

DragonLance®

Official Game
Accessory



Dwarven Kingdoms of Krynn



Advanced Dungeons & Dragons®
2nd Edition

DragonLance®

Saga



**A World in
Stone**

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons
2nd Edition

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Official Game Accessory

A WORLD IN STONE

A GUIDE TO THE DWARVEN REALMS FOR THE DUNGEON MASTER™





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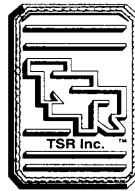
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INTRODUCTION

Among all the peoples of Krynn, none build such lasting structures, nor labor so diligently to create and expand their domains, as do the dwarves. From the initial dank caverns of Kal-Thax to the vast and multi-tiered metropolis of Thorbardin, these sturdy folk have delved a series of magnificent dwellings.

Some of these domains have been torn into ruin by the oft-wrenching history of Krynn, while others continue to grow and flourish, reaching glories undreamed of a generation or two before. Yet they all have their places along the River of Time, and whether ancient or modern, they each illustrate the determination and skill of these sturdy dwarves.

From the *Observations of Astinus*

Much of the identity of any dwarven folk is drawn from the circumstances and structures of their fortress and home. Whether it is delved from deepest bedrock, hollowed out from the living stone of a limestone cave, or built as a boulder-walled house upon the steep slopes of a rocky knoll, the surrounding shelter helps the dwarf to understand himself; his history, and his purpose in life.

Most obviously this applies to the grand excavation, the delvings of Thorbardin, Kayolin, and Zhakar. These dwarves exist amid eternal reminders of their race's purpose and implacable sense of determination. How many generations of forefathers have chipped at these walls, have shaped the hallways and balustrades? What hallowed traditions are embodied in these caverns and chambers? The very life must make one seem part of a grand and ultimately historical design.

But do not disregard the opposite sense of freedom and flexibility embodied in the homelands of the Neidar, the "hill dwarves." They are also a people of purpose and destiny. Because that destiny is neither defined nor limited by grandiose excavations and surrounding walls, these outsiders are sometimes dismissed as historically frivolous.

Nothing could be farther from the truth. When one needs a new solution to a problem, or a different route to negotiate a challenge or obstacle, no dwarf but the Neidar can exhibit the freedom of choice to devise a truly unique solution.

From the *Observations of Chisel Loremaster*

ORGANIZATION OF THE BOOK

The dwarven realms and kingdoms described within are organized chronologically, in the order of their founding. Dates are provided in both the standard reckoning reflected by Astinus in the River of Time, and also by the specific dating of the dwarves, which is predicated on a unique system of counting years, decades, and centuries.

The mapsheets included in this product are generally keyed to locations described in this book. Refer to these maps for a complete understanding of the locales as they are presented.

THE DWARVEN CALENDAR

The ever logical dwarven people worked out a precise system of counting years, decades,



and centuries. Dwarves have 10 fingers, so they naturally used a base of 10 for their counting.

The calendar insures that any date in history can be individually named. Although the names for decades and years are repeated on a scale of 10, the centuries are each granted a unique name.

YEARS

The annual cycle equals a total of 10 years. The years are counted as follows.

- First: Zinc
- Second: Tin
- Third: Bronze
- Fourth: Gold
- Fifth: Silver
- Sixth: Nickel
- Seventh: Iron
- Eighth: Steel
- Ninth: Brass
- Tenth: Copper

DECADES

The 10 decades in each century are named as follows.

- First: Oak
- Second: Hickory
- Third: Pine
- Fourth: Ash
- Fifth: Elm
- Sixth: Maple
- Seventh: Vallenwood
- Eighth: Willow
- Ninth: Walnut
- Tenth: Cherry

For example, the 76th year of a century would be the Year of Nickel in the Decade of Vallenwood (sixth year of the seventh decade).

CENTURIES

The cycle of the calendar begins with dwarves arriving on the shores of Ansalon following the Second Migration. This is roughly equal to 3200 PC by the human reckoning and the records of Astinus as shown in the River of Time.

- 3200 PC Century of Tide
- 3100 Century of Coral
- 3000 Century of Smoke
- 2900 Century of Cloud
- 2800 Century of Magma
- 2700 Century of Truth
- 2600 Century of Snow
- 2500 Century of Stars
- 2400 Century of Stone
- 2300 Century of the Anvil
- 2200 Century of Ember
- 2100 Century of Wind
- 2000 Century of Sun
- 1900 Century of the White Moon
- 1800 Century of the Red Moon
- 1700 Century of Thunder
- 1600 Century of Rain
- 1500 Century of Echoes
- 1400 Century of Shadow
- 1300 Century of Song
- 1200 Century of Fire
- 1100 Century of Emerald
- 1000 Century of Diamond
- 900 Century of Garnet
- 800 Century of Ruby
- 700 Century of Ogres
- 600 Century of Birds
- 500 Century of Swords
- 400 Century of Coin
- 300 Century of Books
- 200 Century of Priests
- 100 Century of Hate
- 0 Century of Despair
- 100 AC Century of Night
- 200 Century of Dawn
- 300 Century of Dragons





TIMELINE OF THE DWARVEN REALMS

This book contains descriptions of the major dwarven realms throughout the history of Ansalon. The realms are Kal-Thax, Thorin, Thorbardin, Thoradin, Kayolin, and Zhakar. Each of these kingdoms is mapped on one or more of the large mapsheets included with this product.

The realms did not all exist at the same time. Some of them went through considerable improvements or declines in the course of their habitation. So a certain sense of proportion of time is necessary. Thus, the following list places them in chronological order, and describes the major modifications made during the histories of each kingdom or realm.

The detailed history of the dwarves is presented in the *Songs of the Loremaster* book. This outline is intended as a quick reference only.

3100 PC (Century of Tide)

Kal-Thax, the “Cold Forge,” is founded on the northeastern coastline of Ansalon.

3000 PC (Century of Smoke)

Kal-Thax is fully delved. Other dwarves continue around the coast of the continent, eventually seeking shelter in other “Cold Forges.” These include settlements near Karthay, Mount Nevermind, and the Kharolis Peninsula. The original Kal-Thax is the only one with significant delving and is the one displayed on the map.

2900 PC (Century of Cloud)

Following the Gargath campaign, dwarven veterans occupy an abandoned ogre delving in the Khalkist Mountains. Thorin is founded, and delved during the following two centuries.

2160 PC (Century of Ember)

The “Last Balladine” of Thorin results in the destruction of the keep and outer delvings. The remaining city becomes isolated under the mountain. The Hylar leave the Calnar and migrate to the Kharolis Mountains.

2150 PC

The delving of Thorbardin begins. Major work will continue for 150 years.

2000 PC (Century of Sun)

Thorbardin is completed in all its major cities and features. Though it continues to expand gradually, it remains essentially the same for the next 2,300 years and beyond.

At the same time Thorin, the city of the Calnar has been lost. An earthquake (2009 PC) carries away the great terraced mountainside, so that this characteristic feature (described in many dwarven legends) vanishes entirely.

1000 PC (Century of Diamond)

Dwarves of all the clans of Thorbardin return to the Khalkist Mountains seeking Thorin (which they now call Thoradin). They cannot locate the original realm, and found a new one instead, which will be known as Thoradin.

The colony thrives and grows, amid battles with ogres and increasing trade with Istar and Solamnia. The realm will not reach its full size for 500 years.

980 PC

Hylar dwarves from Thorbardin delve the Garnet mines in the northern range of the Kharolis Mountains. Over the next 250 years the mining colonies expand into a self-supporting realm.

760 PC (Century of Ruby)

Thorbardin grants independent status to the former mining colony of Garnet. The Kingdom of Kayolin is formed. It has reached nearly its full size by this time, though additional mining will continue to expand its tunnels and shafts.

500 PC (Century of Swords)

Thoradin, now a network of small subterranean cities, achieves independence from Thorbardin. It becomes a major trading power since it controls the only land routes between Istar and Solamnia.

117 PC (Century of Priests)

Thoradin is attacked by an increasingly bigoted Istar. The dwarves close their realm in the Khalkists to humans.

7 PC (Century of Hate)

Istar invades Thoradin again, and this time the dwarves withdraw into the underground regions of the mountains, leaving the surface to the humans.

0 Cataclysm (Century of Despair)

Despite their precautions, the Thoradin dwarves live too close to the impact to

escape. Most of their cities are destroyed, and the pockets that remain are isolated from each other by cave-ins. The survivors will become the degenerate Zhakar dwarves.

Thorbardin and Kayolin survive the chaos with relatively minor damage. The Northgate of Thorbardin is rendered unusable by landslide, and the Newsea completely severs ties between the two realms.

39 AC

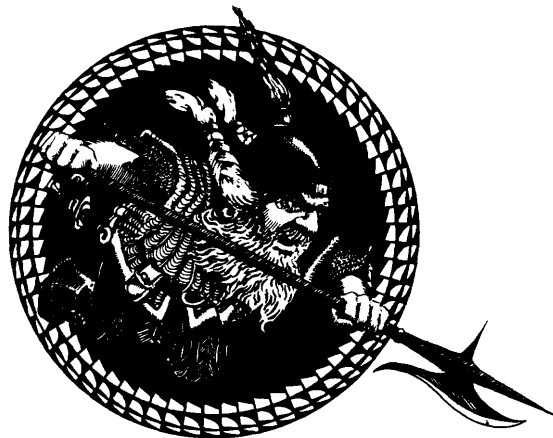
The Dwarfgate Wars result in schisms between the mountain and hill dwarves. The Plains of Dergoth become wasteland, but Thorbardin remains intact.

100 AC (Century of Night)

The Zhakar dwarves appear. Emerging from the ruins of the greatest city of Thoradin, these dwarves establish limited trade with Sanction and Bloten.

350 AC (Century of Dragons)

During the War of the Lance, Thorbardin and Kayolin ally with Solamnia, while the pathetic Zhakar ally with the Dark Queen. None of the dwarven realms is significantly damaged during the course of the war.





USING THE MODULAR MAPS

Many of the larger dwarven realms are far too extensive to be mapped on a building-by-building basis. The modular maps included in this set are intended to allow players and Dungeon Masters to create virtually limitless expanses of dwarven delvings.

The map of the dwarven realm of Thorin, for example, shows a number of square locations on the various levels of the keep and city of this vast construction. These squares are labelled as R, S, or M, or C.

The square map modules on Mapsheet 1 are designed to be placed in these squares on Thorin, or in some of the other kingdoms for which the modules are indicated.

The different labels reflect different uses of the space.

- R = Residential Areas
- S = Shops/Social Settings
- C = Commons/Communal Areas
- M = Manufacturing Areas

Residential areas include a few taverns and common courtyards, but they are primarily the living quarters of individual dwarves or families. Each family's dwelling might be as small as one room, or as large as five or six rooms.

Shops are the squares that include the stores, marketplaces, numerous inns and taverns, and a few small apartments for those who own stores. Some shops, such as bakeries, jewelers, tailors and breweries, might include the workshops where the products are made as well as the stalls where they are sold.

Commons areas are the equivalent of parks and gardens. These pastoral refuges are valued by dwarves of all types, and no

city is complete without several such public places. Some even include splashing fountains, and many are framed by lush fungus gardens.

Manufacturing areas include the forges, smelters, foundries, and toolmaking shops that are necessary for the metal and stonework that is such a hallmark of dwarven industry.

These modules can be used in conjunction with the Thorbardin maps included in *DRAGONLANCE*[®] adventure DL4. They are designed to join and interchange freely. Also, the modular maps included in the *DRAGONLANCE Tales of the Lance* boxed set can be used to add additional variety. These are not the only possible floorplans. Dungeon Masters are free to design additional modules as they wish and need.

A module can be rotated to any one of the four cardinal orientations of the compass when placed into an opening on the map. Alternately, a d4 roll can randomly determine which edge faces to the north.

PUBLISHED SOURCES

Dwarves and their realms have been described in numerous products throughout the years. This set endeavors to introduce new material, only repeating previously published facts as they are necessary for continuity. Some other good sources of information on dwarves include the following.

Adventures DL3, DL4, and DL15

Boxed Set: *Tales of the Lance*

Novels: *DRAGONLANCE Chronicles* and *Legends* trilogies

Gates of Thor-bar-din

Flint, the King

Covenant of the Forge and sequels

CHISEL LOREMASTER, SUPREME HISTORIAN OF THE DWARVES

Scion

Strength:	12
Dexterity:	11
Constitution:	12
Intelligence:	20
Wisdom:	20
Charisma:	10
Armor Class:	7
THAC0:	17
Damage:	1d10 (or spell)
hit points:	55
Magic Resistance:	75%
Height:	4'1"
Weight:	170 lbs.
Movement:	6
Alignment:	Neutral Good

Special Abilities

Magic Use: Like all Scions, Chisel Loremaster can use any magic spell at will, up to seven of each level per day.

Infravision: 120'

Concealment: The Scion can always conceal his appearance if he chooses, either with an impenetrable disguise or complete invisibility. Neither form of concealment can be discovered by magical means. However, once Chisel has allowed someone to see him as he really is, he can never conceal himself from that individual again.

Telepathy: Chisel can communicate with anyone at will.

Appearance: The true appearance of Chisel Loremaster is one that is rarely seen. His skin is a rippling, metallic gold, and his hair is long, fine-spun silver. The center of his pate is bald. His clothes are unusually fine, and look as though they are made of woven gold and silver.

However, when he is encountered on Krynn, Chisel most commonly appears as an old dwarf, so frail that he requires a sturdy crutch just to hobble along. His garments are poor, and his possessions few.

History: Chisel was always determined to record the story of the Smith-folk, for he truly believed that they, and their descendants the dwarves, were the true salt of the earth on Krynn. Born as a wise and intellectual Smith, he was changed to a Scion in the first blast of magic from the Graystone. He was one of a few Scions who regarded the transformation as a blessing of Reorx. Chisel Loremaster remains one of surviving Scions. He was one of the 13 who were set to sea by the dwarves following their arduous Second Migration that carried them to the shores of Ansalon.

Unlike many of his kin, however, Chisel did not use his power to alter the world around him, or even to aid his desperate people. Instead, he employed his magic (and his powers of disguise) to gather stories and to transcribe them into scrolls and songs. He has served Astinus Lorekeeper off and on throughout his existence, which has continued for well over 3,000 years.

Role: Chisel's main use is to provide information about the history of the dwarven folk. He occasionally reports to Astinus. More frequently he appears (in disguise) to mortals he judges to be heroic, and provides them with one or two key bits of information. The information is almost always designed to help the mortals achieve some worthwhile objective.



KAL-THAX

3100 PC - 2700

THE COLD FORGE

The exact location of this first grand home of the dwarven people has been a subject of mystery and dispute throughout more than 30 centuries of history. Virtually all dwarven people, from the Khalkist and Kharolis mountains to the far coasts of Karthay, claim that their lands are founded upon the ancient realm of Kal-Thax.

This general misunderstanding has resulted in argument, confusions in history and legend, and even deep-seated feuds among various dwarven communities. But problems are averted when one takes the time to examine the history of Kal-Thax, the first home of the dwarves.

Perhaps surprisingly, the common claim of origin in Kal-Thax is in most cases true. The reason is simple. "Kal-Thax" in the ancient dwarven tongue describes any naturally-formed cavern, a "Cold Forge" where natural fires of magma and steam did not penetrate. These caves, with their limestone walls and steadily flowing water, were commonly discovered and used by dwarves wherever the sturdy, determined pioneers of the bearded folk came to settle.

After all, the softly porous stone was far easier to delve than was the granite bedrock which they later selected for their cities and fortresses. At the time of Kal-Thax (generally predating 2900 PC) the dwarves lacked the technology to smelt steel. Their tools were most commonly of bronze, though several tribes had mastered the art of forging and casting iron. Nevertheless, they did not possess the strong steel picks and drills necessary to delve through the hardest rock.

The dwarven people were not inherently driven to live under the ground. Instead, they sought shelter in these caves because of a common threat: the Graystone. This stone embodied pure magic, an abhorrent force to all dwarves. They, more than any other people, were driven to hide below the ground. There, they hoped and prayed that the chaotic effects of wild magic would not disturb them.

The original location of Kal-Thax is undoubtedly the cold shore where the 13 rafts of the Smiths landed. The Smiths were those brave folk who made the Second Migration across the great ocean to come to rest on the shores of Ansalon. This ancient realm has been fairly accurately placed along the northern coast of the continent, somewhat to the west of Karthay.

As great numbers of dwarves sought shelter in the caves along that coast, and began the laborious business of making those natural shelters into useable living and working areas, other bands of these hardy folk set out across the face of the world. Some of them came to rest in Karthay, while others landed below the slopes of Mount Nevermind, or in the foothills of the Kharolis mountain range.

These groups encompassed many extremes: large or small, aggressive or reclusive, innovative or hidebound. Yet they all shared some common characteristics. They all lacked the tools to delve truly hard rock. They all feared the Graystone, and thought that the best way to avoid the effects of wild magic was to find safety underground. They were not nomadic people, but while capable of amazingly long migrations, the dwarves always migrated in search of another realm to make their own. They

did not simply roam for the sake of restlessness.

Wherever these dwarves came to rest, they sought natural caves, fortifying these caverns into defensible communities and expanding them as best they could. These caves were wet, and their walls were limestone. Consequently, they were called the "Cold Forges," quite unlike the magma-rich passages and troves of iron ore and coal that drew subsequent generations.

The original Kal-Thax, located along the northeastern coast of Ansalon, is described in this section. It is representative of the habitat employed by dwarves at this period in history during the reign of the Graystone, circa 3000 PC (the centuries of Tide, Coral, and Smoke, in dwarven reckoning). While the following information refers specifically to this founding homeland, it is representative of the types of construction and comfort-enhancing technology employed elsewhere.

LABORS OVER A COLD FORGE

When the first dwarves landed upon the shore of Ansalon, their 13 rafts were all that remained from the great fleet that had carried them around the world. Their needs were few, but profound. Motivated by fear of the Graystone, and still obsessed with their own shame resulting from the release of that gem, they sought to hide themselves from the world and to protect themselves from threats both real and imagined. Consequently, the vast caves along the shoreline of Nordmaar seemed to have been granted by Reorx himself as a sanctuary for his refugee peoples.

Water seepage over the course of many ages had formed a vast network of caverns within the great limestone shelves of the

Nordmaar peninsula. Although singularly lacking in the useful metals that, together with coal, would become the lifeblood of future dwarven kingdoms, the caves offered shelter, the one thing the dwarves sought above all else.

The survivors of the Second Migration were quick to claim these caves as their own. During the nearly three centuries of their habitation, the dwarves worked diligently to finish and expand the natural enclosures, so that Kal-Thax eventually came to resemble the form of many other dwarves' communities.

After their three centuries of habitation, however, the great bulk of the dwarven population moved on to found the vast city-kingdom of Thorin. The caverns returned to a natural state, and the water continued to erode and alter the constructs of the dwarven inhabitants. Some dwarves still lived here, but these were a poor and ragged lot. For the most part they were outcast by their brethren.

When the Cataclysm struck, most of Kal-Thax was destroyed by cave-ins and flooding. However, unlike much of the land to the west, the terrain around this dwarven ruin did not sink under the sea. As the Bloodsea of Istar was created, the land around Nordmaar actually *rose*. Parts of Kal-Thax that had once been submerged were drained of water, and though many of the connecting passages were destroyed by the wrenching shocks and earthquakes of that bleak day, some of the greatest caverns remained remarkably intact. All three of the original entrances were destroyed, however, and access to the Cold Forge is a challenging prospect to the modern explorer.

Some of those great untouched caverns remain today, though they are difficult and dangerous to reach. The map of Kal-Thax shows the kingdom at its height. The shaded areas show the portions that were destroyed





by erosion and, later, the brutal force of the Cataclysm.

The area descriptions are written of Kal-Thax at its height. In some cases notes are included to reference changes wrought by time, while in other locations a quick check of the map should show a DM the pertinent effects of the passing of ages.

THE TECHNOLOGY OF KAL-THAX

In the course of their flight from the Graystone, the dwarven people suffered many great setbacks in knowledge and skill. They had lost the elemental magic that had enabled them to master complex machinery and a wide variety of tools and materials. Yet they had not perfected the mundane arts of smithing, carving, and forging that would serve the dwarves so well in later centuries.

Also, this area they had chosen for their first home on Ansalon lacked many of the crucial raw materials needed for later delving and building. Consequently, Kal-Thax represents a low point in dwarven accomplishment. The primary building materials were wood and stone. The only metal they had was contained in the tools and weapons they brought with them on the great migration.

Nevertheless, these ingenious people did much with what they had. Never in any dwarven excavation, for example, has water played such an important part. The dwarves used canals for transportation, and harnessed gravity to run numerous waterwheels throughout the caverns. Some waterwheels even operated elevator cables that used the power of falling water to lift platforms of cargo or passengers hundreds of feet up toward the higher levels of the city.

The lack of metal ore, coupled with a waking sense of responsibility, would drive

the dwarves toward the more fertile bedrock of the Khalkist Mountains. Still, in their brief three centuries in Kal-Thax, the dwarves worked many unique miracles in their "Cold Forge."

PRE-CATACLYSM TOPOGRAPHY

The limestone shelf of Nordmaar is a plateau 500 feet above sea level. In the time of Kal-Thax's prominence it was covered with a dense rain forest, a mixture of tropical and temperate vegetation varying with the exact climate. The plateau receives a great deal of rainfall, yet it has few rivers or streams. Most of the water simply soaks into the ground. This accounts for the tremendous amount of erosion and the vast size of the caves below.

The flowing water is also a characteristic of the caverns. These are "living caves," where stalactites and stalagmites still grow, and the stone has a slick, polished look from the abundance of moisture.

The bluff overlooking the bay is very steep, and averages a 500-foot drop to a shelf of gravelly beach. In places, the plateau dips to 100 feet or so, while in several other places it towers up to nearly 1,000 feet. A series of deep, steep-sided ravines extend from the edge of the cliff away from the sea. The longest ravines run several miles from the shore, and they tend to be choked with vegetation and deadfalls.

POST-CATACLYSM TOPOGRAPHY

The dominant feature of the ground above ruined Kal-Thax is the Great Marsh. The limestone plateau of the former coastline collects rainwater and has become a stag-

Onant sump where it very slowly drains away into the caverns below. The bluffs are gone and all the original entrance tunnels are collapsed. There are several places around the fringes of the marsh where narrow caves wind into the rocky hills. It is just possible that one or two of these might connect to a passageway of lost Kal-Thax.

PRE-CATACLYSM

KAL-THAX

I. HIGHGATE

This is the main entrance to Kal-Thax. Its base level is 300 feet above sea level, and is an equal distance below the top of the bluff. It is reached by a narrow stairway that ascends from the shoreline, or another that drops from the top of the bluff. Each stairway consists of stairs barely four or five feet wide. Although the lower flight is exposed to observation along most of its length, the upper flight is mainly concealed from view.

Despite the narrow approaches, the gate occupies a wide, high tunnel. From the outside it resembles a cave mouth, since the double gates of Kal-Thax are set back 100 feet into the bluff. These gates are double hinged, and swing outward in the center. Each gate is a slab of stone 30 feet thick, with tapered edges so they cannot be opened by forcing them inward. Ramming the doors jams them more tightly into their sockets.

The cavern outside of the gates is exposed to deadly attack from above, with murder holes that allow hot oil or acid, as well as many crushing loads of stone, to be poured onto intruders in the passageway. To the right and left are concealed arrow slits, invisible unless their stone plugs are removed.

The opening mechanism is rather primi-

tive by modern dwarven standards. The portals simply pivot on their great stone hinges. Several dozen dwarves are required to push each gate open. To close the gates, a long column of dwarves grasps a long strap and pulls them shut. Opening or closing the gate fully requires about five minutes.

Within the gate itself is a secondary gate of similar design, which seals intruders off before they can reach the populated chambers of Kal-Thax.

2. SEAGATE

True to its name, this gate stands at sea level. The entry tunnel is completely underwater at high tide. At low tide, the water level drops about eight feet below the ceiling, exposing slick, narrow walkways to either side of the watery channel. By the time the passage reaches the gate, it has sloped upward to the point where, at low tide, the floor of the tunnel is awash under a foot or two of water. At high tide, the entire aperture is flooded.

Unlike the Highgate, this portal is sealed by a single slab of stone that is raised and lowered from within Kal-Thax. The barrier stands 50 feet in from the entrance, and fits into slots in the floor and walls. It is 20 feet wide, eight feet high, and eight feet thick. Short of smashing it to bits, it cannot be pushed into the tunnel to open a passage.

This gate is also operated by a surprisingly primitive method, without the use of pulleys or block and tackle. Instead, 200 dwarves haul heavy cables attached to the top of the gate. Groaning and straining from the effort, these dwarves slowly inch the gate upward. When it vanishes into the ceiling, several dozen other dwarves hurriedly ram six long poles underneath it to prop it up. It takes about 20 minutes to open the gate and 10 minutes to close it.

In an emergency, six dwarves can chop





through the poles in one minute, which drops the gate firmly into place. The poles must be replaced, however, before it can be raised and propped open again.

Unlike the Highgate, the Seagate has no secondary barrier. In lieu of that, the cavern leading into Kal-Thax descends about 30 feet after it passes the gate. Numerous sluices connect this passageway to the sea, and dwarven defenders can open these secondary hatches to quickly flood the whole length of the Seagate's approaches.

3. FARGATE

This is the smallest of Kal-Thax's gates, and only came into use after dwarven excavations connected this northern cavern network with the main part of the dwarven city. The cave mouth occupies a nearly inaccessible ridge, 400 feet above the beach, and 100 feet below the overhanging precipice atop the cliff.

No path leads to the gate, though a series of holes have been hammered into the cliff leading up to it. Brave and nimble dwarves use these as hand and footholds, though more than one unfortunate citizen of Kal-Thax has fallen to his death attempting to use the Fargate. The only way to reach the gate from above is to drop a line from the top of the cliff and descend in the right place, which is not marked above, save for a few landmark trees and boulders.

The gate is a single portal that pivots outward on a stone hinge and requires no more than 12 dwarves to open it. Like all the gates, it can only be operated from inside the dwarven city. It is not backed up by any reserve gates. It is assumed that few, if any, intruders can reach the Fargate, so they can easily be overwhelmed by a vigorous counterattack from within Kal-Thax.

4. HALL OF NOBLES

This chamber is one of the largest natural caves in the city. The ceiling is lined with stalactites and the floor is studded with stalagmites. Around the periphery of the chamber many of these formations have grown together to form a rank of columns equal in magnificence to any human-made palace. Water splashes from three waterfalls into streams that gather into a pool in the midst of this great chamber.

Perhaps 50 of the stalagmites have been hewn into great chairs. These form a rough circle around the pool, and represent the seats of the dwarven leaders. The hall of nobles is where the dwarves of Kal-Thax gather to discuss matters of import to the whole community.

While the dwarves have no formalized system of nobility, they tend to honor and revere their natural leaders. These include dwarves who skillfully captained the rafts of the Second Migration, those who have distinguished themselves in combat (either before, during, or after the migration) and those who, by dint of careful explanation and discussion, convinced the others of their keen intelligence and insightful wisdom.

For grand ceremonies, the cavern is lighted by fires. Several dozen shallow dishes are carved into the sloping walls around the great chamber's periphery. These are filled with whale oil, and then straw wicks are soaked in the oil and ignited. Even through the smoke, the illumination causes the slick stone walls of the chamber to glow as if they were studded with a million gems.

5. GRAND CANALS

The main transportation system of Kal-Thax is formed by this network of tunnels, half-

filled with water. The canal passages are circular in cross section, and are about 20 feet from top to bottom. The lower half is filled with water, the level of which is carefully controlled through gates that regulate inflow and outflow. The level of flowage is very slight, however. Usually just enough water is added to make up for what leaked out.

The canals run mostly underneath the major levels of Kal-Thax, though in a few chambers the troughs of water flow right through the cavern. In one or two cases they even pass across raised aqueducts.

There are three major levels of canals, referred to simply as the High, Middle, and Low canals. The networks labelled 5A on the map are the High canals, and serve to connect the main chambers around the Hall of Nobles with the passages connecting to the Fargate. The water level in this canal series is about 350 feet above sea level.

The Middle canal network, which lies about 200 feet above sea level, is labelled 5B on the map, and represents the most extensive network. By its several miles of passages, it links the corridors below the Hall of Nobles with the bulk of Kal-Thax. At several points, spiral stairways connect landings for the High canal to landings of the Middle canal.

The Low canal flows barely 20 or 30 feet above sea level. Its outflow goes directly to the Seagate. This is the last of the canal networks to be built, and serves to carry the dwarven waterways deeper into the plateau, away from the coastline and the areas of settlement and population. The farthest of these goes all the way to the Hall of Reorx.

Boats and rafts that use the canal tend to be long, narrow, and of relatively shallow draught. The Middle canal has some portions that are quite wide (nearly 40 feet), and can accommodate larger barges. The dwarves use the canals to carry passengers

around Kal-Thax and also to haul cargos of wood or food from one place to another.

The most common means of propulsion along the canal system is poling. Since there is no current to speak of, a boatman can gently propel his craft in either direction along one of the canals without working too hard, unless he is in a hurry. Generally the boats stay to the starboard side of the passages, so collisions are rare. If someone is in a hurry, the other boaters commonly pull over to shore and give right-of-way.


Some of the canals are furnished with a more advanced system of transport. It is an ingenious network that, oddly, has never been duplicated in any other dwarven settlement. In these passages, long cables extend along the sides of the passage. Waterwheels turn spindles, which in turn move the cables along a vast circuit. Some of these cables are more than two miles long.

These cable-assisted boatways are shown on the map of Kal-Thax. A boatman using one of these canals has merely to affix a rope on his barge to one of the hooks that are suspended from the cables (at 100-foot intervals). Then, powered by the waterwheel, the cable tugs the boat gently along the course of its path. These cable systems are established on the most commonly-used canals, of course. Sometimes they run back and forth down a long tunnel, allowing for two-way traffic, while in other locales they create a great loop, pulling boats only in one direction around the circle. Pole-powered traffic is still allowed for those whose business carries them against the flow.

6. FISH FARMS

The main source of protein for the population of Kal-Thax is the shellfish-clams, crabs, and so on-raised in the community pools.





Also, early in their habitation of these caves, the dwarves discovered that certain types of salmon could spawn in these sheltered pools and the fingerlings could be released into the sea to fend for themselves. Every autumn, the fully-grown fish return to their pools of origin. After they lay the eggs of the next generation, the fish are harvested by the dwarves in the greatest feasting festival celebrated in the entire settlement.

These fishponds are connected to the ocean through the Seagate. A series of gates controls the arrival and departure of the fish, so that the dwarves can carefully establish the limits of their pools and the re-entry of the full-grown salmon.

7. HALLS OF THE PEOPLE

These great chambers provide most of the living space in the vast network of Kal-Thax. Individual living quarters vary from family to family, and though Kal-Thax is somewhat primitive by dwarven standards, it is neither uncomfortable nor crowded. Each married couple and their young children have at least a single private chamber, and large families, or those who earn high status or some other honor, can often command a spacious apartment of multiple rooms and perhaps even flowing water.

