. Apparently, the ceiling here has been weakened somehow, for rock dust and small pebbles drop occasionally from the ceiling. Loud noises (such as shouting, weapons clashing, or explosions), tremors (such as earthquakes, fireballs, or explosions), and probing at

11: Trophy Cave

This cave celebrates the orog victory over the hated dwarves; a small mountain of dwarf skulls, stacked neatly, dominates the center of this room. An observer can guess that at least two hundred skulls must be stacked here. All flesh has been picked clean by time and carrion creatures, leaving only grinning remnants of past dwarven lives.

An orog shaman once hid a magical emerald in a head in the very center of the bottom of the pile. This emerald has a small glowing arrow inside it which points to magical items within 50 feet. The shaman intended to come back for it later, but was killed resisting the elven expansion into the mountain.

12: Deep Passage

This final passage cuts deep into the heart of the mountains, extending as far as the eye can see and beyond. The walls of the tunnel are hacked crudely from the living stone, and the ceiling rises a scant 6 feet high. In some places, the walls are moist and dripping with humidity; stalactites already hang from the ceiling. In



dwarven mine/orog tunnels



- =River
- =Cart Track
- =Switching Post
- =Rubble
- =Tunnel



map #5

100 feet

Drop Zone

Descriptions of the patrols and their locations follow.

Long Sword Patrol/Area 1 (6): AC 3; MV 9; HD 3; hp 20, 16, 14, 12, 12, 8; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 +2 (long swords); SZ M (6½' tall); ML Elite (14); Int Average (11); AL NE; XP 120 each.

Piercer Patrol/Area 7 (4): AC 3; MV 9; HD 3; hp 19, 16, 15, 13; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 +2 (spear); SZ M (6½' tall); ML Elite (14); Int Average (11); AL NE; XP 120 each.

Backbreaker Patrol/Area 9 (4): AC 3; MV 9; HD 3; hp 18, 15, 15, 10; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 +3 (footman's mace); SZ M (6½' tall); ML Elite (14); Int Average (11); AL NE; XP 120 each.

Headcrusher Patrol/Area 10 (4): AC 3; MV 9; HD 3; hp 22, 18, 17, 17; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 +2 (battle axe); SZ M (6½' tall); ML Elite (14); Int Average (11); AL NE; XP 120 each.

Herd Patrol/Area 8 (2): AC 7 (leather); MV 9; HD 3; hp 13, 11; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 +2 (javelin or short sword); SZ M (6½' tall); ML Average (10); Int Average (10); AL NE; XP 120 each.

If the elves come through the orog vault, they enter from area 11, pass through area 7, and exit at area 1. The orog sentries do not challenge the elves, knowing that hundreds more outside could easily swarm in to butcher them. It's an uneasy peace; the orogs enjoy slaying stray elves, but only when they're sure they can cover their tracks. The elves, on the other hand, are above such pettiness, though if they knew that the orogs were killing their people, a great accounting would surely be forthcoming.

I: orog outpost

A number of stone columns mark the boundaries of the orog vault, their massive outlines blocking a full view of the cavern. At least six orog sentries stand watch here at all times, since creatures such as umber hulks have learned no fear of humanoids, no matter how fiercely the orogs try to teach them. The orogs hide inside the columns, having cunningly constructed

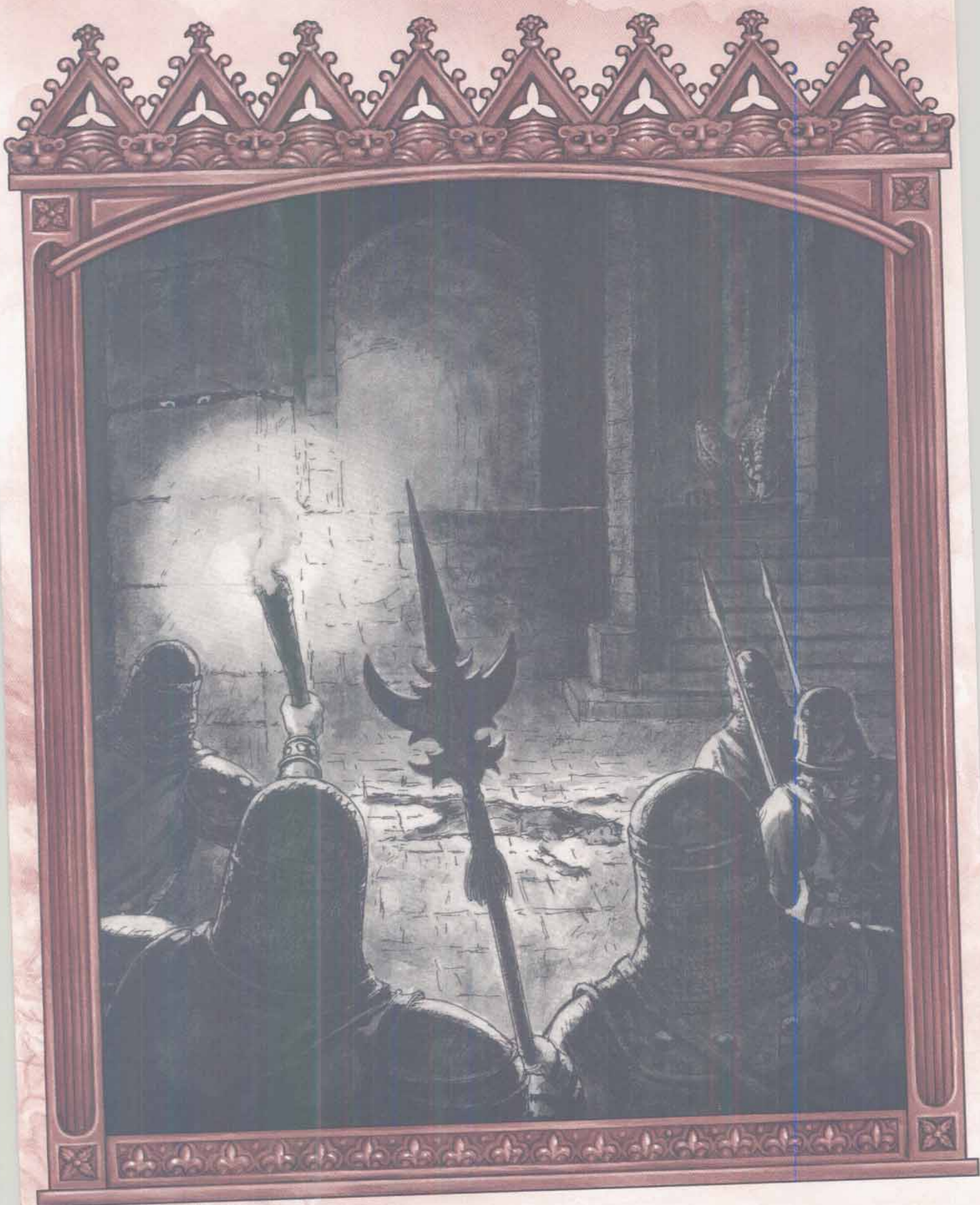
watchposts that are nearly undetectable from the outside. A dwarf can spot these nooks on a roll of 1 or 2 on 1d6 if searching; other races can spot them on a roll of 1 on 1d6.

If an elf escaped from the mines and the party decided not to kill her (or were unable to), the PCs discover her body here, rent and torn. Some of the wounds look as if they were made with swords or other blades, but ragged chunks of flesh are also ripped from her body; most of her face is missing, and even if she could have survived the injuries, she never would have walked again—the back of her left leg is shredded. She appears to have been slain and then savaged by some unknown creature. Blood on the floor attests to the fact that she was dragged a few hundred feet.

The orogs would have been delighted to retrieve the elf's body from the giant lizard that caused these injuries, but their scouts reported the presence of a large party coming down the tunnels. The orogs, afraid of being seen with a dead elf, retreated to their columns. Seeing a party of human knights does nothing to increase their predisposition toward hiding. They will act only when the knights are well beyond them, when it seems likely that they can sound the alarm without fear of being attacked without reinforcements.

If the PCs reach the vault without discovering the orogs hidden in the columns, they hear the mournful bellow of horns behind them. From points all over the cavern come the answering bellows of other horns and the stamping of running feet. All the patrols rush to the attack to prevent the invaders from gaining entry to Kal Antherak. Meanwhile, in the city above, the residents make ready for war.

The combined forces will not attack immediately; instead, the leader of the Headcrusher patrol will request a surrender of the party's weapons, promising no harm to the characters if they do so. He does this for two reasons: to stall for time while the Long sword patrol members emerge from the columns, and because he's been ordered by Spiritrender to bring humans to him alive, if possible. The Headcrusher leader does so with obvious reluctance; he's a warrior aching for battle against untried foes. This should



convince the PCs that they stand a good chance of parley with the orog leader.

If the PCs surrender, or if they hold onto their weapons but make no threatening moves, the Headcrusher leads them straight to Spiritrender. Even dwarves are extended this courtesy, though the Headcrusher insists that all dwarves give up their weapons—it's obvious he'd like to kill any dwarves he encounters, but he has been ordered against this.

If the party attacks, the patrols fight to defend themselves. Though they hope to subdue as many PCs as possible, they have no qualms about killing those who continue to struggle.

Should the PCs discover the orogs before the sentries have a chance to sound their horns, the frightened humanoids will gladly point out the passage the elves took with their hostage. They'll even send one of their own to guide the PCs there. Of course, once the PCs are far enough away that the orogs can scamper to safety, they sound the horns to alert their brethren that the PCs are coming. Any attempt to use a captive orog to stop an attack is futile; the orogs do not care about the fate of a weaker brother. The orogs behave as described above, but will be far more likely to attack with less provocation.

If the characters enter the vault during the daytime, they see light streaming in from the far side of the vault (area 8). Natural sunlight! Not many orogs roam these passages during the daylight hours because the light hurts their eyes, but the dark hours see the population spread across the vault to their assigned tasks.

2: rock garden

This is the outstanding place of beauty in this stretch of the underworld. Here, rocks and water have combined to create something that could never be seen in the sunlit world. Mineral-heavy water has dripped from the ceiling and coalesced around stones on the floor, creating stalactites, stalagmites, and a rock formation that looks like a flow of melted wax across the floor. Spiritrender can sometimes be found here, perhaps even when the PCs pass by, at the DM's option.



3: the bat cave

A flock of bats makes its roost here, flying out from the rift in area 8 for its evening meals. The orogs encourage the bats to remain here, but occasionally harvest a few bats when they desire meat. If this room is entered during the day, over 150 bats hang quiescent from every available surface. At night, they travel across the mountains foraging for insects or fruit.

Touching a bat or disturbing the flock sets off a huge disturbance. The entire flock takes off, flying around the chamber in a mad frenzy, some slipping out into the larger areas of the orog vault and into area 4; this activity naturally alerts the orogs that something is amiss. The Piercer patrol comes to investigate, arriving two rounds after the bats take flight.

Occasionally, a bat will bump into a PC and attempt to bite. For every round that the PCs remain in the chamber, there is a 20% chance that a bat will attack out of pure reflex. After ten rounds of circling and swooping, the bats return to their perches.

Large Bats (150): AC 8; MV 3, Fl 18 (C); HD 1; hp 4 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4; SD Rabies (see below); SZ M (5'); ML Unsteady (5); Int Animal (1); AL N; XP 35 each.

Rabies: 1d4+6 day incubation period; after this time, the victim lives for 10 days. Only a *wish*, *limited wish*, *cure disease*, or similar spell can cure it.

4: slave pen

The slaves that are captured by the orogs must be kept somewhere; that somewhere is this squalid, humid cavern that seems to be infested with every sort of mundane insect the underground has to offer. A group of 20 dull-eyed humans and dwarves are forced to live here; they are emaciated and weak. They have been beaten mercilessly, and those who falter are delivered to Spiritrender. Though the fiend does not relish the taste of broken spirits, they're better than starving.

The slaves are never unwatched. On rare occasions, some have escaped, and the only way the orogs can get more slaves is through trade with the elves. Since the orogs are not on the best of terms with the elves, they guard the slaves heavily and use them as much as they can. They try to make sure that they get the most value from every worker.

The slaves are useless in a fight. All have had their spirits broken thoroughly; freedom in the outer air might reawaken their shattered dreams, but until then, they work and live in a protective daze.

Slaves (Humans 15; Dwarves 5): AC 10; MV 9; HD 0; hp 4 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d2 (fist or rock); SZ M or S; ML Unreliable (3); Int Low (7); AL N; XP 7 each.

Notes: Statistics reflect their current abilities. They may be more powerful after they have been rescued and allowed to recover.

5: fungus lake

This lake is maintained because the orogs subsist primarily on a diet of fungus. The lake keeps the fungi moist, while the bodies of giant spiders, scorpions, and bats provide the compost for the mushrooms to feed on. The mushrooms grow to a height of about 7 feet, and are harvested once every month.

The lake is horribly polluted with spores and such, and anyone who drinks the water must save vs. poison or become violently ill (-4 penalty to attack rolls, AC, and saving throws for 1d10 hours). No large creatures live here, but the area does occasionally attract the creatures of the underworld who creep in here to eat from the harvest.

6: harvest storage

This is the storehouse for the orog vault. In here, meat is hung to cure and the mushrooms are processed into something useable. During the night, orog children toil here, striving to prepare the food that feeds the city. During the day, only the Headcrusher patrol or an occasional stray animal wanders through here.

7: underground passage

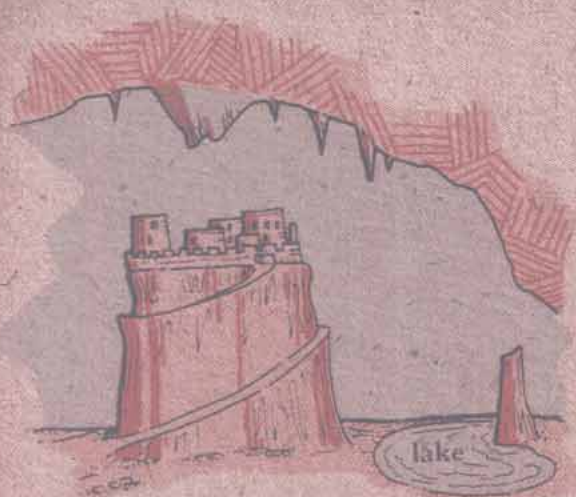
This is a passage between areas 1 and 9. Little of interest can be found here, though an orog stashed about 100 gp worth of stolen dwarven silverware here. She died before she could retrieve it, so it languishes behind a large rock halfway through the passage.