As a rule, the apartments are excavated, not built. The original shell of a set of rooms is most commonly the wall of the cavern itself, but some enterprising delvers hollow out stalagmites, often making two or three cylindrical chambers stacked one atop the other.

These homes are often multi-tiered. A broad wall of the cavern, for example, might have as many as six or eight stories of individual dwellings. These can be reached by public stairways, climbing the outside of the wall, or by communal passages within the stonework. No residence requires one to pass through somebody else's dwelling to gain entrance.

The huge central chambers centered among these residential constructs serve as common rooms. Children play here, students take their lessons here, and adults gather after their labors to gossip, drink, plan, and socialize.

The dwarves of Kal-Thax have not developed a money-based capitalism, so they have no area devoted to shops or marketplaces. However, as has been true throughout the history of dwarfdom, they enjoy strong drink, and the brewers of the community commonly roll out their products into these commons for social gatherings both planned and impromptu.

8. SIGNAL FANG

In the center of this vast cavern rises a naturally-hollowed stalagmite, jutting into the air like a great fang. The spire reaches 80 feet into the air, and is 10 feet in diameter at its base. The dwarves quickly discovered that a sharp blow delivered to the base of the stalagmite sent booming waves of sound reverberating through all of Kal-Thax.

From that time on this became the central gathering place for the entire population. The vast chamber is large enough to hold more than 10,000 dwarves, and since the floor gradually slopes away from the center, most of these observers have a fairly good view of the central platform.

An elaborate series of codes has been worked out so that, by banging on this natural drum, all the dwarves of Kal-Thax know when one of the gates is being opened or closed, when the time of the salmon harvest approaches, or if some sign of an enemy (or, even worse, the Graystone!) has been observed by some dwarf who has ventured onto the surface.

Every seven years, on the eve of the winter solstice, the dwarves of Kal-Thax assemble for a mass remembrance of their history. These observances have become very ritual-

ized ceremonies over the decades, and the pulsating beat of the Signal Fang has become an integral part of the rites. Every young dwarf has grown up with the significance of that pounding cadence, which engenders an awe that strikes at the very hearts of all dwarven people.

The Signal Fang is noteworthy also because it is the first widespread example of the dwarves using the resonance of percussion to signal and inspire themselves

9. FUNGUS WARRENS

This vast network of well-watered caves is devoted to growing the vegetable portion of the dwarven diet. Pools of water and babbling streams are interspersed among lush clumps of mushroom and moss, and some strains of fernlike tubers that the dwarves brought with them from Taladas. All of these plants grow in near lightlessness, but these warrens have several narrow tubes drilled through the roofs that allow in a tiny element of sun and fresh air.

These warrens are tended by the stunted and malformed dwarves who have suffered maiming wounds or congenital afflictions. These folk are not necessarily shunned by Kal-Thax society, but they prefer creating their own niche here. They hollow out the stems of huge mushrooms for their individual houses, and rule their domain jealously. By the later years of Kal-Thax's habitation, these deformed dwarves took complete command of the fungus warrens, to the extent that they delivered the crops to the mouth of their great cavern network, where other dwarves picked up the food for distribution throughout the kingdom.

Attempts to enter these warrens, even by the rulers of Kal-Thax, are resisted-violently, if necessary. The fungus warrens have become a small nation unto themselves, with a population of more than 500 hard-





working farmers. They never fail to provide a steady output of food, and so the remaining powers of the dwarven kingdom have decided that it was not worth the trouble of going in and putting them in their place.

10. CISTERNS

The fresh water supply of Kal-Thax is centered in this great reservoir. Tunnels and underground streams bring seeping groundwater here from many miles away. A series of great, stone-walled vats that are each the size of a small lake collect and hold the water here. Tightly-sealed stone gates hold back the flow to carefully regulate amounts. These cisterns contain not only the drinking water for Kal-Thax, but the flow for the canals and waterwheels as well.

During periods of drought on the world above, the flow is reduced, first by shutting down some of the waterwheels and then by draining some of the lesser-used canals. It is said that, even at the height of the kingdom's population, the great cisterns could provide for the water needs of Kal-Thax for as long as 10 years with no rain.

The dwarves of the fungus warrens (see "9. Fungus Warrens") excavated many connecting passages into these cisterns, ostensibly for irrigation purposes. The arrangements are such, however, that they can siphon off most of the water flowing to the rest of Kal-Thax. Thus, these misshapen outcasts actually control the community's water supply as well as its food.

I I. TEMPLES OF THE GODS

These caverns are devoted to the gods of Krynn. After the founding of Kal-Thax, these were among the first chambers to be excavated and completed. However, as life in the Cold Forge continued, many of these shrines and temples fell into disuse. Finally,

with the discovery of the Hall of Reorx and its miraculously-rendered face in stone, these shrines were completely abandoned. Nevertheless, the structure and ornamentation is quite expansive. The specific locations are the Altar of Reorx, the Altar of Mishakal, and the Altar of Paladine.

I IA. ALTAR OF REORX

The walls of this temple are slick with natural water runoff, causing them to gleam like diamonds if any light is introduced into the cavern. A closer examination reveals that the walls are set with diamonds. There are nearly 1,000 of them, each averaging 200 stl in value. The diamonds cover the walls from floor to ceiling (30 feet).

The presence of the Tamer of Chaos is real here. Those who enter and offer honest and devout prayers to Reorx may well find that the god dispenses some favor. Typical responses include answering a question posed by the worshipper, increasing one of the worshipper's attributes by one (only once per character), bestowing some item or artifact, or allowing the character to discover the location of such an artifact, or revealing a quest that the worshipper is expected to make.

The quest is likely to call for some service desired by the god, perhaps some sort of restoration or other project within Kal-Thax itself. If the character successfully concludes the quest, the kindness of Reorx might be revealed in some way.

Conversely, one who tries to pry the diamonds from the walls finds some risks. There is a 1 in 6 chance for each diamond removed that the character will suffer 3-18 hp of magical damage when the stone is removed. Any character who leaves the chamber holding or carrying one of these diamonds will find himself suffering from the effects of a curse of Reorx. These curses

are not crippling, but will be noticed; a favored possession rots or tarnishes, the character forgets some valuable information, or one of his attributes is reduced (by one, probably).

IIB. ALTAR OF MISHAKAL

This chamber centers around a tall statue, carved from a living column of the cave. It depicts a slightly stockier version of this goddess than is generally portrayed by humankind. The essence of voluptuous femininity, she stands proudly, with her arms outstretched toward all who enter.

One who comes before the statue and makes a devout prayer to the goddess of healing receives the effect of a *cure light* wounds spell. If that character is of good alignment, the spell can be stored by the character and used on himself or someone else as long as it is expended within seven days of the prayer.

IIC. ALTAR OF PALADINE

Viewed by the dwarves as an old man, bent and gnarled from his toils, Paladine is nevertheless revered in Kal-Thax. Often, young warriors setting out for adventure or battle come to this great stone statue to pray for courage.

I2. ARSENAL, THE LAST VAULT

This deeply-delved chamber is anchored among four walls of limestone, far below the surface of the world. It can be reached only by a few narrow tunnels, and each of these is guarded with many gates that can be closed against the approach of any threat. This Arsenal chamber is the final defensive line of the Kal-Thax fortress.

The Arsenal is where the dwarves keep those treasures they brought with them on

their migration, but that do not serve any daily need in Kal-Thax. These include farming implements, all the tools to make many great smithies, mining carts, and even some elements of their once-mighty machines.

Also stored here is a great stockpile of arms and armor. The dwarves have fought no large scale engagements on Ansalon. Here they keep thousands of shields, shirts of chain and plate, tens of thousands of arrowheads and crossbow quarrels, as well as many swords, axes, and spears.

I3. NEW DELVINGS

This extensive network of tunnels and mines was excavated during the last century of the dwarven habitation of Kal-Thax. Compared to most other dwarven constructs, before and since, the New Delvings show a chaotic lack of planning and precision. It is as if the delvers sensed that this Cold Forge offered them little hope of future prosperity, yet they were frantically determined to explore every depth of the underdark rather than consider a return to the surface.

Some of the New Delvings are used as residential areas for the growing population of Kal-Thax. The vast Halls of the People have at last become full. At the same time, the deeper caverns of the New Delvings are less desirable dwellings because of their distance from the rest of Kal-Thax. Thus, those dwarves who live here have become (to the other residents) an underclass that reacts with resentment and envy.

The later tunnels of the New Delvings wind with apparent aimlessness deep into the world. Tunnels cross above and below each other, sometimes intersecting and more often simply ignoring the proximity of other passageways. Some of these New Delvings extend for more than 100 miles. Others end in water-filled chambers and passages, as they were delved too deep and





have reached the water table. Still more of them end in rubble-strewn cave-ins, where the diggers, in their obsession with progress, ignored the safety requirements that are normally second nature to dwarven excavations.

But one of these tunnels apparently does have a purpose, though the dwarves who dug it did not know it at the time (see “14. The Hall of Reorx”). They must have suspected something, though, when they finally broke through into a naturally sealed chamber.

14. THE HALL OF REORX

This was a sealed cave when a dwarven digger broke through the stone wall to enter the untouched vault, deep below the plateau of Nordmaar. The first sound that greeted his ears was the chiming of music, as trickling water harmonized along the fluted surfaces of numerous stalagmites and columns. The sound was a piercing minor chord, sad and almost menacing.

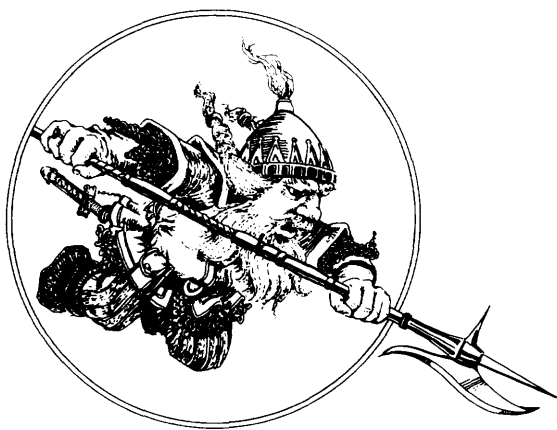
It wasn't until the party of diggers had explored the entire cavern that the truly miraculous nature of the place became evi-

dent. There, on the far wall, they found the great image of a frowning, bearded face. Even in the flickering light of their digger's lanterns, the visage looked heartbreakingly sad. It is said that all the energies of the New Delvers were sapped by this gloomy image, that it drained away their motivation and left them feeling bleak and filled with hopeless despair.

The dwarves quickly deduced that this was the face of Reorx, and that he wept for the wasteful ways of his favorite folk. Perhaps the image only confirmed what the dwarves had already begun to suspect, that it was a mistake to press farther into the bleak and oreless reaches of Kal-Thax.

It is said that a dwarf who studies the image of Reorx with a truly open mind and heart will learn a great truth, and this seems to have occurred among the leaders of Kal-Thax. They came here to ponder the miracle, and as they gradually came to understand, the same course of action occurred to them all.

They would have to leave the Cold Forge, and return to the world of light and sun and air.



THORIN

2900 PC - 2000 PC

THE DELVINGS OF THE FIRST REALM

The tale of Thorin's founding is common lore among the dwarves (see *Songs of the Loremaster*). The warrior-lord Agate Thorwallen, hero of the Graystone War, remembered the beauty of the Khalkist heights, and the wonders of the sculpted valley he had found. This was a place that, ages before, had been delved by ogres. After the Graystone War, Thorwallen brought his people here and led them to the great, steam-venting cave that he first called Hiel-Thax, or the "Hot Forge."

The dwarves worked diligently in their inherited network of caves, and soon the traces of ogre construction had been erased by the many new passages and chambers of the dwarves. At the same time, they commenced work on the great keep that would stand watch over the city gates. Most important to the dwarven delvers, however, was the natural fissure that contained the miracle of Thorin: the firewell.

While there were great changes worked here over the years, the cavern and its central pool of magma remained the central features of Thorin throughout its glorious history. The heat generated by this subterranean lava flow was necessary to the forging of the first steel. This hard metal was first introduced on Ansalon by the dwarves of Thorin, and this was a major source of that continent's early prosperity.

The pool itself is the basic level of Thorin. Around it are gathered the forges and smelters of the great manufacturing centers

of Thorin. Above the forges and smelters are the gradually rising levels of apartments, gardens, warrens, and every other part of subterranean Thorin.

The massive cavern of the Grand Gather was, for many years, the central amphitheater of the realm. Large enough to hold a gathering of all the dwarves of Thorin, it was sculpted from raw ogre delvings left from millennia before. It was also the scene of Thorin's pivotal event, the day of betrayal that came to be known as Last Balladine.

THE EFFECTS OF LAST BALLADINE

The tale of human treachery leading to the sundering of relations with the dwarves of Thorin is told in the *Songs of the Loremaster* book. This historical event (circa 2150 PC) had a profound impact on the structure and appearance of Thorin. The effects are important for gaming purposes, because when the fortress city is visited after that date it is a very different place.

The tragic dwarven hero Handil the Drum wrought great destruction on the outer parts of his city. By pounding his powerful *vibrar* (battle drum) underground, he caused a massive collapse of the outer chambers of Thorin, as well as some significant effects outside the fortress itself.

The maps show Thorin at its prime, as it existed during the century or two preceding Last Balladine. Thorin as a complex was completed by about 2600 PC, though minor delvings continued as long as it was inhabited by dwarves.

On the day of Last Balladine, every portion of Thorin from Grand Gather to the





keep collapsed and was filled with rubble. The keep and the tunnels immediately below it remained standing, though as soon as the passages entered the bedrock of the mountainside, they became choked with debris that had settled into its own bedrock over the ages.

A great sinkhole collapsed in the mountain above the site of the Grand Gather. Over the course of years silt settled in the bottom of this cone-shaped depression, making it nearly watertight. Beginning about 2000 PC this became a pond. During spring and early summers it was quite deep, though by later summer enough of the water had drained into the rubble below that it became more a sludgy marsh.

The tower known as the First Sentinel also collapsed with the wrack of Last Balladine. Now the base of the pillar stands as a ruin, surrounded by the cluttered debris of its own rubble.

The keep itself, as well as the Second and Third Sentinels, remained standing after that dark day. They were abandoned by the dwarves from that time onward, and so quickly fell into ruins. The keep itself was the final tomb of several thousand human invaders. The attacking army broke into the fortress and was trapped in the keep by the collapse, unable to escape.

Though Last Balladine signaled an end to the trade fairs, it could not halt the coming of summer solstice, could not prevent the alignment of the sun with the Great Sun-tunnel leading into the city's central firewell. Thus, the annual occasion still served to reignite the fire in the belly of this underground dwarven realm.

THE DWARVES OF THORIN

This was the first great civilized center of the dwarven people, and the standards of craftsmanship, invention, diligence, and

culture established here have become the known standards of the race. They came to be known as the Calnar, and though their achievements may have been buried by later accomplishments, they cannot be ignored.

The ruler of Thorin was a chieftain. The chieftain of Thorin was responsible for maintaining the security of the keep, coordinating the activities of the Chief Wardens, and for maintaining the trading activity that flourished between Thorin and the neighboring human realms.

The chieftain's position was not a directly inherited one. Though it usually was passed onto one of the current chief's children, this succession was not perceived as a right. A counsel of wardens first had to approve the nomination, and before the new chieftain was declared, his ascension was placed before a voice vote of all the dwarves of Thorin, who gathered in the amphitheater for the occasion. No nominee had ever been voted down, probably because chieftains displayed great wisdom in making their choices. The chieftains looked not toward their firstborn sons, but toward the child of either sex who seemed to display the greatest affinity for governance.

Below the chieftain of Thorin were the Chief Wardens. The five most important of these (Delvemaster, Food Warden, Chief Marshal, Fire Warden, and Water Warden) sat with the chieftain in the Grand Council, and decided the important matters of Thorin's policy. Other wardens supervised all aspects of life in the dwarven city, including steel-making, water, waste, forges, brewing, stone-cutting, gates, lifts, sun-tunnels, and glass-blowing. Each of these wardens was assigned numerous assistant wardens to aid in the sometimes huge tasks and responsibilities inherent in the job. They served as advocates and lobbyists for their personnel, and wielded great power when it came to design-

AGATE THORWALLEN,
FIRST CHIEFTAIN OF THORIN

9th-Level Warrior

Strength:	18/00
Dexterity:	15
Constitution:	18
Intelligence:	12
Wisdom:	14
Charisma:	15
Armor Class:	-3
THACO:	5
Damage:	1d10+10
Hit points:	83
Height:	4'3"
Weight:	200 lbs.
Movement:	6
Alignment:	Neutral Good

Special Abilities:

Infravision: 60'

Direction Sense: Thorwallen had an uncanny knack for recognizing directions and distances on the surface world. It is said that he never once got lost during the course of a lifetime's exploration of new places.

Equipment: Agate typically carried a sword, an axe, and a pick (each +4 equivalent). His full armor included a full-face helm, plate mail, and a battered shield (+4) hat dated from the time of the Smiths.

Appearance: Agate Thorwallen was a brawny figure, with skin well-worn from exposure to the elements. His most striking feature was his piercing, ice-blue eyes.

History: The history of Agate Thorwallen is, in many ways, the early history of the dwarves on Ansalon. He was born during the great voyage of the Second Migration, and came of age in the dank tunnels of Kal-

Thax. Even in his early life he exhibited little patience for the confines of the Cold Forge. As a young man he was anxious to participate in expeditions to the outside, and through his navigational skills quickly became a leader of these expeditions. Soon he was regarded as chief scout and explorer for the dwarves of his realm.

He married Briggit Slatebrim before he marched off to the Graystone War. She was a determined dwarf in her own right, and marched in the rank of his company during that campaign (many dwarf women participated in battles, especially during the early history of the race).

As chieftain of Thorin, Agate proved a just and wise ruler. His model served as the ideal for every generation of chieftain even through the ages of the Stonetooth clan, whose members ruled Thorin four to six centuries after Agate Thorwallen's death.

The greatest tragedy of Agate's life would seem to be his lack of an heir. Both he and Briggit adored children, and it is known that they desperately wanted a family of their own. For whatever reason, Reorx did not see fit to bless this union with offspring.

Role: Agate Thorwallen is a hero whose status approached the mythical as the centuries of dwarven history passed. He may be invoked throughout the ages for causes noble to dwarvendom, and though his presence will probably not be manifest, his very memory might serve to bolster the morale of any dwarves who remember him.





THE CALNAR HORSE

The rise of the Calnar can be attributed to many things. One of the most significant was this powerful animal, domesticated and bred to serve the needs of the Khalkist dwarves.

Armor Class:	7
Movement:	12
Hit Dice:	5
THACO:	15
No. of Attacks:	4 (see below)
Damage/Attack:	1-8/1-8/1-4/1-12
Special Attacks:	Nil
Special Defenses:	Nil
Magic Resistance:	Nil
Size:	L
Morale:	Unsteady (6-8)
XP Value:	270

The Calnar horse is a beautiful creature, the color of beaten gold, with a flowing white mane. The horse is exceptionally long-legged, and its hooves are very wide and surrounded by shaggy fetlocks as white as the mane. The shoulder of a Calnar horse is six feet or more above the ground, significantly larger than a typical draft horse.

Combat: The Calnar horse is not an instinctively combative creature, and many of them are simply used as beasts of burden. These horses have only one attack per round (when untrained), and inflict 1-8 points of damage on a successful hit.

Many of the steeds are trained as warhorses. These include those ridden by the dwarven patrols who frequently scour the frontiers of Thorin, as well as a few dozen warhorses quartered in the keep and the magnificent mounts ridden by the clan

chieftain and his loyal bodyguards (known as the Ten). The latter 11 horses each have the maximum 40 hit points allowed for the breed.

A Calnar horse trained as a warhorse carries its rider into a lumbering charge. The mount and rider do not travel as quickly as some lighter horses and their human riders, but they can hit their targets with tremendously crushing force. In melee, the horse stomps with its two forehooves (1-8 points of damage) and bites (1-4 points of damage). Any victim directly behind the horse can be attacked with a crushing kick of the rear hooves for 1-12 points of damage. The horse can make all four attacks in the same round.

The warhorses of the Ten, as well as any Calnar horse fully outfitted for battle, will be barded in plate (AC 2) or chain mail (AC 4) armor. Plate mail lowers the horses' movement to 8. Chain mail lowers movement to 10.

Capacity: The Calnar horse plods through depths of snow that would stop any other horse. It can travel in up to three feet of snow with no effect on its movement, and is slowed to half movement by snow depths of three to five feet. In depths greater than five feet it can advance with a kind of lunging, swimming motion that still allows it to move at one-third normal speed.

The horse's normal carrying capacity, its encumbered (half-speed) load, and its fully encumbered (one-third speed) load are 280/420/600.

The horses are often employed to haul wagons, and sometimes will be harnessed together in hitches of two, four, eight, or 16-horse teams. The larger hitches are used to haul cargos of stone or ore, and require a fairly smooth-surfaced road.

ing and building new devices, or refining officially-approved work techniques.

The other important class of dwarves was the marshals. They were entrusted with the enforcement of law within the city, as well as matters of danger that required arms. The marshals formed the companies of guards that manned the sentinels, the keep, and the city. They also served to patrol the streets and establishments of Thorin itself, though trouble among the Calnar was rare.

THE VALLEY OF THE TWO RIVERS

The first feature that drew the attention of dwarven settlers to Thorin was the terraced hillside sloping upward from a wide, gently-angled vale where two great rivers flowed, the Hammersong River and the Bone River. Though each river cut through its own channel, the ridge between them was low and gentle. Flowing to the north, the two rivers came together west of Thorin, forming a great waterway carrying runoff from the Khalkists to the sea.

Even without the terracing, the wide vale of Thorin was more fertile and its climate milder than most of the terrain in this mountain fastness. Lowlands of soil-rich marsh were drained, increasing the available farmland even beyond the great capacity provided by the broad and well-watered terraces.

But it was these terraces that truly gave the valley its prosperity and character. Staged in ever climbing arcs around the great keep and city itself, these bands of soil were fertilized and planted early in the spring. Strategically placed so that they caught the full potential of sunlight, the terraced fields had a far longer growing season than normal for the mountain climate. Because of the rising elevations, the lower

fields where the temperature was warmer would produce the largest plants, while the higher fields were reserved for short-season crops.

All of the terraces were separated by steeply-sloping berms of earth and stone. From the shortest of these first and highest terraces to the next terrace below was a drop of only 15 feet. The other fields were separated by larger drops, sometimes as long as 100 to 150 feet. The berms separating the levels were crossed by numerous stone stairways, allowing plenty of access up and down. There was never any intention on the part of the dwarves to use these berms in a defensive capacity.

The two rivers were chill with the runoff of the high peaks, but each had been tamed enough to serve the needs of the ambitious dwarves. The shallow Hammersong was diverted into large, still pools, where the dwarves bred a variety of mountain trout and pike. These fish were regularly harvested, and formed a primary part of the dwarven diet. The Bone River, which was narrower but deeper than the Hammersong, was used as a natural source of fish. The dwarves also developed a system of barges, connected by cables to the shoreline of the Bone, for the purpose of carrying stone blocks that had been traded to Chandra, the human kingdom downriver from Thorin.

SENTINELS OF THE REALM

Three towering pinnacles surrounded the keep of Thorin. From their summits, observers commanded a view of the entire valley, as well as the courses of the two rivers flowing to the west. The first sentinel, the highest of the three, stood above the keep until Last Balladine, when Handil the Drum brought down much of the entrance to Thorin with the resonations of his powerful vibrar.





The sentinels were commonly used for signalling by both drum and mirror. In addition, a large pile of ready firewood and coal was maintained near the top of each tower. These were to be used only in cases of most dire emergency, when even the relays of mirrors could not flash alarm to all the outlying wayposts of the dwarves. Three pillars of black smoke rising into the sky were to be considered the ultimate alarm, calling every able-bodied citizen home.

FIRST SENTINEL

This is the tallest of the towers, commanding a view of the entire realm of Thorin. It is a tapering spire stretching more than 200 feet into the sky. The tower is 60 feet wide at its base, narrowing to half that width at the upper platform.

The tower has a lone door set in the base. This is a portal of solid iron, six inches thick. It is set into a recessed doorway and can only be opened to the outside. Pressing inward only jams it more firmly into its frame.

Within the tower is a garrison room at the bottom, and three circular rooms at the 80-foot, 140-foot, and 180-foot levels of ascent. A spiraling staircase winds around the interior wall of the tower, connecting to each of these rooms and continuing on to the platform at the top. Each of the levels (except the ground floor) is encircled by a series of arrowslits.

The tower is typically garrisoned by a company of 24 dwarves and is led by the Warden of the First Sentinel. The company rotates every four days since duty is lonely up there. During the course of their shift, the guards live, eat, and sleep there in the tower.

On the ground floor is a wardroom and small kitchen. Typically six guards are found here, cooking, gambling, or arguing.

The other guards are scattered through the second and higher levels, with at least four standing atop the tower. Several wooden bunks are placed on each of the intermediate levels.

SECOND SENTINEL

This tower is not as tall as the first sentinel, standing instead as an early warning post guarding the western and northwestern approaches to the keep. A guard company of a dozen dwarves is always on duty here, led by the Warden of the Second Sentinel. At least four of these dwarves stand atop the tower at any given time.

The lone door to the tower is iron, and every bit as solid as the door to the First Sentinel.

Second Sentinel is 150 feet high, tapering from a width of 50 feet to 25 feet at the top. It has several intermediate floors, each surrounded by arrow slits, but is not so elaborately furnished as the Third Sentinel. These dwarves rotate back to the keep after each 12-hour shift, so they do not have bunks or an elaborate kitchen. The ground floor does have a fireplace, though, and a rack for keeping a pot of beans or oatmeal hot.

THIRD SENTINEL

This sentinel is, in structure and garrison, the match of the second. Its location provides a better view of Crevice Pass and the approaches to the east. In exchange it loses the vista of the Hammersong and Bone valleys.

THE GREAT KEEP OF THORIN

With the original settling of Thorin, many dwarves realized that they preferred a life

under open skies to an existence as a cavern dweller. These folk welcomed the sun and fresh air on a daily basis, or desired to walk a balcony in the evening and enjoy the vista of stars overhead.

In keeping with the somewhat libertarian philosophy of the Calnar dwarves, these citizens were assumed to be just as rational as those who liked the security of solid stone walls and a cavern ceiling overhead. So at the same time as the ogre caverns were expanded into the wondrous city under the ground, the great keep was built on the mountainside at the mouth of the delvings.

Because the dwarves desired fresh and sweeping views, the keep is ringed at many levels by extensive balconies. Many of these connect to individual family quarters within the keep, while others provide access to common rooms and corridors, so that every resident of the keep has an available balcony. Of course, different levels of privacy are based upon the individual's or family's status within the community.

The keep is a massive, block-like structure rising for 20 levels to a height of 200 feet. The upper 12 levels are all surrounded by balconies from which the residents can take in the fresh air and the magnificent views or, during times of trouble, rain a hailstorm of flaming iron death on an enemy encircling the fortress below.

The lower 80 feet of the walls are smooth and featureless, rising almost straight into the air. The only breaks in the square base of the tower are the mighty gates.

Of all the parts of Thorin, the keep is most visited by outsiders. It is opened up to humans and other guests on the occasion of Balladine. And even during the course of a year the presence of a few human merchants in here does not turn many heads.

THE GATES

The gates in the west wall of the keep provide the main access both to the keep itself and to Thorin city. The city has other points of entrance, but these are secret, and much smaller. They stand closed at almost all times, though they are frequently opened to admit entering or departing dwarves. Only on the occasion of Balladine, with its accompanying fireflash, are they opened and left that way for any significant period of time.

Bands of steel wrap stout timbers to make these gates formidable barriers to anyone who might attempt to intrude. The entryway is 20 feet wide at the base and 16 feet high. The gates themselves narrow to a width of 16 feet at the top. The beams of each are about 18 inches thick.

The gates open outward. The opening mechanism is driven by a series of windlasses and cables, requiring at least 12 straining dwarves for each of the two doors. It takes a full round to open them. The gates are hinged so that they quickly swing shut. Iron pins are not set in the windlasses to hold them open.

Like most dwarven portals designed for defense, the edges of each gate are planed inward on the inside, so that anyone hammering on the outer surface merely presses them more tightly into their stone frames. Thus, the gates are virtually impossible to force open, though a steady battering would eventually shatter them enough that an invader could possibly get through.

On the occasion of Last Balladine, when the human barbarians did get inside the keep, they gained entrance by magically incapacitating the gate's operators once the portal stood open. The gates themselves never fail to perform as designed.





THE WALLS

The keep walls are constructed from precisely-fitted blocks of granite. At the lower levels, the walls are about 40 feet thick. They taper to a width of 15 feet by the upper level of the fortress.

Where the balconies begin 80 feet above the ground, the walls that lead to the next higher level slope gently outward. This is a defense against someone attempting to scale from one balcony to the next higher one. Though this does not negate the use of a grapple or some other climbing device, it is enough of a deterrent to insure that anyone trying to make his way upward in this fashion is very vulnerable to a defender on the higher platform.

ENTRY HALL

This wide passageway provides all access to the keep, and to the underground city of Thorin beyond. Those who want to pass from the gates to the city simply continue on through the entry hall. Access to the keep is gained via the stairs that leads upward to the right and left of the hall. Each of the stairways ends in the base of the huge vault containing the keep's twin spiral stairways.

THE GREAT VAULT OF STAIRS

Central access to the different levels of the keep was originally only through the stairs on these two pillars. However, in the last century of the keep's use, the famed Calnar, Handil the Drum, invented an effective lift mechanism that provides rapid transport up and down. The lifts are located in shafts that run through the hollow centers of the stair pillars.

The only connections between levels of the keep are found within this vault. None

of the floors has a stairway, ladder, or trap door leading to an adjacent story.

During the day the vault is illuminated by sunlight, filtered through many panels of quartz crystal set in the roof. Illumination is quite good near the top of the vault, though it dwindles into shadows on the lower stairs and walkways. At night, torches are ignited in sconces set around the central pillars, providing minimal illumination.

The room is a huge shaft running the full height of the keep. The vault is an oval-shaped chamber about 80 feet in diameter. The stairways each wind around one of the wide pillars in the center of the vault. These pillars are about 25 feet in diameter.

At each of the 20 levels of the keep, platforms lead from the stairway to a pair of doors in the sides of the shaft. These doors are made of heavy wood, reinforced with iron, and can be barred on the inside against intruders. Since there are no railings on the platforms or the spiraling stairs, these are perilous places to fight.

The vast walls of the vault are decorated with tapestries and decorative shields throughout their height. Some of the tapestries are four or five stories in length, and hundreds of feet wide.

At every fourth level (1st, 4th, 8th, etc.) there is a door in each pillar connecting to the lift shaft within it. These doors are cleverly concealed, further masked behind hanging tapestries. No non-dwarf is allowed to see or use them. Once opened, the doors lead to a lift station, providing access to the unique "elevators" of Thorin Keep.

HANDIL'S LIFTS

This system is praised as one of the dwarven hero's greatest inventions. The lifts are a series of cages supported by heavy cables. The cage stages are 40 feet apart, so that when the lifts come to a rest there is one





cage at every lift door.

The entire system is run on one circuit, so that when the lifts in one column are going up, those in the other column are going down. At the top and the bottom the cages are carried horizontally between the two pillars. The entire circuit involves 14 individual cages.

The lifts are powered three different ways. The most effective way is by water power. All the drainage of Thorin's vast plumbing and sewer network flows beneath the keep, and this steady flow is used to turn a huge wheel before it spills from the keep into the valley.

The water power keeps the lifts running fairly consistently. At each level there are braking levers that can be applied by one who wishes to stop the lifts long enough to embark or disembark. The water is simply diverted when the lift stops. It doesn't back up.

The pressure of the drainage is usually sufficient to lift at least six dwarves upward at any given time. Of course, a large load can be lifted when it is counterbalanced by other passengers traveling down. However, when the water pressure is light, or if a larger load has to be raised, a series of winches, connected to a windlass at each level, allows musclepower to lift the load. A dwarf who turns the crank cannot ride the lift at the same time, though.

The third means of powering the lift only works when more weight comes down than goes up. It simply involves a braking lever on the lift cage itself, which allows a dwarf to descend at whatever rate of speed he desires.

A team of well-trained wardens mans the lifts throughout the hours of daylight. They include one assistant at each lift stage in each pillar, as well as six in the winch chamber. The Chief Lift Warden is also on duty when the lift is operating, though he

often travels the height of the keep and performs maintenance on the lift equipment. While the lift can be operated at night, this is only done during periods of urgency. In these cases oil lamps are lighted on each stage of the lift.

LEVELS OF THE KEEP

The keep is divided into three sections. The bottom floor is the first of these sections, and simply serves as a hallway providing access to the upper floors of the keep above, and to the subterranean city delved through the mountain to the east.

The second through eighth stories serve as storage chambers, workshops for small business operations, and public places like inns and market stalls. These levels have no external access, given the need to make the keep walls impervious to assault. They are lighted primarily by torches and lamps, though those chambers near the central vault have windows of quartz or glass to absorb whatever minimal light filters into these lower levels.

The ninth to the twentieth levels are generally residences, though each floor has several inns for those dwarves who don't like to travel far for a bite to eat or a glass of ale. Apartments in the keep are much-desired quarters in Thorin. Many of them have access to private balconies, while the rest provide public space where the residents can step outside.

Each level on each floor is connected to the central vault by six doorways. Beyond each doorway is a walkway (without a railing) leading to the nearest of the central stairway pillars.

INDIVIDUAL LEVELS OF THE KEEP

Level 2: The floor is mostly devoted to stores of heavy materials needed by nearby shops,

including coal, ingots of iron, copper, and silver, and lumber.

Level 3: Many smiths practice their trade in these shops, which resound to the banging of hammers and the roaring of forges. It is uncomfortably hot here.

Level 4: This level houses many carpenters, as well as metalworkers such as armorers and toolcutters, whose work requires precision more than power. It is neither so hot nor so loud as the level below.

Level 5: This floor includes a large garrison space for the keep's guard company, as well as a locked armory containing roughly 100 swords and shields and 50 crossbows. The rest of the floor is used for various brewing and baking businesses.

Level 6: Known as the "Cook's Floor," this level is used by the makers of breads, cheeses, sausages, and other food staples. The odors of spices and rising dough make it a pleasant place to shop.

Level 7: Large storage rooms filled with bales of wool occupy much of this level. Its most common features are the numerous weaving and tailoring shops.

Level 8: This floor is occupied by shops that offer supplies for the many dwarves living on the upper floors. The vendors include pottery makers, scribes, embroiderers, candle makers, and many restaurateurs who sell the food prepared on Level 6.

Levels 9-19: These levels include comfortably furnished chambers for single dwarves, married couples, and many small and large families. Level 11 is home to many of the city's guardsmen.

Level 20: This is a very desirable place to live in Thorin, and these apartments are saved for those who can exert some special pull, such as wardens, marshals, and the masters of various crafts. Though the roof of the keep is a platform that can be used for defense, it is covered with many panels of thick, translucent quartz, so that the upper

apartments all share the benefits of natural light during the daytime.

THE REALM UNDER MOUNT THORIN

The keep is merely the foyer to the grand city of Thorin. The majority of the place lies underground. The subterranean sections consist of the Known City and the Secret City.

The Known City includes the entry hall, its attendant markets, stalls, and apartments, and the great amphitheater of the Grand Gather itself.

The Secret City begins beyond the Grand Gather, and is strictly off-limits to humans and any other non-dwarves. Joined to the Grand Gather by a single wide gate (which remains closed whenever non-dwarves are in the arena chamber), the Secret City extends into many levels and a vast, complex network of working, living dwarves.

THE SUNTUNNELS

No section of Thorin is completely removed from the light of day, thanks to these complex devices of quartz crystal, silver, and glass. They collect sunlight through multifaceted lenses and carry the illumination into the realm of the caverns below.

The mouths of the suntunnels are strategically placed in the most inaccessible portions of Thorin Peak. Sheer cliffs ranging from 100 to 500 feet in height plummet away from them. None of the crystals can be seen by observers anywhere below the mountain, and the peak itself juts 1,000 feet higher than any nearby massif. Several of Thorin's secret exits lead to these high locations and allow dwarven mountaineers to keep the lenses free of snow and debris from rockslides.





Even if an intruder were to reach the mouth of one of these tubes, he still would not have gained access to the city. The outside layer of the lens is always made of a quartz as hard as granite, in a layer at least two feet thick.

The tunnels range from four to 12 feet in diameter. The sides of the smaller ones are lined with silver. In the larger tubes, the surface of the stone is polished to a mirror-like brightness. Except for the Great Suntunnel, all of the tubes are canted toward the north, since Ansalon lies south of Krynn's equator. The tubes form an arc covering east to west, so that some get their full illumination in the morning, others in the afternoon.

Only the Great Suntunnel of the Firewell runs straight up and down. This is to insure that the sun aligns with it on the summer solstice. This massive shaft is wider than any of the others. It is a key feature of the Secret City.

ENTRY AND EGRESS

A number of passages connect the maze of Thorin to the world on the surface. The only one of these that is publicly acknowledged, where guests are allowed, is the Entry Hall through the keep. All of the others are concealed by large boulders or a patch of carefully constructed brush or scree, so that anyone tramping over the heights of Mount Thorin will not stumble onto one of them by accident.

Most of the concealed entrances are very small, and connect to the city by long and constricting passages. These tunnels average about five feet tall, and are barely wide enough for a broad dwarf to walk along without brushing his shoulders against the wall.

Two entrances, however, are large enough to permit a Calnar horse to pass, though not with a rider; riders must dismount and walk

through. These two doors are about nine feet high, and nine feet wide. Each is blocked by a single large boulder mounted on hinges that allow it to be pushed open from the inside relatively easily. The doors will swing shut if not propped open.

These larger openings are located on the lower slopes of the mountain, and while they are not reached by trails, the terrain is gentle enough to allow horses to pick their way down into the valley. The apertures are concealed from observation by nearby rises, so that even if a large column of dwarves emerges, an observer in the valley or on a neighboring mountain would not be able to see where they exited the delvings.

Each of the entrances to Thorin is guarded at all times by a Gate Warden and two assistants. While these guards primarily serve as doormen for dwarves who enter and exit, they have also pledged to give their lives in defense of the entrance, should an enemy try to intrude.

The tunnels connecting the entrances to the main halls of Thorin are deadly approach routes. They are intentionally narrow and constricted, with portions that bring intruders under fire from the arrows and slingstones of defenders. Many of them have slots in the ceiling through which guards can pour boiling water or oil (which is subsequently ignited) onto unwelcome visitors. As a final barrier, a portion of the ceiling of each of these approach tunnels is designed as a deadfall trap. Here the defenders can collapse a 20-foot to 120-foot stretch of ceiling, filling the tunnel with rubble and effectively blocking approach.

THE WATER SYSTEM

One of the great wonders of Thorin is its water system. This network of stone pipes and aqueducts runs throughout the city, carrying running water to each level of the

underground cavern network.

The original source of the water is melted snow during the wintertime, and accumulated snow or rainfall at other times of the year.

The snow collects in a huge depression that has been hollowed out of the round top of Mount Thorin. Heated by the escaping gases from the forging and smelting levels of the city, the snow melts into water that flows into several large cisterns that have been hollowed out of the mountaintop itself.

From the cisterns the water flows downward through main pipes that extend all the way to the deepest reaches of Thorin, almost into the firewell. At each level of the city, tap valves are placed into these mains, allowing a network of plumbing on that level to be filled with water.

If the flow is weak, and a great deal of ready access is desired (for example, in a section running between many apartments), the water is carried in an open aqueduct, where it can be dipped into freely by anyone.

In other places the stone pipes are used, often carrying the water underneath floors and through walls, to its crucial destination. The smelting pits, for example, require a great deal of water, and the pipes carry it to those portions of the pits where it is put to use.

Tap Wardens oversee the operations of the plumbing system in each level of the city. The pipes are kept clean by iron balls (only very slightly smaller than the diameter of the pipes) that are rolled through the system, and serve to scrape out any impediments.

HALL OF APPROACH

This long passageway is lined with many merchant stalls and caveside inns. These

locales are primary gathering places for social outings in Thorin. Young dwarves gather here to drink ale after a long day's work, while the elders come to sit beside the grand walkway and watch folks go by.

These venerable citizens willingly share tales of earlier days with any interested ears. For the price of a few mugs of ale, one can often gain a great wealth of information on the history of the Calnar, with highlights on the memorable events of the last century.

The Hall of Approach usually seems spacious and vast, with the stalls and kitchens set up in alcoves beside the main walkway, and a relatively small number of pedestrians present at any one time.

This portion of Thorin is open to human visitors, as long as those humans are accompanied by dwarves and have a definite purpose within the mountain. Such visitors are not allowed onto the Grand Ramp or into the Grand Gather without an invitation from the chieftain or a governing warden.

On the occasion of Balladine, however, the Hall of Approach is thrown open to all who would shop, barter, or trade. Double the usual number of stalls are jammed into this space, constricting the crowds (which are naturally much larger than usual). Pickpockets are not uncommon, and any business that can find space usually turns a handsome profit.

GRAND RAMP

This sweeping hallway climbs to the amphitheater level of the Grand Gather. The smooth floor ascends at a gentle angle, and the corridor is wide enough to allow for grand pageantry and marches.

The top of the ramp holds the highest seats of the arena. Several large blocks of stone, resting on rollers, stand ready to be rolled across the entrance. In an emergency these can be turned sideways and rolled





down the ramp, becoming deadly war machines as they trundle into an attacker's ranks.

THE GRAND GATHER

This vast amphitheater is the largest individual chamber in Thorin. Although it was originally a block-shaped ogre delving, signs of its original builders have long since vanished beneath the careful stonemasonry of the dwarves.

Each of the columns encircling the room is 10 feet in diameter, and is carved in fluted designs that swirl upward toward the top. These pillars are of dwarven carving, but mark the original periphery of the ogre cavern. Now they support a considerable space for vestibules beyond them.

Panels of crystals mark the ends of sun-tunnels that dot the roof of the cavern. On a sunny day, the Grand Gather is one of the brightest places in Thorin. Seating takes the form of huge, concentric rings of semicircular benches. The rings are interrupted to the east and west where wide, steeping stairways descend to the arena at the bottom of the chamber.

In the center of that arena typically stands a wooden platform, though it can be removed for special occasions. That platform holds the great council table of Thorin. The seven-sided table is where the chieftain and his five chief wardens gather. Rumor claims that the seventh side is reserved for Kitlin Fishtaker, the legendary hero of the Graystone age.

When filled to capacity, the amphitheater holds about 10,000 celebrants on the many benches, with as many as 2,000 more standing around the rim of the huge chamber.

The entry on the eastern side of the Grand Gather leads to the Secret City of Thorin. It is protected by two sets of barriers: a sliding wooden doorway, and a heavy dropstone of

granite called the Inner Gate. The granite barrier is 20 feet thick, and will only be dropped in direst emergency. Once it falls, it is not intended to be opened again.

Whenever humans are within the Grand Gather, the wooden doorway is shut and concealed behind a hanging tapestry. The dwarves take great pains to see that humans and other outsiders do not know about the vast complex of caverns that lies even deeper within the mountain.

The Inner Gate was dropped during the siege of Last Balladine. From that time forward Thorin became a city that shut out the rest of the world. No humans or other outsiders would ever again be allowed within.

MAIN CONCOURSE

This is the busiest part of Thorin City, a bustling center of shops where hard goods and consumables are sold. Inns feature a variety of food and drink to appeal to every type of dwarven appetite. No one lives along the concourse, nor are any goods made here. This is a social gathering place and a center for buying and selling.

The concourse comprises three levels of long corridors. The middle and upper levels are crossed by wide channels through the floor, creating a long, rectangular atrium in the center of these floors. From this balcony, the floor of the first level of the concourse is visible below.

All of the main living levels of Thorin connect to the concourse at some point. Likewise, the great manufacturing centers gathered around the deep firewell all abut the eastern edge of the concourse.

The concourse is lighted by several sun-tunnels leading from the mountaintop to the ceiling of the chamber. These tunnels, based on their orientations, are shaded with colored lenses placed in the middle. Blue lenses are placed in the east-facing tunnels,

while red filters obstruct the sun tunnels pointing west, so that the morning light in this area is tinted blue. The light becomes pure white during the middle of the day, and then becomes red during the afternoon and evening hours. Thus, a quick glance into the concourse is all that is needed to give a rough approximation of the time of day.

At all hours of day the concourse is a crowded, bustling center of commerce and social life. Dwarves meet their friends here before and after work, while classes of young students are brought to see many of the wonders available in the shops.

During darkness, the concourse grows less busy, but it is never abandoned. Some of the inns and taverns remain open all night, and these are never lacking customers. The shops and stalls, on the other hand, generally close up with nightfall and reopen the following dawn.

COMMONS

The common areas scattered throughout Thorin are a unique contribution to the quality of life within Thorin. The commons are not areas of any business or commerce. Instead, they are intentionally quiet locales, usually decorated with attractive works of stone sculpture, with streams and even fountains of clear water running through them.

Some are designed as mazes, with many private cubicles. Naturally, these are favored by young lovers seeking a few moments of privacy. Carpets of soft moss cushion the walkways, while clumps of glowing fungus provide soft, intimate lighting.

Other parts of the commons are wide, open chambers, often with structures of metal and stone for rambunctious young dwarves to climb and play upon. Benches and tables are scattered around these

places, and old dwarves will often rest themselves in a favorite commons, playing a few games of knucklebones with their friends, or just watching the youngsters at Play.

RESIDENTIAL LEVELS

Many different delvings have been carved into living quarters for the vast population of Thorin. These delvings are mapped with many spaces for modular apartments, and DMs should fill them in as needed. They should be assigned randomly. The dwarves do not establish separate quarters for single adults and families with children, for example.

The larger the set of rooms, as a general rule, the more dwarves will be living there. Some common family groups include single adult males or females, married couples with as many as three children, and clanholds that include a matriarch or patriarch (perhaps both), as well as their children, their children's spouses, and even grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

An individual dwarf's living quarters will probably consist of no more than two rooms. These are highly sought-after quarters for the most part, granted only to dwarves who exhibit mastery of a trade or occupy a position of responsibility in the warden or marshal hierarchies. Most single adults are forced to live with their parents until they get married. Even then, couples count themselves fortunate if they manage to find a private set of chambers.

Married couples generally have to make do with two or three rooms. With the birth of a child, however, they become eligible to occupy a more spacious suite with larger rooms and a separate chamber for the child or children. After all, dwarves do not believe in smothering children with affection or attention.





The largest of the living quarters are given to the large clanholds. These can number up to 20 rooms or more, and often lead to some unusual family blends. For example, if some young adults move out and a few of the elders pass away, a clan might recruit cousins, nephews, and even good friends to come in and join them. If they can't find enough people to fill the place, they'll be sent to live somewhere less spacious.

THE FIREWELL

This is the infernal heart of Thorin. It is the pit of magma that ignited the first forges of the dwarven city. Throughout the city's history, with its renewal each year at Balladine on the summer solstice, the firewell recharges the smelters and forgers, maintaining the power of the manufactories.

Even during the non-Balladine course of a year, the chamber of the firewell is a sweltering and dangerous place to be. Those who enter the pit are protected by a stone railing that encircles the magma pool itself, but even so they will suffer 1 hp of damage per round. Characters who are soaked with water can avoid this effect for 10 rounds, until the water evaporates. Likewise, any kind of protection against heat or fire negates the damage.

During the firing of the well each Balladine, the temperatures in the well soar to unsurvivable extremes. They are equivalent to red dragon breath inflicting 44 hp of damage per round. Saving throws apply as they would against dragon breath. The maximum damage occurs for 10 full rounds, followed by 10 rounds of 33 hp damage, then 10 of 22 hp damage. Finally, the lingering heat is enough to inflict 11 hp of damage per round on characters within the firewell. This significant level of heat remains for 2-12 days after Balladine, by which time the well cools to its normal temperature.

The reddish glow of the magma in the bottom of the well provides all the illumination in this chamber. The air is hot and smoky, but the percolating liquid stone casts everything in a warm, crimson glow.

SMELTERS OF THORIN

This huge, circular chamber is where the actual melting of ores into metals occurs. Around the periphery of the room are great vats and ovens into which raw materials are dumped. Water is readily available from the flow-pipes above.

Extra heat can be provided as needed via a series of metal pipes that are attached to a granite bridge spanning the firepit itself. When one of these pipes is lowered into the magma, pressurized vents can be tapped that spurt the molten rock through the pipes and into whichever oven or vat-base requires the heat.

Very little light trickles down this far from the suntunnels. Instead, this level of Thorin is illuminated primarily by the reflected glow of the magma in the firewell. The stench of smoke and sulfurous fumes permeates the air. It is always warm down here, though not so hot as to cause damage.

During the hours of daylight the smelting level echoes with the sounds of bellows and forge-fires, hissing steam and pouring, crumbling rock. The dwarves who work here are singed and sooty. They tend to be very serious about their work, and suspicious of outsiders.

The chief Fire Warden, Brack Two-Teeth, supervises operations on the smelting level. He regularly inspects each operation, and is responsible for insuring that the fires stay hot and the smoke is properly ventilated.

During Balladine, the smelting level grows unbearably hot, though the temperatures don't reach the extremes they do in the firewell. The maximum damage a char-

acter might receive here is half the damage that would be inflicted in the firewell. Nevertheless, the dangers last for a similar amount of time, two to 12 days following Balladine. The smelters are shut down during that period.

THE FOUNDRY LEVEL

A series of bucket and winch mechanisms allow the molten ore from the smelting level to be lifted to the foundries. Here is where the metal is cast into the shapes of tools and implements to be used within Thorin or traded. Some of the finest metal is cast into ingots, and these are traded to other peoples. Alternately, fine weapon steel is cast and stretched in rough form here, before transport up to the forge level for finishing.

Stockpiles of coke and coal (firestone) are

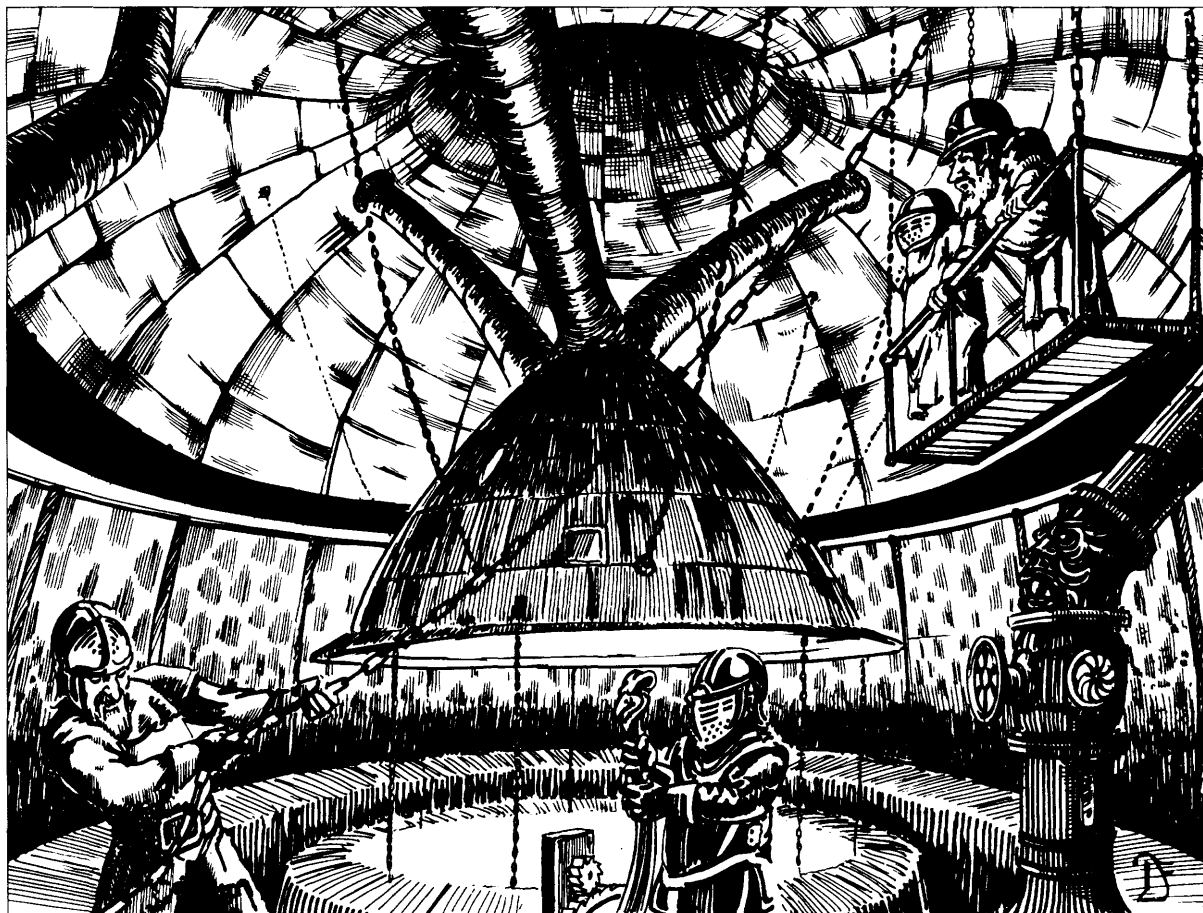
heaped in many locations around these shops. While much of the melting power comes from piped magma and hot air vented from below, many fires are built in the various ovens to apply extra heat where it is most needed.

In the various shops around the foundry level are great vats and casting molds for making objects of all shapes and sizes. Specific areas are devoted to the following types of products.

A. Gears and pulleys for the large winch mechanisms used throughout Thorin, as well as wheels for carts and wagons, are made here.

B. Horseshoes, spikes, bolts, pins, and other small, high-strength parts are made here.

C. Plates, bowls, buckets, and other metal containers are made here.





D. Plows, anvils, levers, shovels, and other large, flat tools are made here.

E. Strands of flexible wire, both steel and copper, that are woven into cables of any length are made here.

F. Links for chains, varying from finger-nail-sized bits to huge rings that weigh more than a stout dwarf, are made here.

G. Large ingots of working types of metal (copper, iron, bronze, etc.) graded for sale and barter are made here.

H. Smaller ingots of precious metals, including gold, silver, platinum, and steel, are made here.

I. Weapons-quality steel for sword blades and axe blades, as well as the heads of arrows and spears, is made here. The blades are crudely finished at this level, and sent up to the smithies and forges for final honing.

During the fireflash of Balladine, the foundry level becomes lethally hot, but only for the 10 rounds immediately following the flare of sunlight. For this period, anyone in the foundry level will suffer 12 hp of damage per round, treated as red dragon breath for saving throws and magical resistances.

Though this is one level higher than the smelters, the foundry level similarly receives very little illumination from the outside. Instead, the reflected glow from the firewell provides much of the lighting here. Other illumination comes from the many well-stoked fires in the pits and ovens of the various foundries.

FORGES

These furnaces are smaller than those on the foundry level. They are used for finishing materials that have been rough-molded on the floor below. The most distinctive feature of the forge level is the vast, cone-shaped ceiling that rises up from the work stations to carry fumes through the great central ventilation shaft.

This is a very busy work area within Thorin, but there is a more deliberate sense of purpose in the atmosphere here. Smiths hammer at their various forges, coaxing hot metal into the shapes they desire. However, even with the constant din of labor, the forge level is clearly a place of precision and craftsmanship, away from the brutal power and roaring heat of the lower levels.

A distinctive characteristic of the forge level is the large iron shield that can be rolled into place, blocking off the effects of the fireflash from the lower levels. This is the lowest place one can expect to be during Balladine and still survive the fireflash. Anyone who stands next to the suntunnel will be susceptible to 2-24 hp of blast damage during the round of the flash itself.

The shields are operated by hand-cranked winch mechanisms built into the bedrock of the mountain. When the shields are closed, all access to the foundries, smelters, and firewell is blocked, except directly down the suntunnel itself.

The forge level holds the headquarters for the various wardens of metals. Thorin has a Steel Warden, Iron Warden, Gold Warden, Silver Warden, and Copper Warden, as well as assistant wardens for alloys and other, lesser-used metals. The wardens test the various metals by taste and other procedures (melting them, touching with acids and other materials, etc.) in order to insure that proper levels of quality are maintained.

Hand-cranked lifts carry supplies and goods from the foundry level up to the forges, and also serve to lower the raw ores and fuels that are sent down to the manufacturing.

Directly off the forges, and still below the level of the Grand Concourse, are the main warehouse complexes of Thorin. These great storage chambers contain the raw ores, coal, and lumber supplies consumed by these operations. The smaller warehous-

ing caverns contain finished products of dwarven manufacture. They are kept there until they're needed for barter or for use in the city itself.

UPPER LEVELS

Rings of the city's levels encircle the Great Suntunnel up through the heart of Mount Thorin. Connected by many shafts, lifts, and stairwells, these levels are also linked by a wide series of stairs spiraling down the interior of the suntunnel itself.

Each of these levels has a wide plaza surrounding the suntunnel. These areas tend to be well-lit and airy, and are common places for neighbors who live on the same level to gather.

Surrounding the plazas on each floor is a ring of shops and markets, as well as workshops and manufactories. Not all the work is done in the levels below the Grand Concourse. The city's upper levels house most of the tailors, leather workers, stone-carvers and wood-carvers, brewers, and other small scale shops that don't require a great deal of heat for their operations.

This inner ring of buildings also contains quarters for the wardens and marshals of the floor. Each level has its own Chief Marshal, as well as numerous wardens whose duties are exclusive to that level alone. The highest ranking among these notables usually have spacious quarters with ready access to the plazas and suntunnel.

Some space in the inner rings is reserved for storage and warehousing, purely for practical reasons. Since most vertical transport of heavy loads is accomplished directly in the suntunnel, these storage facilities are located as near as possible to the docks where cargos are delivered and picked up.

Beyond the inner ring of structures, each city level has a variety of residences, with apartments for families small and large.

These quarters lie along many winding, narrow corridors, but they are better lit than most parts of Thorin.

FOOD WARRENS

These moist caverns are generally tucked away from the city proper. There are dozens of them throughout Mount Thorin, and they are each supplied with sunlight through an overhead shaft. Water, too, is piped to the warrens from one of the cisterns. To a great extent, this moisture is conserved in the dank chambers, so the regular water needs of the warrens are minimal.

The floors of the food warrens have been layered in rich loam, which was originally carted in from the silty bottomlands of surrounding valleys. Over the decades and centuries of use, the unusable portions of the crops have been composted into the soil, creating a rich, soft earth with astounding growing potential.

The plants grown within these warrens vary considerably, though naturally the emphasis is on many types of fast-growing, edible fungi. The larger warrens have several different types of crops, while the smaller compartments are often devoted to only one kind of plant.

The combination of moist soil and many years of composting makes the air in these warrens thick, humid, and musty. Those who aren't used to it find the atmosphere unbreatheable, almost to the point of asphyxiation. The dwarves who dedicate their lives to tending the farm crops, however, not only grow used to the rich air but come to enjoy it.





THORBARDIN

2150 PC - Present

THE GRANDEST HOME

Thorbardin is without a doubt the grandest testament to dwarven ingenuity, diligence, and craftsmanship that exists anywhere upon Krynn. With its eight great cities, vast extent of warrens, fortified gates, and cold, underground sea, it represents an undertaking far beyond any other dwarven delving. In fact, it is much larger than many a surface realm of humankind.

Sheltered under the vast, stony bulwark of Cloudseeker Peak, Thorbardin became a unifying symbol to fractious dwarven clans. It is a fortress that has not been breached in more than 26 centuries of existence.

But the single most remarkable feature of Thorbardin, a city and palace unlike any other on the face of the world, is the Life-Tree of the Hylar. This vast network of chambers has been excavated from the living rock of a great stalactite, and holds almost the entire population of the Hylar clan in its myriad levels, chambers, and rooms.

Thorbardin is the dwarven nation of the Kharolis Mountains, including much of the surface world of the mountains and their surrounding plains. It draws much of its food from these outer fields, and here it maintains pastures for its horses, and trading villages for the goods manufactured in the undermountain city's great forges.

The Neidar (hill dwarves) who occupy the outer portions of the realm are not fond of their cousins within the mountain. After some centuries, the bleak hatred of the Dwarfgate Wars has mellowed somewhat. Relations have now reached the point where the two peoples can exchange trade

goods, though always with mistrust and grumbling. The dwarves living under the sky must also be considered when one examines Thorbardin, for although they are two cultures, they live in one place.

The wonders of this magnificent city have been documented in many sources. The tale of its founding is well-told in the *Covenant of the Forge*. It is mapped in outline in the *Atlas of the DRAGONLANCE® World*. Tales of its wonders have been recounted in many a tome, including the *DRAGONLANCE Chronicles*, the *DRAGONLANCE Legends*, and stories such as *The Gates of Thorbardin* and *Flint, the King*. Yet no single description, no tale of action and adventure, can truly capture the full magnificence of the place in a manner that the reader can readily comprehend.

In part, this is because Thorbardin is just too extensive for such a treatment. Yet it is the intent of this tome to fill as many of these gaps as possible. While material that already exists will be summarized as necessary, new information will also be presented. In particular, the outer flanks of the realm, including the hill dwarf villages, border outposts, and trading villages, will be placed in their proper context.

The world of Thorbardin is a living, breathing environment, seething with intrigue, rife with conflict and confrontation. At the same time, it is the greatest source of steel and the implements made from that precious metal that exists on all of Ansalon.

It is through trade that the dwarves of Thorbardin, while reclusive and distrustful of the rest of the world, assure their kingdom its status as a powerful nation and as one of the leaders among the civilized realms of Krynn.