8: herdlands

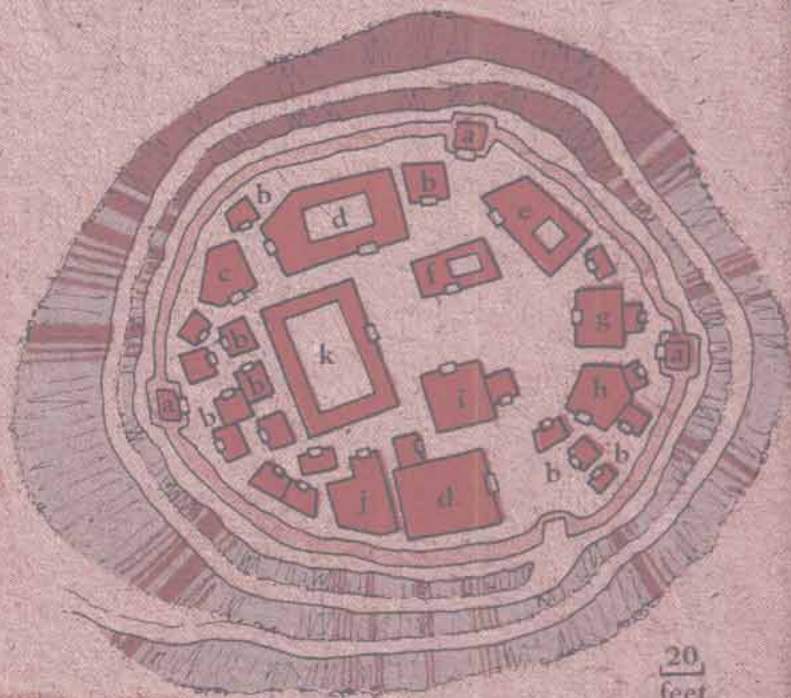
Crystalline deposits line the walls and ceilings of this enclosure, and a great rift in the ceiling allows the sun to shine in for a few hours every day. The crystals magnify and reflect

the orog barrens

The Orog City

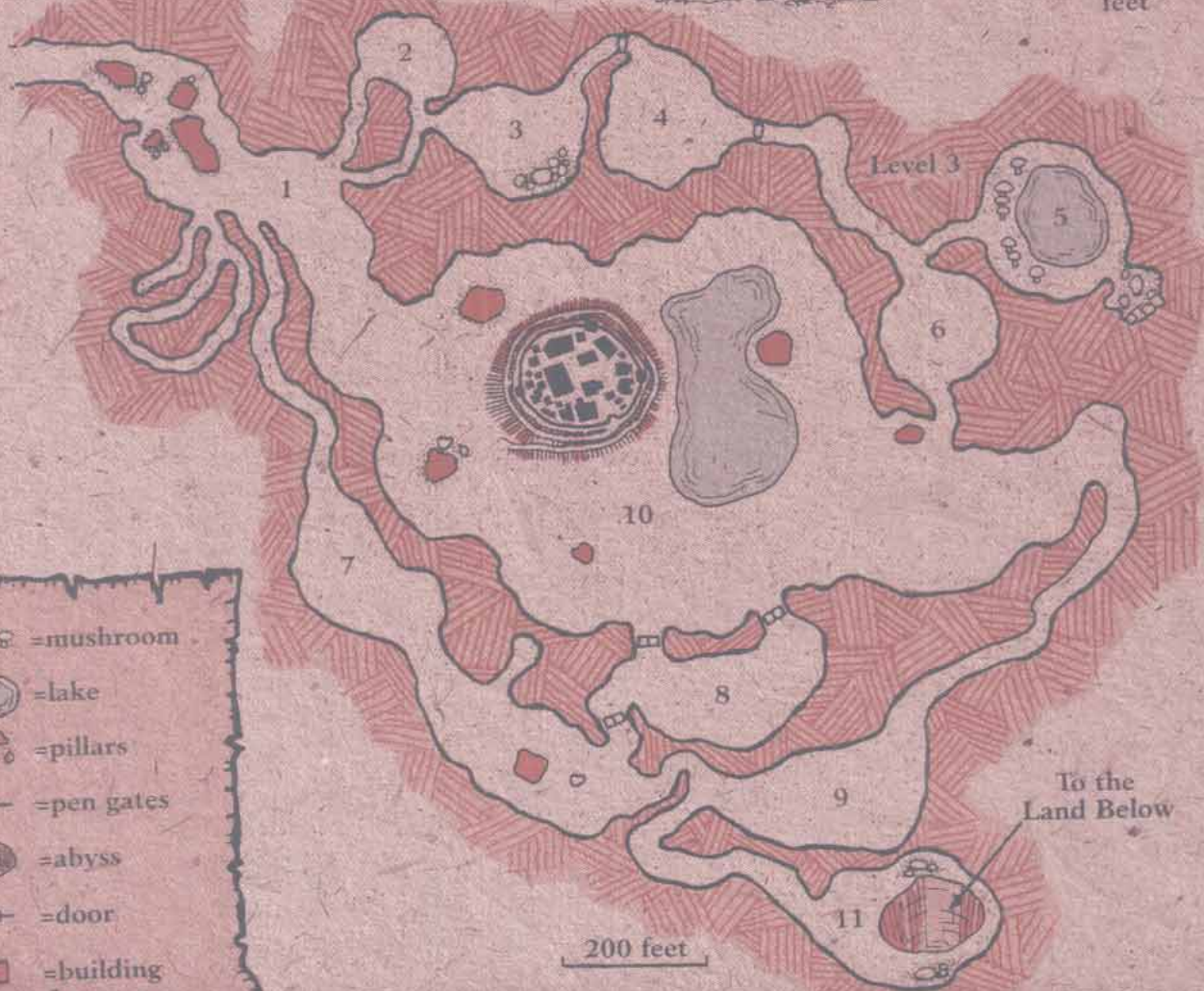


Orog City



20
feet

From
Level 2



map #6

the light about the chamber, providing a few extra hours of light. However, since the ceiling is over 500 feet overhead and the crack is an additional few hundred feet deep, it's all but impossible to get out this way.

About 20 cattle and horses stolen from the daylight land roam this fenced-in area, feeding on grains specially grown near the lake in area 5. The orogs have managed to breed a strain of beast that can subsist on fungus as well. Unfortunately, it's made them rather mean-tempered, so the cattle have little hesitation about trampling an intruder.

These beasts are reserved for only the brightest of occasions, when the whole of Kal Antherak celebrates. Since the arrival of Spiritrender, it seems that the herd has been growing. The fiend consumes the spirits of the orogs; he leaves the bodies to his herd.

9: guard chamber and drill field

This is where the orogs practice their maneuvers. Since the field is covered with rock formations and jumbled scree, it makes for horrible fighting conditions, and thus the orogs improve. They practice fighting in bright, dim, and no light, and with random obstacles placed in the field. The bulk of the population comes here every three days to practice with their weapons and improve themselves.

10: kal antherak, the orog city

The orog city sits atop a plateau that's roughly 200 feet high and is positioned near the center of the cavern. The sides of the plateau are sheer, with few handholds suitable for only the most intrepid of climbers. A path winds around the butte, serving as the only visible entrance and egress from the city. A huge lake lies to the side of the city and is populated with fish and other creatures. Occasionally a splash is heard from the lake, as if some larger creature lived there, but no one has ever spied it. The bottom of the lake has never been discovered; the orogs

know that it goes down far beyond 200 feet.

Any persons approaching the city without first cloaking or camouflaging themselves will be spotted by the orog sentries atop the hill and scattered throughout the vault.

At exactly noon every day, a shaft of sunlight pours down a remarkably straight, narrow crack in the cavern ceiling above. It illuminates the public square in the middle of the city with a warm glow for approximately two minutes. Occasionally, Spiritrender can be seen basking in this glow, his face turned up to the sky to absorb the heat and light.

When the PCs arrive here, they'll see that the city seems remarkably empty and depopulated. Although there's a bustle as the orogs prepare themselves for the party's approach, these preparations echo through vacant streets and across an unused city.

At the base of the plateau is a small cluster of dilapidated houses. A tiny village nestled here at one time; now it's a ghost town, since all the orogs have moved up to the city. Nothing of value can be found in these houses, though they may be used as cover for someone trying to approach the city by stealth.

10a: Gatehouse

In each of the three gatehouses, a single orog is always on guard, watching the surrounds of the city to ward against possible invasions up the ramp. These guards have an excellent vantage point to gaze out over the vault and detect anyone who might try to creep up to the city.

10b: Residences

There are 21 hovels of this type scattered through the city, each the home of one to ten orogs. Though they could conceivably house more, the orog population is small enough that all live comfortably here.

10c: Abandoned House

Once considered a mansion in Kal Antherak, this home belonged to a reclusive orog wizard, but the place is now abandoned. It's reputed to be haunted, and the orogs steer clear of here.

This avoidance is all for the best, for the shells of the victims whose spirits are eaten by Spiritrender are here. Some of the bodies he distributes to the populace, but many continue a catatonic life here as zombies. They never leave the house.

Zombies (15): AC 8; MV 6; HD 2; hp 7 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (fist); SZ M; ML Fearless (20); Int Non (0); AL N; XP 65 each.

Note: These are not zombies in the traditional sense; rather, they are living creatures whose spirits have been stripped away. They do not suffer from rotting.

10d: Dining Halls

These two halls are where the population of Kal Antherak gathers to eat. Greasy food spots, spilled mushroom beer, and scurrying insects are the main attractions of these buildings. An area at the back of the building is used for food preparation and dish cleaning. Orogos cook the food; the slaves clean it up.

10e: Tannery

Like all creatures, the orogs require clothing. The cattle and horses from area 8 provide good quality leather, but there are not enough of them to clothe the whole city. To supplement their needs, the orogs use the skins of their fallen victims to make new leather. Though they can trade for wool and cotton, the orogs prefer to wear the skins of their heroes and their enemies. Those who are particularly privileged trim their clothes with dwarven beards.

The stench of the tannery permeates the city, filtering into every nook and cranny. It's a bitter, acrid smell that burns the nostrils. The orogs have grown accustomed to it, but a visitor to the place will find the stink to be offensive or even nauseating for a good two or three hours before becoming acclimated.

10f: Prison

The prison is a squat, granite affair. It has been empty for years, so the fetor of dead flesh and waste has faded away. However, psychic remnants of the agonies of those who've endured tortures beyond imagining still linger in these dank cells. Anyone of good alignment who enters here must save vs. spell or suffer a momentary agony, staggering from the mental anguish that echoes from the walls.

Naturally, Spiritrender comes here frequently to breathe the air and delight in the pain.

10g: Mill

Even orogs require some level of food preparation. This mill uses slave-driven power to crush mushrooms, insects, and other unappetizing edibles into a paste which is dried out, turned into a powdery grain, and used in baking bread for the residents of the city. The machinery is also useful for crushing enemies to death, as Spiritrender has found and the bloodstains on the mill wheel attest.

During the day, the facility stands empty. At night, two orogs watch over a quartet of slaves who must grind the day's batch of grain.

10h: Distillery

Orogos are not without their entertainments. One of their favorite pastimes (or at least a favorite in this city) is drinking the fermented mash of the grain made in the mill. It's a foul liquor, but one that's more potent than whiskey. This is, naturally, a constantly working industry.

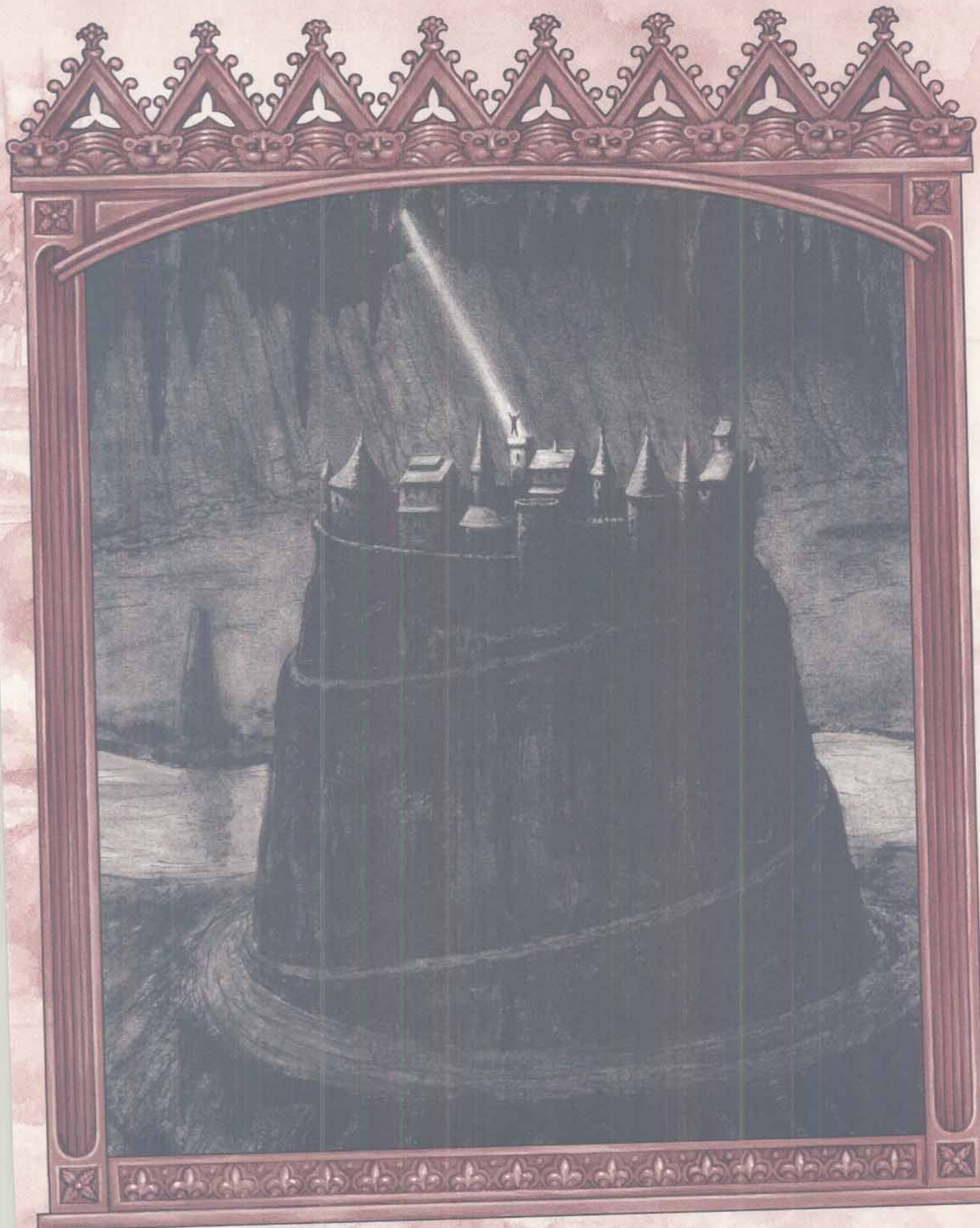
10i-j: Pantries

These serve as food storage areas for the two mess halls. They hold a number of cured bats, loaves of fungus bread, some dead slaves, and a side or two of horse flesh. There are also jugs of the wine and ale of which the orogs are so fond. At any time, a supply is on hand that has been aging for a few months, so it's fairly potent.

10k: Spiritrender

The palace of the Marquis of Kal Antherak is really nothing more than a brooding, one-room house. The smaller chambers inside are formed with curtains hung from rods set into the wall. Some of the curtains are tapestries stolen from the dwarven fortress or traded by the elves, while others are leather with human faces stitched into them.

Six sections make up this building. The first room, closest to the door, serves as the public hall and court for the



marquis. To the right of this area is Spiritrender's laboratory, where he conducts his magical rituals. To the right of the lab is the fiend's personal torture chamber, which he refers to as "my kitchen." Beyond this are his bathing area and his bed. Both of these are ordinary, with no unusual features.

Spiritrender is the child of Rhuobhe and a fiend, recently summoned to this earth by his father. He was bound in an obscure ritual, and now serves unwillingly as Rhuobhe's governor over the orogs. He'll do whatever he can to break free of this hold, since he's accustomed to being a free spirit.

He appears as a tall elf with darkened skin, as if he had walked through a sooty room. His eyes are usually an angry yellow color, but they change to match his emotions. He wears his flaxen hair long and unbound, and dresses almost entirely in black.

Spiritrender, F7, fiend: AC 2; MV 15; hp 45; THAC0 14 (+4 for strength and specialization, +2 for magical spear); #AT 2; Dmg 1d8 +11 (strength +7, specialization +2, spear +2); SA Detect lie; SD never surprised; MR 30%; SZ M (nearly 7'); ML Elite (13); Int Exceptional (15); AL CE; XP 6,000.

Blood strength: Azrai 85

Blood abilities: Detect illusion (minor), Divine aura (major), Regeneration (great).

S 19 (+3, +7), D 17 (+2, +2, -3), C 15 (+1), I 15, W 14, Ch 16.

Personality: Bitter, scheming, brooding, and trapped.

Special Equipment: His only special item is a spear +2 called "Truthslayer." It is +3 vs. lawful good characters and +4 vs. paladins.

Thief Abilities: MS 80%, HS 80%, CW 95%.

If by some strange twist the party is captured and led here, Spiritrender lies sprawled across his blackened iron throne. He does not bother to straighten up as the party enters, but instead regards them languidly. He sizes up the party, then orders the guards to lead all but the blooded characters away from the room. Only two guards remain in the room, but Spiritrender keeps Truthslayer close at hand. He never loses his composure; if a character angers him, Spiritrender will order that person executed with the same emotion that one would order an ale.

"Greetings," he purrs, his voice much harsher than an ordinary elf's. "I'm glad you decided to stop by. If you've made it this far, it's

obvious that you've the tenacity and the drive to make it just a bit farther. I'd like to help you with that, in exchange for a small favor."