THE DWARVES OF THORBARDIN

Thorbardin is the most populous realm of dwarves upon Ansalon. It is also the oldest, in terms of continuous habitation, since by the conclusion of the War of the Lance the great undermountain nation had existed for more than 27 centuries.

For all its grandeur and long and exalted history, it is still not a place of great unity. The original dwarven tribes here, as in so many other locations, called their initial realm Kal-Thax. Even then, prior to the coming of the Hylar, the tribes were divided. Those divisions exist to this day.

The dwarves of Thorbardin are divided racially and historically. Several distinct subraces of dwarves are present, including Aghar, Hylar, Daewar, Daergar, Klar, and Theiwar. Each has distinct characteristics, and each is suspicious of members of the other clans. There have been countless inter-subrace clashes, many verging upon open warfare.

The historical divisions are not inherent, yet for most dwarves they are even more bitter than the racial distinctions. This difference is based upon whether the dwarf's ancestors chose to live underground or on top of the mountains. The mountain dwarves include clans of all the subraces in Thorbardin. The hill dwarves include many members of the Hylar, Daewar, and Klar subraces, and a few Theiwar and Aghar. They have come to view themselves as hill dwarves to the extent that the subrace differences are rarely even noted among surface-dwelling dwarves. The hill dwarves call themselves Neidar, but they do not form a separate subrace of dwarves.

Before the great cavern had been discovered by the famed explorer Urkhan, the dwarves dwelled across the breadth of

Mount Cloudseeker, the neighboring massif of Sky's End Peak, and also across many of the rolling ranges and foothills that sloped away to the west. They called this place Kal-Thax, and it became the place where the various tribes first organized into "thanes." The differences between these thanes were, and remain, so pronounced that they actually qualify as individual subraces.

At the time of Thorbardin's founding, there were a great many dwarves who belonged to none of the clans. These unattached dwarves, the Einar, have since been absorbed into the various underground clans, or have identified themselves with their outside-dwelling kin and have become Neidar, the hill dwarves.

MOUNTAIN DWARVES

Each of these subraces has its own city or cities in Thorbardin. The following descriptions are intended to explain the dwarven-*realm's* powers-that-be.

THEIWAR

The first thane to form in Kal-Thax, the Theiwar were cliff-dwellers who inhabited the high summits of Cloudseeker Peak. Shrewd and ambitious, they are stocky and broad-shouldered.

The Theiwar are the only dwarves who claim any proficiency in magic use. Through their savants, who are often physically deformed and repulsive in appearance, the Theiwar have a potent source of fear that they freely use to intimidate dwarves of the other clans. Among the Theiwar themselves, the savants are despised and feared, even as they are obeyed.

The members of this subrace are selfish and malicious, deriving cruel pleasure from the sufferings of others. They are cunning deal makers, and will conceal trickery and

deception in the midst of apparently innocent conversation and negotiation. When the tables are turned, however, a Theiwar often seeks vengeance in blood for any kind of trick played upon him.

Pounce Quickspring became the thane of the Theiwar following the War of the Lance. This warrior chieftain resisted the alliance the previous thane (Realgar) had made with the dragonarmy Highlord Verminaard.

DAERGAR

The Daergar are the dark-dwellers and the dwarves most well-adapted to living underground. They have the best infravision (90') of any of the subraces, and are uncomfortable in conditions of bright light. The DM can inflict a -1 penalty on all attack rolls when the character is in full sunlight.

The Daergar are the most ambitious miners among the dwarves of Thorbardin. They were the first of Thorbardin's clans to forge steel, although it was a crude and somewhat brittle alloy until the Hylar came along.

This is also a subrace that is quick to use violence, and is utterly ruthless in the manner in which that brutality is employed. Daergar males routinely slay each other in duels and brawls, though public policy forces them to take these quarrels into the warren tunnels beyond their city borders. Daergar are brutal and intolerant of Aghar, which makes it something of a mystery why the greatest population of gully dwarves in Thorbardin maintains its lair in the environs of a Daergar city.

The Daergar have long cooperated with the Theiwar when confronted by the diplomacy and persuasive skills of the Hylar/Daewar union. Still, even the Theiwar distrust them, and gang battles between groups of these two clans are not uncommon. Daergar make no effort to hide their loathing for the Hylar and Daewar.

The current thane of the Daergar is Halt Blackmetal. He won the throne at the conclusion of the War of the Lance, when he slew Rance Coalmount, the previous thane, in the Arena of Blood. Halt then successfully faced seven challengers, fighting one per day. Custom allows a maximum of seven. Some successions require only three or four duels. He assumed the throne upon the death of the seventh challenger, amid great celebration and drunken rioting.

DAEWAR

In the years predating Thorbardin, this clan had little to do with the others. The Daewar lived in a great keep that they erected on the slopes of Sky's End Peak. There they lived in isolation, yet with a kind of permanence and dignity that escaped their cliff-dwelling and cave-dwelling neighbors.

It was the Daewar explorer Urkhan who discovered the vast caverns that would one day house Thorbardin. The Daewar were the first of the clans to recognize the primacy of the Hylar, and the two clans have often cooperated on objectives beneficial to Thorbardin as a whole.

The Daewar are skilled merchants and builders. A great many of them live in the vicinity of Southgate, from which they continually emerge with goods purchased from throughout Thorbardin. Most of the trading representatives for the Theiwar and Daergar are Daewar, since members of those two clans detest going outside, yet they distrust the Hylar too much to let them handle their business.

The thane of the Daewar is Gneiss True-silver. He presided over the clan during the War of the Lance, but was too old to take a very active role in the campaign. Consequently, many of the Daewar served under Hylar captains. This still rankles Daewar pride.





KLAR

These wild dwarves are rendered mad by their use of the false metal *tamex*, or quick-silver. Klar delight in the flowing of tamex, and typically use it to add a sheen to their works of art, as well as keeping bowls and dishes of the stuff around to play with. When a Klar needs to think, he often gathers a handful of tamex and pours it back and forth between his palms while he ponders the mysteries of the universe.

Klar are temperamental, unpredictable and, when angered, almost immune to the effects of logic or pain. Other dwarves consider them rude and unkempt, but the Klar are tolerated as a full-fledged thane of Thorbardin.

In part this is because of their skill in battle. The Klar are excellent scouts, able to maintain a movement rate of 12 when unencumbered by metal armor, and they are absolutely ferocious when attacking. When a common enemy of the dwarves is present, the dwarves are disciplined enough to control their impulse toward violence until that enemy presents itself. When no such enemy exists, the other clans leave the Klar alone.

Previous to Thorbardin's founding, the Klar lived like nomads, roaming the mountains and seeking shelter as they went. Even after they moved underground, a great number of them left Thorbardin to live among the hill dwarves. During the Dwarfgate War the Klar fought on both sides in approximately even numbers.

Naturally, the Klar are not as productive laborers or as skilled craftsmen as the other clans. Still, their needs are simple, and they have managed to delve for themselves an extensive and multi-leveled city. The buildings and streets are somewhat chaotically arranged, and connecting passages are sparse. Often two buildings back each

other, but a dwarf must travel from one through a mile or more of winding tunnel to reach the other building's entrance.

Tufa Bloodeye is the thane of the Klar. He is determined and stubborn, and smart enough to know that he isn't very smart. He always studies a situation very carefully before he makes any plans to cooperate with the other dwarves of Thorbardin.

HYLAR

The Hylar have traditionally been the ruling clan of Thorbardin. It was their arrival that first united the clans, and it was Hylar pressure that forced the Daewar to open up the underground cavern to all the subraces of dwarves.

The Hylar are the most inventive of the dwarves, as evidenced by the technology for things such as aqueducts, pulleys, lifts, and cart tracks that they brought with them from Thorin, not to mention the superior steel that they alone knew how to forge.

Dwelling primarily in the great Life-Tree, the Hylar have created one of the wonders of Ansalon from this great stalactite. The Hylar have been the force behind the two great colonizations in Thorbardin's history, the journeys to Thoradin and Kayolin.

Glade Hornfel is the thane of the Hylar, and the first king of Thorbardin since Duncan, who ruled at the time of the Dwarfgate War. He has proven to be a wise and able king, though both the Daergar and Theiwar resent the power he has gained for himself and his clan.

AGHAR

The gully dwarves of Thorbardin have achieved a level of majesty and pomp within the great dwarvenhome that far exceeds their stature anywhere else on Krynn. Nevertheless, they are still pathetic

little creatures who don't seem to understand the world around them.

For their "city," the Aghar have claimed several massive tailing-piles that have been excavated from the delvings of the Daergar. Although the Daergar continue to dump great cartloads of rock onto these piles (usually when the greatest number of gully dwarves are playing in the slide zone), the Aghar have continued to thrive and prosper here.

Their stubby fingers have clawed countless narrow passages through the loose rock of these piles, and they have shored up their cavern with a wide variety of materials. Many a Daergar warrior has lost his plate mail shirt and never suspected that it serves as a crucial archway in the warrens of the gully dwarves.

The current leader of the Aghar is Highbulp Bluph Bluphigh I. Though he has the honorary title of thane, and even holds a seat at the great Council of Thaness, he is usually ignored by the other thanes. That doesn't bother Bluph, however. In fact, it's doubtful that he even knows about most of the councils held by the other thanes.

Of course, all the formalities are observed. Several days prior to each council meeting, a messenger arrives at Agharbardin and hands an invitation to one of Bluph's courtiers. The difficulties involved in getting the message to the highbulp, having it deciphered, and of Bluph actually remembering the appointment at the proper time are generally enough to insure that no gully dwarf representative will appear in the Aghar throne in the Council of Thaness.

NEIDAR (HILL DWARVES)

Neidar villages cover the length and the breadth of Thorbardin. Many of them exist on top of the caverns inhabited by their undermountain kin. Lately, limited trade has

even begun to develop between the two great populations of dwarves.

Nevertheless, the hill dwarves live with the knowledge that their greatest enemies might dwell directly beneath their feet. Encounters between hill and mountain dwarf patrols still end in bloodshed as often as not.

This has not always been the case. Prior to the Cataclysm, the two peoples existed in symbiotic prosperity. Neidar foodstuffs, as well as cloth, timber, and leather goods, were a necessity in Thorbardin. The mountain dwarves, in return, had plenty of weapons and tools to offer in trade.

Because of their curious nature, the hill dwarves established contacts among the neighboring populations of humans and elves. These contacts later led to very prosperous trading arrangements between the mountain kingdom and the realms beyond Thorbardin. Many mountain dwarves of the Hylar, Daewar, and Klar said goodbye to their birthplaces and moved out to the world of fresh air and light. Often, young hill dwarves sought training or employment in Thorbardin, and remained there to live and raise their children.

All this changed when the wrath of the gods plunged downward from the skies, and Krynn was forever changed by the Cataclysm.

The tales of the horrors suffered by the hill dwarves are well-known. The tales tell of their pleas for mercy answered by the closing of Thorbardin's gates, trapping them beneath a sky that still poured forth a chaos of rain and steam. Enlisting with human allies under the command of the wizard Fistantilus, the Neidar hurled themselves into war with their undermountain kin.

Despite the horrific losses inflicted upon the mountain dwarves in that tragic conflict, it was the hill dwarves who suffered the scars that leave a burning bitterness to this





day. Many Neidar villages were destroyed outright, and the rest suffered a dark century or more of starvation, disease, and chaos.

The War of the Lance provided some small ground for cooperation between the hill and mountain dwarves, perhaps planting the seeds for some future reconciliation. For now, however, it has merely allowed enough cooperation for Thorbardin to begin trading with the outside world. Hill dwarf agents control much of this trade, though most of the goods come from the mountain dwarves. Profits have been high in many instances, but the two tribes have not reconciled the painful past.

Unlike the mountain dwarves, the hill dwarves as a clan do not have a thane appointed to rule over them all. Some villages have leaders who have appointed themselves "thanes," but the title has no significance beyond the immediate locale. Instead, when it comes to making arrangements with their neighbors, or to defending their settlements against depredation by monsters or hostile troops, hill dwarf villages are pretty much on their own.

THE OUTER REALM OF THORBARDIN

Thorbardin is dominated by the great massif of Cloudseeker Mountain, whose triple summits and broad shoulders sprawl across a width of 50 miles. Each of the three summits is more than 12,000 feet above sea level.

To the north of Cloudseeker, rising upward from the Northgate like a challenge to the sky itself, is an even higher summit called Sky's End. It soars at least 15,000 feet into the air. Its jagged ridges have not been scaled in the living memory of man or dwarf.

The Kharolis Mountains spill away from these two heights through a series of high,

rocky ridges. Though they rarely top 10,000 feet in the outlying ranges, these are snowy mountains, difficult to cross and irrevocably claimed by the dwarves as their home.

Interspersed among these ridges, however, are numerous hill dwarf villages, complete with fertile terraced hillsides, healthy flocks of sheep, and herds of goats and cattle. Humans live among these hill dwarves in ever increasing numbers, and with the end of the great war, the level of trade has once again begun to flourish.

THE BORDERS

Thorbardin's borders officially extend from the ocean to the west, to Pax Tharkas and Qualinesti in the north, and to the very fringe of the Kharolis Mountains to the south and east. The great bulk of this territory is wilderness. The settlements of the hill dwarves, and the land patrolled by the mountain dwarves, encompass a much smaller locale.

Of course, the Plains of Dergoth lie just to the north of Northgate, and for the dwarves of Thorbardin, that battered prairie will always be a symbol of the Dwarfgate War. Skullcap still rises from the wasteland, a forbidding enough presence to frighten all but the most determined of traders from its environs.

Since the war, the trail to Pax Tharkas has been reopened, and dwarven goods are once again carried through that great pass to Qualinesti and Abanasinia. With the increased shipping trade in Newports, the dwarves have a trading outlet that can reach to Solamnia and beyond.

The long history of cooperation between Thorbardin and Qualinesti was interrupted by the attendant tragedies of war. Now, however, many dwarves have formed companies and have marched north to help the elves drive out the dragonforces that still

occupy many parts of that hallowed elven-home.

To the south, a good road extends from the pass at Southgate across the Plains of Dust to Tarsis. Having thrown off the yoke of dragonarmy occupation, that city is now opening its markets to trade. Industrious dwarven merchants have established permanent shops there, and make certain that a steady supply of Thorbardin's goods are available. The most desirable items sought in trade by the dwarves include furs, wool, and salt.

THE WILDERNESS

The tangle of mountain and fen surrounding Thorbardin has been of little use to man or dwarf since the Cataclysm. Where once Tarsis Bay offered good fishing and its low marshes teemed with many types of waterfowl, the Plains of Dust now spread in parched desolation.

Dergoth Plain too, had once been a fertile, well-watered lowland where crops and livestock flourished within easy reach of Thorbardin's Northgate. That plain survived the Cataclysm intact, only to have the wrath of Fistantilus descend in a disastrous explosion that rendered the whole region a wasteland.

Though the route to Pax Tharkas remains open, despite the fact that some of the road was destroyed by Fistantilus, that thoroughfare has carried little traffic in the Post-Cataclysmic age.

To the west, the mountain wilderness rolls and tumbles for more than 100 miles before meeting the Forest of Wayreth. That wood is avoided by dwarves because of past and present suspicions about chaotic magic. North of Wayreth is Qualinesti, where skirmishes continue between returning elves and the remnants of the once-conquering dragonarmies.

Although dwarven patrols (both mountain and hill dwarves, naturally in separate companies) regularly comb the area around Thorbardin itself, the outer wilderness is different. Occasionally a well-armed band of dwarves will make a sweep through one of these segments, but for the most part the creatures living or roaming there are not disturbed by the troops of Thorbardin.

These interlopers represent a varied population. Many of them offer a significant threat to the unwary traveler. Some typical inhabitants of the wilderness include the following.

1. 2-12 Kapak Draconians

These creatures have fled the returning elves in Qualinesti. They are hungry and desperate to return to Sanction, but they don't know where it is.

2. 1-3 Ogres/2-10 Hobgoblins

This remnant of the Red Wing has fled northward from Tarsis. They seek a good shelter where they can make a lair to serve as a base to plunder the surrounding area.

3. 1 Unicorn

This creature is scarred and battered from cruel captivity in the hands of draconians. He seeks a return to the forestlands of Qualinesti.

4. 1-6 Raptorbirds

These magnificent creatures are some of the few survivors left after the dragons swept through. They seek to restore harmony to the mountains.

5. 1 Adult White Dragon

Hungry and frightened, this great beast (named Ferion) lost his mate to red dragons. He seeks vengeance, or a safe place to live. He's not really sure which is more important.





6. 10-40 Bandits

Led by a black-robed wizard, these cutthroats are willing to talk or attack, depending on whom they encounter. They are trying to amass treasure that they will take to Sanction or Lemish to establish a stronghold.

7. 1-3 Cave Bears

These mighty creatures have put up with dragons, the Cataclysm, dwarves, and elves. They're not about to let anybody steal their snug and spacious cave.

8. 1-6 Trolls

Ancient mountain dwellers, the trolls remain aloof from other conflicts, but are devious and cunning at setting ambushes for unwary travelers.

9. 2-20 Dwarves

This patrol might include nearly any type of dwarf, with the following probabilities: 1-45 hill dwarves; 46-70 Hylar/Daewar; 71-85 Klar; 86-95 Theiwar; 96-00 Aghar. The dwarves naturally react to clan rivalries, but they also take an interest in any activities that might be dangerous to Thorbardin.

10. 2-12 Elves

These elves will be Qualinesti (1-50) or Kagonesti (51-00). They try to avoid discovery. If confronted, they are here because they've been pursuing some band of creatures (draconians, most likely) who have fled Qualinesti.

11. 3-18 Dire Wolves

Tired and hungry, these great wolves are desperate for fresh game. They have a healthy fear of armed parties, but their hunger grows worse with each passing day.

12. 1-6 Mountain Cats

These unique felines are extremely rare, dwelling in isolated valleys and staying

close to home. They are supremely confident in these vales that they consider their own. They do not go out of their way to attack, but are fierce and unafraid if confronted in their own valleys. They might be encountered in the company of an irda.

SHEERCLIFF

This is a lofty promontory that slices through the Kharolis Mountains, presenting an impressive barrier to east-west travel and communications. It is located at the base of the Anviltops, which are the highest mountains of the range except for the summits above Thorbardin itself.

The dropoff faces east, with the heights of the Anviltops beginning atop the cliff itself. The cliff extends for about 35 miles in length, while its height varies from 200-1,200 feet in various places along that length.

Though much shattered rock, together with angled ledges and ice-worn cracks, mar the face of the cliff and provide ample hand- and footholds, the climb is still treacherous. Thieves and skilled mountaineers can possibly negotiate it (appropriate checks are required). Other characters need to use a rope, or they will almost certainly suffer a dangerous fall.

The largest remaining population of raptor birds dwell among the Anviltops. Occasionally they can be seen floating gracefully through the air above these cliffs.

WAYKEEP VALLEY

This is a place where magic lays heavy on the land. Sometimes images appear here, recreating scenes from dwarven history. Commonly, these will be scenes of hill and mountain dwarves locked in the savage combat of the Dwarfgate War. The charred hulks of great war machines rise like skele-

tal monsters around these vignettes. Often the scenes of battle are surrounded in ice, reminiscent of Fistantilus' destructive magic.

Waykeep Valley is also one of several places on Krynn where the Tower of Gargath occasionally appears. The magical emanations surrounding that edifice are so potent that it materializes here, rising from the ground and remaining in place for years at a time. Later, travelers might come along and find no trace of the tower's presence.

This valley is one of the few places on Ansalon where one might encounter an irda. These huge, graceful creatures are the predecessors of the modern ogre, but in their wisdom, gentility, and patience they are almost the exact opposite of their brutal descendants. It is rumored that several irda wander the Valley of Waykeep, enjoying the potent magic of the place and protecting its natural beauty from harm.

Irda: AC 8(10); MV 6(9); HD 4+1; THACO 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1-1 0 (weapon); SA +2 to damage

PATHS AND ROADWAYS

The mountain ridges of the Kharolis Range tend to run in a north to south direction. However, these peaks have less regularity than the Garnet Mountains. Consequently, there are several routes that allow travelers and merchants to move among the mountains without having to scale the highest peaks.

Promontory Pass: This is the gap to the south of Cloudseeker Peak. In the early history of Thorbardin, it was the main route of human invasion. Now it serves as a trade highway for humans and dwarves.

Beginning where the Plains of Dust meet the foothills of Cloudseeker Peak, the road winds its way along a flat river valley, skirt-

ing to the south of the climbing mountain ridges. The great Southgate of Thorbardin lies only six miles to the north of this road. The trail to Southgate turns off 10 miles before the pass itself.

Promontory Pass is a half-mile-wide niche in the mountain ridge, flanked by sheer 1,000-foot cliffs to the south, and 2,000-foot cliffs to the north. After this pass, the route climbs a succession of lower ridges until it reaches the western plain, just south of Wayreth Forest.

Hillhome Highway: This is an old smugglers' road that was developed in the decades prior to the War of the Lance. It passes from the base of Sky's End Peak through many rugged foothills, finally coming to an end at a sheltered bay of the *Newsea*. A small fishing village called Salmonfall is settled there, though the docks and wharfs are large enough to suggest a sizeable shipping capacity.

The western terminus of the Hillhome Highway ends in a rocky streambed. Once it led to a secret entrance to Thorbardin that has since been closed. Several dwarven engineers have examined the road and concluded that it might be possible to extend it as far as the Northgate, but considerable excavation would be necessary to raise it to the level of that lofty and unused aperture.

South Road: Once this road connected Thorbardin to Pax Tharkas and Qualinesti. The portion of the road closest to Thorbardin was destroyed by the rage of Fistantilus, so that now it begins in the Hills of Blood.

Every trace of the road south of those hills has been obliterated, and much of the route is buried in the festering bog. If one reaches it, however, it continues northward to Pax Tharkas in very good shape.

Barter Trail: This winding path connects the mercantile village of Barter (which stands on the Promontory Pass Road) to the





Vale of Respite and the hill dwarf regions beyond. It is a foot trail suitable for horses and mules, but too narrow to allow the passage of even a small cart.

OUTPOST MINES

Many of the mines of Thorbardin are located beyond the actual cavern of the realm itself. These are known as the Outer or Outpost mines. Each is a small community unto itself, since the miners who work here generally stay for at least a month and often a year or more before they return to Thorbardin.

Typically the outer portions of a mining cavern are devoted to large barracks, rooms, supply chambers, and numerous saloons and gambling establishments where the miners pass the time while they're not working or sleeping. Stockpiles of food and ale are kept on hand, as well as spare tools, and sometimes, limited equipment for smelting or chipping the ores.

These mining camps are raucous and wild places. Very few non-dwarves will be encountered here. An elf or a kender takes his life into his hands just by entering.

Typically, the camps are not fortified. Each mineshaft has a heavy wooden door, reinforced by iron bands, to close off access in the event of an emergency. One or two armed guards will be present when the door is open, but as a rule they don't expect trouble.

Some of the more notable of the Outer Mines include Thunderpeaks, Agharpost, Gemfathers, and Smokesnest.

THUNDERPEAKS

This mine is controlled and worked exclusively by the Daergar. It is the most productive source of metal ore in all Thorbardin, and has been worked continually for more



than 2,000 years. During this time, the tunnels have grown deeper, the chambers wider, but never has there been any indication that the ore supplies might be approaching depletion.

Iron is the primary ore drawn from here, though tin, nickel, and aluminum have also been excavated in smaller amounts. Excess stone is chiseled from the ore as much as possible before great cartloads are taken back to Southgate where they are smelted in the Shaft of Reorx.

The great network of tunnels at the mouth of these mines has grown to a small city in its own right, since many Daergar miners have brought their families here and made somewhat permanent homes in the mining town. The population of this community is approximately 4,000 miners, and another 3,000 wives and children.

AGHARPOST

This Outpost mine was one of the northernmost of a network of iron and nickel mines that once sprawled across the ranges all the way to the northern foothills and the slopes of Mount Zhaman. At one time dwarves of all the clans worked these mines, producing a variety of useful metals for return to Thorbardin.

The mines survived the Cataclysm intact, but it was the rage of Fistantilus that eventually obliterated most of them. A dozen Outpost mines in the Hills of Blood and near Zhaman were totally destroyed.

The tunnels and chambers of this mine remain intact. They are warmed by geothermal steam blasts that fog up many of the passages, obscuring both normal and infravision. The mines themselves are no longer in use. In fact, they've probably been forgotten by most of the mountain dwarves. But the caverns have been taken over as a splendid lair for about 200 gully dwarves.

GEMFATHERS

This is a vast network of narrow tunnels that have penetrated the ancient rock of the Anviltops. Numerous precious and semi-precious stones have been brought from these delvings, though the stones lack the pure quality of the fine gems mined in Kay-olin.

Each of the Thorbardin clans has found something worth delving in the Anviltops. The Hylar and Daewar, working together, have exploited a wealth of jade, onyx, and bloodstones in the northernmost network of the Gemfathers. The Theiwar, operating the central section of the mines, have produced jade, as well as an occasional find of emeralds and rubles.

The Daergar, mining in the south, have followed several profitable finds of diamonds and rubies. The diamonds are large and generally rough, but work very well for the cutting and drilling needs of the ever-delving Daergar.

Because of the easily transportable wealth mined from the Gemfathers, security here is a little tighter than at the other mines. Each shaft has at least three guards at its mouth, and when the gems are transported to Thorbardin they are carried along the Promontory Pass Road in a caravan of several dozen heavily-armed dwarves.

SMOKESNEST

This dark mine has produced a tremendous amount of coal. The firestone has been used for centuries to fuel the forges and foundries of Thorbardin. It is one of the largest of the Outpost mines, and has shown no sign that it is reaching the end of its productive days.

J-he mine is typically worked by 3,000 dwarves, mostly of the Theiwar and Daewar clans, though each clan works a separate network of tunnels, and maintains a sepa-



rate barracks and recreational quarter near the tunnel mouths.

HILL DWARF VILLAGES

The Neidar dwell in many places among the mountains and foothills of Thorbardin. Their villages are too numerous to describe individually, but several representative examples are described here.

STORMSLOPE

This is a community of stone houses, muddy yards, and a great deal of business activity. It is located below the main Daergar mines, and the hill dwarves have taken an active and profitable role in seeing that the ore from those mines is delivered to Southgate.

Stormslope occupies a rocky mountain-side. It can be reached by a winding cart track that climbs nearly 1,000 feet in a little over a mile from the Promontory Pass. With a population of 800, Stormslope has perhaps 600 hill dwarves, and 100 each of Daergar and humans. From 10 to 200 additional Daergar might be staying here during any given day.

Several of the inns and residences in Stormslope are almost completely underground, since the Daergar who pass through here so despise the light of the sun. These establishments are run by hill dwarves, but these innkeepers have learned to provide a setting that their Daergar customers will appreciate.

The Daergar and the hill dwarves don't like each other, but they are pragmatic enough to realize the benefits of their relationship. The dark-delvers have difficulty making the journey from Southgate to the Thunderpeak Mines in one night, and they dread the prospect of spending a day under the light of the sun. Consequently, the shelters offered in Stormslope provide welcome

respite. The hill dwarves, conversely, make a handsome profit from the moneyed and ore-laden Daergar.

The chieftain of Stormslope is a dour hill dwarf named Slate Armbreaker. He exacts a personal toll from every cart of ore carried through the town, though to his credit he has used much of the money for improving the road and clearing away slides and rockfalls.

BARTER

Barter is a hill dwarf village with a sizeable human population. More than 1,000 folk live here, and they are about evenly divided between hill dwarves and humans. Another 100 mountain dwarves have established somewhat permanent quarters here, though they will always claim that their true home is Thorbardin. Elves, kender, gnomes, and mountain dwarves from all the clans are tolerated in Barter. In fact, nowhere else in Thorbardin does such a diverse population live and trade together.

As indicated by its name, Barter is a trading town. Merchants from Qualinesti, Abanasinia, Tarsis, Wayreth, and even farther points come to the various booths and stalls that line the bustling marketplace. Every type of goods manufactured in Thorbardin is available here, and all sorts of food and clothing materials are carted here and offered in return.

The chieftain of Barter is a rotund and jolly hill dwarf called Toother Grinface. He wants to see that Barter is a peaceable and profitable town, and as long as visitors don't participate in violence, they are always welcome in Barter, at least until their money runs out.

HILLHOME

This is the famous birthplace of Flint Fireforge, hero of the War of the Lance. It is



located amid a region of tumbling, rocky foothills, and is a prosperous settlement of dairy farms, sheep and goat herds, and breweries.

Hillhome was never a great trading town. The local dwarves are ambivalent about improving the "Hillhome Highway," which is currently a very good road that doesn't connect to anything particularly useful. It was originally built by command of a dragon Highlord for purposes of smuggling Theiwar arms out of Thorbardin.

The population of Hillhome consists of about 600 hill dwarves, with perhaps 50 humans living among them. It is a peaceful and somewhat bucolic place, though it has turned out more than its share of valiant war heroes. Besides the famed Flint, the Fireforge family gave the world Regar Fireforge, a hill dwarf hero who perished in the Dwarfgate War, and Basalt Fireforge, who fought in the War of the Lance, and is now the esteemed mayor of the village.

Basalt and his wife Hildy, who is the chief brewer of the town, preside over their people with beneficence. Yet both of them have seen enough of the world that they remain vigilant against danger. Basalt has become a shrewd negotiator, and if any attempt to open up the Hillhome Highway is made, one can be certain that the chieftain will insure that his town gets a good deal in whatever arrangements are made.

HERDLINGER

Located near the center of the wide, fertile Vale of Respite, this village suffered badly during the War of the Lance. New herds of goats, cattle, and sheep have been purchased, thanks in part to grants made by the Hylar after the war. The pastures of Herdlinger are so lush that livestock multiplies quickly, so prosperity is rapidly returning.

The valley is sheltered by the towering Ice-

cap Mountains to the west. The peaks are only about 10,000 feet high, but the eastern slopes plunge rapidly to 4,000 feet above the valley floor. Water is plentiful, making this the most fertile farmland in all Thorbardin.

Thorbardin has also granted tacit permission for humans to farm the fertile bottomlands in the Vale of Respite. Numerous small villages have cropped up, but these humans trade all of their excess food to Thorbardin in exchange for their metal goods. The humans tend to be more intuitive and successful farmers than the dwarves, and consequently have become an important source of the dwarven kingdom's food. As long as the farmers remain content with their lot, they will be allowed to continue operating.

Fleece Ironhill is the chieftain of Herdlinger. Although he was once as bitter toward the mountain dwarves as any other hill dwarf, his village was saved by the heroism of a mountain dwarf shortly before the War of the Lance. As a consequence, he has become more open-minded than many of his kin. Mountain dwarf patrols sometimes stop in Herdlinger when in the midst of an extensive scouting mission, knowing that they will be greeted with a warm meal and good fellowship.

MEADOWFAIR

This is a lonely little town, farthest west of any of Thorbardin's hill dwarf villages. Beyond it lies a region of tumbling hills, mingled patches of forest, rock, and prairie, and a host of wilderness creatures fighting for survival.