If the PCs ask what the favor is, he continues: "I'm not here by will. I've been bound here by my father, the Manslayer. There is a ritual that allows such bindings, and he has always wanted to hold this city. I am his tool. If you promise to release me, I will allow you and your pathetic warriors free passage out of this city, with no provocation from the warriors under my command. If you do not take my offer, I will have you crushed. It's as simple as that.

"However, to prove that I am risking much on you, witness this." He draws aside the curtain leading to his torture chamber, revealing the bodies of other elves. "These fair folk were trying to warn the Manslayer of your coming. I have prevented them from doing so, at great risk to myself. Now, do we have a deal?"

If they agree, he says: "The object of my binding is in a room at the top of the Tower Ruanoch. It is a black obsidian dagger. Simply smash it to the floor, and the binding will be undone."

Spiritrender will not break his oath. He believes in paying his debts; betraying anyone who has done him a favor goes against his grain. However, once he is freed, he offers the PCs no assistance or harm; if they ever encounter him again, they will discover a new relationship—that of adversaries.

Should the PCs point out that Spiritrender is evil, the elven fiend says, "Which is more evil, a single elven child, or a major war raging across Anuire? You be the judge."

If the PCs still refuse to honor his bargain, Spiritrender's eyes flash blue for a moment. He sighs, calls for his guards, and does his level best to have the party killed.

If the PCs raid through the city, Spiritrender leads the counterattack on the party, for he has not had enough bloodshed to suit his taste. This is the perfect opportunity for him to vent some of his nearly bottomless rage. However, if Spiritrender has not been personally attacked, he may stop to parley with the PCs. Though he is not to be trusted, he might well decide to betray his father. Although he is bound to serve Rhuobhe's will, this arrangement is against his own desires.

Rhuobhe never said anything about slaying *all* humans who passed this way. If the PCs can offer something of value to him, such as freedom from Rhuobhe's binding, he may well call off his hordes and let them pass without harm.

On the other hand, Spiritrender is a purely chaotic creature. He may approach under a flag of truce simply to get his troops into position.

If even a single attack has been made on him personally, he will not parley honestly unless he truly believes the PCs can deliver him from his bondage.

When the fiend leads his troops, he first defends the city, unless the party shows no interest in taking it. If the PCs enter the city, orcs fight from the tops of their buildings and from tunnels built under the streets of the city.

If the PCs do not enter the city, the orcs march down the pathway from the city or drop into the shallows at the edge of the lake. From the winding pathway, the orog battalion spreads across the plain to take up defensive positions behind stalagmites and scattered rubble. If they can manage it, they will also fight from house to house in the abandoned village, using the obstacles they've trained with all their lives.

II: to the land below

This massive hole in the ground is a place from which a subterranean wind whistles constantly. The orogs steer clear of it. Their legends tell that fearsome fiends and creatures of nether blackness arise from this hole to steal the spirits of orogs. No one knows

whether this is a legend created by Rhuobhe and Spiritrender or a superstition from before the time elves discovered the vault; regardless, it serves to let the elves enter the orog-held lands without difficulty.

The abyss is about 150 feet across. A staircase is carved around the edge that winds downward as it descends. Wind howls up the broad (15 feet wide) stairs, carrying with it the scent of dirt and damp—the ever-present smell of the underworld.

About 500 feet down, the abyss ends and the stairs open into a flat, underground plain. From here, the wind doesn't seem so stale; it almost smells as if a fresh lake breeze were blowing into the shafts under the mountain.



Elven warriors, F3
(2): AC 4; MV 12; hp 21, 20;
THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 +1
(long sword); SZ M; ML Steady (12); Int
High (14); AL NE; XP 120 each.

If the PCs are fleeing orogs as they descend these stairs, the orogs fire arrows at the party as it escapes. The orogs will have 20-60 shots at the PCs as they descend. The DM is encouraged to try the skirmish rules found in the Rulebook of the BIRTHRIGHT Campaign Setting to resolve this. The orogs hurl imprecations at the PCs, but will not follow into the Land Below.

the elven outpost

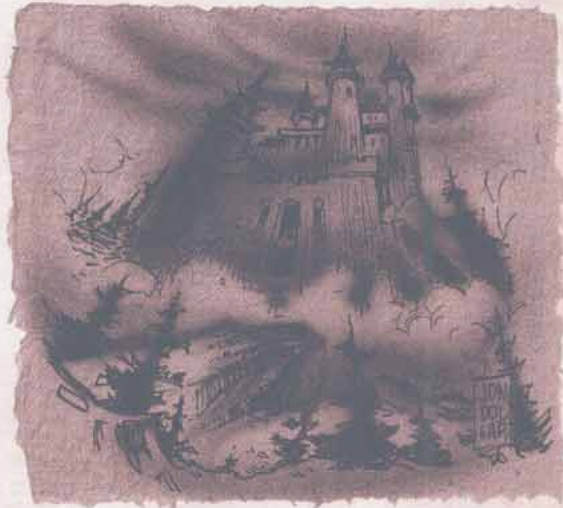
The stairs open into an elaborately tunneled passage. The walls are lined with bricks and the floor is laid with flagstones. The craftsmanship here is distinctively elven. A cool draft blows up the corridor—the freshest air the PCs have breathed since they began this trek. The air hints at an escape from the underworld.

Something else drifts up the corridor—angry shouts and the sound of weapons striking flesh.

If the PCs investigate, they discover two elves beating a half-elf. As the characters approach the scene, the elves' backs are to the party and they're engrossed in their work. The elves are dressed in chain mail and are armed with spears and short swords. Their prisoner wears a drab smock covered with soot and cowers on the floor beneath a flurry of blows and taunts about hopes of escape. Because they're distracted, the elves suffer a -2 penalty to any surprise roll. They will fight furiously, not even pausing to sound a warning. Since no other elves are in the outpost right now, they will not waste their breath.

The prisoner's name is Linras, and he is utterly grateful for his rescue. He can tell the PCs what to expect in the tower, as well as the best way to enter. He escaped from the tower through the blacksmith's chimney, wrapping his hands in cloth to protect them from the heat.

Linras knows the princess is being held in the spire, and he knows that the stairs leading up there are in the northwestern and southeastern corners of the keep. He can also tell the party how to get through the wall of thorns that surrounds the keep: a tiny hole can be found in the western side. Every other entrance is closely watched.





SUMMARY: The PCs sneak into Rhuobhe's tower located on the southern shores of the lake. They must explore the tower and search for the missing princess. Eventually, the PCs fail to silence an alarm and the tower's protectors are roused.

The knights volunteer to draw attention while the PCs continue to search the tower. The PCs hear

Rhuobhe Manslayer himself annihilate the interlopers. After Rhuobhe has destroyed the knights, he comes looking for the PCs.

The PCs reach Aubrae Avan in the tallest tower and prepare to escape with her. Just as they prepare themselves to escape, Rhuobhe bursts in, his sword and eyes blazing.

DM's Notes: This section details the PCs' travails in Tower Ruannoch. A floorplan of Ruannoch can be found on the accompanying poster map in this adventure. It is recommended that the DM keep a copy of the Manslayer's description (found on a cardsheet in the BIRTHRIGHT Campaign Setting) handy, for he plays a major role in the tower.

entrance to the tower

Tower Ruannoch is built into the base of a great tree at the shores of a large, pure lake. Though the tree has long since died, its stump continues to provide a foundation for the tower. The walls were once polished marble, but are now blackened as if a great fire had washed over the tower at some point in the distant past. The reflection of the tower in the waters of the lake show it in a more pristine state, as if something in the tower refused to give in to the ravages of time.

The structure stands over 200 feet high. It is a solid foundation at the base—the standard blocks typical of a castle—but beyond this, the elven architecture shows through. A single spire rises high above the rest of the castle, an accusing finger thrusting into the uncaring sky above.

About three stories up, cages line the outer wall of the castle. Skeletons lie in some of these; in others, emaciated humans and elves clutch the bars without taking notice of their surroundings, as if they've already died inside. They pay no attention to anyone approaching the tower.

All around the base of the tower, a thorny wall grows from the earth. It stands

over 30 feet high, and to all but the most thorough inspections, there appears to be only one way through it: the main pathway through the well-defended main gate. The thorn bushes are alive and thriving—their greenery is resistant to

fire and human-cast magic. The thorns are over an inch long and ooze ichor from their

tips—the ichor is irritating, but not poisonous, although the stuff appears particularly noxious. The bushes are hopelessly entwined, woven in and around each other, so there's no destroying or uprooting a single plant to break through.

The single pathway leading to the tower appears to be a root of the tree that forms the foundation, for it grows out from the base of the dead wood. The path is about 70 feet wide, enough for a battalion of horses to charge in or out. The causeway is polished wood, and surprisingly, there don't seem to be any nicks or scratches from what must be nearly continual horse traffic.

The tower is a marvel of elven architecture. It conveys a sense of brooding anger, commingled with the elven love of nature. It almost seems as if the tower were an artistic representation of nature's expression of hatred at humanity for despoiling Cerilia.

getting in

The best route into the elven compound is through the hole in the western wall of thorns. Unfortunately, a heavily armored man (such as a knight) will not be able to wriggle through the thorns without making enough noise to attract attention. Thus, a successful entry will require someone small to slip in, creep up either the

in the tower





kitchen or blacksmith's ashpipe, and find a way to raise the portcullis.

Another alternative is for the entire party to abandon their armor and crawl through the hole. They'll be able to carry their weapons, but the armor will have to remain behind unless the group can think of an ingenious way to haul it with them.

The party might also choose to enter through area 21, the landing pad. They'll have to make their way through the heart of the castle; that's another adventure in itself.

The group might also elect to simply ride right up the pathway. Of course, this will rouse the entire tower against them, and Rhuobhe is likely to come down to deal with the interlopers himself. However, if the PCs choose this alternative, the DM can rule that they've impressed Rhuobhe enough with their bold actions that the

PCs can move directly to the climax. The Elf might be willing to hand over Aubrae Avan; he might also, at the DM's discretion, simply

try to crush them like the insects Rhuobhe assumes all humans to be.

Magical items or spells could provide another method of entry. Flying into the tower might work if flying PCs could eliminate the guards who

would surely spy them. Teleportation simply won't work, since Rhuobhe has placed heavy magical wards around his tower. The thorny wall does not respond to any magic except that cast by the hands of an elf, so priestly magic will not affect it. Digging under the thorns might prove successful, but would be time-consuming and noisy, thus attracting attention the PCs might not want. Invisible characters stand a fairly good chance of getting in, but would need a spell of silence to avoid the guards.

In short, there are only a few ways into the tower, but a resourceful party should be able to take advantage of some of the natural features of the structure to increase the chance of success. Everything depends on how ingenious they can be.

The elf guards throughout the tower are, for all practical purposes, identical. When referring to an elf guard, use the statistics below. Feel free to adjust hit points up or down for more important guards or for those guarding areas such as stairways. Statistics may also be adjusted to better suit the abilities of the party.

Remember that these elves do not constitute Rhuobhe's entire force (in case the PCs should decide to return here at some point). Over 125 guards reside in this tower as well as cavalry, charioteers, and huntsmen. Also, some of Rhuobhe's forces live in the countryside, engaging in guerrilla warfare against human oppressors.

Elf Guards, F1 (125): AC 5 (chain and shield); MV 12; F1; hp 7 each; THAC0 20 (19 with long sword and bow); #AT 1 or 2; Dmg 1d8 or 1d6; SZ M; ML Elite (13); Int Very (12); AL NE; XP 35.

Rhuobhe is aware of the party's arrival (see area 53); in fact, he's expecting some sort of rescue team to appear. He doesn't want to make the rescue too easy, nor does he want to tell his guards of their approach. It's a test for both groups, to see how well prepared and inventive the two sides are.

The whole fortress seems to tingle with power; a feeling of unease permeates the air. Rhuobhe is carrying his enchanted weapons, and the tower knows it.

the first floor

During the night, this level is fairly free of activity. Although elves have little need for sleep, their horses and other animals need rest, so the elves must allow them their time for rest. However, this does not mean that the area is deserted. Any ruckus made here will draw the attentions of guards, stablehands, and the servants who work nearby.

During the day, this area is much more active. The courtyard is used for training troops, the blacksmith works at his forge, servants bustle back and forth, and grooms lead horses in and out of the stables all day. However, no one but the training guards are likely to interfere if the PCs should come through; most of the workers on the first floor are laborers, not fighters.

1: Portcullis

The portcullis is usually closed, though it opens with surprising frequency for the elven raiders who continually slip in and out. It is controlled from area 15 on the second floor, though it can be lifted by two people making a successful bend bars/lift gates roll, or by one person succeeding at half his normal score. Of course, while this is being attempted, the archers above are raining arrows and boiling lead down on their heads, while the guards within also fire volleys of arrows at them.

2: Entryway

Small slits in the ceiling mark the murder holes leading from area 15. Small stalactites of solidified lead dripping from the ceiling indicate where boiling lead has been poured onto attackers; the smell of burnt flesh still hangs in this area.

Double doors lead into the main body of the fortress. They're made of solid oak and are wrapped with iron bands. They must suffer 75 points of damage before they will give way to intruders.

3 and 4: Guard Chambers

These two rooms each house four elf guards, all of whom are ready to spring out at attackers who might try to break through the

portcullis. If an attack comes, one of the elves will try to reach the bell pull on the northern wall of each chamber. This bell rings in rooms 26 and 27 on the second floor, alerting the guards there. Any warriors still in the barracks can be dressed, armed, and in position near the entry in five rounds.

Each room holds a pair of tables. Cards and dice litter the tables; obviously, the guards are not called to action very often.

5: The Great Courtyard

This courtyard is a mustering ground for the warriors of Ruannoch as well as a training ground for mass combat. It also serves as the one place in the fortress where all the people can gather to hear Rhuobhe's inflammatory or inspirational speeches.

The earthen floor of the area is kept dry and oiled (to minimize dust), but sometimes it is churned by the movement of many feet. If the PCs enter during the day, many slaves are smoothing it down, preparing it for the next day's maneuvers. If they enter at night, the floor has been packed down, the bloody spots turned over and smoothed back into the earth.

The servants will not fight, preferring to hide until the elves have either dispatched the intruders or been laid out themselves. They will not sound the alarm; they have not been trained to that extent. If they see a chance, they may flee out the portcullis unless they are specifically told not to.

6: Stables

This room serves as a combination hayloft and stable. Over 50 horses are stabled here, the mounts of the elite elf cavalry. The 50 horses that pull the war chariots are kept here as well, but they are not trained to fight. The grooms who watch over the horses sleep in the hayloft above, keeping close to their beloved animals at all times. If any threat to the horses becomes

evident, the stablehands will respond in force; otherwise, they're content to let the professional guards do their job.

Elven Medium War Horses (50): AC 7; MV 18; HD 3+3; hp 21 each; THAC0 19; #AT 2; Dmg 1d6/1d8; SZ L; ML Unsteady (7); Int Animal (1); AL N; XP 65 each.

Elf Grooms (6): AC 9; MV 12; HD 1+1; hp 5 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (dagger); SZ M; ML Unsteady (7); Int Average (10); AL NE; XP 35.

7: Blacksmith

The blacksmith of Ruannoch is a dwarf named Screde Noctuln, a happy-go-lucky fellow who's more than happy to voice his opinion on nearly any subject put to him. He is an excellent fencer, disdaining the heavy weapons favored by his brethren for the cut and thrust more favored by the elves. He's not devoted to Rhuobhe; he is paid well to make fine steel weapons, but has never been a particularly good friend of humans. He'll fight if threatened or challenged; otherwise, he's content to watch.

Screde Noctuln, male dwarf, F3: AC 5; MV 6; hp 15; THAC0 18 (17 with rapier); #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d6+4 (specialized rapier and strength); SZ S (4'); ML Elite (13); AL CN; XP 175.
S 16, D 17, C 14, I 14, W 10, Ch 9.
Personality: Garrulous, friendly, cutting wit.

The forge area is home to a chimney that leads outside to allow smoke to escape the tower. The chimney's outside opening is on the third floor, near the base of Rhuobhe's spire. There is also an ash pipe through which Screde dumps the refuse from his labors. The pipe is usually very hot from all the material being dumped through it; a small slag heap lies below the 6-foot drop to the ground. The pipe is about 4 feet wide and 1 foot tall and is made of steel; some handholds are inside it for the periodic cleaning of the pipe. Thus, it is possible for

a smallish person to crawl through. It's possible for someone larger to do so, but this will be an uncomfortable journey along the 30-foot length of the shaft.

8: Northwestern Great Stair

A pair of guards lounge by the stairwell of this massive carved wooden stair. They are bored and easily distracted; stair duty is among the most boring in all the tower. They suffer a -4 penalty to a surprise roll, and won't put up much of a fight if captured.

9: Spring

The spring is the main water source for the tower. It is magically funneled upward from the bedrock near the lake and into the tower, where servants distribute it throughout the fortress. A water hauler stands nearby (area 10), which makes this task less of a chore.

The spring seems to have roots deep in the earth; it has never shown signs of running dry, and it's nearly impossible to poison it. Numerous enemies of the Manslayer have tried and failed.

10: Water Hauler

The water hauler spares the slaves the bother of walking up flights of stairs to deliver water to the kitchen and the second floor in general. It is a bucket and winch system, with pulleys and gears cleverly arranged to allow the hauling of over 100 gallons at a time.

11: War Chariots

The war chariots of the elven forces are stored in this room. Twenty-five vehicles stand here, each lightly armored and studded with spikes and blades. They are a fearsome sight in combat, and look deadly even when sitting at rest.

12: Southeastern Great Stair

As in area 8, the guards here are none too motivated. Whether this is because of their current posting or because of a deeper problem, they're stuck here with little opportunity for promotion. They know it, and thus feel no great need to perform their duty with gusto—just enough to avoid the punishment of the cages (see area 45).

the second floor

The second level is filled with most of the living quarters in the fortress. The slaves and common guards make their beds here; it's not uncommon for people to be up and about at all hours.

Any noise or alarms on this floor are likely to rouse practically the entire level, and in turn, the entire fortress. It's the hub of activity for the keep, so any party of infiltrators will have to be exceptionally quiet to avoid having every member of the fortress descend on their heads.

13 and 14: Southeastern and Northwestern Great Stair

Unlike the stairs below and above, no guards are posted at these positions. Since free movement is permitted on this level, there's no need to report on activities here. There's also little need to protect from intruders gaining access to the tower; the doors to the stairs bolt from the interior of the tower, rather than from the stairwell. If an alarm is raised, elves nearby rush to bar these doors and thus prevent intruders from entering the interior of the keep. The doors can suffer 35 points of damage before falling.

15: Forward Ballista Post

Six elf guards are on duty here at all times. It's their job to make sure that no unauthorized persons gain entry through the front gate; if this happens, the guards alert the entire fortress. To this end, they have a bell pull that connects to areas 26 and 27, as well as area 30, so that as many elves as possible can respond to an alarm. These guards also have a great bull horn that will alert all the elves in the surrounding hills and mountains. They control the portcullis as well, so they have the final word on who enters and who is trapped outside.

These elves also have the duty of providing the first line of defense. They're armed with bows and spears, ten quivers of 25 arrows lined against a wall, and a stock of 15 ballista bolts to fire at attackers. They also have pots of lead and a burning brazier so they are prepared to pour liquid death on those storming the portcullis.

Murder holes adorn the floor, allowing these guards to rain missiles on intruders who somehow manage to push past the portcullis. Boiling lead pours easily down these, as well.



16: Western Ballista Post

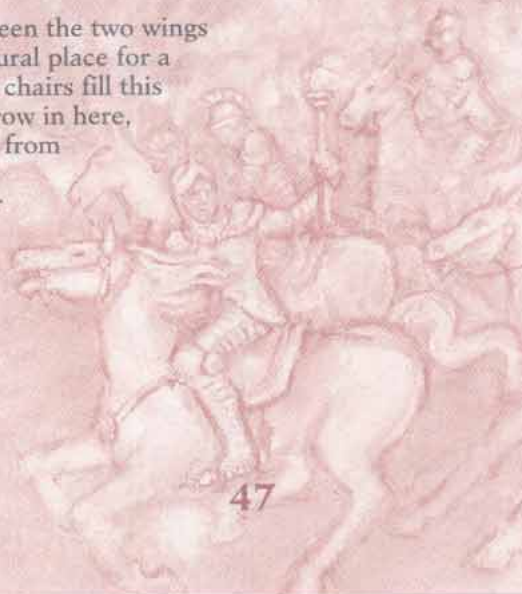
Only three elves guard this post. This is easy duty and a choice position for the guards to hold, and they revel in it. Much of the time, they keep only half an eye peeled for trouble, so it is possible for a party to creep past the elves' unwatchful eyes as long as the group is somewhat surreptitious.

17: Eastern Ballista Post

Like the Western Post, only three elves are on duty here. They don't usually take this post too seriously, as few attacks ever come from this quarter. Still, the elves are serious enough—no attack has ever succeeded in coming from the west.

18: Gathering Hall

The common area between the two wings of guard barracks is a natural place for a gathering hall. Tables and chairs fill this room, and several trees grow in here, thanks to light filtering in from outdoors. This place also serves as the mess hall for the elf guards. When the officers need to address the common



elves, they use this area to gather them.

At any given hour, at least four elves are likely to be in here. During the day, fewer are present, as they are gathering food, guarding, and drilling. In the early evening, most of the fortress's guards are here, whiling away the hours with games, poetry, music, or art. As the night draws on, more and more of them drift off to their personal chambers.

Eventually, those who guard during the night and early morning filter in, preparing themselves for another boring stretch of guard duty. As night draws into morning, even the most die-hard elves decide to catch a quick nap or return to their posts; this is one of the few times the gathering hall stands empty.

19: Kitchen

Although this is the only place in the keep that's constantly busy, the kitchen is one of the safest places for the PCs to investigate. The slaves who staff this place are kept under the supervision of a single elf cook, a domineering female named Lwellya Hoarfrost, who has served Rhuobhe for over 300 years. She is devoted to him, and the slaves are kept in terror of her. She has killed several for inferior service, poor food, or just bad attitude. However, she's nothing in a fight; she has the statistics of a typical guard, but has only 3 hp. Her power comes from the fact that the guards nearby are willing to support whatever decision she makes, and the slaves know it.

The kitchen is filled with knives, utensils, and crockery, all of which are inventoried by Lwellya every day. The northern wall is dominated by a huge fireplace, designed much like the one in the blacksmith's workshop. The ash pipe empties onto a spit of land near the lake; the ashes are carted away and used to fertilize the thorn bushes around the tower. The pipe descends about 50 feet from the kitchen, then drops 10 feet to the ground below.

20: Slaves' Quarters

The entire slave population of the tower sleeps in this room. There are 50 beds for the 150 slaves; since they work in 16 hour shifts, three slaves share a bed (though not always at the same time).

Most of the slaves are

useless as functioning creatures at this point; they've had the spirit beaten from them so often that they barely dare to hold hope. They will not aid in an attack or an escape, though they can be led to safety.

21: Griffon Stables

The Windriders of Ruannoch stable their five griffons here. Though this force of Windriders may not be as impressive as those of other realms, they are still a formidable force in battle, for they are superior to most ground troops. The Windriders can rain death on enemies below without suffering a scratch themselves, so they are among the most valued of Ruannoch's warriors. The five griffons of the Ruannoch Windriders are belligerent and ferocious, attacking anyone who is not specifically a griffon rider or trainer.

Griffon (5): AC 3; MV 12, Fl 30 (C, D if mounted); HD 7; hp 38 each; THAC0 13; #AT 3; Dmg 1d4/1d4/2d8; SZ L; ML Average (11); Int Semi (3); AL N; XP 650 each.

The room is filled with sweet straw and the musky scent of the griffons. Nothing of value (other than the griffons) can be found here.

During the day, the Windriders take their mounts out for exercise and training, so the griffons are here only at night.

21a: Landing Pad

The Windriders use this platform to take off and land. It is scarred and nicked from numerous flights and landings, and though there are places where it has obviously been patched recently, the overall appearance is that of something fragile and ready to break. However, the balcony is well supported and will not collapse unless placed under considerable stress.

The guards in area 31 do not generally watch the base of the tower below them, and the landing pad is rarely guarded, so it serves as a potential entrance into the tower.

21b: Tack and Harness

The riding equipment for all the flying mounts is stored here, as well as spare straps, extra saddles, and the tools for making and repairing the equipment that keeps the elves safely mounted during combat.

In the early evenings, some of the Windriders work on repairing and maintaining their equipment. The others spend time with the mounts and oil their saddles.

When they're finished, usually after dark, they head into the common room and commandeering a few tables for their games and art.

22: Great Eagle Stables

This area is much like the griffon stables, except that the eagles have arranged their straw into nests and an egg lies in one of the nests. Unlike the griffons, the eagles don't attack everyone who comes in here. Indeed, they enjoy a good conversation with anyone who can speak with animals. Though they will not betray their masters, they are fairly reasonable and can be convinced to be quiet as long as no one tries to steal the egg.

Giant Eagle (3): AC 7; MV 3, Fl 48 (D, E if mounted); HD 4; hp 20 each; THAC0 15; #AT 3; Dmg 1d6/1d6/2d6; SZ L; ML Elite (13); Int Average (8); AL N; XP 420.

23: Hippogriff Stables

Like the griffon and eagle stables, the hippogriff stables house little of value. These creatures are kept here during the night, and are fairly unfriendly. However, they can be coaxed into affability with kind words and a little food.

Hippogriffs (3): AC 5; MV 18, Fl 36 (C, D if mounted); HD 3+3; hp 20 each; THAC0 17; #AT 3; Dmg 1d6/1d6/1d10; SZ L; ML Average (9); Int Semi (4); AL N; XP 175.

24: Windriders

The eleven elf Windriders share bunking quarters here, though each faction claims its own area of the barracks. Each Windrider is specialized for a certain type of animal; thus, there are five griffon riders, three hippogriff riders, and three eagle riders. They dress in distinctive armor, proud of their associations, and have gone so far as to adopt some of the mannerisms of their chosen mounts.

Though the Windriders present a united front in the face of the rest of the tower's denizens, they are split among themselves. The griffon riders assert their natural superiority, while the other two contest this mightily.

This room contains the decorative armor of the Windriders, all of which is equal to elven plate mail. Weapons are also stored here; the griffons prefer spears, the great eagles axes, and the hippogriffs broad swords.

Elf Windriders, F4 (11): AC 5 (chain and shield); MV 12; hp 31 each; THAC0 17 (16 with bow); #AT 1 or 2; Dmg 1d8 (axe), 1d6 (spear), or 2d4 (broad sword); SZ M; ML Elite (13); Int Very (12); AL NE; XP 175.

25: Officers' Barracks

The officers of the common guards live here. Five elves currently share this room; each commands 25 elves. They are equal to the Windriders in area 24 above, except that they use *long swords* +1, (part of a matched set called the Silent Five) instead of specialized weapons. Their room is filled with trophies taken from dead humans, arranged in an aesthetically pleasing manner. Skulls, banners, swords, and axes hang on the walls, between paintings of pastoral woodlands.

26 and 27: Dormitory and Barracks

These are the quarters for the 125 elf guards of the tower. In a pinch, they're also used as housing for elves who flee to Ruannoch for safety. Refer to the earlier text for a description of when the barracks are in use.

These rooms are all of similar size, but their content varies from room to room. Each chamber houses about four elves, and most elves pursue a different artistic vision in their free time. Some of their works are passable; others are quite excellent.

the third floor

The third floor is restricted to all but the most important people of the tower, including the elite fighting forces and the commanders of the fortress. The diplomatic quarters are also here, as well as the prison cells (Rhuobhe places a great deal

of importance, although little respect, on his prisoners).

28 and 29: Top Landings of the Great Stairs

Because this is a restricted area of the tower, guards are posted here. Two guards watch to make sure that no unauthorized persons enter the upper floor. Like the floors below, bars are fitted on the inner doors to prevent intruders from gaining access to the interior of the tower.

30: Tower Stair and Audience Chamber

This is the rotunda for the Tower Stair. Rhuobhe and a few trusted lieutenants are the only persons allowed up here; not even servants are allowed up these stairs. Since Rhuobhe is often in his tower, no guards are posted here; none are needed, as no one is fool enough to barge into the tower and take the chance of risking Rhuobhe's wrath.

One of the alarm bells is mounted in this room. If it rings, the warriors in areas 33, 34, 39, and 40 all respond if they're in the area.

Assuming that the PCs reach this spot with their knights, Boeruine's knight, Sir Belladaen, says, "My lords. It is our knightly duty to stand fast and ward off any attackers. Retrieve the princess and return here, for no doubt your abilities will be sorely needed. We will do our best to buy you the time you need to free Avan's daughter from the elves." The other knights nod in assent; only Sir Taresien and Lord Morthan follow the PCs.

31: North Guard Post

Like area 15 on the floor below, this guardpost is manned by six elves, three for each ballista. Although this post contains no murder holes, it is otherwise exactly the same as area 15.

The guards here concern themselves with attacks coming from the lake. They do not generally scan the base of the tower, assuming that the other guards will be able to see any who might try to creep through the thorn wall.

32: Training Room/Melee Weapons

This barren wooden room is devoted entirely to the study and practice of melee weapons by the elite of the tower. The floor is spotted with old brownish stains, places where the blood spilled in this room was not mopped up entirely. Racks of gleaming steel weapons line the walls—nearly every type of hand-to-hand weapon known in the world. At least 20 of each type of sword, axe, and spear are supplied here. Even polearms and bludgeoning weapons are included.

Several hours every evening, the elite forces and commanders come in here for a grueling training session led by Rhuobhe himself. The jailers are the only occupants of this floor who are not routinely invited to these sessions, though they may occasionally receive dispensation to do so.

33: Elite Huntsmen Barracks

The Huntsmen are responsible for bringing in most of the food and for training the warriors outside the tower. They are more skilled than any human ranger could hope to be; most of the other elves are in awe of them. Their skill is such that they must concentrate in order to make tracks, and they have an 80% hide in shadows ability in the woods. Eight Huntsmen share this room.

Elf Huntsmen, F7 (8): AC 6 (leather and Dexterity); MV 12; hp 45 each; THAC0 14 (13 with short sword and bow); #AT 5/2 (two short swords); Dmg 1d6 +2 (short sword and strength bonus); SZ M; ML Champion (16); Int Highly (14); AL NE; XP 975.

Nothing of value can be found in this room; the Huntsmen are not here enough to store valuables. However, they may happen to be here during the course of this adventure. They adhere to the same schedule as the other elite units.

34. Elite War Barracks

These are the shock troops of Rhuobhe's army—the special squad that moves in to wreak havoc on the enemy. They are trained fighter/mages, able to cast spells and swing a blade with equal proficiency.

While the Huntsmen are proficient in stealth, these elves must learn stealth and deadly force in equal measures.

These troops are among the few allowed onto this floor of Rhuobhe's spire. They spend much of the day here; at night, they work out in the melee or missile combat rooms.

Elf Fighter/Mages 5/5 (5): AC 2 (*bracers of defense* AC 4 and *Dexterity*); MV 12; hp 20 each; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (long sword); SA spells; SZ M; ML Champion (16); Int Genius (16); AL NE; XP 650.

Special Equipment: Each elf is equipped with a set of *bracers*, handed down through the generations of elves serving under Rhuobhe. Their weapons vary; they usually carry enchanted broad swords or bows. However, all their weapons have been secreted near the Boeruine border in preparation for a raid.

Spells (4/2/1): 1st—*affect normal fires*, *change self*, *audible glamor*; 2nd—*darkness 15' radius*, *invisibility*; 3rd—*fireball* or *lightning bolt*.

35: Elite Mess Hall

The elite troops gather here to eat. The hall is well decorated, with tasteful tapestries covering the walls. The floor is made of rich loam, with

still-living trees bending and melding to provide tables for the elves.

The chairs in this hall are constructed of sturdy mahogany, with cushions softening the seating. Each chair is large and practically thronelike. However, none is as impressive as the oaken chair at the head of the table on the western wall. This is Rhuobhe's chair, and it practically emanates an aura of its own.

The room is occupied in the morning, at high noon, and following the training sessions in areas 32 and 37.