The town occupies the center of a broad prairie, where the Kharolis foothills sink into a gently-rolling plateau. Winds, funneled by two outer spurs of the Kharolis Mountains, sweep relentlessly across this relatively flat surface. The terrain to the





northwest of the village is a region of barren sand dunes where the dust of the ages has been collected into mountainous piles.

Meadowfair is located on the banks of a shallow river that seeps out of the sandhills. Sheep and goats graze on the sparse grasses. On the other side of the dunes are several streams that flow out of the mountains, and occasionally gold nuggets are found there by Meadowfair's miners.

Perhaps 800 hill dwarves live here, with 500-1,000 humans as their neighbors. Many of the humans head for the western lowlands before winter, though. The humans bring game, furs, and timber, which they trade for gold and steel. Hill dwarf merchants act as middlemen, carrying the human goods to Thorbardin and returning with steel.

The chieftain of Meadowfair is Blade Silverbell, a golden-haired dwarf who is both intelligent and charismatic. He is also ambitious and ruthless. He rules the surrounding area with a subtle hand, collecting tolls from miners and herdsmen for the "protection" of his 100-member militia.

UNDERBLUFF

This village is sheltered by the northern end of the Sheercliff. Several precipitous passes lead to the west from here, and many of them are unknown beyond the village. The dwarves of Underbluff make a meager living by chipping jade from the rocks at the base of the Sheercliff. They also maintain small herds of goats and sheep.

Underbluff is the home of many skilled stonemasons and jewelers. Dwarves take the jade and other precious stones of the area's mines and transform them into delicate objects of beauty. Many of these are made into useful items, including drinking mugs, short-bladed knives, and tiny vials. The vials are favored by magic-users across Krynn for storing certain valuable spell components.

The dwarves of Underbluff are suspicious of, and hostile toward, strangers. Still, they will not turn away someone who is obviously in need of shelter or assistance. Such visitors will usually be put to some sort of work (woodsplitting is a popular choice) in return for food and lodging.

The chieftain of Underbluff is Cakk Whistlebreath, an old hag who has lived longer than any of her contemporaries. She has inherited the powers of the Theiwar savant from some Theiwar ancestors and she uses these powers to terrify and intimidate her people.

WINTERHOME

Located in a shady valley known as the Vale of Ice, Winterhome is a chill and glacial location. But at the glacier's feet are lush forests full of plump game. More importantly, the pulverized rock of the receding icefield yields a large amount of crushed ore. The hill dwarves are able to gather gold, nickel, and platinum by diligent harvesting.

Most of the buildings of Winterhome are snug cottages of stone, with large fireplaces and huge stacks of firewood outside. Some of the new arrivals carve ice caves in the base of the glacier, outfitting these with furs and blankets to make snug little abodes.

The chieftain of Winterhome is Fir Icebeard, a grizzled prospector who has lived a long and prosperous life out here. He is intolerant of strangers, and tends to be drunk at all hours of day or night. He earned his post because of his genial sociability and relative sobriety when compared with his fellow townsfolk.

NEIDARBARD

Neidarbard is the northernmost of the hill dwarf villages. Actually it falls into the

region of wilderness, and is rarely visited by dwarven patrols. It has a long tradition of friendliness with the elves of Qualinesti.

Neidarbard is a self-sufficient place located beside a deep lake containing many plump and tasty fish. The dwarves also have a unique food source. In a series of caves near the headwaters of their lake are numerous giant bees. By care and stealth the dwarves harvest a great deal of honey the year round. The honey is their major stock when Neidarbard trades with Thorbardin or Qualinesti.

There are only 300 dwarves here. But they have styled themselves as the Kingdom of Neidar. Their chieftain is Falric Stinger, and he desires to be introduced as the "King of the Hill Dwarves" whenever he meets a stranger.

AVALANCHE

Perched on the slope of Cloudseeker's steep shoulder, this village of hill dwarves is one of the loftiest communities in all Ansalon. About 400 hardy Neidar dwell here, and from their vantage they command a view across most of Thorbardin.

The dwarves of Avalanche survive partly by stalking the wild goats and sheep that roam the summits of the great mountain, eating the meat and trading the furs to the mountain dwarves. A greater portion of their subsistence, however, comes from the work they do for Thorbardin. These duties include patrolling the summits of the mountain, keeping the lenses of the sun tunnels free of debris, checking that the grates over the ventilation shafts remain intact, and maintaining a vigil over the plains to the east and the mountainous approaches to the north and south.

They are paid in steel, gems, and stone goods by all the clans of the undermountain realm. In return, the Neidar of Avalanche

tirelessly roam the heights, battling through the snows of winter, the tumbling avalanches of spring, and the bitter storms of autumn. Only during summer is theirs a place of peace. Then it assumes a grandeur that causes any other vista to pale by comparison.

The dwarves who settle in Avalanche are hardy souls, inured to cold and discomfort, who value the serenity and beauty of the heights. They are warm and gracious with visitors, under the natural assumption that anyone who travels here must share some of their values and desires.

Chieftain of the village is Sleet Hoarfrost, a venerable climber and scout who knows the mountain well. He has long boasted of a desire to scale Sky's End Peak. Though he has not done so (no one ever has), there are those who bet that he will one day succeed in the attempt, or die trying.

THE REALM UNDER CLOUDSEEKER

When the Daewar explorer Urkhan stumbled upon the great network of caverns below Cloudseeker Peak, and gave his name to the great underground lake at its center, he knew that he had found a natural wonder unequalled anywhere else upon Krynn. It is doubtful though, that he ever conceived of the true magnificence that natural wonder would one day attain.

For nearly 27 centuries Thorbardin has been the pre-eminent dwarvenhome in Ansalon. It has withstood the ravages of Cataclysm and war. It has protected its people from famine and cyclone, and as a fortress its impregnability is as solid as the mountains themselves.

Beyond strength, Thorbardin is a marvel of intricate architecture, ingenious technology and diligent purpose. Despite the



flashes of internal warfare, it is also a fine example of nearly miraculous inter-clan cooperation.

TECHNOLOGY

Inspired by the example of the Hylar and their Calnar ancestry, the dwarves of Thorbardin have perfected an ingenious array of technological marvels to enhance the comfort of their realm.

Suntunnels

Several grand suntunnels bring daylight into the vast cavern of Thorbardin. The city of New Daebardin is the best-lit location in the realm, benefiting from the white quartz that is so common in the ceilings and walls of their caverns on the shore of the Urkhan Sea.

Several wide shafts carry light into the great sea cavern itself, so that on a bright day the Life-Tree of the Hylar is surrounded by four beams of sunlight. By reflecting from the still waters, this light spills through the entire sea-cavern, casting even the winding shoreline into dim illumination.

Several smaller suntunnels have been delved above the city of the Klar, thanks to the help of Hylar craftsmen. These suntunnels don't light up the whole city, but each of them leads into a central plaza or square, so that a large number of the Klar can enjoy the illumination. In Klarbardin, the shafts pour their light into wide pools of quicksilver, from which it is reflected in rippling patterns across the surrounding caverns.

Ferries

The network of ferry-lines spreads outward from Hybardin like the spokes of a massive wheel. Although a few small boats are available that can be rowed anywhere on the

Urkhan sea, by far the majority of watercraft are ferries that are attached to these lines.

The typical ferryman is a Theiwar, since that clan least abhors water among the dwarves. In fact, most Theiwar ferrymen have developed a minimal swimming ability, which is far more than any other dwarf.

Although the ferry operators provide good service, with relative speed and an excellent safety record (in only about 1 per 6,000 journeys does the boat tip over), the ferrymen make a habit of rude and surly behavior toward their passengers. Though the ferries are free, the ferrymen will sometimes demand a tip or other payment, especially if they're carrying someone who is clearly unused to, or nervous about, boat travel. They will still complete the journey if the passenger refuses to pay, though the bump into the wharf at the end might be a little jarring.

Over the generations of Thorbardin's existence, many dwarves of other clans have grown accustomed enough to water to share the duties of the ferry-operators. More than half of them are Theiwar, though.

The ferries are propelled by cranks within each boat. The cranks connect to winches that clamp onto the steel ferry-cables. The lines are raised about 10 feet above the water level, and are suspended by pylons mounted on the lake floor, or hangers suspended from the ceiling.

Landing wharves encircle the base of the Life-Tree, and ferry lines extend from there to Theibardin, New Daebardin, Agharbardin (where the wharves are claimed by the Daergar), and to terminals at the ends of the Sixth and the Eighth roads. A branch cable from the New Daebardin line runs off to the north, connecting to Theiwarin.

Lifts

The various levels of most of Thorbardin's cities are connected by mechanical lifts,



typically operated by steam power. Manual backups are available for each lift, and can be operated from inside or outside the lift cages.

Only the cities of the Aghar and the Klar rely on ramps and stairways for climbing between levels. The rest of Thorbardin has lifts, depending on local interest. Hybardin, for example, is connected by numerous lifts, some of which run the entire height of the great stalactite. New Daebardin, too, relies heavily upon mechanical cages for vertical transport.

The cities of the Daergar and Theiwar, on the other hand, employ lifts only where they can benefit important citizens or cargos. Lifts provide access to the two upper levels of Theibardin, for example, where the thane and his attending nobles dwell. In Daerbardin the lifts can be used to quickly transfer troops and wardens between levels. In Daerforge they are reserved for the transport of ore and fuel to the foundries, and the return of the smelted alloys to the forges. The largest lift of all connects the South Hall of Justice with the Great Hall of Audience, several hundred feet directly above.

Seventeen Roads

The great roads of Thorbardin link all parts of the subterranean kingdom. They follow tunnels that are 30 feet wide, and nearly 15 feet high. Each road has two pairs of metal tracks running through it. The tracks follow lower grooves, with each set of tracks about three feet below the floor level of the road. Wide walkways follow to either side of the tracks, and a six-foot-wide raised platform runs between the two sets of tracks.

The First and Second Roads, connecting to Northgate, are battered and decrepit. The tracks are broken in many places, and pieces of rock have broken from the ceilings and litter the floors. Although a lot of work

is needed before the rails can be used, at no place is the tunnel floor completely choked off with rubble.

The Seventh, Eighth, and Ninth Roads all lead to the Valley of the Thanos. These are rarely used, and signs of dust and rubble are common within them. The rails in these three tunnels, however, are still intact, and it would only take a little sweeping before the carts could ride along them again.

The other roads are all fully used and maintained. Carts roll along the tracks, sometimes in trains of 10 or 20, and at other times alone. The smaller trains are pulled by small, shaggy horses or sometimes by dwarven laborers. Though the Theiwar and Daergar would be content to use slaves for this brute work, slavery is unacceptable to the Hylar and Daewar. So far the Hylar and Daewar have been able to enforce their will on this crucial issue.

The dwarves have developed a very heavy, steam-driven engine that they use for hauling the trains with the greatest number of cars and the heaviest cargos. These devices belch and puff along the rails, towing ore, coal, food, or other cargos at a movement rate of 6. Each engine is manned by four dwarves. Three of them feed the voracious firebox while the fourth watches for obstacles on the rails. If it has to stop, the train can lose one point of movement rate per round (on a level section of track).

The major steam-train routes include the Fourth and Fifth Roads, the Twelfth through the Seventeenth Roads, and the spur road connecting the two Theiwar cities. On these routes the trains sometimes run as often as twice a day. Any more often would present a major threat to the air supply in the roads.

Ventilation

Thorbardin is very well ventilated. Warm air rises from the depths of Krynn, filtering





through the dwarvenrealm, and then rises farther to escape through ventilation shafts spotted around the summits of Cloudseeker Peak. It is the vapors emerging from these vents that give the mountain its almost-permanent mantle of white cloud.

The largest ventilation shaft begins in the roof over the Urkhan Sea and emerges in the Valley of Thanos, near the terminus of the Eighth Road. Others lead from all the cities and warrens of the dwarvenrealm to join this major vent, or to reach smaller outlets located elsewhere on the great mountain. The roads between cities and gates have ventilation escape holes at approximately every 1,000 feet; however, it takes hours for the coalsmoke of the steam trains to dissipate.

Each of these outer vents is closed with a grate of steel bars.

Magma Forge

The Shaft of Reorx plummets toward the heart of Krynn from the fortress at Southgate. Deep within this smooth-sided hole, which is 80 feet in diameter, red fires gleam. The well of the shaft is modeled after the great Firewell of Thorin. It was ignited within the first century of Thorbardin's existence. Now it provides the heat for the major ore smelting operations of the dwarven realm, including the treatment of the ore brought into Southgate from the Daergar mines below the Thunderpeaks.

A similar shaft exists within Northgate, but the dwarves have never been able to tap into subterranean fire there. At most they got a faint flicker, and for centuries it has yawned as merely a bottomless pit. This northern shaft is sometimes known as the Shame of Reorx.

THORBARDIN'S GATES

Each of these two gates is a marvel of defensibility, sealed by a plug of stone that is 60 feet wide, 30 feet high, and 30 feet or more thick. Originally they were identical, but the Cataclysm wrought changes in the Northgate. The following description pertains to the original design.

When closed, the plug seals flush with the outside wall. The gate can be opened by throwing a single lever. A concealed lever is outside each gate, but that lever can be disconnected from inside the fortress.

When it opens, a tremendous reservoir of water begins to drain through a shaft, where it turns a massive iron screw. The screw pushes the plug outward at a rate of five feet per round. After six rounds, a crack appears between the plug and the doorway. The door opens for three more rounds, eventually exposing a 15-foot-wide entry to each side of the plug.

Within each gate is a tri-level mass of fortifications, centered around a great atrium known as Anvil's Echo. A long, narrow bridge crosses this great pit, 100 feet above the floor. In an emergency, the surrounding modules can be closed off, forcing an intruder to cross this terribly exposed route of approach.

Northgate

The wide, walled plaza that once stood here was swept away by the Cataclysm. Now Northgate faces a five-foot-wide ledge and then a plunge of 1,000 feet to the valley floor below. The ledge stretches for 100 feet along the cliff face, ending in an upward ravine at each end. The cliff below is sheer, and cannot be climbed by trail or stairway. The ravine to the east ends in a cliff-walled canyon, but the gully to the west climbs steeply for 500 feet before coming onto a

shoulder of Cloudseeker. This shoulder can be reached by a steep, winding trail up the mountain's western slope.

For more than three centuries AC the gate remained closed, but during the War of the Lance, Northgate was opened. With no ground to support it, the gate broke free and tumbled down the cliff. Current plans call for its repair, but the Theiwar claim the right to do the job, and the Hylar are the only ones who know how to do it. Negotiations continue in Northgate's huge atrium, Anvil's Echo, though the discussions have come to blows on several occasions.

The city blocks within Northgate are mostly abandoned, with many sections in ruin. There are several hundred Theiwar living here, however, and they regard the whole area with proprietary eyes. Their leader is Tumble Havoc, a savant. He rules the Northgate area like a bandit lord presiding over a wilderness camp.

Southgate

Southgate opens onto a wide plaza, which is actually the first layer of Thorbardin's defense. The gate nestles in a steep-sided valley, with twin walls arcing across the only means of approach. The outer wall is 30 feet high, and the inner wall 60 feet high. A gap of 100 feet separates them. A pair of iron gates 20 feet wide offer the only passage through each wall.

A company of dwarves mans the outer wall, though in peacetime this is a skeleton crew of 40 warriors. Thirty of them bear crossbows, while the other 10 carry brass horns. The horns are used for alarm purposes, but also for ceremonies at dusk and dawn each day.

Southgate itself remains open all day and every day. It is closed each evening after the Daergar night-caravans depart, and usually not opened until dawn. An order of one of

the thanes or prelates is required to open it after dark.

Dwarves of all the clans inhabit the city blocks within Southgate. Several smithies here provide metal repairs and simple products, and there are numerous inns and merchant bazaars. Humans are only allowed through the gate by invitation of a thane or prelate.

CEREMONIAL CENTERS

The great ceremonial centers of Thorbardin are locales that are not claimed by any specific clan, but may be used by all. Dwarves are expected to mingle freely and in good fellowship in the ceremonial centers. This is such a rigid custom that a dwarf who causes trouble in one of these areas is likely to be punished by his own clan.

Halls of Justice

The two Halls of Justice stand as second lines of defense for the north and south gates of Thorbardin. Each hall is several miles from the gate inside the mountain, and has a single major level, though transport shafts descend from each hall to a dark and forlorn dungeon several hundred feet below.

Each hall presents a series of barriers to invaders. First is a 50-foot-deep moat crossed by a drawbridge. The cavern wall on the inside is lined with arrowslits and bulwarks, allowing a great force of archers to shower their missiles on anyone trying to bridge the moat.

After the drawbridge the corridor opens into a great hall lined with arches and alcoves on each side. Several great thrones and benches stand in these halls. These are the locations where justice is administered to wrongdoers who are not disciplined by their own thanes.





Any dwarf who's been wronged by a member of his own clan seeks satisfaction from the thane. If the malefactor comes from a different subrace, the nearest Hall of Justice is the scene of adjudication.

Beyond the entry hall, each of Hall of Justice opens into a wide, circular chamber with a domed roof. Large diamonds have been set in the ceilings, duplicating the patterns of Krynn's major constellations. When candles are lit in the center of the Temple of Stars, the gems glitter with a bright, starlike glow.

The North Hall of Justice is currently claimed by the Theiwar. Since Northgate was sealed by the Cataclysm, it receives little attention from the rest of Thorbardin.

Great Hall of Audience

This vast amphitheater is a recent addition that was excavated during the time of Huma. It occupies a huge, expertly-delved cavern above the South Hall of Justice.

The circular chamber has countless rings of stone seats descending to a circular dais, upon which sit the thrones of the thanes and their king. Five aisles reach like spokes from the dais to the hall's perimeter. Each aisle provides access to a stairway which makes the 240-foot descent to the upper level of the hall of justice. The central ("king's") aisle connects to a transport shaft and a huge lift.

About 20,000 occupants can fill the seats. A sun-tunnel terminates in the center of the hall's domed ceiling, casting gentle illumination over the entire chamber during the day.

Valley of the Thanes

This sheltered vale is virtually inaccessible from outside. It is tucked in a high shoulder of Cloudseeker Mountain, and is surrounded on the outside by sheer cliffs 500 to 1,000 feet high. The inner walls of the vale are also

precipices, and these plunge on the average more than 2,000 feet to the flat valley floor.

Much of the ground here is a sprawling cemetery of low graves, each marked with a small pile of rocks. Major nobles and important citizens have been buried in larger cairns, some of them are ovals measuring 10 feet by 20 feet.

Around the periphery of the valley are the honored tombs of the thanes. They have been delved into the surrounding mountains, and are sealed with stone plug-type doors. A special and unique tool is required to wrench the plug outward. Only one copy of that tool (which looks like an elaborate, three-pronged crowbar) exists, and it is carefully guarded by the Master Tombwarden who lives in Hybardin.

WARRENS OF PLENTY

The warrens are the underground farms of Thorbardin. Though they are not rich enough to fill all the food needs of the mountain dwarves, they nevertheless provide a major portion (perhaps 40 per cent) of the sustenance of Thorbardin's residents.

They are worked by dwarves of all the clans, and the unique feature about them is the presence of the huge Urkhan worms, which have been used throughout history to till the soil and haul the crops toward the ports of embarkation.

North Warrens

The north warrens are the province of the Theiwar, who harvest a large proportion of their food supply from these damp, mushroom-filled caverns. Pools of water have gathered in numerous low places, and moisture trickles down the walls in many places. Several natural fountains pour from the ceiling, insuring that the warren is crossed by numerous rapidly flowing streams.

Several suntunnels breach the ceiling of the north warren cavern, but generally it's very dark in here. It is not uncommon for a farmer to stumble upon a couple of young dwarves who have come here to get away from the crowded cities.

West Warrens

The west warrens are the smallest of Thorbardin's agricultural caverns. They are managed by the Hylar, though dwarves of all the clans labor here and share the bounty of the fields. This is the best-lighted of the warrens, with six wide suntunnels pouring daylight through the ceiling whenever the sun shines above the mountains.

Mushrooms and spice-fungi of many unique and rare varieties grow here, as well as strong-tasting peppers that are harvested from pools of warm water. Though the food output is smaller than that of the other warrens, the products of the west warren are famed for providing a great deal of taste for a small amount of ingredient. A typical meal of mushroom and tuber will be heavily flavored with the spicy products of the west warren, even though the bulk of the food probably came from elsewhere.

Several of the great roads of Thorbardin pass through the west warrens. These tracks pass right between the fields, and meet in a large gathering yard in the center of the warren. Here food is loaded for shipment throughout Thorbardin, while a maze-like nest of connections and couplings allow carts to shift from one road to another, or to continue on a straight track through the warren.

East Warrens

These are the most extensive warrens of Thorbardin, and were the first to be used by the early dwarven settlers. The Urkhan

worms were discovered here. The dwarves heavily rely on these supple creatures to help in tilling and harvesting food.

The Daergar and Daewar primarily work the east warrens, though of course members of the other clans harvest here as well. Compost piles line the fringes of the huge caverns, where worms grind their way through heaps of mud and plant matter, churning the stuff into the rich loam that fills the great bulk of this warren.

Fast-growing mushrooms are the most common product of these warrens, with vast fields of huge fungi interspersed by watering canals and cart-tracks. Though several suntunnels shed daylight into the huge caverns, these warrens tend to be dingy and dark even when the sun is out.

THE EIGHT CITIES OF THORBARDIN

The cities of Thorbardin contain the living quarters, manufactories, mercantile shops, and social gathering places of the dwarves. The permanent residents tend to be segregated by subrace, though members of the different clans freely visit and trade within each other's cities. Even so, "foreigners" might be subject to harassment and bullying, especially among the Daergar and Theiwar.

Each city is governed by the thane of the clan. However, each level of the city has a prelate who is in charge of that level of the city. Sub-prelates are often appointed to oversee large residential or commercial blocks within the city.

Daerbardin

This city of the Daergar contains most of the clanmembers' residences. Three large levels make up the major surface areas of the city. There are no suntunnels reaching Daer-





bardin, so these levels are constantly dark and dingy places.

Much of the upper level is devoted to the palace of the thane, Halt Blackmetal. The palace is an intricate structure of many winding caverns and tunnels, with several large, dark rooms, and numerous artifacts of dark metallic statues, shields, and weaponry on display. The central feature of the palace is the great Arena of Honor, where every new thane earns his post, and where most of them eventually lose it to a younger, faster warrior.

Also dwelling on the upper level are the Daergar nobles, the wealthiest merchants, and the warriors of the regular militia. The militia lives in huge barracks, and takes great pride in defending the honor of the Daergar against insults both real and imagined.

The lower levels of Daerbardin contain teeming caverns of Daergar families and warrior-gangs. The gangs consist of young toughs who bully and battle each other, and anyone else they can successfully intimidate. They make Daerbardin a dangerous place for non-Daergar dwarves, and even Daergar who can't claim the protection of a militiaman or noble.

The characteristic feature of all of Daerbardin's quadrants is their great Clansmoke halls. These are dark chambers that stink of coalsmoke, where Daergar gather to drink and exchange insults and challenges. Each of the Clansmokers is presided over by a sub-prelate, and there is intense rivalry between neighboring halls. These are mostly the province of male Daergar, though quite a few females have proven tough enough to hang out here.

Daerforge

Daerforge is the primary work area of the Daergar. Though some Daergar live through-

out the three levels of this city, most of the clan make the two-mile journey from Daerbardin to Daerforge to their jobs.

This is a city of clanging hammers, roaring forge-fires, and smoke-thickened air, just the way the Daergar like it. Since the thane lives in Dnerbardin, Daerforge is ruled by a high prelate named Vog Blackbeard. He is a greedy and manipulative overlord who extracts (by graft and bribe) considerable profits from most of Daerforge's enterprises. By passing a large enough portion of this profit along to his thane, he has kept his post throughout the reigns of the past four rulers.

The bottom level of Daerforge is a vast extent of mines and chambers. Originally this was a source of iron ore, but since the mines were tapped out more than 1,000 years ago, these tunnels are used as dungeons and storage networks.

The middle and upper levels of Daerforge are conglomerations of forges, smelters, carvers, metalshapers, varnishers, and firetenders. Intermixed among these factories are numerous Clansmoker halls (such as are found in Daerbardin). These are raucous gathering-places for dwarves who have gotten off work but have yet to head for home.

A favorite sport in Daerforge is Aghar-bashing. Since the gully dwarves populate the tailing-piles that spill from the Daergar city into the lake, Aghar are easy to find. A typical Daergar doesn't think twice about dropping a rock on one of the poor creatures. A good shot is cause for boasting and hard-drinking celebration.

Agharbardin

This tangled network of tunnels, sewer pipes, rock-ridged ravines, and massive piles of debris is avoided by all non-Aghar dwarves in Thorbardin. Many of the pas-

sages are too narrow to allow a typical dwarf to move around, though kender and gnomes would have no difficulty.

Much of the surface of Agharbardin is steeply-sloping loose rock that faces the great cavern of the Urkhan Sea. At the base of the pile are wharves and docks, including a landing for the lake-ferries, but the Aghar tend to avoid these. Instead, thousands of the grubby little folks live in the chaos and sprawl of the debris pile.

The thane himself, Highbulp Bluph Bluphigh I, dwells in a large cavern far beneath the surface of the pile. Here he has gathered around himself the treasures his agents have recovered, including many rusty objects of iron, a few tattered garments, and one or two items of real value, including a *crystal ball* that he has never learned how to use.

The Highbulp is attended by a bevy of young Aghar lovelies. They are as frightful a collection of damselhood as can be imagined! His wife, Fredblup, watches over him carefully however, so all he does is flirt with the giggling girls.

New Daebardin

This was the first city delved in Thorbardin and is still one of the grandest. It faces the Urkhan Sea, and has the busiest and most extensive waterfront in the realm. The Daewar are the most numerous dwarves in Thorbardin, and their city is a bustling center of trade, learning, and good-humored lite.

New Daebardin consists of three main levels, and six upper levels which are little more than balconies overlooking the lake. Since the wall slopes inward toward the domed roof of the cavern, each of these balconies juts out a little farther than the ones below, creating a nine-layer facade that looms nearly 500 feet above the water.

Suntunnels cross the cavern ceiling in many places along the outward face of the city. There are two great atriums within New Daerbardin. Each atrium is illuminated by a large suntunnel and features numerous encircling balconies where inns and commons-parks are situated.

The thane of the Daewar, Gneiss Truesilver, lives on the third level of the city in a long, sprawling palace that fronts the balcony over the lake. His elite guards are also quartered here, as are the finest artisans and craftsmen among the Daewar. The third level of the city is a quiet, serene place, with marble-lined corridors and tall, marble columns fronting mercantile exchanges. A great deal of money changes hands here, but it is mainly in the form of important trading arrangements and large-scale purchases of mining rights or land rental. The third level lacks the bustle of the lower marketplaces.

The six narrow balconies above the third level have been delved by wealthy mercantile families, and each of them is the site of a hundred or more very posh apartments. These are the wealthiest dwarves in all Thorbardin, and each has a staff of bodyguards to protect a significant treasure. Some apartments have long rope ladders hanging at the ready, allowing quick access to a boat on the surface of the lake below.

The balcony immediately below the palace is a public promenade, favored by young lovers and playing children. The bottom level contains the wharves and docks as well as several large chambers containing the gear and winch mechanisms for powering the ferries. Both of these levels are crowded mixtures of residence and commerce, with many street bazaars and artisan shops. The lower level also houses the forges and smithies operated by the Daewar.





Hybardin, the Life-Tree

One of the magnificent wonders of Krynn, the city of the Hylar is a towering testament to the ingenuity and talent of these industrious dwarves. Delved from the living rock of a massive stalactite, it consists of 28 levels. These levels range from nearly half a mile wide at the top, to the bare diameter of the transport shafts and their surrounding wharves at the very bottom.

The highest level of the Life-Tree contains a complex of buildings and passages that have served as the Palace of the King since the crowning of Glade Hornfel. Water flows throughout this level, irrigating numerous gardens here and below. The water spills through a series of ornately-carved waterfalls during the course of its descent to the lake.

The lower levels include many residential districts, most of which are surrounded by streams and gardens. (Hybardin is referred to as the "City of Gardens" by the Daewar.) The lower levels also include many smithies and foundries, as well as smaller shops where the gemcutters, armorers, and tinkers of the Hylar work on their inventions and their crafts.

Theibardin

The typical three levels of Thorbardin's cities are present here. The great city of the Theiwar fronts the Urkhan Sea, but unlike New Daebardin, it takes little advantage of the fact. Instead of balconies over the water, the upper two levels present only a series of narrow arrow slits to the great cavern of Urkhan. The lowest level is a workmanlike waterfront, with many docks, and several



large sheds where ferries are built and returned for repair. Even here there is no provision for the citizenry to come and enjoy the waterfront.

Theibardin is a busy city, but its streets and buildings possess a furtive air, as if everyone worries that someone is prying into their affairs. Marketplaces and shops are common, but the proprietors react with indignation to any questions about the quality or origin of their goods.

Even the inns and saloons are dark, subdued places. There is little joy expressed by the typical Theiwar. Perhaps it is because someone who seems happy almost always arouses the jealous suspicion of his neighbors and co-workers. The Theiwar find it practical to go about their business with stealth and avarice, taking whatever they think they can get away with.

The upper level of the city is devoted to the nobles and the high-ranking officers of the thane's guards. Pounce Quickspring, the current thane, has his palace guarded with paranoid intensity, since he's convinced that someone intends to murder him. Within the tangle of these upper levels are numerous laboratories and libraries where the Theiwar savants study. These magic-using dwarves, often distinguished by a deformed limb, a hunchback, or some other disfigurement, are given a wide berth by the other citizens of Theibardin. Anyone who offends a savant is likely to feel the sting of magical retribution.

The middle level of Theibardin is a tangled mass of residences, shops, forges, and factories. There is activity here at all times, though it remains quiet and uncrowded. Workers like to remain out of sight of



passersby, and even shopkeepers often watch potential customers from concealment until it becomes time to make a sale.

The lowest level of Theibardin is a winding, dank network of dungeons. This is one of the most miserable locales in all Thorbardin, and a good many prisoners sent here are simply forgotten by the guards and wardens. It usually requires that a prisoner have some outside influence for the guards even to bring him an occasional wretched meal.

Theiwarin

The smaller city of the Theiwar was delved after a feud threatened to divide the clan into two self-destructive factions. The losers of the confrontation delved this cramped network of tunnels a mile to the east of Theibardin.

Theiwarin has since become quite crowded, filled with small shops, forges, and foundries, as well as numerous apartments and tiny residences. The Theiwar are the second-most populous clan in the realm after the Daewar. Their numbers have outgrown their available space and Theiwar squatters have begun to take over the Northgate complex and the North Hall of Justice.