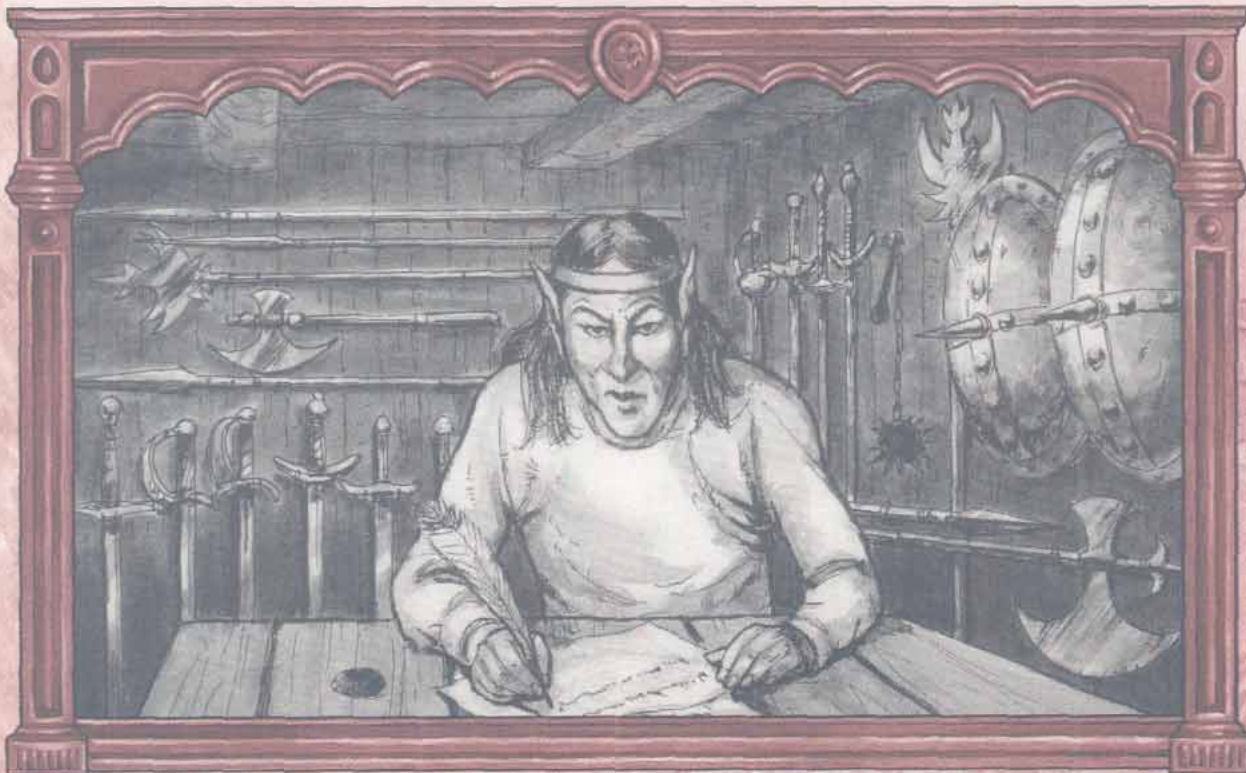
36: Pantry and Kitchen

The food preparation area for the elites is not staffed by slaves, but rather by elves loyal to Rhuobhe. He doesn't want to trust the safety of his general staff to slaves with a burning hatred for elves. The head of the staff is a gentle elf who cares deeply for his cooking. He will not fight unless forced to, but he will raise the alarm after the PCs leave the room.

The four lesser chefs are fairly militant, but are not fighters. Their statistics are the same as the common elf guards.

37: Training Room/Missile Weapons

When the elves are not practicing with melee weapons, they train in here. Targets for bows line the far southern wall, while targets for hurled



weapons are on the closer southern wall. All the targets are in the shapes of humans. The western wall holds racks of bows and quivers of arrows, as well as dozens of daggers, axes, spears, and javelins.

38: Woodland

This room was created by the Elf to reward his more faithful followers and those who have provided him with exceptional service. It is a replica of a woodland, complete with all the sights, sounds, and smells. It seems much more extensive than it actually is, and a score of elves (or humans) could be in here without ever seeing each other. An alarm bell hangs by the door, alerting anyone present should there be an emergency. However, nothing is available to alert the outside.

At any time, at least two elves are likely to be present. If a large party barges in, they will do their best to remain hidden. Since users of this room are likely to be guards who garnered Rhuobhe's attention, they are unwilling to take on a whole group of raiders by themselves. In addition, weapons are not allowed in here.

39: Elite Cavalry Barracks

Members of Rhuobhe's mounted unit live here in a barracks apart from the rest of the tower. These are among the best horsemen in all Anuire, capable of tricks that would make even a Khinasi jealous. They are arrogant and condescending, for they know their horsemanship so well as to be far above anyone else in the castle. Their political enemies in the tower are the charioteers.

Elf Horseman, F4 (50): AC 2 (chain mail and Dexterity); MV 12; hp 33 each; THAC0 17 (16 with long sword and short bow); #AT 1 or 2 (long sword or short bow); Dmg 1d8+1 (long sword and strength bonus); SZ M; ML Champion (16); Int High (13); AL NE; XP 270.

Each rider keeps his polished saddle next to his bedside. These warriors allow no one to borrow their saddles; indeed, they let no one else touch their saddles. The saddles carry weak magic; they allow a rider to remain mounted without having to grasp the reins constantly

Though the elves usually have no need for the magic, it's an added advantage for them in the heat of battle.

40: Elite Chariot Barracks

The horsemen's talents in mounted combat are matched by these elves in chariot combat. They equal their mounted brethren in statistics, though they use spears and javelins in preference to swords or bows. Two elves comprise each chariot team.

The charioteers each keep a special set of chariot reins in their footlockers. The reins allow the holder to transmit orders directly to the horses so that the charioteer's attention can be more fully occupied with fighting the battle, thus allowing two elves to take part in the fight.

41: Diplomatic Quarters

These quarters are reserved for visiting diplomats who aren't of high ambassadorial rank. (Higher level officials are usually offered the room now being used as Aubrae's cell). These chambers are for junior-level diplomats or those who have come to request a favor from Rhuobhe.

The rooms are finely decorated and beautiful, but anyone with a sense for the artistic can see that something about these rooms isn't befitting a diplomat of higher station.

The chamber holds a beautiful mahogany table, four chairs, a large canopied bed, and tapestries covering the wall. A thick carpet covers the floor, and a heavy oaken table rests atop that. A fine crystal decanter, half filled with sparkling spring water, sits atop the table. It was crafted by a long-dead elf crystal-smith and is worth 1,000 gp.

42-43: Jailers' Room and Armory

The four elves who are responsible for the cells in area 44 make their homes and store their weapons here. The room is merely functional, though the southwest corner is devoted to interrogation devices such as the thumb screw, hot poker, and boot. There's also an impressive array of whips and manacles on the wall. Racks of weapons also stand ready for the jailers to use in the event of a prison mutiny.

The back room is the living space itself. Four beds are here, with two elves abed at any given time. They have the statistics of common guards.

44. Prison Cells

As the PCs are infiltrating the tower, it's likely that Rhuobhe will be in here speaking with and interrogating his

guards must be exceptionally careful with their aim. No living prisoners are currently in these cages. Bones still hang in several cages.

prisoners. However, if the PCs venture this way, he'll have departed by the time they arrive. The nonelf prisoners will be more than happy to warn the PCs that Rhuobhe is roaming the tower; any elf prisoners are still convinced they have a chance of redemption. The prisoners include two human knights from Tuor-nen, caught while spying; a human merchant who hoped to make a deal with Rhuobhe; three elf border guards who are being punished for their failure to apprehend the knights; and two dwarves who had broken into the castle to study its architecture.

45: The Cages

The cages are a barbaric punishment for those who have angered the Elf in some way. The cages dangle about 15 feet from the outside castle wall, hung by chains that can be hauled up from the balconies above.

The cages are tiny affairs made of cold steel. They barely accommodate a squatting elf, and thus are particularly harsh on humans. The floors of the cages are barred, spaced far enough apart that a single leg could slip through but not far enough apart that someone could slip out. The bars become uncommonly cold at night, and since the victims are often placed naked into the cages, scraps of skin often freeze to the bars.

The cages are too small for a victim to turn around within unless the prisoner brings his legs up into the cage, presses them against his chest, and turns with tiny movements. However, there is ample room for crows and ravens to slip between the bars and peck at a victim. They've become quite adept at stealing bits of flesh over the years, for the Manslayer has been abundant in his gifts.

The cages closest to the guard post at area 15 are reserved for those prisoners who are exceptionally spirited or those who require extraordinary punishment. Since the guards are often bored while manning the front gate, they occasionally take shots at those trapped within these cages. Sometimes such target practice involves small rocks thrown at the prisoners; more often, arrows are fired, aimed to wound. Since Rhuobhe doesn't want these prisoners killed before they die from exposure, the

46: Guard Post

A pair of guards stand here to protect against any possible jail breaks and to prevent unauthorized folk from exploring parts of the fortress that are prohibited.

first floor of the spire

This floor is where Rhuobhe performs much of his arcane work, his studies, and his bindings of fell creatures not of this world. He is usually here only during the day, working on some nefarious activity to drive the humans from the land. At night, he roams the entire fortress, looking for something to occupy his time. However, days can go by when Rhuobhe does not visit the magical part of his tower.

47: Tower Stair

This is the sole entrance to the higher reaches of the tower. The windows here are large enough for a full-sized human without gear to slip through.

48: Magical Laboratory

Rhuobhe is a perfectionist. Here he perfects his magical skills, working on obscure rules of magic and incantations. These days, he's doing his best to understand human magic, which is subtly different from elven magic. Thus, many human-style magical items can be found lying around the lab. Any spell components the PCs may be seeking can probably be found in this room, assuming that they're not too exotic.

Beakers and burners smoke and flicker on the lab bench. Fizzing noises and bright lights dominate the room, and small explosions rattle the lab desks from time to time. If the PCs try to approach any of these experiments too closely,

they suffer the localized effects of a random 1st-3rd level spell (DM's choice) as if cast by a 10th-level wizard. A save vs. spell is allowed for the PC to avoid the effects entirely.

49: Binding Room

This room contains the instruments used in summoning and binding creatures from the netherworlds. Pentacles and magical circles are inscribed upon the floor and occult symbols hang upon the walls.

The southern wall appears to be a trophy case. Inside are many magical tokens, each placed within a different magical circle. Characters who succeed a Spellcraft proficiency check will realize that each of these items is actually a binding for some creature from another plane; a second successful roll identifies whether the tokens indicate a place of good or evil. Most of the items here are evil.

Of particular interest is the black obsidian dagger. It does not sit in the trophy case; instead, it hangs on the wall in a place of honor, with hellishly glowing runes carved into its surface. The image of Spiritrender is painted on it, placed next to a portrait of Rhuobhe himself. The resemblance is undeniable. The dagger can be broken by simply smashing it to the floor.

second floor of the spire

50: Tower Stair

Embrasures allow outside light and air to filter in freely. The windows stand open in all but the most violent of storms, and close magically during those. The view from this level is astonishing; anyone with good vision could see for hundreds of miles if the mountains didn't obstruct the horizon.

51: Aviary

Birds of all types flock in Rhuobhe's aviary. Since there are no windows here, only overhanging abutments, the birds can enter and depart as they please. Food is always provided for them and the chamber is always kept at a moderate temperature, even in winter, when the aviary is most highly populated. The birds allow any elf in this room to approach them, but flee if any creature other than a full-blooded elf enters the room.

52: Aubrae's Cell

This room is well appointed, suitable for favored ambassadors and royal guests. Thus, it is only fitting that Princess Aubrae would find it her prison during her stay with the Elf. The door is not locked. When the PCs enter, they find the princess lying on a bed reading some elven poetry. She looks up at the PCs with shock and amazement warring on her face, then leaps off the bed.

"Hurry!" she hisses. "Let's get out of here!"

Depending on the PCs' actions, the DM should proceed directly to the climax (see Conflict in the Tower).



top of the spire

53: The Elf's Bedchamber

Anyone expecting some kind of perversion to be practiced here will be sadly disappointed. This is a room of gauzy darkness, with dark blue and green silks spread throughout the room. Somehow, the place is reminiscent of a wooded glade on a cloudy day.

Rhuobhe's bed dominates the room to the east of the stairs. It's a large affair hung with silks and canopies, and is open to the eastern window. Portraits of Rhuobhe in younger, more carefree days hang in the southeast corner of the room, in a space that seems light and airy. Busts of the Manslayer fill the northeastern corner of the room, as well as portraits painted after he was infected by the blood of Azrai. This portion of the room is darker, gloomier, and more introspective in mood. It is a place devoted to loneliness and sadness.

The northwestern corner is devoted to music and writing; lutes, harps, drums, and flutes clutter this space. Sheafs of music, reams of paper covered with poetry, and a few inkwells sit on a nearby desk. Anyone who studies this music and writing will find it disturbing and brooding, with what appears to be a slight magical thread running through each. Perhaps Rhuobhe has found a new way to attack humans?

The southwestern corner of the room is most disturbing. It is devoted to war, and attention is called to this fact as soon as anyone walks up the stairs. It is dark and angry in mood, filled with stands where weapons would hang. A sheath for a powerfully large sword lies near, as well as a wooden case and a mannequin standing 10 feet tall. On the mannequin's head rests a helmet, but no armor is on its body. All of this points to one conclusion: Rhuobhe Manslayer is armed with his legendary weapons and is ready to use them against his foes—in this case, the PCs!

Near the bed is a small table. On the table rests a *crystal ball*. If any of the PCs glance inside the ball, they see an image of themselves glancing inside the ball. Apparently, the resident of this room has been tracking their progress and has been making plans for them. That explains the absence of the weapons and armor.



conflict in the tower

SUMMARY: The PCs are likely to expect a furious fight to the death, but instead, will discover that the Manslayer is not intent on their destruction. They will be allowed take Aubrae Avan back to the Sword and Crown.

These events should take place as soon as the PCs enter Aubrae Avan's cell. If the PCs have entered Rhuobhe's bedchamber, they already know that Rhuobhe is expecting them. Aubrae is grabbing traveling clothing from the closet, preparing herself for flight. Meanwhile, the knights below have been fighting furiously, and from the sounds of the battle, are dying quickly. Silence falls suddenly and heavy footsteps march toward the door. Aubrae whispers, "Too late!" Then the Manslayer stands in the doorway.

There's a moment of silence as the Elf stands in the doorway, regarding all of you. The blood on his sword and spattered on his clothing attests to the struggle your knights waged; they at least managed to damage his clothing. Still, he holds himself proud and strong; he's not even breathing hard, as if the knights were beneath his attention.

If any PC is foolish enough to attack Rhuobhe, he does not hesitate to destroy that character. If the others help, he keeps only one alive. Otherwise, continue with this speech.

Manslayer speaks. "I assume that you have sent word back to your human lands, telling them that you have discovered where the princess has been spirited away. I would do the same in your place. Anything else would be stupid, and while I do not respect humans, I've never accused them of stupidity.

"I fully admit that I was willing to see Avanil and Boeraine destroy each other. The princess came to me with her plan to ensure Boeraine's destruction, implicating the archduke in her kidnapping. This would force your petty kingdoms to declare war on her father's greatest enemy and obliterate him.

"However, the princess has made sure that I would receive some of the blame, and I do not want to accept that blame. Her attempt to betray me has destroyed a very good plan. Princess, as a plotter, you are very good. As a traitor, you have much to learn.

"Now, as a token of my honesty, I will not harm you humans as you leave. However, I do insist that you return anything you may have taken from me."

Aubrae interjects: "You malign me, Manslayer! You seek to sow discontent between the human kingdoms, and you are using me as a pawn!" She turns to you and says, "It's not true! He kidnapped me and told me his plans to use me to destroy the humans!"

Manslayer continues: "You demean yourself and your plans, woman." He returns his attention to you. "Take the princess with you, and force her to speak the truth before your pathetic councils. Remember, if I had not wanted her alive to testify to her duplicity, I would have had her slain as soon as my warriors entered the Seamist tunnels. Take her. If you come back, I will not hesitate to annihilate you." His sword glows as if in anticipation of tasting your blood. His eyes harden, and he steps aside to let you pass through the door. A party of elves waits outside to escort you from the Tower and back to the dwarven fortress.

If the PCs have stolen anything, they would be wise to hide such items or return them. Rhuobhe recognizes anything on sight and is attuned to the magical items of his tower. However, small valuables can be secreted without his knowledge, though he'll probably discover their absence later.

If the PCs pause to deliver more threats or to attempt to converse further, Rhuobhe clenches his teeth and hisses, "Do you have any idea how much I hate you and your kind? Do you? I have spent over two thousand years trying to rid this land of your kind. I have foresworn my entire existence, betrayed my kinsmen, and allowed myself to be perverted by the essence of your Azrai, all in order to crush your kind. Can you imagine this? No. Your puny lives cannot imagine the hatred in my spirit. Now go. Or I will slay you where you stand."

If the PCs do not leave immediately, Rhuobhe begins to slaughter them. He will spare only one in addition to Aubrae Avan, in order for the true story of her betrayal of humanity to be carried back to the conclave. As he fights, his eyes fairly glow with power and fury. (Remember that the Elf cannot be harmed by weapons of less than +3

enchantment; it's unlikely that the PCs have more than one such weapon between the lot of them.)

If the PCs attempt to flee, Rhuobhe chases them down. If they try to fight, he slays them where they stand. He offered them freedom once and they rejected him; there's little he likes more in the world than killing humans.

The elf escorts say nothing as they accompany the PCs through the vast tunnels, and they set their camp well away from the PCs. They do nothing to harm the PCs, nor do they aid them. As long as a single human remains alive to tell the tale of Aubrae Avan, their mission is complete.

If the PCs have destroyed the teleporter in the dwarven fortress, the elves instead escort the party to the borders of the realm, then leave the PCs to find their way from there. Without a word, they fade back into their lands, appearing to vanish before the PCs' eyes.

As soon as the elves are gone, Aubrae tries to make a deal with the party. She has nothing to offer right now, but she's willing to do anything to

keep from testifying before the lords of the land.

She's fairly certain that her father will want to keep the family name

unbesmirched, and will aid the PCs in whatever endeavor they desire.

"Please," she pleads, "take me back to Avani. The Elf was lying to you, you must know that. Simply bringing me back as if I were a prisoner will convince everyone of the truth of his words. You can tell my father that I returned home, and we can forget the whole episode. Please? I can assure you that my father will be grateful to you. These gentlemen," she indicates the knights, "will vouch that I am well and alive at home."

Sir Belladaen interrupts. "My lady, you must come back with us and speak as to the truth of the Manslayer's words. If you are innocent, you have nothing to fear. If you lie, then you will be punished."

Sir Morthan disagrees, and the two begin arguing again.

Aubrae, if left unguarded at night, will do her best to slip away. If caught, she claims that she was simply trying to save face for her father, and promises she will not do it again. Of course, she's lying. She doesn't want to be tried in front of all the regents of Anuire.



SUMMARY: The PCs arrive home with Aubrae Avan in tow. They must decide what to report to the nobles regarding her activities. The PCs must also try her case, treading a thin line between Boeraine and Avan.

DM's Notes: This section assumes that one of Boeraine's knights is still alive and willing to report Aubrae Avan's indiscretions. It might be necessary to have one of the other surviving knights step forward to speak the incriminating words against Aubrae. If the PCs or Sir Bel-ladaen saved the lives of Avan's knights, one of

them may feel honor-bound to testify—even the stiff-necked Lord Morthan.

conclusion

The conclusion of the adventure depends entirely on the actions of the PCs. There is the possibility that they will throw their lot in wholeheartedly with either Avan or Boeraine, or choose to follow another route entirely. They must decide the truth of the whole matter; their choice will alter the face of Anuirean politics for years to come.

the return home

The horses gallop toward town. Word spreads like fire among the village that you've returned. Word seems to spread faster than you can ride, for the people come out to cheer you home. Apparently, many eyes have been watching for you.

Before you reach the gates, a detachment of guards rides out to escort you. Your captain salutes you and welcomes you back to the city. On the ride back, he briefs you on the goings-on since your departure.

Apparently, without your presence to keep the Sword and Crown under control, Avan and Boeraine have both done their best to antagonize one another. They've also managed to bring quite a few supporters and sycophants to their respective camps, and there's not a scion who doesn't have an opinion about them one way or another.

Of course, this doesn't mean the rest of the regents aren't up to their own tricks. The usual rounds of back-stabbing, rumor-spreading, and general ill-will have been going on. On the bright side, several marriages have been arranged, some alliances sealed, and peace treaties signed. Some trade wars have been settled, while new ones have started; the priests seem like they're beginning to reach some sort of ecclesiastical accord; and the wizards are talking about recreating the Royal College of Sorcery in the Imperial City. Overall, it hasn't been so bad, though without your presence to oversee it, there's been some unavoidable chaos.

If the PCs have Aubrae along, Avan's knights (if still among the living) ask respectfully to return her to her father immediately. They give their word that she will remain in the city under her father's parole. If the knights are dead, Avan asks to have her brought to him as soon as possible, making the same guarantee.

Upon the return of the PCs, the sword and the crown are duly passed on to the PC ruler of this kingdom. There's a small ceremony performed by a priest from the Imperial Temple of Haelyn (Anuirean Chapter), with the Mhor and Ghoere as witnesses.

After a day has passed, Archduke Boeraine asks for an audience with them. He's no longer *demanding* an audience; it seems that word of what the PCs have accomplished has spread through the city: They dared the Manslayer's tower, and have returned alive! Of course, if the PCs have no remaining knights or if they ordered their men not to speak of what occurred on the adventure, Boeraine skips this praise.

Regardless, Boeraine asks to see the PCs upon their return, curious to know what they discovered. He also wants to know what progress the PCs made in clearing his good name. Much of his reaction will depend on what the PCs tell him. If the PCs do not tell him what they've learned, Boeraine's knights or Avan's knights pass the word along—even Lord Morthan has learned enough of honor and honesty to know when it

would be dishonorable to protect his liege.

Boeruine is smart enough to know a plot when he hears the slightest details, having played this game for years. Nonetheless, he presses the PCs for details, and seems to have an uncanny grasp of the situation for someone who's only hearing about it now.

There are several possible courses the action can take at this point. Obviously, the list below cannot take every eventuality into account. Instead, it presents the most likely outcomes and the consequences of these actions.

If no one tells of Aubrae's involvement: Aubrae Avan escapes with her pride (and her father's honor) intact. The PCs may choose to lay some sort of blackmail on her; if they choose this route, the prince will find a way to invalidate the claim after a while—the PCs can maintain this hold for only a few months before Avan tires of the game. After all, the PCs may not have any proof of her involvement.

If the PCs do not attempt any blackmail, Prince Avan might offer Aubrae's hand in marriage to the most eligible male PC, preferably a ruler of a kingdom. A wise PC will refuse diplomatically, knowing of her scheming ways. If a character is foolish enough to accept, he'll be dead within a few years unless he makes provisions to protect against such an eventuality.

Through the years, Aubrae will scheme to remove the PCs. Though the secret might not be physically dangerous to her, the fact that the PCs know her past evil threatens her future. She'll take steps to make each of the PCs meet with accidents, no matter how long it takes her.

If word gets to Boeruine of the truth, but not through the PCs: This option is at the DM's discretion, and assumes that the PCs have not chosen to tell of Aubrae's involvement.

Boeruine is angry, and rightly so. Not only has his honor been assaulted, and with serious effect, but the PCs have tried to hide the true culprit. They'll have made themselves accomplices to Aubrae Avan's crime and Boeruine will thereafter regard the PCs as enemies. He'll be unable to prove Avan's involvement in the scheme, which he was dearly hoping to do, and this will cost him face. Thus, he'll do his best to discredit the PCs and thwart their schemes in the future, using his considerable resources to crush them and their hopes and dreams.

If the PCs tell Boeruine everything: Boeruine listens to their words quietly, giving no sign of the fury that must be raging inside him. When they are done, he thanks them politely and takes his leave of the party.

Naturally, Boeruine is highly upset by this news, and even more so by the fact that Prince Darien Avan now probably knows of this blight and will never offer an apology. Boeruine, after a day of deliberation, comes to the PCs again with Prince Avan in tow, begging their indulgence in a small matter of justice. Boeruine asks the PCs to deliver a public, scathing condemnation directed at Avan's daughter's attempt on his honor, or to ask Avan for a public apology on Boeruine's behalf. Apparently, Boeruine has not yet told anyone else of what he knows, hoping for it to come from the mouths of the PCs. He holds the moral high ground over Avan, and continues to do so as Avan refuses to apologize for the princess's actions, publicly or privately.

If the PCs agree to make a public condemnation, they earn the enmity of Avan. Though he will not pursue the feud with the same fervor as would Boeruine, he will certainly do whatever is in his power to humiliate the PCs for their "slight." He gears his treaties toward crushing the PCs, asks his allies and underlings to be difficult when dealing with the characters, and generally makes their lives miserable. Of course, this will not preclude him from attempting to make alliances with them should the shifting winds of politics dictate this. However, he will never entirely forgive them.

Should the PCs refuse to condemn Avan, Boeruine understands. His anger does not befuddle his political sense; he knows the political exigencies of the condemnation and he won't hold a grudge. However, he does then demand that a trial be set for Aubrae Avan, on charges of conspiracy, collusion with enemies of Anuire, and defamation of character.

Of course, Avan refuses even to consider this idea. He will not see his daughter humiliated, and by now, his stubborn pride has gotten the best of him. He will not back down and he will not give in.

At this, Archduke Boeruine loses his temper. The meeting degenerates into a shouting match, as neither side is willing to give an inch.
The PCs'

intervention at this point will only make things worse. Both parties stalk off in their separate directions.

This does not mean that the incident has been forgotten. The next few days fill the Sword and Crown with unease and tension. Everyone is talking about the feud between Boeruine and Avan. No one seems to know why the old rivalry has flared up, since the PCs have probably assured everyone that Rhuobhe was behind the attempt on Boeruine's honor. At least, no one seems to know this on the first day after the argument. The second day carries rumors that Avan was behind the whole episode, and an NPC in the know might clue the PCs that the two are gathering their allies in hopes of forcing some sort of decision.

The third day sees the conclave choosing sides, though there are many who remain neutral, then the realization comes that both Boeruine and Avan have about an equal number of supporters. They ask the Mhor to step in and resolve their differences. The old Mhor declines when Gavin Tael, Baron of Ghoere, objects to the choice of moderator.

Priests are asked to moderate, but there is no temple that has the trust of both Avan and Boeruine, and so the choice is passed. Eventually, the two rivals agree that the best choice for moderator is the ruler of the kingdom in which

the Sword and Crown is being held; in short, the nominal Emperor—the PC holding the sword and the crown.

It looks as if Boeruine has gained his wish, for the holder of the sword and the crown must call a trial for both sides to present their arguments. This is certainly not something the PC can beg out of, for it seems that the fate of all Anuire is at stake.

Bargaining about the state, location, and number of people permitted in the trial runs rampant between the two sides. Each seeks to control every aspect of the trial from start to finish, and the PCs will have to judge what's reasonable and what's not. The two will try any bargain in their power to outmaneuver the other. It's unreasonable and irksome, and the PC regent will have to put a stop to it at some point.

Naturally, Avan wants to keep this whole trial as secret as possible, while Boeruine would like to have it trumpeted across town. However, both defer to the decision of the PC regent, even if they disagree. Obviously, Boeruine's more interested in doing it out of spite, so he'll give in much more readily than the prince.

The day of the trial arrives without flourish or fanfare. The streets of the capital are quiet, but



Boeraine, on the other hand, is well pleased by this turn of events. He'll reward the PCs with aid when they need it, but he won't respect them. He'll see them more as pawns to be pushed about than regents in their own right.

there's an underlying tension that permeates the air. Everyone knows that something big is going to happen, but unless the PCs have advertised the trial and opened it for the general consumption of the nobles, few have any idea what's in store for the day.

the trial

First, Boeraine levels charges against Aubrae Avan: conspiracy, plotting with an enemy of Anuire, conspiring to induce an act of war, and making an attempt against the life of a lawful ruler. He contends that her actions could have led to the downfall of humanity in Anuire; her plottings endangered hundreds of thousands of lives, possibly more.

Princess Avan's only defense is that the Elf was lying and that she had nothing to do with the attack or the abduction. It's her word against the Elf's. Apparently, Boeraine is willing to believe the worst of her, as are his knights and Avan's knights.

Basically, it all boils down to this: The PCs must decide whether the Manslayer spoke the truth or not. It's a devious game they all play, and the PCs are stuck in the middle of it. If they decide in favor of Boeraine or Avan, they sway the balance of power away from the loser. This is one of the most important events that has occurred in their power struggle in many years.

If the PCs rule against Aubrae Avan: Prince Avan is naturally furious. He can't believe the PCs would go to all the trouble of rescuing his daughter only to find her guilty of collaborating with one of humanity's enemies. He'll work toward the PCs' downfall, though he won't devote all his attention to their destruction. However, when he can, he'll seek to hinder them if it doesn't affect his own plans.

If the PCs decide Aubrae is innocent: Boeraine becomes the offended party, furious that such a breach of justice should remain unended. When he can stymie PC plans, he will. He might even send a few soldiers to make the PCs' lives unhappy.

Avan, on the other hand, is overjoyed. Not only has his daughter gained a reprieve, but Boeraine has suffered a crushing and humiliating defeat. Avan will use the PCs for future plots if he can get away with it, and try to manipulate the PCs into helping him in the future.

If the PCs find a compromise: Obviously, there are many compromises that could be found here. They're likely to upset both Boeraine and Avan, but both will respect the PCs for their ability to navigate through the heart of the situation. Neither of the two will do anything to gain revenge, though they may send a few half-hearted warnings.

Of course, the punishment (if any) meted out by the PCs plays a large part in the final attitudes of Avan and Boeraine toward the party. More severe, and Boeraine is inclined toward friendliness; less so, and Avan's pride is assuaged.

As the regents of Anuire take their leave of the PCs' realm at the end of the conclave, one or two stop off to mention some of their troubles. It certainly will not be easy being the keeper of the sword and the crown.

aubrae avan

Anuirean Mage 2

S: 10 AL: LE
D: 15 AC: 9
C: 13 hp: 6
I: 16 Mv: 12
W: 13
Ch: 16

THACO: 20
#AT: 1
Dmg: 1d4 (dagger)

Bloodline: Anduiras—
(great)—70

Equipment: None during
this adventure.

Description/History: Aubrae Avan has always had what other children only dream of. She's always known it, too. She is the only child of Prince Darien Avan, the ruler of Avanil and contender for the Iron Throne. All her life, she has wanted to do something to prove herself to her father, proving that she is a worthy heir.

Unfortunately, her methods of doing so have always been a little less than considerate. She has taken only the most draconian of her father's ideas, and she has become totally willing to sacrifice others in her quest for history.

Though she comes across as a gentle person, one who would scarcely be involved in politics, let alone scheming of any sort, this is all a front. Aubrae is fully her father's daughter; she learned much of her ambition by watching her father at work. She knows how to win favors through a smile and wink of the eye, how to call in debts owed, and the value of a good piece of blackmail.

If she had a preference, she'd take the blackmail, because it gives a greater hold over the victim. It's a hold that never lets go, and that's the kind she wants.

She will not hesitate to use the PCs for whatever she can. Whether it be concessions for Avanil or her own freedom after her double-dealing is discovered, she'll do her best to be the one pulling the strings.



aeric boervine

Anuirean Fighter 12

S: 17 AL: LN
D: 15 AC: -3
C: 15 hp: 100
I: 15 Mv: 12
W: 13
Ch: 16

THACO: 9
#AT: 3/2
Dmg: 2d4+8

Bloodline: Anduiras —
Roele? — 60

Blood Abilities: Bloodmark
(streak of red hair), Battlewise, Divine Aura
(major), Anduiras's Resistance (Great).

Equipment: All of Boervine is the Archduke's to control. He typically carries the sword *Kingsbane*, a *bastard sword* +4, and wears a suit of *field plate* +4.

Description/History: The archduke is one of the most powerful men in all of Anuire, one of the last remaining scions of the Twelve Families that stood by the Roeles. As such, he feels that it is his right to step forward and lead the peoples of Anuire to a new era in their history. He campaigns vigorously among the other nobles of the land, seeking to win their approval and their support. His aim at the current Sword and Crown is to force the issue of the Iron Throne; though he's tried for years, this might well be the year that the lords finally decide to seat a new emperor.