Theiwarin is ruled by a powerful Theiwar warlord known as Drop Altec. His rank is high prelate, but he demands to be addressed as thane. He lives in an ornate palace in the upper level of Theiwarin, and strives to outdo Pounce Quickspring in his number of retainers, in the splendor of their uniforms, and in the treasures he flaunts in the various chambers of his fortified dwelling.

Outside the palace region, the city of Theiwarin is quite slum-like. Dirt and rubble are everywhere, and unkempt dwarves vie with each other for scraps of refuse. Thievery is rife, and the city is organized into a complex network of thieves' guilds, all of which owe a certain amount of fealty to the high prelate.

These guilds are so extensive that many of them have agents and branches in the other cities of Thorbardin. Many of the thieving activities that occur in the realm can be traced back to Theiwarin.

Klarbardin

The city of the wild-eyed Klar is a chaotic region of frantic arguments, moving confessions of loyalty and friendship, and insane and violent accusation. All three moods can typically occur during a single conversation.

Very little work gets done here. The productive activities are mostly centered around combat, with battle training, weapon-sharpening, and unarmed combat practice the most common.

Tufa Bloodeye, the thane, lives in a crowded barracks among a company of his most loyal warriors. He disdains the trappings of royalty, and like the long line of his predecessors has refused to make an official palace. Warriors are everywhere in Klarbardin, and they keep their weapons ready and their hands free. Insults real or imagined are the cause of numerous fights, and as might be expected Klarbardin has the highest murder rate of any of Thorbardin's cities.

Klar live in a chaotic style that matches their temperament. Family units are fractious, and males often seek the company of other males, leaving their wives and young to fend for themselves. The men gather in dingy halls, where numerous rituals involving the false metal tamex are enacted. The ultimate honor is for the warrior to be fully immersed in quicksilver, remaining under the liquid for as much as a minute at a time.

Objects of art or decoration are practically nonexistent among the winding tunnels and twisting stairways of Klarbardin. Instead, the Klar favor fountains of spurting

tamex, or unique spouts and cups that spill the liquid metal back and forth. Klar of all ages will sit and stare for hours at these displays, which are commonly located in large, public chambers in the city.

CREATURES OF THORBARDIN

RAPTOR BIRDS

These great birds soar over the high peaks of Kharolis, making their nests among the in accessible reaches of the Anviltops. Throughout the centuries they have developed a wary respect for the dwarves. It is a feeling that the inhabitants of Thorbardin return in equal measure.

Armor Class:	7
Movement:	6 (flying: 36)
Hit Dice:	5
THAC0:	15
No. of Attacks:	3 (see following)
Damage/Attack:	1-6/1-6/1-12
Special Attacks:	Nil
Special Defenses:	Nil
Magic Resistance:	Nil
Size:	L
Morale:	Unsteady (6-8)
XP Value:	300

Raptors soar above the mountains, keeping a careful watch over their realm, reacting angrily to any intrusion that threatens the peace. Many of these courageous birds perished during the War of the Lance. The remainder have become even more reclusive and suspicious.

Combat: The raptor can strike with its beak when in flight or on the ground. It can strike with each of its powerful claws, but only during a round when it settles to earth. Thus, the claw attack can only be made

once every three rounds.

Capacity: An adult raptor is powerful enough to lift a full-grown human or dwarf into the air, though its movement slows to 18.

URKHAN WORMS

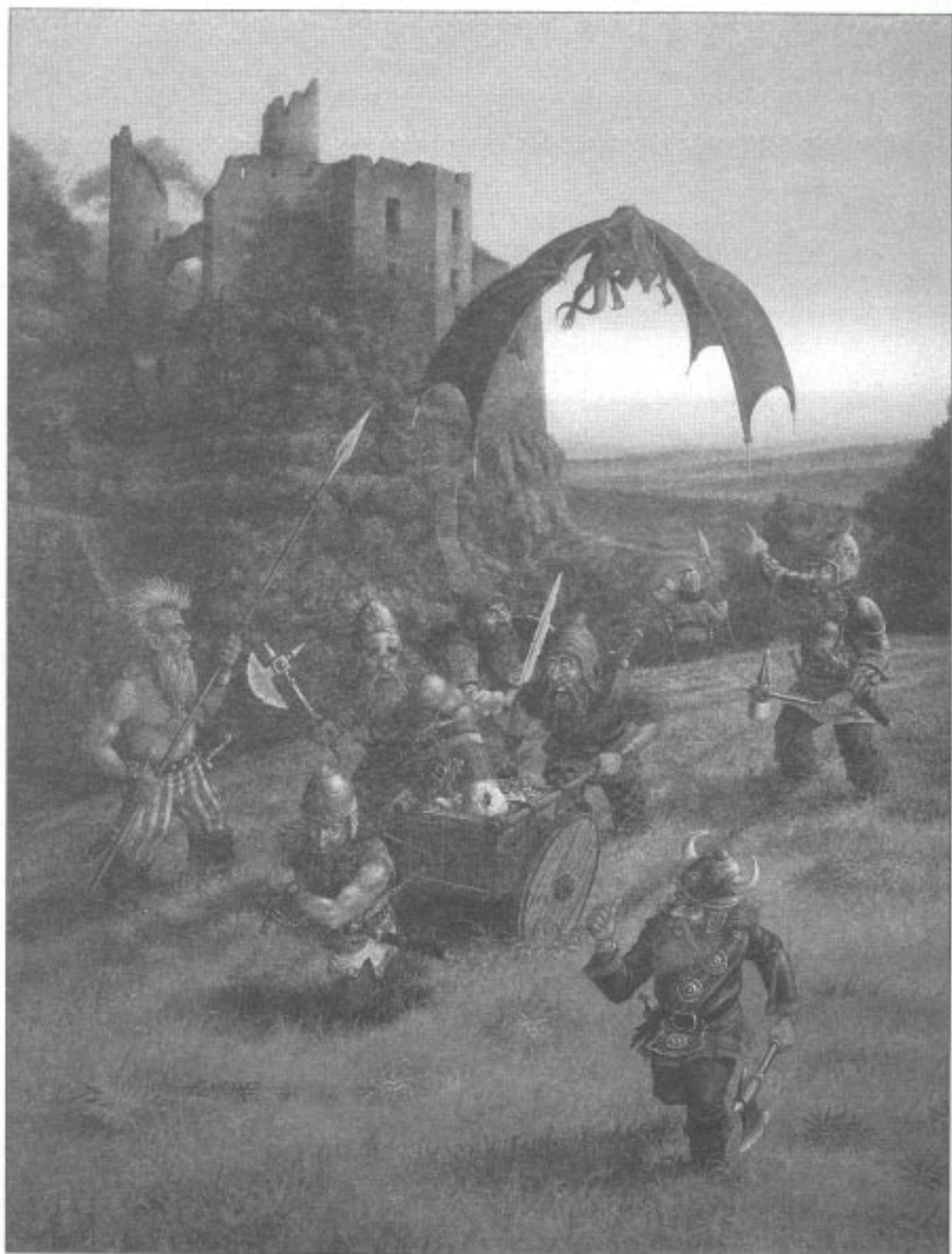
These powerful creatures were first encountered at the same time as the famous explorer discovered the cavern of Thorbardin. Since then they have been harnessed for work in the warrens and mines.

Armor Class:	2
Movement:	6
Hit Dice:	8
THAC0:	13
No. of Attacks:	1
Damage/Attack:	1-8
Special Attacks:	Nil
Special Defenses:	Nil
Magic Resistance:	Nil
Size:	L
Morale:	Fearless (18-20)
XP Value:	650

These powerful creatures reach a length of 30 feet or more, with a body diameter of as much as four feet. They move with a worm-like crawl, and are often harnessed by the dwarves. The harness is attached to a cart or sled that the worm hauls without apparent effort. Younger worms are used to till the rich loam of the warrens. Simply by moving through the earth they mix the topsoil with compost; over a period of a few days, 12 worms can churn an entire field to prepare it for planting.

Combat: The worms are not aggressive creatures, but if they are threatened, or blocked from a food source or escape route, they can lash out and bite. Because of the worm's segmented body, it can stretch out to strike at a target as much as 12 feet away.





THORADIN

1000 PC - 0

TRADE CENTER OF THE WORLD

The realm of Thoradin existed for a 1,000-year period of greatness, at first claiming the lairs of ancient Thorin and finally degenerating into the chaos of modern Zhakar. At its height it became more grand than either Thorin or Zhakar. Thoradin was a trading center of the world and a mighty nation that maintained its strength against the brutish power of ogres and the arrogance of Istar. Only the ultimate wrack of the Cataclysm brought Thoradin to its end.

Though it occupied the same lands that housed the previous and post-dated dwarven realms, the surface geography of Thoradin was unique. A series of violent earthquakes altered the mountains of Thorin, even changing the course of rivers and carrying away several distinctive summits before the founding of Thoradin. Then the Cataclysm completely obliterated many of the previously recognizable features of the realm.

Thoradin must be looked at separately from Thorin and Zhakar, not just as a history, but to gain an understanding of the place itself.

THE DWARVES OF THORADIN

Formed by migrating bands from Thorbardin, Thoradin was populated by dwarves from the Hylar, Daewar, Daergar, and Theiwar clans of that great dwarvenhome. Because of continuing communication between Thorbardin

and Thoradin, the ties between these clans and their cousins back in the Kharolis mountains remained strong. Also, the general traits of each subrace were the same in Thoradin as they were in Thorbardin. For example, the Daergar were the dark-delvers and miners, the Theiwar were troublemakers, the Hylar were inventors and improvisers, and the Daewar became the masters of trade.

The conflicts between the clans in the founding of Thoradin are explained in the *Songs of the Loremaster* book. This section describes the surface reaches and delvings of the Thoradin dwarves, as they were circa 200 PC. This was the time of Thoradin's greatest accomplishment, as shortly thereafter the arrogance of Istar would lead to an increasing series of conflicts with their dwarven neighbors.

Thoradin eventually became host to a number of hill dwarves. Many of these were Klar and Neidar who migrated from Thorbardin, and many more were members of the Thoradin clans (especially Hylar and Daewar) who chose a life on the surface in lieu of an underground existence.

The Neidar were never as populous here as they were in Thorbardin. This is because the Khalkists were the home of many powerful ogre bands, and these brutes inevitably made life hazardous for those dwarves who chose to live outside the protection of an underground fortress. Also, the Khalkist Mountains formed a more hostile environment than the Kharolis Range. They tended to be dry, and their steep and rocky soil provided little plant life, even for the grazing of sheep or goats.

Consequently, the hill dwarves who did live above Thoradin had far more of a scouting/defensive role than an agricultural one. They depended heavily upon their mountain



dwarf cousins for reinforcements, while at the same time offering valuable service as patrollers and border guards.

THE MOUNTAINS OF THORADIN

The Khalkist Mountains surrounded Thoradin with a series of steep and rocky heights. Two natural passes crossed the range from east to west. These became the sites of two major trading highways. Travel to the north and south was considerably more obstructed, with even the river valleys choked with gorges and waterfalls.

The Suncradles loomed to the west, as they had in relation to Thorin, but the terrain between the mountains was considerably more jagged and irregular in 1000 PC than it had been 1,000 years earlier. Also, because the dwarves of Thoradin took a wider interest in their surroundings than had the Calnar of Thorin, they discovered that beyond the Suncradles lay a long and tortuous series of ridges, not as high as the summits themselves, but equally forbidding to transportation.

The twin rivers of the Bone and Hammer-song had eroded together, forming a much deeper channel that was known to the Thoradin dwarves simply as the Bone River.

To the north of the Suncradles rose a smoldering range of volcanoes called the Firepeaks. These included the summits that would one day be known as the Lords of Doom, though before the Cataclysm those three volcanoes were only a relatively mundane part of a much larger chain.

Between the Suncradles and the Firepeaks was the major pass of the Khalkists, called Stone Pillar Pass by the dwarves after a singular column of rock that towered 500 feet into the air near the very summit of the pass. The dwarves built a wide, smooth roadway here, a route that enabled Istar to commence

trading with Solamnia.

To the south of Thoradin rose an even higher range of the Khalkists, known to the dwarves as the Reorxcrown Mountains. These rugged heights contained numerous ogre lairs, but they also held some of the most promising mineral finds of the range. The mastery of the Reorxcrowns gradually shifted until, by the end of the Second Ogre War, the dwarves had driven the brutes out of the iron-rich range and secured safety for their ever more ambitious mining activities.

When the dwarves built a road through White Bear Pass, the route traversed the heart of the Reorxcrowns. This highway was considerably more narrow, with more abrupt changes of elevation, than the Stone Pillar Pass. Nevertheless, the White Bear Pass soon became a major trading route between Istar and the regions south of Solamnia.

Thoradin was crossed by numerous rivers, but none of them was suitable for river navigation. They typically flowed through the bottoms of steep-walled gorges, plunging from the heights through waterfalls and rapids. In the few places the dwarves managed to bridge them, they were forced to erect high, arching spans. These bridges were amazing feats of engineering, and were constructed completely of stone.

HILL DWARF VILLAGES

The hill dwarf villages are fortress-like compounds, situated where they can trade with passing caravans of humans and maintain easy access to Thoradin's gates. Though each is populated primarily by hill dwarves (500-1,000 in each), mountain dwarves and humans are not uncommon in any of them.

Pillarton

This is the first toll village of Thoradin. It rests on a rocky height above Stone Pillar Pass and



consists of a stone-walled enclosure around numerous deep burrows. Most of the buildings are inns and taverns, as this is naturally a favorite waystation for the caravans crossing the range along the road. This is the largest of the hill dwarf villages, and is a bustling center of commerce and recreation.

The toll road passes next to the village gates. There, a large flat space has been cleared for wagons and beasts of burden to wait while their tolls are calculated. Typically this amount averages 1 stl per wagon, though extremely valuable cargos are charged more.

White Bear

This village is located a mile off the White Bear Pass. It is more of a fortress than Pillarton, with stone towers standing around the periphery of its U-foot-high stone wall. Inside, however, it is a lively and bustling place, with caravan guards, merchants, and hill dwarves all mixing with social conviviality.

At the end of the way leading down to the pass road is a toll station. The tolls charged are similar to those on the Stone Pillar Pass. Wagons, horses, and oxen are typically corralled just off the road while the merchants and guards continue up to the village for a little relaxation. Hill dwarf guards will protect the caravan while the owners are away for a fee approximately equal to the toll charges.

Ironhead

This mining town is located in the midst of the Reorxcrown Mountains. It is not surrounded by a wall, but its buildings are large, and often reinforced with iron bars and rooftop parapets. Instead of one fort, Ironhead can become dozens of small fortresses when threatened. Naturally, these

buildings are connected to each other by underground tunnels.

Smelters belch smoke into the air, and heavy draft horses trundle freight wagons up and down the winding trail that leads back to Thoradin. There are few humans here, but many mountain dwarves who work the mines stop in to partake of refreshments and to cause trouble. Fights between mountain and hill dwarves are common, though bloodshed is usually avoided.

Suncradle

This mining town links to Thoradin's Westgate. It is located in a narrow valley, with walls at either end of the gorge and virtually unscalable heights to the north and south. Many gems and semi-precious stones have emerged from the tunnels around it, as well as some limited amounts of marble. The town occupies a large area, but the population remains small except when a large party of miners comes through.

NEIGHBORS

Thoradin is bordered on the east and west by human realms, and to the south by the ogre nation of Bloten.

Bloten

The clans and tribes that compose this chaotic melange are generally too busy warring among themselves to bother with the dwarves. Before the founding of Thoradin, of course, these ogres dominated the entire mountain range, and the scars left by their conflicts with the dwarves never healed. Once they lost the Second Ogre War, the brutes stayed pretty much to themselves. A few bands of young warriors occasionally try to raid Thoradin, but they are usually dealt with quickly and firmly.





The dwarven appetite for minerals and gems is historically insatiable and Thorbardin's miners are always opening up one more mine which is just a little too close to Bloten for ogre tastes. These mines are always a source of tension between the two races.

Sanction

This chaotic city-state is on the western slope of the Khalkists. While not the horrible place it became after the Cataclysm, its not a place one would choose to make a pleasant visit. Thieves and bandits abound (the nominal lord mayor is the worst of both), and cargos must be heavily guarded to pass safely through. But it is also a place where one can meet members of all the races of Krynn. Its bazaar is unsurpassed in the world, and an exotic array of goods is always available, for a price.

Istar

This great king-city claims all the lands to the east of the Khalkists, though it lies far to the east of Thoradin. The plains are patrolled by Istarian legionnaires and the kingpriest pays a great deal of attention to his borderlands.

Trading Villages

These villages dot the landscape around the periphery of the dwarven lands. While they are typically human settlements, dwarves and dwarven goods are always welcomed there.

THORADIN UNDER THE MOUNTAINS

The cities of Thoradin were large in surface area, but with the exception of Zhakar and Thorin, they were single-level communities.

They lacked the multitude of levels found in Thorbardin and Kayolin, and consequently tended to be smaller in total area. Nevertheless, they were extensively delved, elaborately designed, and solidly-built communities, well worthy of their dwarven inhabitants.

MOUNTAIN DWARF CITIES

There were seven cities, though this was not the case when the colony was first settled. The cities beyond the great gates are described in the order they were built.

Gates

The four gates that provide access to Thoradin all were modeled on the screw and plug system perfected in Thorbardin. Each is guarded by a full company of dwarven warriors (24 F2, and a captain F5). They are often opened to allow trading caravans to depart or raw materials to enter.

The Zhalakar and South Gates are closed to all non-dwarves. Humans are permitted to pass the Northgate upon invitation of one of the thanes, and many Knights of Solamnia are welcomed into the Hylar city of Thorin from here. The Westgate, which connects to the mercantile city of Talak-Siln, is freely opened to humans, many of whom travel all the way to that city for trade.

Thorin

This is the ancient realm, claimed by the Hylar upon their first return to Thoradin. Much of ancient Thorin remains as shown on the map of that realm, although all sections from the Grand Gather to the north were carried away by war and earthquake.

A new gate was delved when the dwarves returned to Thoradin. Called Northgate, it emerged from the north face of Mount

Thorin, and was connected to the city by two short, wide roadways.

Many of the features of ancient Thorin remain in the modern incarnation. The Main Concourse is still the major social and commercial center of the city. The Great Sun-tunnel was cleared out, and now it extends to the very depths of the smelting pits. Numerous suntunnels allow light into the city, and the ancient system of cisterns and aqueducts was quickly restored to working order.

The sunlight of the summer solstice still penetrates to the magma pit, though the ceremony of Balladine was never resumed. However, after considerable delving of rubble, the ancient magma pit was reopened, and for the last six centuries of Thoradin's existence it has continued to fire the great furnaces and factories.

The king of Thoradin lives in Thorin, since he is always the thane of the Hylar clan. One of the upper levels surrounding the Great Sun-tunnel has been modified into a palace quarters for the monarch, his family, his attending nobles, and a large force of bodyguards.

Thordarax

The Daergar excavated this dark city several miles to the west of Thorin. They plunged deep into the bedrock, and when they found rich veins of iron ore, they expanded the mineral wealth into the tunnels that would form their city.

Thordarax is a city of tunnels, with no large chambers or halls. Instead, it is a network of passages with small apartments and shops delved into the walls of the corridors.





The only access to the surface is through Thorin and Northgate, but this is of little importance since many Daergar spend their entire lives without getting a look at the sun.

Smoke drifts through the air here, giving the place an acrid smell, but the Daergar don't seem to mind. They maintain large smelting pots, belching furnaces, and hammering forges throughout this city, which is primarily dedicated to the mining of ores and the making of steel. The finest steel in all Thoradin comes from this Daergar city, and the dark-delving dwarves make so much of the valuable alloy that they are able to trade it to the rest of the realm to meet all their other needs.

Thorolck

The Daewar sought more airy accommodations than the dark-delvers, and hence they chose this expanse of porous basalt and limestone for their city. Thorolck is close to the surface, and connected by numerous suntunnels and ventilation shafts to the world above.

Although the passage of goods and cargo requires the Daewar to travel to the North or Zhalakar Gates, they have designed many small, concealed gates that allow individuals to emerge onto the surface with relative ease.

Thorolck consists of several large chambers, well-lit by suntunnels and surrounded by common areas, inns, and taverns. The residential apartments each have access to one of these large amphitheaters as well, though the connection often requires passage down a long corridor.

Thorolck is a mercantile city. There are few forges or factories here, but dwarves from the other three northern cities generally bring their goods here for trade. Since the Daergar don't like to have other dwarves in their city, Thorolck has become the largest trading center of Daergar steel in Thoradin.

Zhakar

This city of the Theiwar became the largest community in Thoradin. Like Thorin, it consists of multiple levels, with numerous wings delved in various directions. The city in overview resembles a giant spider, with eight great legs extending into the surrounding rock.

Zhakar is the lowest of Thoradin's cities, delved even deeper than Thordarax. The Theiwar mined many useful minerals in the course of its excavation, and also found some small troves of rough gemstones, including diamonds.

It is perhaps the most well-rounded of all the cities in the realm. A bustling manufacturing center, Zhakar also boasts busy markets, crowded inns, and prosperous farming warrens in the extensive caverns below the city.

Several long passages connect Zhakar to the Zhalakar Gate, which emerges into the base of a deep box canyon in the mountains. So deep is the city level, however, that the long roads climb over 4,000 feet to the gate.

Southgate, too, was delved by the Theiwar and connects to Zhakar over many miles of subterranean passages. It emerges at the foot of a small mountain, and provides access to a deep and secluded valley.

Both of these gates are jealously guarded by the Theiwar. Passage through either gate is denied to any non-dwarf, and even dwarves of the other clans might have to do some fast talking or bribery, or produce evidence that they are on important business for the kingdom before they will be allowed to pass.

Each gate is protected by a series of fortresses along the roads leading into the dwarven kingdom. Intruders would have to force their way through heavy stone gates, across drawbridges, and through fortified walls before they could make their way to one of the cities.

Thaxtharken

This is the first of the new cities, delved after Thoradin had been inhabited for several centuries. Thaxtharken includes dwarves of all the clans, and has become the major manufacturing center of the realm. Vast lakes of surging lava flow beneath these delvings, and this natural heat source is tapped into for smelting and forging a vast array of metals.

Thaxtharken is a center of raw steel production second only to Thordarax. Many Istarian coins are minted here, and a host of weapons- and armorsmiths take advantage of the steady fires and ready sources of metal.

Thaxtharken lies far below the surface, with several towering peaks looming overhead. The city consists of large and small chambers, with numerous ventilation shafts and a single suntunnel opening into its large central chamber.

Far removed from any of Thoradin's gates, Thaxtharken is a place of fire and darkness. The sounds of hammering ring constantly through the halls, and fires often belch upward from the lava lakes, sweeping even into the streets and buildings of the city.

Menekhtat

Known as the "Linking City," Menekhtat is a rare example of cooperation between the Theiwar and Daergar. Equidistant between the South and West Gates, this dark city is a terminus of underground highways and a garrison city for Thoradin's dwarven legions. Little manufacturing occurs here, but the city is connected by canals to Zhakar, Thaxtharken, and Talak-Siln. In fact, this is the only one of Thoradin's cities to significantly rely on water transportation. The three cities connected to the canals merely have one set of wharves, with passages leading only to Menekhtat.

Menekhtat is a city of subterranean islands, with each block surrounded by water. Many bridges traverse these waterways, but the Theiwar generally prefer to travel about the city by boat. Long cables extend to each of the three destinations along the canals, and the dwarves use winch-operated ferries (cranked from within the boats) to work their craft along these long waterways.

Talak-Siln

This is the outside trading center of Thoradin, located nearly 12 miles from Westgate. It is the only part of Thoradin where non-dwarves are common. Human merchants often make the journey up the narrow trail leading to Westgate, knowing that they can negotiate better deals for themselves within Talak-Siln than they could make on the surface. The dwarves don't mind the presence of humans here, since it saves their merchants the trouble of venturing into the mountains and braving the weather.

Between Westgate and Talak-Siln stands a sturdy fortress that any intruders must fight their way past. The fortress includes several stone gates, a deep moat and drawbridge, and several walls fortified with arrowslits and murder holes overhead.

Talak-Siln is mainly a city of markets and bazaars, intermixed with many inns and taverns. Those dwarves who live here generally occupy small apartments delved directly above or below their places of business. Goods available for barter include all manner of coins, metal weapons, tools, and armor, a fantastic array of fine jewelry, rough and cut (but unmounted) gemstones, stone statues and tools, a variety of fungus-based foods, and ale, mead, and beer.

Humans bring in wool and cotton, lumber, creosote, salt and spices, fresh meat (even on the hoof, sometimes), fruits, and vegetables.



KAYOLIN

760 - Present

THE MINES OF GARNET

When Thorbardin's intrepid colonists started for the northern reaches of the Kharolis Mountains nearly 10 centuries before the Cataclysm, they sought to make their homes in mountains rich in metal ores. They wanted a realm of high mountains and a place that could remain isolated from, and defensible against, the humans that already teemed across the Solamnian plains. Gems would be an added benefit, though precious stones were not initially the most important objective of these brave, migrating Hylar.

Little did they realize the wealth of mineral resources that would eventually emerge from their delvings. After nearly 14 centuries of production, Kayolin's dwarves have delved more valuable mines than any other dwarven realm of Krynn. Their gemstones are sought across the length and breadth of Ansalon, and the coins minted here form the currencies of virtually every civilized nation north of the Newsea.

Early in the history of the bustling colony, Daewar dwarves were invited to join the Hylar settlers, and the two clans united with a solidarity not seen anywhere else among dwarven clans. The combined mercantile and production skills of the two clans made a perfect match.

Now Kayolin is a realm of Hylar and Daewar. These hard-working dwarves have established valuable trading arrangements with all of their surrounding neighbors. They fought bravely in the War of the Lance and, unlike Thorbardin, have even opened some segments of their underground city to human guests and trading partners.

KAYOLIN AND THE KNIGHTS OF SOLAMNIA

The roots of cooperation between human and dwarf go back to the very founding of Kayolin. The mountainous realm, after all, was granted to the dwarves as a reward for the help they gave to the knights during the Third Dragon War. This tradition of friendship and cooperation has lasted through the centuries.

For the first portion of its history, of course, Kayolin was a colony of Thorbardin, and its relations with humans were thereby controlled by the prevailing attitudes of that great dwarvenhome. These attitudes were considerably less tolerant than those of the Kayolin dwarves. Even after independence was granted (five centuries pre-Cataclysm), the dwarves of Kayolin retained closer ties with Thorbardin than they did with the various nations under the control of the knighthood.

However, when the Cataclysm and its watery agent, the Newsea, severed all communications between Kayolin and Thorbardin, the dwarves of Kayolin developed a high degree of self-sufficiency. But the clans of Garnet Thax are social and cooperative by nature, and a life of pure isolation did not suit them.

Also, they were faced with the growing threat of evil around them. The lands nearest to their mountain fastness include the human realm of Lemish. After the Cataclysm, this unhappy state degenerated into chaos, and in the centuries since has been the site of many feuds between rival warlords. Lemish was too disorganized to present any threat to the dwarves. Still, Kayolin kept a wary eye on its warlike neighbor.



At the same time, Kayolin expanded the bonds of trade that had traditionally linked it to Solamnia. With a good road connecting Garnet Thax to the port of Caergoth, the dwarves had an expanding market for their goods. When Thoradin was destroyed, the humans had no convenient source of minting and trading activities. The dwarves of Kayolin were all too ready to answer that need.

Caergoth, Thelgaard, and Solanthus now provide major outlets for dwarven goods. The folk of Kayolin travel freely to those cities, and beyond to Vingaard, Palanthis and, by river, all the way to Kalamán. The northeastern portion of Kayolin is an open plain, populated by humans. The dwarves accept these settlers with perfect ease. Dwarven warriors have even fought to protect these lands against the incursions of the warlords from Lemish.

The knight/dwarven history of cooperation was further cemented during the War of the Lance, when both peoples united against the greater evil of the dragonarmies. Hobgoblins seized Throtl, slaughtering most of the human population. Those who fled were given temporary safety within the Dualgates of Kayolin. When Solanthus fell, a dwarven battalion marched out to screen the retreat of thousands of refugees. Then, fighting side-by-side with mounted knights, these dwarves retired to the mountains and helped plan the great counteroffensive.

The warlords of Lemish, meanwhile, fell under the influence of invading hobgoblins and their ogre masters. Unlike Throtl, the humans of Lemish did not flee the invasion, feeling certain that they could settle this. It did not require a great deal of moral adjustment on the part of the brutal Lemites. They found a closer kinship with hobgoblins than they ever had with the Knights of Solamnia.

Lemish is now seething with evil forces. Mostly these are humans and hobgoblins,

but ogres and draconians are not uncommon there. Rumors persist that some blue dragons have broken away from their armies, and are serving in a mercenary (or perhaps independent) capacity with the warlike bands of Lemish and Throtl.

In cooperation with their knightly allies, the dwarves of Kayolin are planning a major offensive campaign to clean out the evil in Lemish once and for all.

THE DWARVES OF KAYOLIN

These dwarves are not radically different in appearance or nature from their cousins in Thorbardin, 300 miles to the south. They are a mixture of Hylar and Daewar stock and the two clans coexist quite peaceably. Relations between them in Kayolin are notably friendlier than in the more complex (and crowded) political arena of Thorbardin.

Intermarriage between the two clans has become so common that mixed-clan dwarves will soon be nearly as numerous as those whose roots come purely from one or the other.

It is well-known that the Daewar and Hylar are the two clans among the dwarves that most recognize the value of communication, diplomacy, cooperation, and trade. It is not surprising therefore, that they have made their nation a haven of peace and tranquility.

The population of Kayolin is a fraction of Thorbardin's. Fewer than 20,000 dwarves live in Garnet Thax and its surrounding cities and delvings. Yet their accomplishments in trade and manufacturing equal nearly half the output of Thorbardin, precisely because little effort is wasted on inter-clan suspicions and conflicts.

The Hylar have retained the governorship of Kayolin throughout its history, and Hylar dwarves also are usually selected as ambas-





sadors to meet with their human neighbors. All other posts in the realm tend to be selected on a basis of merit. So Hylar troops will serve willingly under a Daewar commander and a master craftsman of one clan will gladly teach apprentices of the other.

When relating to outside forces, the two clans react as one, with the best interest of Kayolin at heart. Whether it means a trade treaty with Caergoth, a military expedition against Lemish, or the restoring of ties with Thorbardin (which began in the second century after the Cataclysm!), the representatives of Kayolin speak for all Kayolin, not just for the dwarves of their own clan.

Naturally, some dwarves of the Aghar clan have also found their way into the caverns of Kayolin. The gully dwarves take no interest in the governing of the realm, nor would anyone listen to their suggestions if they did. Even so, the Aghar live better in Kayolin than do their kin in Thorbardin. For the gully dwarves, a life that is free of the brutal kicks and scornful abuse of their larger and stronger cousins is a very sweet life indeed.

THE GARNET MOUNTAINS

The spur of the Kharolis Mountains that lay farthest into Solamnia was the original home of the Kayolin dwarves. With the gouging of the Newsea, this range became completely severed from the bulk of the Kharolis heights. Now it has come to be known simply as the Garnet Mountains.