Boervine is trying a new tack this year: he's trying politeness and tact instead of his usual blustering. This will, he hopes, win him enough allies that he might try to force an election to seat him on the Iron Throne.

Of course, with all the plots and counterplots, it's looking like this year won't be his big year after all. Still, he might be able to salvage a victory against Avan; by taking the moral high ground, he can gain many supporters among those who once supported Avan.



prince darien avan

Anuirean Fighter 9

S: 15 AL: LN
D: 18 AC: -3
C: 13 hp: 75
I: 16 Mv: 12
W: 12
Ch: 17

THACO: 12

#AT: 3/2

Dmg: 1d8 +4 /1d6+3

Bloodline: Anduiras (Roele?)—Great—70

Blood Abilities: Animal

Affinity (Major), Bloodmark (dragon birthmark on face), Persuasion (Major), Elemental Control (Great), Regeneration (Great).

Equipment: Avan favors fighting Brecht style—with two weapons and light armor. His *long sword* +4 is called *Scalebiter*; his *short sword* +3 is called *Heartseeker*. He wears a suit of *elven chain mail* +5, a gift to one of his ancestors from the former queen of Tuarhievel.

Description/History: Prince Darien Avan is, basically, a schemer. Though he is not without honor, he is much more concerned about gaining the Iron Throne than the intangible morals of others. However, he will never break his given word, if only because it will make him look bad in the eyes of the other rulers.

During this adventure, he's looking to make allies and friends, and he'll devote all his cunning to influencing his fellow regents. He has no idea what his daughter is involved in, but since she's of his blood, he's convinced that there's more than meets the eye to the whole setup.

He remains friendly and kind, and he'll always turn a fatherly ear to listen to another regent's problems. Once he can provide a favor for another regent, he has that regent in his grasp—and he'll do his best to ensure that he never has to let go.



other npcs

pcs' knights

Human Knights, Fighter 3 (25): AC 2 (plate mail and shield); MV 9; hp 20 each; THACO 18; #AT 1; Dmg 2d4+1 (broad sword); SZ M; ML Elite (14); Int Average (10); AL as PC; XP 120.

Notes: The knights are as loyal as the DM deems.

S 16, D 15, C 15, I 10, W 12, Ch 14.

pcs' scout

Darien Woodsman, male human, Ranger 3: AC 7 (leather armor); MV 12; hp 18; THACO 17; #AT 2; Dmg 1d6/1d6 (short swords); SA Fights with two swords; SZ M; ML Elite (13); AL NG; XP 175.

Notes: Darien is quiet and unassuming.

S 15, D 15, C 15, I 14, W 14, Ch 10.

Thief Abilities: MS 27%, HS 20%.

avan's knights

Sir Uridise, Fighter 5

S 17, D 13, C 16, I 14, W 13, Ch 12.

Lord Morthan, Fighter 3

S 15, D 14, C 16, I 12, W 10, Ch 14.

AC 2 (plate mail and shield); MV 9; hp 47, 22; THACO 14 and 17; #AT 3/2; Dmg 2d4+3, 2d4+2 (broad swords); SZ M; ML Elite (14); AL LN; XP 420 and 175.

Notes: Uridise is reasonable and friendly, while Morthan is an irritating lad with delusions of grandeur.

boeruine's knights

Sir Tariesien, Fighter 6

S 17, D 16, C 13, I 11, W 14, Ch 12.

Sir Belladaen, Fighter 5

S 16, D 16, C 14, I 14, W 13, Ch 14.

AC 2 (plate mail and shield); MV 9; hp 54, 45; THACO 13 and 15; #AT 3/2; Dmg 2d4+3 (broad swords); SZ M; ML Elite (14); AL LN; XP 650 and 420.

Notes: The knights are quietly competent, and usually will not speak unless spoken to.



magical items

oathmade

This dagger was created to forge a bond of friendship between the dwarven kingdoms and the elven nations. With each generation, it was intended to be passed from one race to another. Unfortunately, with the taking of the dwarven stronghold in the Seamists, the dagger was lost to history and knowledge. Both the dwarves and the elves would dearly love to regain the symbol of their lost alliance—the dwarves seek it to force the elves to help aid against the orogs, while the elves would like it to cause the dwarves to sever alliances with the humans.

Oathmade is a *dagger* +3, but is specially enchanted to harm goblins and orogs. It gains a +5 bonus against those creatures. When held within 50 feet of a goblin or orog, it glows with a pale blue light, which grows brighter with proximity to the beast. When it strikes such a creature, the wound flares with an intense blue flame for an instant.

goblinbane

Like *Oathmade*, *Goblinbane* is of dual manufacture. It was made during the heyday of dwarven and elven ability, when the two races could produce such weapons without much effort. The sword is a long sword that glows a pale green within 30 feet of goblinkin. It has no other properties. It belonged to a young elf noble before the humans arrived in Cerilia; that elven line has vanished from the face of the earth, but the elves would appreciate its return.

truthbreaker

This spear, straight from the nether regions of the world, was gifted to the Marquis of Kal Antherak by his mother. It's designed to crush goodness and the champions of good. When held by a neutral or evil creature, the spear functions ordinarily as a +2 weapon. Any good creature touching it suffers 1d8 points of damage. When used against creatures of lawful good alignment the spear's

tip begins to glow lamently and the weapon's bonus increases to +3. When used against paladins of any god, the whole spear lights with an unholy gleam, hellish fires playing about its tip, and it becomes a +4 weapon.

emerald of magic detection

This knuckle-sized gem, worth about 1,000 gp by itself, has an enchantment within it. The magic takes the form of a small white arrow buried in the very center of the emerald. The arrow points unerringly toward any magic within 50 feet, always aiming for the closest source of magic first, then the strongest. If two items of equal magical power are in range, the arrow points first to the closest one, then the other, fluctuating until one of the items is taken out of range.

Unfortunately, it also detects magic carried by its owner, so the possessor must either leave his magic behind or retreat and allow someone else to carry it.

elven saddle and reins

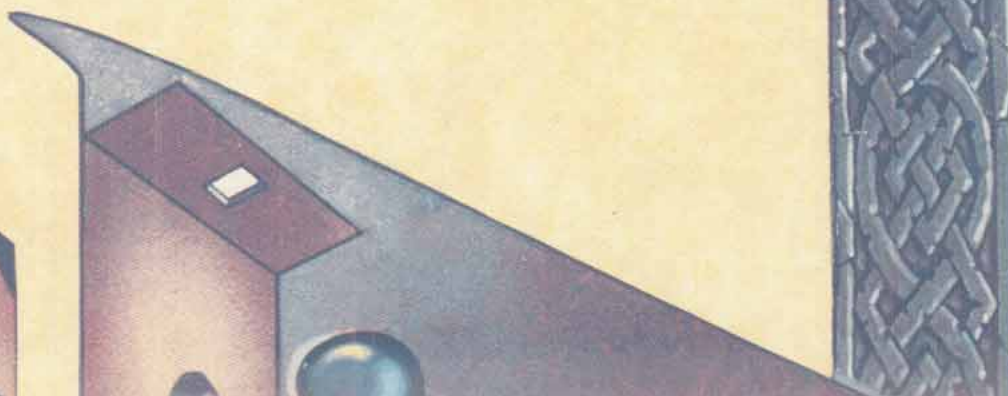
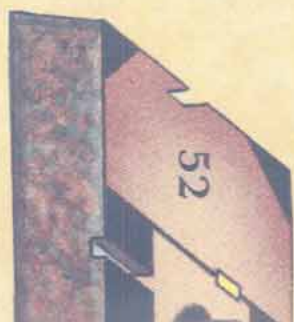
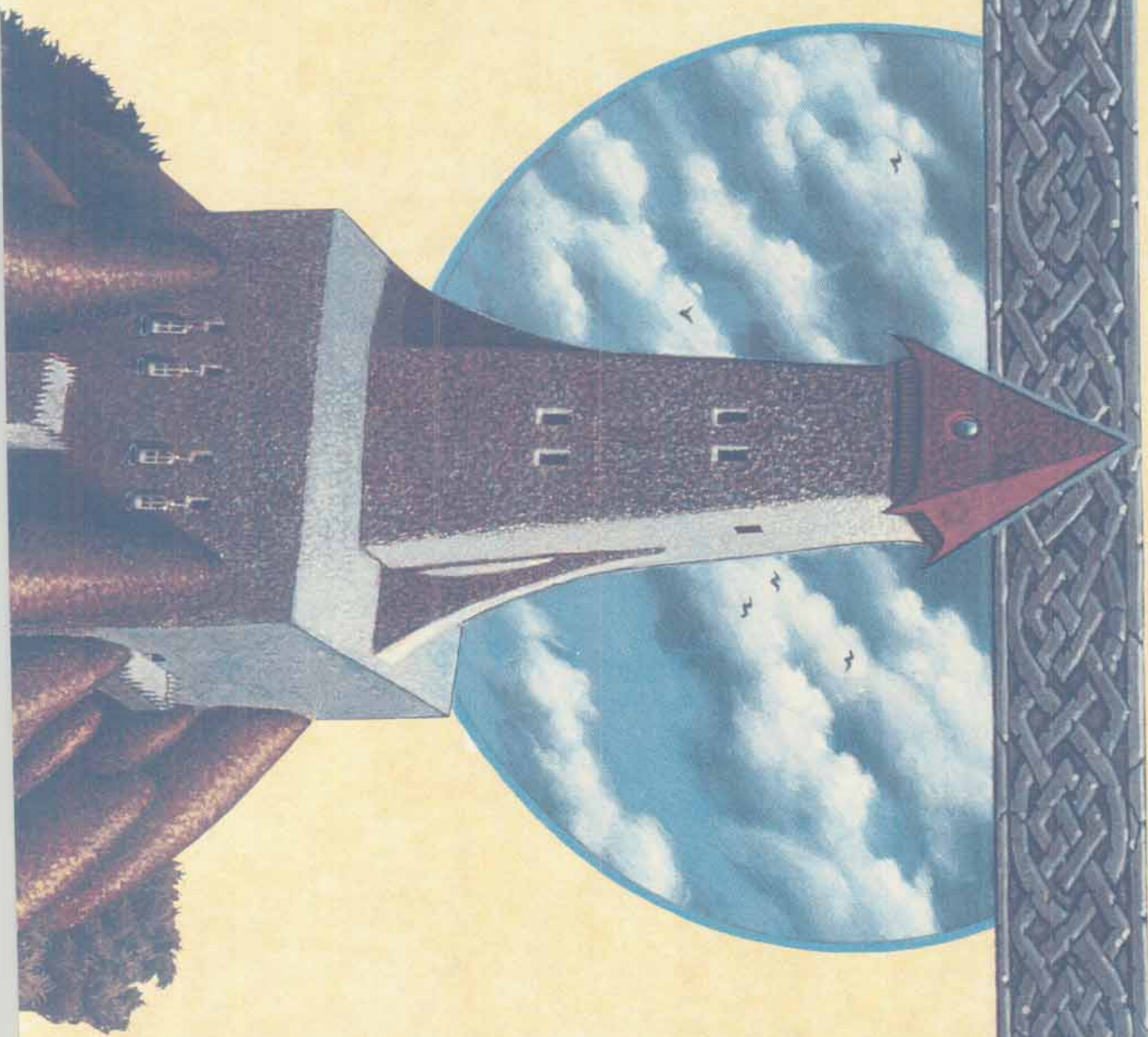
saddle

The elves of Ruannoch have developed saddles that allow riders to remain seated on their horses with absolutely no chance of falling off. Elven wizards have somehow managed to create an item that holds a rider to his horse for as long as the rider desires. A mere wish to adhere or release from the saddle activates the magic. Each saddle fits a regular horse, though could be fitted to a larger creature with minor modifications.

If a rider wishes to adhere to the saddle, absolutely nothing can force the rider off short of a *dispel magic*, *limited wish*, or *wish*. Death causes the rider to fall from the saddle, but also destroys the saddle in the process.

reins

These enchanted reins are fitted for the war chariots of Ruannoch. They allow the charioteer to simply wrap the reins about his waist, steering the horses pulling the chariot by thought alone, thus keeping his hands free for melee and missile weapons.



RAVENHOLT



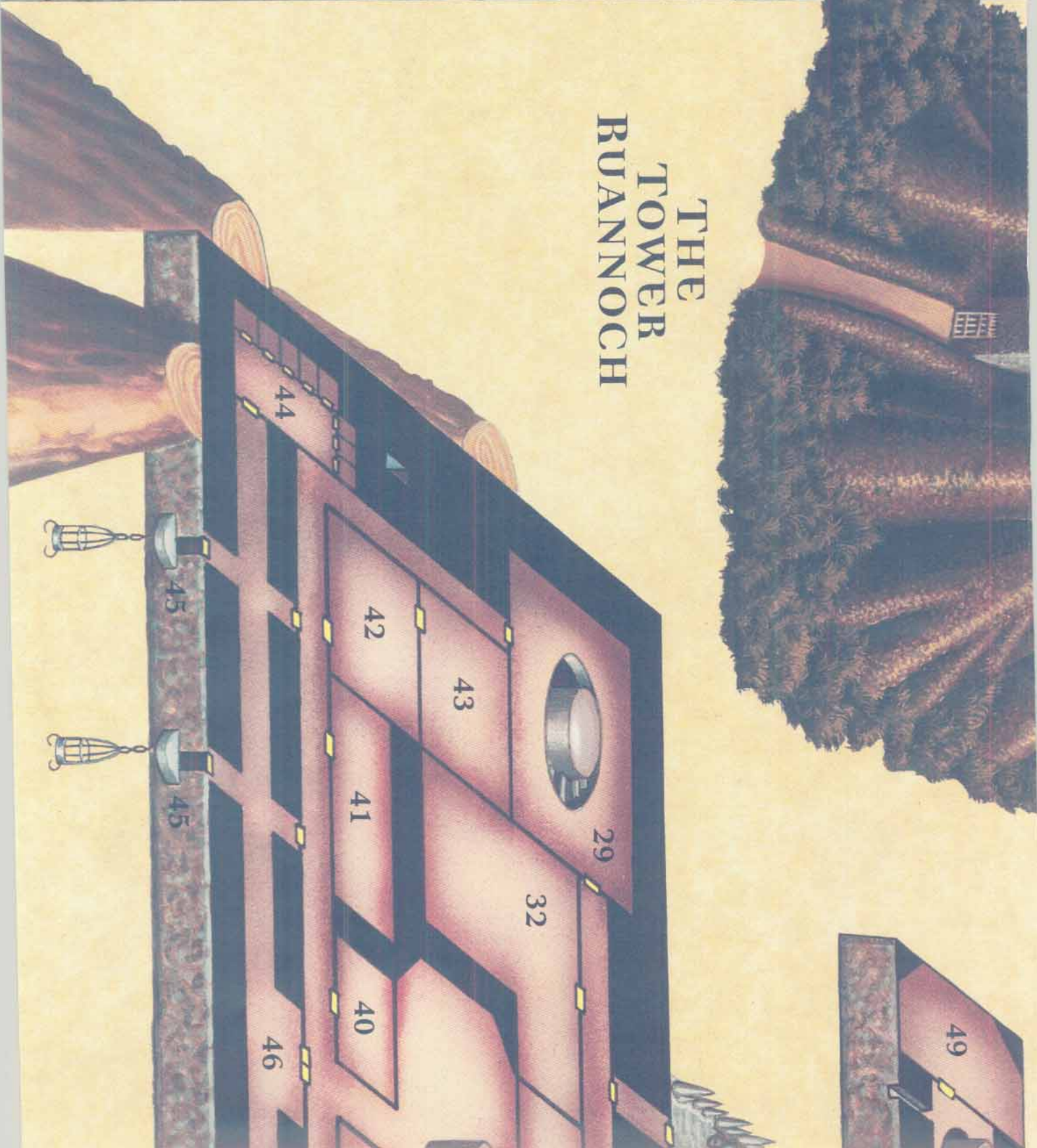
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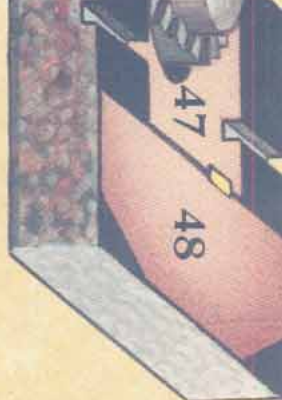
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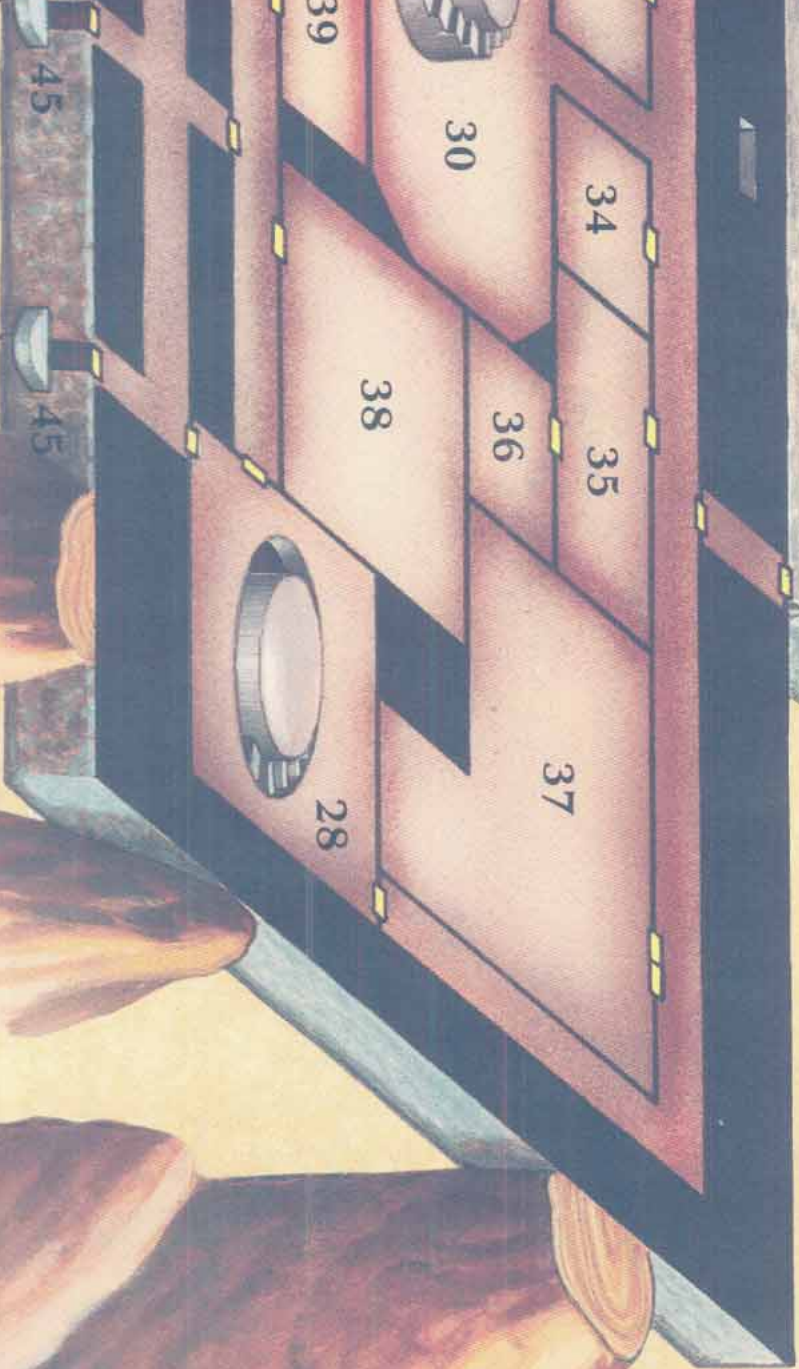


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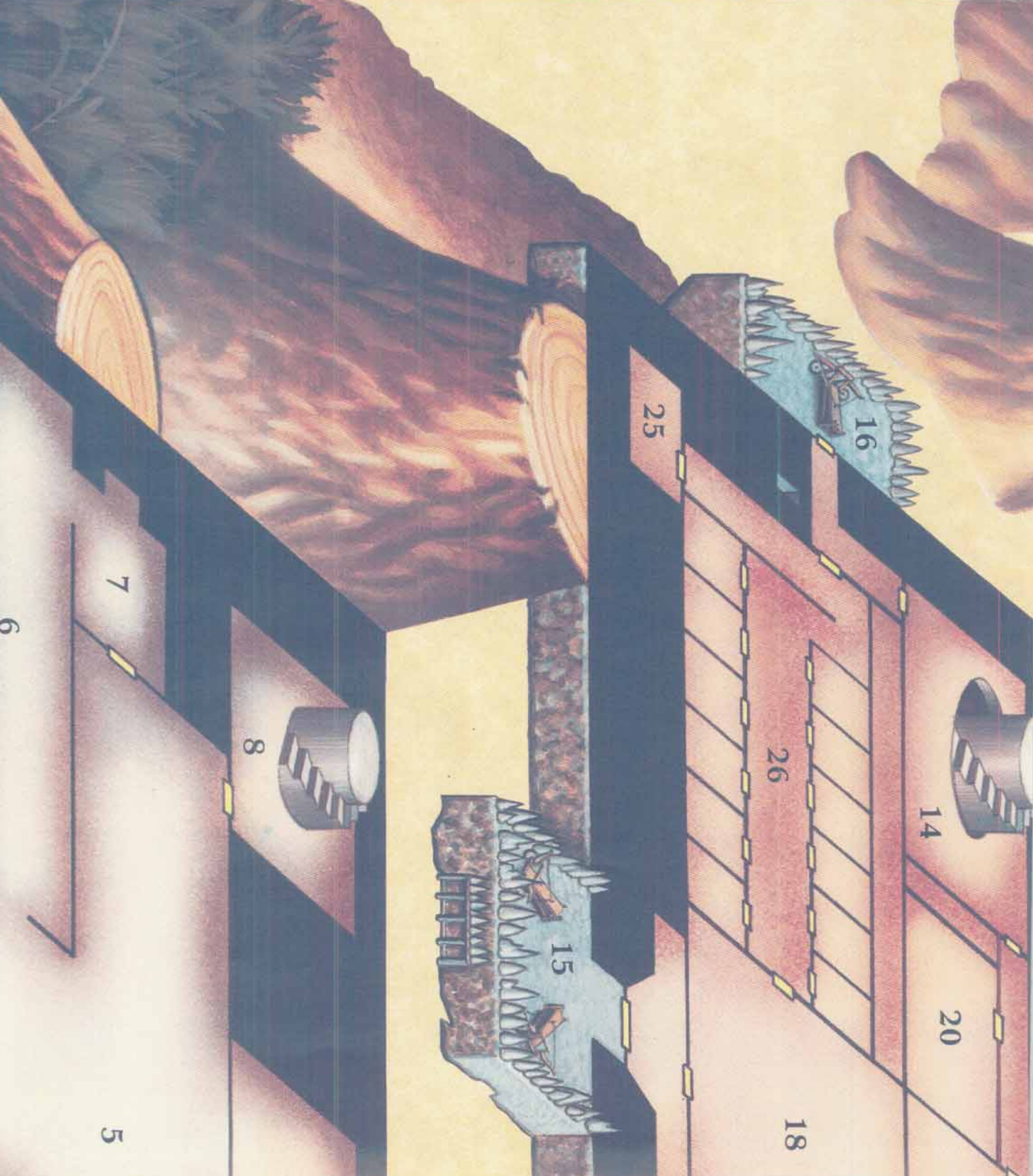
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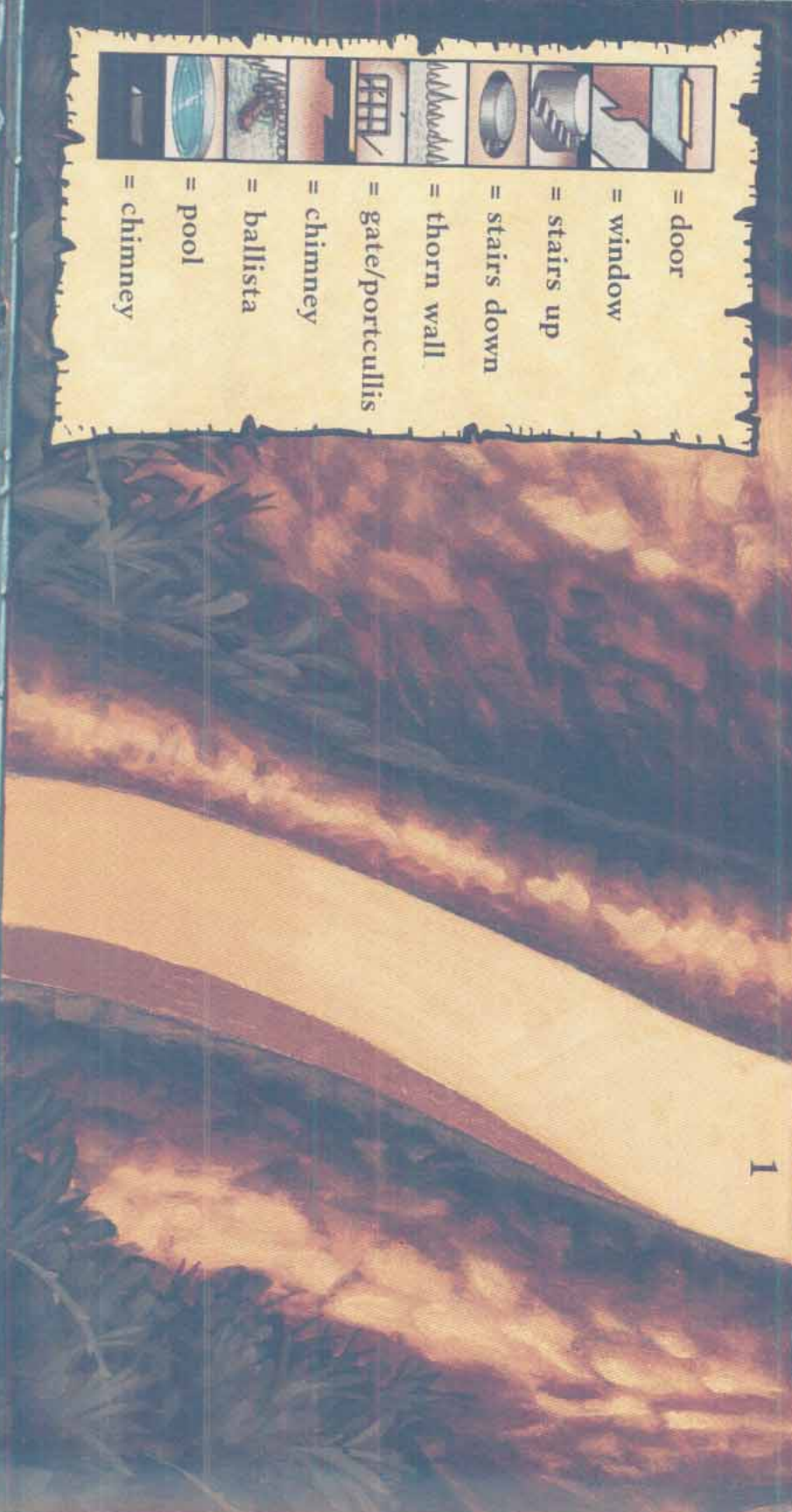
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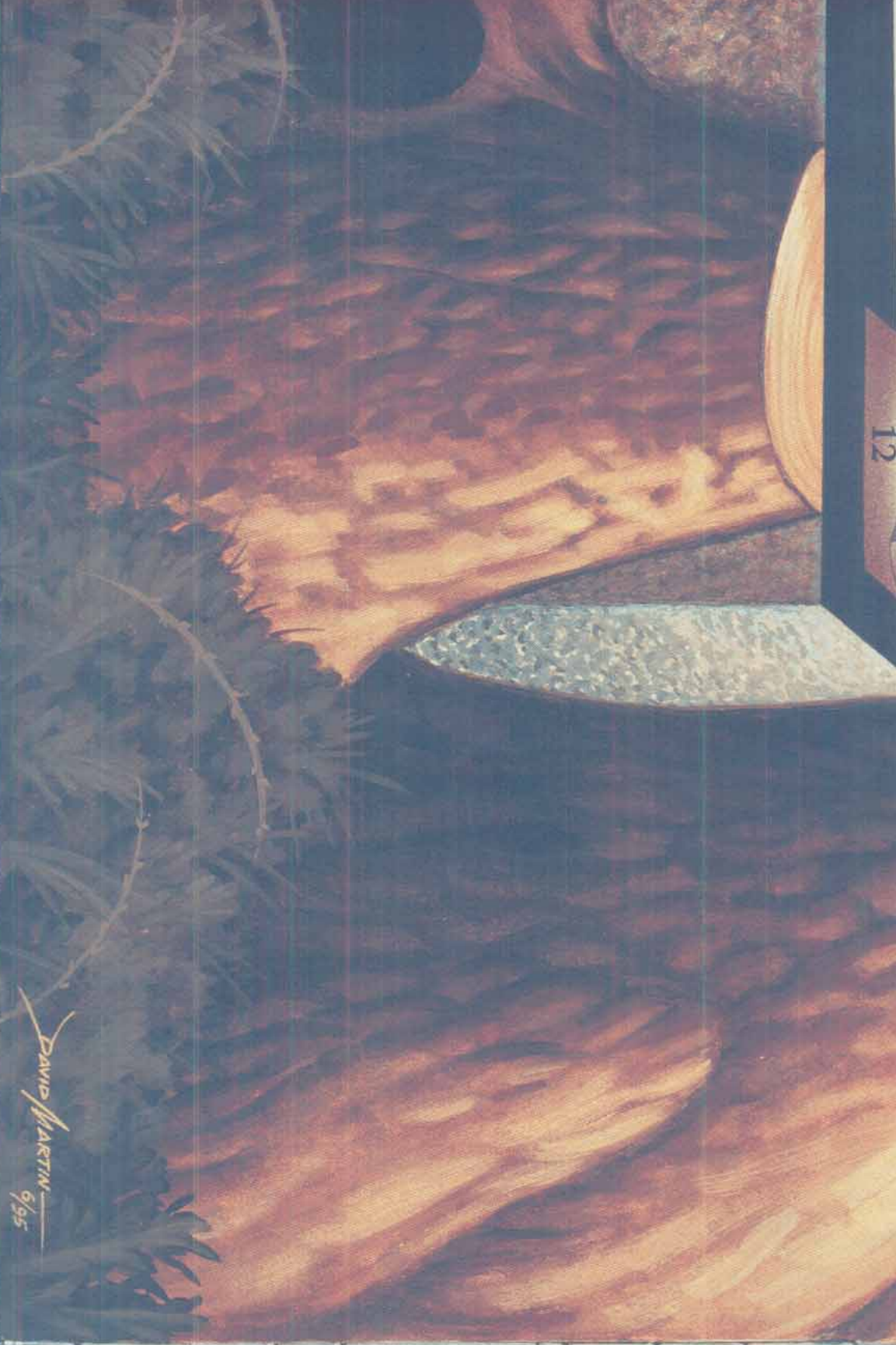
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- = door
- = window
- = stairs up
- = stairs down
- = thorn wall
- = gate/portcullis
- = chimney
- = ballista
- = pool
- = chimney





DAVID MARTIN
6/95

Advanced
Dungeons & Dragons®



sword and crown

by Colin McComb

The Sword and Crown is an event unrivaled in Anuirean politics. Every five years, rulers come from across the land to renew friendships, cement alliances, and provoke their enemies with poisoned words and sharpened swords. Wheels turn within wheels, and plots abound. It's politics as usual in Anuire.

Except this conclave is different. Not only is it taking place in the PCs' kingdom, but before the festivities can even commence, someone wages an attack on Prince Avan and kidnaps his daughter. And to whom do the regents turn to rescue the princess? The hosts, of course! The PCs must win their way past dangerous bandits and treacherous elves and discover a path through darkest caverns where the slightest misstep means death. Only then does the *real* threat become apparent!

This adventure contains a 64-page book crammed with details about the setting, the situation, and the major characters, plus a full-color mapsheet. It is designed for use with the BIRTHRIGHT boxed set.

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