The range consists of a series of long ridges running diagonally. They are not so massive as the mountains of Thorbardin, nor are they as rugged and lofty as the Doom Range peaks around Zhakar. Nevertheless, they present a formidable barrier to human travel, especially travel from east to west.

The highest peaks reach perhaps two miles above sea level. The range is very

snowy in the winter, but in most places this snow cover melts completely by midsummer. The highest of the mountains, called Garnet Peak, maintains a small glacier on the southern face, and several of the other major summits also protect somewhat permanent snowfields in their shadows.

The most distinctive features of the range are not the peaks, but rather the ridges. These ridges are straight and steep-sided, and most of them run the length of the range. Though the summits are little more than 10,000 feet in altitude, the low spots on these ridges are very rarely lower than 8,000 feet. This makes natural passes very rare, and the approaches to the ridgecrests are steep, winding, and narrow.

The dwarves have circumvented this problem very neatly. They have carved tunnels through the ridges so that they can easily traverse their realm in any direction they choose. The locations of these tunnels are closely guarded secrets, and even the human allies who trade so reliably with Kayolin are not given this crucial information.

The mountain heights are host to thriving populations of deer, bear, sheep, goats, and a species of mountain cat that is a prized trophy for dwarven hunters. The great felines are dangerous and huge, and many a hunter has ended up as a meal for his intended quarry. This danger only enhances the value of the creatures to the dwarves.

The valleys between the ridges are used to grow grapes and other types of fruit, and terraces along the lower slopes are used for growing grains and vegetables. These crops are a valuable supplement to the Kayolin diet but do not meet the food needs of the population. As with Thorbardin, food is one of the major goods sought by Kayolin in their tradings with human neighbors.

The valleys are so narrow and steep-sided that there are no lakes in the Garnet Moun-

GOVERNOR
ERANN FLOWSTONE

7th-Level Priest and Ruler of Kayolin

Strength:	13
Dexterity :	11
Constitution:	14
Intelligence:	16
Wisdom:	18
Charisma:	14
Armor Class:	3
THAC0:	14
Damage:	3-8
hit points:	46
Height:	5'1"
Weight:	185 lbs.
Movement:	6
Alignment:	Neutral Good

Special Abilities:

Infravision: 60'

Equipment: *chain mail +1, mace +2*

Appearance: Erann Flowstone is an incredibly forthright dwarf, possessed of an abundance of personal integrity that seems to shine from his intense blue eyes. He is handsome and takes good care of his appearance. His beard is always neatly trimmed, his clothes are clean and elegant, but not fancy. He is tall for a dwarf, but does not seem to dominate. Instead, his presence acts as a soothing counsel to any of his people who behold him. His voice is his most commanding feature. It is well-modulated and clear and he can use it to persuade, to mollify, to threaten (rarely necessary), or to praise. Those who hear him tend to believe him, not merely because he always tells the truth, but because he makes listeners want to believe him.

History: Erann is the son of the former governor and the grandson of his predecessor. His grandfather was the first governor appointed after the Cataclysm, since during that dire convulsion a cave-in wiped out every member of the previous ruling family. The Flowstones have universally been hailed as wise and careful rulers of Kayolin, and Erann is no exception.

Unlike his father and grandfather, Erann received his training in the devout priesthood of Reorx, not in the arms and armor of the warrior. He has been an esteemed member of the clergy throughout his adulthood, and even after assuming the office of governor (in 294 AC) he continues to conduct religious services and to practice the skills of his clerical arts.

It is primarily because of the devotion showed by Erann and priests like him that the worship of the traditional dwarven gods was not completely lost in Kayolin. Erann has not let his people forget the gods. He has created several annual festivals observed in Kayolin during which the dwarves offer thanks toward their patron god. The major festival is Ironheight, a seven-day period of feasting, celebration, and relaxation that begins with the winter solstice.

Erann has also insured that the Aghar continue to be treated with respect (as much as this is possible, admittedly) in Kayolin. He will not tolerate abuse or cruelty toward the Aghar, and during the days of Ironheight he often has the local Highbulp as a guest at his table.

Role: Erann is a kind and beneficent leader. He much prefers to negotiate a dispute rather than settle it with a judgment. He is courageous and decisive, and his people know that his word is law.





tains. Some of the rivers have wide places created by rockfalls or other chokepoints, but these tend to be narrow and deep, and they possess a noticeable current.

The forests of Lemish extend far up the easternmost slopes of Kayolin. These woods are patrolled diligently by the dwarves, since the woods seem to be the most likely source of trouble. Clashes between dwarven and hobgoblin patrols are relatively frequent. The dwarves usually get the upper hand, but they have lost enough warriors there that these patrols have recently been increased.

NEIDAR NEIGHBORS

Many of the fields in the Garnet Mountains are tended by Neidar (hill) dwarves. These outside-dwelling kin of the mountain dwarves wander the range as hunters, herders, and sentinels. They barter their own products, primarily foodstuffs, to the dwarves of Kayolin in exchange for metal tools, weapons, and coins. Their settlements also provide major trading centers for dealing with humans beyond Kayolin's gates.

Almost all of the Kavolin Neidar are the descendants of the Hylar or Daewar mountain dwarves from this same kingdom. Very few Neidar migrated from Thorbardin and its environs to settle here. Still, through the centuries many young dwarves have chosen to live beyond the confinement of stone walls, and this has led to a thriving population of Neidar.

The History of the Neidar

There is still tension between the dwarven clans of Kayolin because King Duncan closed Thorbardin's gates during the Cataclysm. Though the Dwarfgate War occurred 300 miles to the south, and because of the Newsea, Kayolin didn't even hear about

that conflict for more than two centuries after the fact.

In Kayolin at the time of the Cataclysm, the city welcomed all dwarves into the shelter of the great delvings. They made room for the Neidar in the mercantile areas near the gates, which had previously been used for trading activities. Those activities were of course suspended by the Cataclysm. The arrangement proved amicable to the Kayolin dwarves, and the hill dwarves were grateful for the shelter, though they could not help but find the lifestyle somewhat claustrophobic.

Within the first decade AC, some of the Neidar began to return to the outside world, which at that time was an environment of constant rains, frequent convulsions of the earth, and many wandering tribes of desperate humans and humanoids. Hobgoblins and ogres had begun to infiltrate the outer ridges of the Garnet Mountains, driven there by the vigorous pursuit of the Knights of Solamnia. It was the hill dwarves who drove these creatures back into the lowlands, forcing the monsters to struggle for survival in the forests of Lemish. The mountain dwarves provided their cousins with all the weapons they wanted, but left the bulk of the fighting to the Neidar.

When word of the great betrayal finally filtered north, the tempers of the hill dwarves were fanned. For several years they threatened to blockade the gates of Kayolin in symbolic vengeance for the suffering of their fellow clansmen to the south. Fortunately, the wisdom of the governor, Bracken Flowstone (father of Erann), prevailed, and the hill dwarves were persuaded back into the fold.

Because of the news from Thorbardin, the hill dwarves began to think of themselves as a separate people from the dwarves living under the mountain. As a result, the Neidar now consider their own interests

first in any potential course of action involving the mountain dwarves.

NEIDAR SETTLEMENTS

Three villages of Neidar dwarves exist in the Garnet Range, though fewer than half the hill dwarves actually live in one of these communities. The herders and hunters prefer to live in solitary cabins or caves, occasionally with an extended clan of some 20 or 30 members all sharing some isolated mountain grotto. The villages are the centers of trade and social life for the Neidar, though, and even the most reclusive of them comes into town every few months for gossip and supplies.

Though they call them villages, the hill dwarf communities might well be considered towns. Each has nearly 1,000 residents and is a bustling center of commerce. A network of easily recognizable roadways connects the villages to the lands beyond the mountains, while more discreet pathways run among the Garnet ridges, linking the towns to each other and to the gates of Kayolin.

These villages also serve as a first line of defense for the Garnet Range. In the event of any incursion in force, the hill dwarves will muster a sturdy militia to harass and delay the invaders, while at the same time carrying word of the threat to the cities of Kavolin.

Sunsleep

This hill dwarf village nestles in a little swale atop the westernmost of the Garnet Mountain ridges. From this vantage one can see for miles across the Solamnian Plains. In fact, on a very clear day the towers of Thelgaard Keep are visible, 40 miles to the northwest. Looking east from Sunsleep an observer will see a forested valley and the

next great spine of the mountain range rising five miles away. That ridge is high enough to block further view eastward.

One of the few roads to cross into the Garnet Mountains passes down the main street of Sunsleep. This avenue is paved with smooth stones in the village, though it reverts to dirt just outside the town in both directions. A steep and winding series of switchbacks carry the road down to the plains to the west or into the wooded valley of the Coldstream to the east.

Many of the homes of Sunsleep have been carved into the north and south faces of the sloping hillsides that climb away from the center of town. Numerous wood and stone buildings line the road, however. These buildings tend to be trading posts and inns, since the hill dwarves prefer to have their residences set back from the main street.

Horse-drawn and mule-drawn carts are common here, since many human traders bring their wagons up from the plains. Oxtams and teams of more than two horses have a lot of difficulty on the steep road, so large wagons are unusual here.

Several small shops offer good deals on high quality gems and jewelry from Kayolin, including garnets and diamonds set in gold pins, chains, or brooches. A variety of foodstuffs is offered in trade, including the best variety of fish and seafood available anywhere in Kayolin. Most of the food is carted in from Caergoth, since it draws top dollar in Sunsleep. Especially treasured by the hill dwarves are the pungent black eggs harvested from a species of coastal sturgeon. A spoonful can fetch as much as a whole steel piece in the Sunsleep markets.

Inn rates are reasonable, and a variety of ales are offered to ease the aching muscles of the weary traveler. Sunsleep is a peaceful town. Thieves and rowdies are roughly handled by the Chief Constable Slate Black-





smoke (F7), a brawny and no-nonsense hill dwarf with 18/00 strength.

Knollwood

This hill dwarf community is at the northern tip of the Garnet Range. It is barely 20 miles from Solanthus, with good roads connecting the entire distance. Knollwood is more oriented toward heavy cargos than are either of its higher-elevation sister villages of the Neidar.

The town was named for the forested knob of rock that juts upward just behind the main road. Many hill dwarf homes have been carved into the sides of this knoll, and all sides of the rise are criss-crossed with narrow and winding trails leading to the entrances of these abodes. The top of the knoll is devoted to many hundreds of sheep who graze among the trees in perfect security from any predatory threats.

The main business portions of the town are located on the level ground at the base of the knoll. The road curves around this promontory, and both sides of the avenue are lined with shops, stalls, inns, and saloons. A full variety of weapons, steel tools, and coin-exchangers are represented.

Knollwood is the only hill dwarf village that carters can reach with heavy wagons. Consequently, it has flourished as a center of the marble trade. Large warehouses of sturdy fieldstone hold an assortment of blocks, and many heavy wagons carry the stone to Solanthus and points beyond.

Knollwood is a wild town and often nearly as many humans will be present as hill dwarves. Musicians are valued here and are easy to find, ranging from dwarves with resonant drums to humans playing harps, flutes, and cymbals. Often it seems that the different inns on the main street compete to see whose musicians can play the loudest.

The saloons are rowdy, and fights are

common, though the use of weapons is discouraged. A team of hill dwarf marshals (F4-F8) patrols the town each evening. Assassins and violent assaulters are usually executed by a summary hanging. The town's central square has a permanent gallows erected there.

Those individuals who are excessively drunk or show signs of drawing steel against another are quickly escorted out of town. A shantytown of sorts has grown up around Knollwood's refuse dump, since most of these recalcitrants merely sprawl on the ground long enough to sleep off the effects of the overindulgence.

Crestrock

This village is very different from the other two hill dwarf villages, since it is far more concerned with defense than with trade. It is located along the crest of the easternmost ridge of the Garnet Mountains. Directly below and sweeping to the horizon toward the south and east, are the evil-inhabited forests of Lemish. The hill dwarves of Crestrock maintain a constant vigil against incursion by those human, goblin, and draconian forces.

Fortunately, the slopes ascending from the forests into the mountains are very steep, with only a few traversable gullies and ravines among the jutting cliffs as one approaches the summit. Naturally, the dwarves are far more familiar with these locations than are their enemies, and Neidar sentries are posted at every possible route of approach within five miles of the village.

The homes and businesses of Crestrock are all embedded in the rock of the ridge-crest. Each structure has at least a door and window, but every aperture can be sealed with sturdy shutters. Many of the buildings have underground passageways connecting

them to each other.

This architecture, like most everything else about Crestrock, results from the village's dangerous location. The entire community can be protected from assault, and even if the shutters and doors get bashed down, the stone houses will not burn, and the Neidar can withdraw into several heavily defensible structures.

Crestrock maintains a ready militia of 100 warriors (F2). These warriors gather in the town square within 30 minutes of any alarm. Another 400 warriors can be gathered over the next few hours. The dwarven fighters of this village are all proficient with missile weapons that are usually some type of crossbow, though some use shortbows or slings. All wear metal armor and carry shields. This competence, coupled with the steep paths of approach leading from the lowlands to Crestrock, have enabled the dwarves to successfully hold back every attack in the village's long history. However, it must be noted that the Highlords have never sent a dragonarmy against the Garnet Mountains.

Two foot trails lead to Crestrock. One winds along the summit of the ridge to the northern terminus of the range and then descends to Knollwood. The other cuts back and forth down the western slope of the ridge, then crosses the Flowstone River to reach the Dualgates of Kayolin.

The dwarves of Crestrock maintain many herds of sheep and goats, and provide mutton, wool, and cheese to Kayolin, but the village is far from self-sufficient. Since it occupies such a strategic portion of the realm's borders, the town is subsidized by shipments of weapons and tools from Kayolin, as well as a variety of foodstuffs from Knollwood. These subsidies have been a long-standing tradition, and are paid from the central treasuries of the governor himself.

There are several inns and shops in Crestrock, but it lacks the commercial bustle of the other two hill dwarf villages. Here a stranger is likely to be regarded with suspicion. The populace does not tolerate rowdiness and offensive behavior.

DRAGONHEIGHTS

About 50 miles south of Crestrock, yet located atop the same mountain spire that forms the eastern ridge of the Garnet Range, rise the most rugged heights of the entire realm. Steep cliffs plunge 1,000 feet or more to the west and east, while sharp precipices of at least 100 feet block progress along the crest of the ridge, both from the south and the north. For this five-mile-long stretch of the ridge, broken fingers of rock extend upward, while deep chasms yawn between them. This is not a region for creatures who must walk upon the land.

This is the place where Sycctus, an ancient blue dragon, and his younger mate, Pulse, have come to make their home. The two dragons are fugitives of a sort, deserters from the Blue Wing and its fearsome commander, the Dark Lady. The two dragons participated in the disastrous battle at Margard Ford and in the wake of that debacle, they flew off to the south, seeking a simple life of plunder and depredation in a place where they wouldn't have to answer to the will of a human mistress.

Sycctus (ancient blue dragon): AC -6; MV 9 (FI 30); HD LO; hp 120; #AT 3+ Special; Dmg 1-8/1-8/3-24, (breath 20d8+10) THACO 2; MR 45%; XP 15,000

Pulse (very old blue dragon): AC -5; MV 9 (FI 30); HD 19; hp 112; #AT 3+ Special; Dmg 1-8/1-8/13-24, (breath 20d8+10) THACO 3; MR 40%; XP 14,000





These dragons found a deep, narrow crack in the base of one of these mountainous chasms for their lair. It can be reached only by air, by climbing a 200-foot vertical chute, or by descending from the top 300 feet into that same chute. The latter approach requires one to get to the top of this section of the ridge, which is no easy matter.

The gap is very wide at the mouth, but swiftly narrows into a 10-foot crack that extends 120 feet back into a larger chamber. The dragons cannot spread their wings in the crack, so they are forced to walk to the outer cavern before taking to the air.

During the period of their habitation here, the blue dragons have tried to avoid blatant attacks against the dwarves, knowing that those determined warriors might well decide to take action against the wyrms. Instead, the two serpents plunder human realms to the west of the Garnet Range, as well as the numerous seacoast settlements that dot the northern shore of the Newsea.

The dragons have also plundered the brutal troops of Lemish, and have terrorized the centaur and Kagonesti populations in the very southernmost parts of the range.

The pair have amassed quite a trove of treasure, including a variety of gems and jewelry totalling 20,000 stl, a similar amount in gold and steel pieces, and numerous magical items.

Even more important to the two dragons, however, are the contents of a small chamber off their main cavern. This niche is concealed by a pile of rubble cast across the entrance (treat as a concealed door), and is warmed by geothermal heat rising from within the mountains themselves.

The hidden chamber contains 13 blue dragon eggs. These are due to hatch at any time the DM thinks the event will do the most "good."

VALLENGLADE OF THE CENTAURS

The southern valleys of the Garnet Mountains contain the only known groves of valenwood trees north of the Newsea. These majestic trunks rise among grassy meadows, surrounding the meandering course of the Coldstream and creating dappled patterns of sunlight, lush grass, brilliant blossoms, and fern-draped shade.

Amid this forested paradise dwell several hundred of the powerful, magnificent Abanasinian centaurs. They have no permanent settlement or dwellings, preferring instead to claim the full breadth of the glade as their home.

The dwarves of Kayolin know of the centaurs. The centaurs are tolerated because they not only offer no threat, but they live in a portion of the realm that the dwarves have no particular use for. Even hill dwarves generally prefer surroundings of rock to woods.

The chief of the centaurs is a venerable warrior named Whitelock. He is a broad-chested specimen and a personal friend of Erann Flowstone, as he was of Bracken Flowstone in years past.

Whitelock (centaur): AC 5; MV 18; HD 4; hp 32; #AT 2 or 1; Dmg 1d6 + 1-8 (longsword) or 1d6; THAC0 17

Whitelock's centaurs roam the valleys around the vallenglade, and he meticulously reports any intrusion to the dwarves. If small groups of draconians or goblins are observed, the centaurs have been known to take care of the problem themselves.

One piece of information Whitelock keeps to himself, however, is that he is well acquainted with the Kagonesti who dwell on the forested slopes east of his glade. He suspects that the dwarves would not permit elves to live within the borders of the realm, but he understands the plight of these

refugees. Therefore, he has refrained from informing Erann Flowstone or any other dwarf of their presence.

WILDTREE

With the destruction of Qualinesti by advancing dragonarmies, most of the elven population fled westward, eventually seeking safety on Ergoth or the Sancrist Islands. Some of those sylvan folk scattered to the four winds, however.

None of the refugee groups passed through as much of an ordeal as did a small clan of wild elves, the Kagonesti. At first this small band of fewer than 200 individuals intended to hide in the forests of Qualinesti, using their superior woodsmanship to avoid detection by the marauding dragonarmies. Somehow, their secluded hiding place was detected and when the red dragons flew overhead, nearly half the Kagonesti were killed. The rest managed to escape into the woods, guided and protected by their chieftain, Fernen Narrowleaf.

The Kagonesti refugees fled northward through the ruins of Solace and across the scoured plains of Abanasinia. Securing a dragonarmy ship by stealth and courage, these elves sailed across the Newsea, finally coming to shore amid the hostile forests of Lemish.

Fleeing westward, they finally reached higher woodlands where the creatures of evil seemed reluctant to tread. The wild elves very quickly realized that they had passed into a dwarven realm.

So desperate were these elves that they resolved to stay there, blending into the forests of a region where no dwarves seemed to live, at least on the surface. The wild elves have made their homes in hidden, forest-choked gullies along the steep slopes of the Garnet Range.

By draping leather tarps and woolen

screens around the moss-draped trunks of many of the large trees growing here, the Kagonesti have made a village so well camouflaged that a human or dwarven hunter might pass within five paces and not even know that any kind of structure exists. Also, the terrain is so rugged with steep-sided ravines, deadfalls, and thick underbrush, that the wild elves are virtually guaranteed that no such woodsman will ever venture into the vicinity of their homes.

The tribe of wild elves numbers about 100, and 75 of them are warriors (F1 or better). The chieftain of the elven clan is Fernen Narrowleaf, a ranger of 9th level who has led his people through many travails in order to bring them here.

Some of the typical warriors of Wildtree include the following:

Elven rangers, F5 (five in village)

Elven warriors, F3 (20)

Elven warriors, F1 (40)

Elven priest, F5

These elves watchfully patrol the forests, ambushing the evil forces of Lemish wherever and whenever they are encountered. They strive to remain undiscovered by the dwarves, and have established friendly, if discreet, relationships with the centaurs of Vallenglade.

Many stags wander through the woods at the foot of these ravines. These great deer have been domesticated by the Kagonesti and serve the elves as steeds. As many as 24 stags respond to the high-pitched summons. They carry the elven warriors as loyally as any warhorse will transport his knight, and are every bit as willing to enter combat and fight on their riders' behalf.





FERNEN NARROWLEAF

9th-Level Elven Ranger

Strength:	13
Dexterity:	19
Constitution:	12
Intelligence:	16
Wisdom:	14
Charisma:	13
Armor Class:	6
THAC0:	12
Damage:	1-8
hit points:	59
Height:	5'8"
Weight:	175 lbs.
Movement:	12
Alignment:	Chaotic Good

Special Abilities:

Infravision: 60'

Equipment: *longbow +4; 10 arrows of draconian slaying; Mount: Elkhorn, a giant stag that roams the woods, but will arrive within 1-12 rounds of Fernen's inaudible summoning whistle*

Elkhorn (giant stag): AC 7; MV 21; HD 5; hp 31; #AT 1 or 2; Dmg 4-16 or 1-4/1-4; THAC0 15

Appearance: Fernen is a typical Kagonesti, with dark skin and piercing brown eyes. When he goes among his people or into the woods, he paints his entire body in swirling shades of green, orange, and black. Around his eyes are spiraling circles of black that seem to accentuate the intensity of his gaze. He wears a supple doeskin loincloth and soft leather sandals that protect the bottoms of his feet.

History: Fernen holds himself responsible for the fact that his tribe had to flee from the rest of the elves of his realm. (His own

wife was killed during the attack.) It was his suggestion that the Kagonesti conceal themselves in the woods to the north of Qualinesti. He never imagined anything as devastating as the dragonarmy attack would strike into their ancient homeland. He still wonders bitterly how the enemy forces found his clan's secluded grotto.

He did formulate the plan that allowed the Kagonesti to capture the ship on the Newsea, and through his leadership has settled them in their fairly secure location for the time being. He cannot overcome his feelings of guilt for their circumstances, but none of his tribesmen hold him responsible for what has happened.

In the course of their journeys through the Lemish forests, Fernen became aware of the presence of the creature called wightlin. He recognizes the monstrous apparition as being elven in origin, and fears that it will seek out the village and wreak horrors upon them.

Role: The Kagonesti chieftain is a pillar of strength among his people, alternately tender or tough as need be. It was his determination that kept the tribe going during the long flight from the dragonarmies. Now, every young warrior admires him and every elven maiden desires him.

Yet Fernen himself is an unhappy, driven character. His guilt tears at him, and he lives in constant dread that the dwarves will discover the tribe and drive them out of the Kayolin realm. He prefers that threat to the draconians and other monsters that roam the forest to the east.

Fernen has convinced himself that it was destiny that brought his elves here, destiny that calls upon them to remove the sinister threat of the wightlin. He has no plan for dealing with the monster, but it is a personal quest that he will eventually do so.



LAIR OF THE WICHTLIN

In the heart of a forested gully, near the foothills of the Garnet slopes, an abomination has come to dwell. The lair is a misty fen in a low hollow, where water comes to drain into a morass of mud, fetid ponds, and stinking, rot-infested plant life. Even during bright daylight, the moss-draped branches of overhanging cypress and willows choke off every ray of the sun.

The wichtlin is a hideous creature, the remnant of a wild elf who betrayed his people in exchange for a promise of great power from a dragon Highlord. It appears as merely a pair of disembodied eyeballs floating above two skeletal, clutching hands. It is usually found with its companion, a wichtlin stag that appears as another pair of eyeballs topped by a broad rack of

greenish, faintly glowing antlers.

Wichtlin Kagonesti: AC 2; MV 9; HD 4+4; hp 21; #AT 2; Dmg Special; THAC0 15

Immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold* and cold-based spells: hit only by +1 or better magical weapons; attackers suffer -2 penalty to attack rolls, except for characters who detect invisibility; becomes fully visible for 1d4 rounds upon killing an opponent.

Wichtlin wild stag: AC 7; MV 24; HD 3; hp 17; #AT 1 or 2; Dmg 2d4 or 1d3/1d3; THAC0 17

Hit only by +1 or better magical weapons; victims of antler attack must successfully save vs. *paralyzation* or be paralyzed for 2d4 rounds; stag is destroyed if separated from rider by more than 20 yards for 1 round, or if the wichtlin rider is killed.



In its mortal life, the elf was known as Silveron Lightblade, and he was a member of Fernen Narrowleaf's tribe. It was Silveron's treachery that led the dragonarmies to the Kagonesti village. Naturally, the Highlord commander of the dragonarmy then betrayed his traitorous assistant, and the elf and his wild stag mount were slain by dragonbreath as they tried to flee back toward the woodlands.

None of the Kagonesti knows of Silveron's treachery. In fact, he is mourned by the wild elves along with the rest of their kinfolk who perished in the brutal attack. Although Fernen Narrowleaf and several other wild elf scouts know of the wichtlin, they have not made the connection between the monster and their former compatriot.

The wichtlin dwells primarily in the dank swamp of its fetid hollow. It wanders among the trunks of the great trees, never resting. Often the eyes of stag and elf are seen in the respective positions of mount and rider, with the skeletal hands twisting this way and that, guiding the wichtlin stag on an eternal patrol.

The wichtlin does not know of the Kagonesti settlement on the nearby slopes, although it followed the tribe on its migration from Ansalon. The creature senses that the Kagonesti have settled somewhere near here, but it has not yet found out where. Because of the numerous and well-armed creatures roaming this forest, it tends to remain in the protection of its dark swamp.

If the wichtlin were to find out the location of the Kagonesti village, it would hasten there and try to surreptitiously slay as many of the elves as it could. When enough of these elves had been rendered into corpses, and then (after seven days of death) transformed into additional wichtlin, the creature would lead its horde against its remaining former villagemates.

GARNET VILLAGE

This outpost straddles the main road from Caergoth to Thelgaard Keep, and has become an important community in its own right. This is where the dwarves of Kayolin bring many of their goods that they would really like to sell, including metal weapons and tools, as well as gems and jewelry that are not of the best quality.

In turn, the humans bring many goods here that they don't want to cart up into the mountains. Horses are common trade items in Garnet Village, as are sheep, goats, and cattle. At one time this was a prosperous center of the lumber trade, but Solamnia has been so heavily cut that there is no longer any hardwood timber.

Garnet is a village of dwarves and humans, with many kender and a few gnomes. It is surrounded by a stout wooden palisade, with double gates on the north and south walls where the highway enters.

A small militia patrols the town and keeps the peace, though its members are quite willing to take a bribe to allow troublemakers to go free. Trading is lively, beginning in the late morning and continuing into the night. By sunset, ribaldry and rowdiness begin so that the streets of Garnet are noisy places, fraught with perils from pickpockets, cutpurses, and even strong-arm bandits.

Gambling is a popular activity in Garnet, and most of the larger inns and taverns have rooms set aside for gaming. Knucklebones are always popular, as are guessing games, riddles, and many varieties of card games using the Talis deck.

KAYOLIN UNDER THE MOUNTAIN

Kayolin is centered around and dominated by one huge underground city, Garnet Thax. Surrounding this city is an extensive network of delvings, many of which are actively undergoing continued excavation and expansion. Others of the older mines have been abandoned as the ore diminished, but these are well-shored with supporting timbers, and are kept as public areas for the dwarven population of the realm.

Beyond Garnet Thax and the delvings are the passages leading to Kayolin's three gates. Around each of these gates one or more smaller cities have been excavated. Garnet Thax has no direct access to the outside world, so travelers must move through one of the three gate-regions before they can pass from the great central city into the realm of sunlight and fresh air.

Kayolin is a region of great geological variety, which was one of the features that so fascinated the original dwarven settlers. It has yielded wealth of untold quantity, in surprisingly diverse types, including precious gems, a whole host of metals, and many quarries producing fine stone for building and sculpture.

Some parts of the realm suffer incursions of flowing lava and hot gasses released from fires far below the surface of Krynn. In other places the rock is very old and contains a great profusion of metallic ores. Underlying much of the entire realm is an ancient bed of limestone that has since been compressed into marble. The stone quarried from this level has created much of the beauty and grandeur of Kayolin, and also provides a valuable commodity that has been shipped as far away as Palanthis.

LIGHT AND AIR

A series of suntunnels carries daylight into the depths of Kayolin, into the cities and towns of the underground realm. The delvings and the mines are as dark as one might expect.

Each of the communities has at least one source of daylight. These shafts employ the same type of quartz lenses and silvered mirrors as are used in Thorbardin. Their upper entrances are located along the crests of the ridges above the cities, and are sealed tightly with plugs of rock-hard quartz that are as clear as glass.

TUNNELROADS

A vast network of roadways connects the various quarters of Kayolin. These passages have been carved with similar dimensions. They are 20 feet wide, 10 feet high, and are flanked at each side by shallow gutters to carry waste water away.

The roads typically link only the uppermost levels of each city and delving. This construction was designed for defense, since the roads also slope upward from the gates to the central city of Garnet Thax. Because of their smooth floors and unbending nature, as well as the downward orientation when viewed from the realm's center, large rocks can be rolled down any of these roads. Gravity will carry these deadly juggernauts quite a distance.

UNDERGROUND WATERWAYS

Thorbardin, of course, has the Urkhan Sea. While Kayolin has no such great body of water within its realm, it can be argued that water transportation is even more important here than it is in the great dwarvenhome to the south. This is because no fewer than three deep rivers flow through the realm,





and the passages of all of them have been carved out and gated or dammed where necessary, to allow the passage of barges and boats from city to city.

The Silvershield River is a great flowage that plunges out of the mountains near the Southgate of Kayolin. The Fireflow River is a short, deep stream that flows into and out of the great city of Garnet Thax itself, before it joins with the deeper, more sluggish waters of the Gem River. That river passes through the vast and intricate canal network that distinguishes the city of Spar before flowing out of the Westgate and mingling with the mountain stream known as the Sliprock.

THE LOCALES OF KAYOLIN

Each of the cities and gates of Kayolin is described in general terms, with some of its distinguishing features. Also noted are the various delvings, a description of the products mined there, and whether the tunnels are still in use.

Dualgates

At the northeastern extent of the undermountain city are two stone gates placed two miles apart, and separated by a cliff-walled promontory of stone. From the outside, one sees two parallel valleys, each leading toward the heart of Kayolin. Partway up each valley is a wide facade of a marbled archway, flanked by elegant arches and leading through a circular hole into the depths of the mountains.

The Dualgates are the most commonly-used of Kayolin's gates. They are the most accessible to the humans who live beyond the Garnet Mountains. Though the mountains extend for 15 miles past the gates, travelers can follow along the course of the valley floors and avoid having to climb any of the steep ridges. They are also surrounded

by the largest network of communities adjacent to any of Kayolin's gates.

The towns of Facet and Emera are both connected to the Dualgates by undermountain corridors. Emera can be reached from either of the apertures, while Facet is linked only to the eastern of the two gates by direct corridor. Farther into the mountain, but still part of the Dualgate complex, are the cities of Crystal and Rubicon. Both have easy access to the gates through the routes traversing either Facet or Emera.

The Dualgates typically remain open, though they can be closed within 10 rounds of raising an alarm. The guards are not reluctant to close them, given proper cause. During the War of the Lance, for example, they spent the better part of two years tightly shut, open ring only to allow dwarven warriors to emerge, or human refugees and emissaries to enter.

Outside the mountain, the Dualgates connect to trails that join together about five miles from the entrance. The pathways are actually quite smooth and are paved with gravel in places where erosion is a problem. The trails are more like roads than hiking paths. They are more than 12 feet wide, even where they climb the slopes of the mountain ridges.

Going north, this roadway links up with the Neidar town of Knollwood, and hence to the Solamnic Plains beyond. The great city of Solanthal is less than 50 miles away from the gates, and the good roadway runs for the entire length of the route.

Each of the Dualgates operates on the screw-and-plug system that was developed in Thorbardin. None of the mechanisms controlling the gates can be reached from the vicinity of the gates themselves. Instead, they are controlled from large rooms directly underneath the gates. Access to these rooms is restricted to passages coming from deep within the mountains.

Each of the Dualgates has a permanent garrison of dwarven warriors on duty. There are 12 guards (F3) standing ready outside the gate, and another 36 (F3) can be summoned within 1-6 rounds from the garrison halls and ready rooms just within the mountains. The guards are all proven veterans, and each shift is commanded by a battle-hardened captain (F8). The total force includes 44 guards and four captains.

In the event of an attack, these dwarves are expected to give the order to close the gates, and then fight outside the gates for as long as possible. If they win the battle, the gates will be reopened. If they lose, their lives have purchased the security of their kingdom.

Although the gates are guarded, those with legitimate business may enter either of the Dualgates and proceed to one of the nearby cities, all of which conduct a flourishing business in trade. Those who enter here must merely pay a toll of 1 stl per individual, and convince the dwarven guards that they meet one of the following criteria.

1. A dwarf of Kayolin or Thorbardin, or any hill dwarf, will be freely admitted through the Dualgates.

2. Any human or gnome traders will be admitted, providing they can demonstrate that they have sufficient wealth to make some purchases. Generally a 50 stl purse is adequate, though the guard captains have discretion.

3. A human or gnome merchant who brings goods for sale will be allowed to transport his goods through the gates, though they will be thoroughly searched by the guards. The purpose of the search is primarily to insure that no one sneaks into Kayolin to do harm, or to avoid paying the toll.

Elves and kender will be firmly turned back at the gate. Neither type of character is welcome in Kayolin, though exceptions

have been made. Generally, these exemptions require an invitation from the governor or one of his key agents.

Westgate

This gate is not as well-used as the Dualgates, but it too remains open most of the time, and human and gnome traders are welcomed at the Westgate as well. The city of Spar, which is the largest community of Kayolin except for grand Garnet Thax, lies just a few miles from this gate, delved into the heart of the mountain ridge.

The Westgate is framed by a marble arch. A flight of 20 wide, marble stairs lead to the arch. Next to the stairs is a steep ramp, and a pulley and winch mechanism at the top of the ramp is available for hoisting up heavy loads.

The exterior of the gate descends steeply into the valley of the Sliprock River. A stone bridge crosses the river below the gates, and joins with the narrow, winding road that carries travelers westward from the Garnet Mountains.

At the base of the stairway, and slightly off to one side, a rapid flow of water emerges from a crack in the ground. This is the external outlet of the Gem River, one of several streams flowing through Kayolin. The current is strong and the waters rush down the hill to mingle with the Sliprock. In winter this aperture is sealed by ice and snow, and during spring and summer the outward flow is intense. In later summer and autumn, however, it fades to a slow trickle, leaving much of its passageway open to travel. The dwarves have installed a grate of heavy steel rods over the exit, anchoring them firmly in the rock. Nothing larger than a big rat can slip through the bars.

Because of its height and inaccessibility, Westgate is considered the most impermeable of Kayolin's entrances. Any invading





force would have to climb the steep trail from the river valley, all the while exposed to missile fire from troops on the grand stairway. Then the enemy would have to fight its way up the stairway and into the gatehouse aperture, by which time the gates would probably have been closed.

As with each of the Dualgates, a permanent garrison of 12 guards stands on duty here, with another 36 within the gates that can be summoned in just a few rounds. During those months when the Gem River slows to a trickle, these guards keep a careful eye on the stream's outflow, which is well below their vantage posts.

The gate mechanism here is also similar to the Dualgates. The plug is controlled by an overhead chamber in this case. The opening mechanism cannot be reached directly from the gatehouse. One must go as far as the city of Spar, and then double back through narrow, low-ceilinged tunnels in order to get to the winch room.

Human and gnome traders are welcomed here as they are at the Dualgates, with similar strictures and tolls. Because the road leading from Westgate is far more rugged than that leading to the Dualgates, however, this gate is primarily a trading avenue for lighter and more easily transportable goods. This includes a great deal of gem and jewelry trade going out of Kayolin, as well as seafood, spices, and salt coming in.

Southgate

This aperture is sometimes known as the "Wargate," supposedly because it leads toward realms that have traditionally been controlled by Kayolin's enemies. Unlike the other entrances, the Southgate remains closed except when a dwarven patrol needs to pass out or in. No humans or gnomes will be admitted here, nor is this corner of Kayolin much interested in trade of any sort.

The city of Geale lies within the mountains, about a mile from the Southgate. The area teems with armed dwarves, many of whom have established temporary quarters here while they retain other apartments elsewhere in Kayolin.

The gate here is a plug, like the other two entrances to Kayolin. It has the same garrison of 12 on-duty warriors and 36 in reserve as are posted at the other gates. However, since the Southgate is rarely opened, they don't stand at the entrance and wait for visitors.

The gate is regularly opened once per day, usually just before sunset, for the changing of the guard patrols. The opening occurs only after a drummed signal from the dwarves outside indicates that the coast is clear. The drumbeats are coded, and follow any one of 36 possible patterns, to avoid the risk of being decoded. The fresh patrol of 12 dwarves marches out while the returning company goes in.

A stream of water plunges from a gap in the rock just below the Southgate. This is the headwaters of the Silvershield River, a stream with a much stronger flow than the Gem River emerging from the Westgate. The gap where the stream emerges from the mountain is also covered with a sturdy grate, and similar grates are placed every 1,000 yards or so along the river's channel for the three miles to the city of Geale. Dwarven guards listen alertly near these grates, and any attempt to wrench the bars loose or to cut them would almost certainly be noticed within the mountain.

Geale

Geale is a city of soldiers and warriors, as well as those businessmen and merchants who make a living by serving the needs of these military dwarves. The city consists of three main levels, though almost all the



dwarves currently living here have quarters on the middle level. The upper and lower expanses were used to house additional troops during times of war, and also have the capability to serve as shelter for hill dwarf refugees that might be driven into the mountain by some external threat.

The major feature of the city is a deep chasm cutting through all of its levels, which is the course of the Silvershield River. The subterranean waterway cuts a trough slightly below the lower level of the city, but it is open all the way to the roof of the cavern. Several bridges span the chasm at each level, and wide avenues run along each of its banks on each of the city's levels.

The Geale suntunnel is located directly over this chasm, creating strange reflections on the walls on days when sunlight glints off the water deep underground. The illumination is adequate near the river, but fades into nearly complete darkness in the rest of the city.

Geale is a city designed with practicality in mind. There is little marble here and the buildings and shops are designed without ornamentation. Square doorways are common. There are very few foundries and forges here. Most of the actual manufacturing and craftwork of the realm occurs in the other cities.

The markets of Geale are designed to service the daily needs of the warriors garrisoned here. This typically includes a brigade of 800-1,500 dwarves, with an approximately equal number of wives and children. Within the shops one can find all the typical foodstuffs of Kayolin and an assortment of tools and weapons, as well as the simple needs of a home, such as crockery, candles, coal, and garments of wool, cotton, and leather.

Geale does have a boisterous social district, located along the riverwalk on the middle level. Here streets are lined with

inns and taverns. Carousing dwarves, the booming drumbeats of music, and the raucous violence of an occasional fistfight all combine to keep things lively.

Emera

This small town is a network of tunnels, caverns, and chambers that connect to each of the Dualgates via straight tunnel-roads. Emera is a small city with a key location, since any invader forcing through the Dualgates will next have to negotiate the crooked, winding streets of Emera. The town has been laid out like a maze, with blind alleys, twisting thoroughfares, and many overlooking balconies from which an intruder can be showered with missiles and debris.

Emera does not occupy a large, hollow cavern. Instead, the streets are tunnels delved through the rock, and the buildings are merely caverns that front onto one or two of these tunnels. Though a suntunnel spills light into the center of the city, where many of these tunnels come together, the rest of the place is dark and its inhabitants use candles or other artificial illumination.

The center of Emera is the largest open area in the town. No fewer than eight tunnels converge on a large, octagonal plaza. From the center of the plaza four stairways spiral upward, and five tunnels lead down to lower levels. Anyone walking around in Emera long enough will most likely come to this square, but guessing which way to go from there is another matter entirely. Dwarves who live here find perverse pleasure in providing inaccurate or misleading directions to strangers.

Even so, Emera is a bustling and sociable little town. Humans and gnomes are nearly as common here as dwarves, although all the inns and shops are owned by dwarves. Many human merchants have made arrange-



ments to lease space from a dwarven landlord, setting up selling stalls, however.

Emera is the best place to buy wine and hard spirits in all of Kayolin. These products are imported by human merchants and sold within the city, since they draw a much better price than they would in any of the outer settlements. Though most dwarven tastes run toward ale and mead, enough of them like the beverages of fermented fruit to insure that the liquor merchants do a booming business.

Facet

Facet is a bustling city of gem merchants and stonecutters, frequently visited by humans looking for a good deal on diamonds, emeralds, garnets, sunstones, rubies, bloodstones, and articles of jade and quartz. Although it connects via a direct road to one of the Dualgates, that connecting tunnel can be severed by a mechanically-induced cave-in at a moment's notice. If Kayolin were to come under attack, an invader would have to fight his way through Emera before reaching Facet, or reach Facet before the dwarves knew they were under attack, which is a very dubious prospect indeed.

The numerous levels of Facet are connected by many spiraling stairways, as well as a few mechanical lifts. Three great sun-tunnels extend through the roof of the city's cavern, making this one of the brightest locales in all the underground portions of Kayolin. The bottom lenses of these tunnels are fitted with a myriad of colorful gems, so that the light that spills into the city below is a glittering melange of all the colors of the rainbow.

The shop districts of Facet are gathered along the main roads that crisscross through all the levels. These are lively centers of trade, where precious stones are the major commodity. Numerous inns, many of them

quite comfortable, offer lodging and meals. Others provide musical entertainment or darkened rooms used for drinking and private conversation.

Most of the building facades in Facet are made of a black marble that has been specially carved to highlight several different planes of reflection. These facets are reputedly the source of the city's name. The effect is quite striking, giving it the appearance of a hall of mirrors, where light is distorted and angles are deceptive.

The southern end of Facet's lowest levels branch into natural caverns that angle steeply downward. Warm, moist air wafts upward from these tunnels, carrying a vague scent of rot and mold. There are steel grates across these tunnels, and at least six guards stand at each entrance. Even though humans are allowed throughout much of Facet, they are not permitted to enter the approach caverns to Kayolin's great food warrens.

Auriculum Warren

This is the largest of the food-growing caverns in Kayolin, with connecting tunnels linking it to the cities of Facet and Crystal. Many important varieties of fungus are grown in this winding network of Limestone passages, dripping stalactites, and slowly growing stalagmites. The air remains damp from the water that constantly filters through the overhanging rock. Parts of these caverns provide vents for the hot air from the lava caverns below, accounting for the warm temperature of the warren, as well as the flourishing plant life clinging to floors, walls, and ceilings.

Rubicon

Rubicon is a trading city founded upon the need for quality steel, whether as ingots, or cast and hammered into tools, weapons,

and armor. The scent of coalsmoke lingers pungently in the air, and hammers ringing against anvils provide a background noise at all hours of the day and night.

Although the greatest manufacturing centers of Kayolin are found in the lower reaches of Garnet Thax, Rubicon also manufactures high-quality steel. The raw elements are smelted beneath the great capital, and much of the steel is transported as ingots to Rubicon for finishing into its final forms, or for sale to human merchants who take the ingots to their various realms for use.

A layer of soot seems to coat every level of this five-tiered city. Four great shafts serve as ventilation passages and also contain spiraling stairways and lifts that connect the various levels. At the top of each of these shafts are the quartz panels of a suntunnel, but accumulated layers of soot have rendered them mostly opaque. The most that can be seen is a dim glow on the ceiling, and that's when the sun is shining brightly above.

One section of Rubicon, extending through all five levels in the northernmost quarter of the city, shows signs of catastrophe. The stone faces of the buildings are twisted and the strong columns are bent and misshapen from the effects of a raging fire that swept through the city at the time of the Cataclysm. The blaze was triggered by a flow of lava erupting from below into what had once been a fifth stairshaft. Quickly, stockpiles of coal ignited, creating a roaring inferno that melted rock and scarred the cavern walls forever. This part of Rubicon is treated as a shrine to the dead, and no one has attempted to move in here or to rebuild.

Rubicon Warrens

These twisting caverns are not as big as the Auriculum Warrens, but are still a major source of food in the depths of Kayolin.

They receive a great deal of fresh water and many of the tunnels and passages are fully submerged. The farthest corners of the caves are only reachable by boat.

The Rubicon Warrens lack any source of natural heat, and consequently the air is cool. The mushroom fields are not as lush here as in Auriculum, but they are still productive sources of food grown in an almost completely lightless environment.

Crystal

Crystal is the center of mushroom trade in Kayolin, given its proximity to the two major food warrens in the realm. While human and gnome visitors are allowed here, they are not so common as in the other three cities of the Dualgates quadrant.

Crystal fills a series of vast caverns. Numerous multi-tiered structures supported by wide marble columns rise from the floors of these chambers. In the upper reaches of the city the columns are made of white quartz, and connect to one of several sun-tunnels leading to the surface. These quartz pillars glow like pale moonlight when the sun shines above, making Crystal one of the prettiest places in all Kayolin.

The effect is enhanced by the smooth marble floors that cover virtually every portion of the city, including the private dwellings. The marble is laid in a constantly varying pattern of mosaic and is polished to a gleaming sheen. Many different colors of the stone are used, giving each floor a uniquely dappled appearance.

Surface-dwellers who come this far into Kayolin are usually interested in purchasing certain types of rare fungus, many of which have unique properties. Some of these are listed here.

Healing Fungus: A bite of this mushroom will restore 1-6 hp of damage to a human or demi-human. It is a virulent poison to





humanoids and animals. The cost is 20 stl for one mushroom, which is four doses.

Delusional Fungus: This potent fungus causes paranoid hallucinations, so that whoever ingests it must make successful Wisdom checks in order to avoid attacking anyone who approaches or speaks to him for 1-10 turns. The cost is 40 stl.

Blinding Fungus: When dried and crushed, the dust of this mushroom can be hurled into the eyes, causing blindness for one to six days. The cost is 50 stl.

Poison Fungus: This is an extremely toxic fungus, yet it is tiny and tasteless. If ingested, the victim must successfully save vs. poison with a -6 penalty or die. If the fungus is smeared on a weapon, the penalty is -3. The effect is paralysis for 2-12 turns.

Spar

Many of the coin-minting operations in Kayolin are centered in Spar. Human traders who cross the mountain ridges to the west come to Spar seeking coinage for their home realms. In return, they bring many of the food delicacies that the Kayolin dwarves can get from no other sources.

Spar is covered by a single huge cavern overhead. Many stalactites spike downward from the curving ceiling. The sound of water trickling along the walls makes a constant musical background here, and three foaming waterfalls tumble about 50 feet from the east wall of the cavern. The air in here is damp and chill.

This city is made up of three levels, but the lowest level is more water than solid rock. Originally the cavern of Spar was a large underground lake, but in the early centuries of Kayolin this lake was drained. In several places rocky islands jut up from the water, while throughout the rest of its expanse the lake is not more than 10-20 feet deep.

Consequently, the dwarves built stone foundations on the islands, and piled up rock in the shallower portions of the lake, creating a city that was a maze of bridges, canals, lakes, and pools. As it expanded upward, sturdy marble pillars were used to support a second level and then a third level. Bridges span the gaps between these levels, and in many places balconies overlook large, tile-rimmed reflecting pools.

The upper levels include slightly more floor space than the lowest, but there are still large gaps where one can see all the way from the water's surface to the ceiling.

Several suntunnels give light through the overhead ceiling, and during the day this illumination even filters down to the lowest levels of the city. Because so much of the city rests upon these supporting pillars, it has been constructed with a great deal of wood, particularly on the upper levels. This was done to keep the weight of the structures under control.

Many cable-drawn boats ply the canals of Spar. These boats are based on the craft of Thorbardin that are used on the Urkhan Sea, though in Spar the boats are much smaller and more nimble, so that they can negotiate the sometimes narrow passageways.

Two parallel roadways connect Spar to the Westgate. The roads are flanked by stone walls on the outer side, but between them there is no barrier except the sluggishly-flowing Gem River. Barges and other watercraft ply their way back and forth from the gate along this waterway, which is used more frequently than either of the roads.

The city center occupies the largest island, which is near the middle of the lake. This island consists of a wide, flat square crossed by two canals, open all the way to the cavern ceiling. The four sides of the center plaza are faced by the facades of four great minting factories.



The mints are known as the Houses of Gold, Silver, Platinum, and Steel. Approximately half of the coinage minted in Kayolin comes from Spar, and most of it is traded out of the Westgate.

House of Gold: These gold pieces are emblazoned with the head of a gold dragon on one side and the three waterfalls of Spar on the other.

House of Silver: One side of the silver piece shows a seven-pointed star, representing the seven clans of dwarfdom. The other is an image of moonlight over shimmering water.

House of Platinum: The wizened face of Paladine in dragon form smiles benignly on one side of these coins. The reverse shows the outline of his constellation in a pattern of tiny stars.

House of Steel: The imagined likeness of Chisel Loremaster, historian of the dwarves, is stamped on the front of the steel piece. The reverse shows an image of a tree leaf, indicating what decade the coin was minted.

KAYOLIN'S DELVINGS

The mines of Kayolin have produced a phenomenal quantity of all sorts of ores and stones over a period of more than 13 centuries. While some of the veins have been exhausted, others are constantly being uncovered and exploited.

Kayolin miners typically work 10- to 12-hour shifts. The mines are shut down and are relatively abandoned for the other hours of the day. During the War of the Lance these hours were expanded to 24-hour operation, but now that the crisis is over the dwarves have gone back to their normal schedule.

The areas on the map of Kayolin indicate where the delvings are located. It would be impossible to map out every mineshaft and





probing tunnel along this vast and complex network. Each of these areas includes at least 1,000 feet of vertical elevation change, and some of them plunge as much as 5,000 feet from the upper to the lower reaches.

There are certain similarities that can be drawn regarding all of the delving operations. The dwarves use mechanical lifts instead of stairways when vertical distance needs to be negotiated. Most of the delvings start at the nearest city level and descend from there. The lift mechanisms for all the delvings are located on the city level, which is at the top of the shaft in most cases.

Where the miners are seeking gemstones or metal ores, small carts with sturdy iron wheels roll along tracks that have been grooved in the stone floors by large amounts of ore having been moved along the horizontal passages for centuries. In those places where marble is quarried, the carts are much larger, and the tunnels are correspondingly wider.

Each of the delvings focuses on one of the nearby dwarven cities. The workers will usually live in that city, and the products of the mine are typically taken back to that same community for processing and finishing. In some cases, the delvings are connected to the city by long, wide tunnels, along which the appropriate-sized cart tracks run. In other cases, the ore or stone is transported to the city via barges that follow the course of one of the underground rivers so common throughout Kayolin.

Smelting or cutting plants are at the junctures of the delvings to the passages leading toward the nearby city. Here many dwarves work to trim as much of the excess material from the products of the mines as possible. Ore is separated into grades and as much useless rock as possible is chipped away in a quick treatment. The remaining product is piled into the carts and shipped back to the city for smelting, forging, and casting.

At the marble quarries, the stone is cut into blocks using huge, diamond-bladed, water-cooled saws. The blocks are then loaded onto carts or barges for transport to the city.

The specific delvings of Kayolin include:

Dhaxam: This was the first gem and ore mine of Kayolin. It connects to the city of Spar via a straight tunnel three miles long. It is now abandoned, having yielded its last ore around 300 PC.

The tunnels and shafts of Dhaxam are rumored to be haunted. At one time it was a primary source of garnets and diamonds, and its lower levels led to the first discoveries of marble in the realm. Very few dwarves visit here any more, because the stories of the hauntings have too many realistic-sounding tales of young lovers and others who wandered away for a walk and were never heard from again.

The stories result from a very real threat. Beginning immediately after the Cataclysm, an expanding hive of the horax reached the lower levels of this mine. The horrible insectoids wander around in here, and quickly devour anyone who passes far into the mines. The horax are fully described in the *DRAGONLANCE® Monstrous Compendium® Appendix*.

Horax: AC 3; MV 15; HD 4; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 2d8; SA -1 initiative, crush

Thrax Delving: The Thrax mines were the first major marble quarries of Kayolin. Located about five miles from Spar, they were worked until the Cataclysm. The convulsions of that dire event caused a breach in the lower walls, and now the bottom part of the delvings are flooded. The dwarves might be able to drain them, but there are enough other sources of marble in Kayolin that so far, it hasn't seemed worth the trouble.

Allek Delving: This is an active network of mines, primarily yielding gold, tin, nickel and silver on the upper levels, with several



productive finds of gems in the middle realm, and a vast supply of high quality marble in the bottom. Most of the products from the mine are taken along the short (one-mile) tunnel to Garnet Thax. The precious metals are loaded on barges and shipped downstream to Spar, where they are used in the mints to make coins.

Quarth Delving: A very old mine, the Quarth Delving once produced marble and quartz for the building of Garnet Thax. It has since been abandoned (about 100 PC), after a series of surprising cave-ins cost the lives of numerous miners.

A tunnel about five miles long connects this delving to Garnet Thax. Another road once ran along the side of the Silvershield River all the way to Geale, but erosion has worn most of that passage into rubble.

Actually, the Quarth Delving was the first place the dwarves tapped into the great hive of the horax. The insectoid monsters devoured all of the miners who were part of the discovering party, and have since burrowed through the passages, closing them off with cave-ins and then slaying the trapped dwarves at their leisure. Following the rash of fatal accidents here, the dwarves seem content to leave this delving alone. Consequently, they have not yet discovered the nature of this threat.

Phanx Delving: These mines are known as the Steelmothers, since they have produced the highest concentrations yet discovered of iron ore, nickel, antimony, and copper. Several large docks connect the mine tunnels to the Silvershield River, and from here the ore is shipped upstream to Garnet Thax about 10 miles away. The mines can only be reached by water. There is no connecting tunnel or road leading to either Garnet Thax or the nearer city of Geale.

Cerial Delving: Like the Phanx Delvings, the Cerial Delvings can only be reached by

water. These are very active mines, and currently produce a variety of gems, including diamonds, emeralds, sunstones, and garnets. The lower levels of these delvings produce great quantities of a slightly inferior grade of marble.

Zhaban Delving: This is a network of long, narrow tunnels, delved specifically to follow veins of precious metals. Gold and silver have been mined here in great quantity. The metal-bearing ore is loaded onto barges that ride the Fireflow River all the way to Garnet Thax, a journey of about five miles.

Haxx Delving: These mines are very actively worked. They produce the finest quality marble of anywhere in Kayolin, as well as offering limited amounts of low-quality diamonds. The marble is carried by barge to Garnet Thax (a 10-mile journey) while the gems are carted out through tunnels that lead eventually to the cities of Crystal and Facet.

Hydraas Mines: This is another depleted delving. Once it provided huge quantities of marble that was used in the building of Garnet Thax and Crystal. Now the tunnels are silent and dark and the miners have gone to more profitable finds elsewhere in Kayolin. The central passages of the Hydraas mine have been widened into a major highway that connects the cities of Dualgate to Garnet Thax.

Dorax Delving: At one time these mines were a great source of metal ores, particularly the iron and other materials needed to make steel. Quantities of ores here were somewhat limited, however, and by several centuries before the Cataclysm, far more profitable finds had been made elsewhere. Now the mines are abandoned by the dwarves.

The horax are another matter, however. They have tunneled their way into the lower levels of these delvings, and now a great



colony of them breeds here, creating massive stockpiles of eggs that, when hatched, will release a voracious horde upon Kayolin.

Upper Dhaxalder Delving: This active mine produces primarily iron ore, which is shipped to Garnet Thax along the upper tributary of the Gem River.

Lower Dhaxalder Delving: This quarry is also very active. It has tapped into a huge expanse of marble, and quarrying activities remove much of the stone in great slabs. It is carted along a network of tunnels into the Dualgate cities, where much of it is sold for export to human realms.

Crystal Delving: More gems have come from this extensive delving than from any other mining operation in Kayolin. The gems are shipped from a terminus about one mile from the gates of Crystal City. Many of the rough stones are cut and finished in Crystal City, although most are carted to Facet. Rubies, emeralds, garnets, and a variety of jades have all been pulled from the deep and extensive tunnel systems here.

Quarder Delving: This is the newest of Kayolin's mining operations, and shows promise of yielding an incredible fortune in gems. The potential of the mines has barely been tapped. They occupy merely a single level of stonework right now, though the delvemaster has initially approved attempts that will begin to dig into the upper reaches of rock.

A unique situation blocks expansion of this system to the east. A large quantity of water runs along a faultline. Its extensive drainage eventually becomes the Fireflow River. Some of the tunnels have emerged into this faultline, which has led to limited flooding of the mines before the holes could be plugged. Now waterseals of mortared stone are in place, and further digging in the direction of the fault has been banned.

AQUEOUS WARREN

This great food-growing cavern is located on the west side of Garnet Thax. While not so extensive as either of the Dualgate warrens, it provides a great deal of the food consumed in the great capital city.

GARNET THAX, JEWEL IN KAYOLIN'S CROWN

This sprawling metropolis is one of the wonders of Krynn. Within its multiple tiers of balconies and buildings it holds more than half of the population of Kayolin. Also here is a royal palace, the Governor's Atrium, which is the largest Aghar community in all Ansalon. It is a solid-walled fortress with enough food and weapons to weather a major siege.

Although no portion of Garnet Thax connects to the outside world through a recognizable gate, there are several secret passages allowing dwarves such as the governor and his official advisers access to the surface without being detected.

Some 20,000 citizens of Kayolin live here, and work either in the city or in one of the surrounding mines. Six great wings extend away from the mass of the city center, creating a metropolis 12 miles across at its widest, making it larger than the largest single city of Thorbardin.

The Governor's Atrium

The center of Garnet Thax is a deep hole in the bedrock of the mountains, plunging to an unimaginable depth into the ground below. Rumors suggest that it is bottomless, and there is no evidence to support any other contention. For a long while it served as the dumping ground for the tailings removed from dwarven delvings, from both the construction of Garnet Thax and the nearby mines.

Several suntunnels spill light into the top of this great shaft when the sun is out. This illuminates the upper levels of the city quite well, and even into the lower balconies of the atrium one finds a fair amount of light filtering down in the areas closest to the atrium.

The atrium averages nearly half a mile across near the summit of the city levels, though it grows progressively smaller as one descends into the city's lower reaches. At the bottom level, the atrium is barely 100 feet across. In all, there are 18 city levels, all emerging onto balconies overlooking this immense shaft.

Each of the atrium openings is hexagonal. The balconies of each level extend about 50 feet farther outward than the balconies of the floor above. Thus, an object dropped from a balcony will typically only fall about 100 feet, which is the average distance to the level below. Only at the very bottom level can one lean off the edge of the balcony and stare downward into a sweeping infinity of darkness.

Several exploratory attempts have been made to find out about the true nature of the hole's depths. Courageous dwarves have been lowered by cable and line for as much as two miles. Not all of them returned.

Those who did report increased warmth in the depths of the pit, and occasional signs of fire flickering far, far below. Those dwarves who have been lost often vanish without a trace. When the lines and cables are hauled in, those who operate the winches above find that they are pulling up nothing more than the frayed ends of the line.

The danger in the pit is the slowly awakening colony of the horax.

Governor's Palace

The upper level of Garnet Thax is devoted exclusively to the residence and formal

chambers of Erann Flowstone, royal governor of Kayolin. It is a network of buildings, streets, walls, barracks, and arsenals that actually serves as the dwelling place of more than 500 dwarves.

The palace is roughly hexagonal in shape, and its inner dimensions are determined by the width of the Governor's Atrium. Most of the buildings are shells of walls, with doors and windows but no roofs. Instead, they are open to the domed ceiling of the cavern which rises from the edges to peak in the center of the atrium, some 100 feet above the floor level of the palace.

The outer rim of the palace structures have been delved into rock, however, so these chambers are solidly surrounded by walls and ceilings. Every surface of stone throughout the palace is highly polished marble. The color and specific type of the stone varies so much that every type of marble delved in Kayolin is represented somewhere.

Six wings form the basic parts of this grand structure. Each of these fans out from the central atrium, and is divided from the neighboring wings by long, statue-lined avenues.

The northernmost of these wings is devoted to the Governor's Hall, which is a wide area surrounded by towering marble columns, and centered before a great throne of black stone. The hall is used for receptions, formal ceremonies, judgments, debates, and discussions among the ruling dwarves and their subjects.

Moving clockwise around the hexagon, the next wing is devoted to the royal apartments, where the governor's family and his servants live. These are further divided into many spacious buildings in which flowing water trickles through numerous reflective pools and shallow streams.

Next to the royal apartments is a wing devoted to the governor's honor guard of 60





veteran dwarven warriors (F4). They have been selected by merit, having proven their courage and skill during actual battle, and all are sworn to defend the governor to the limit of their lives.

These fellows live here in fine style. Each warrior and his family have a spacious apartment. Some of the wing is devoted to deluxe training rooms, and in the center of the area is an arsenal containing some of the finest weapons anywhere in Ansalon. These include numerous axes, swords, crossbows, and hammers, with enchantment equivalents from +1 to (rarely) +3. Similarly potent armor of chain and plate mail (dwarf-sized, naturally) and shields are also common. The arsenal contains enough equipment to outfit the 60 honor guards, plus another company of 200 warriors.

The fourth wing stands opposite the Governor's Hall. It contains the royal treasuries, which consist of an immense fortune (tens of millions of steel pieces in total) in all sorts of the valuable products of Kayolin. These include all sorts of coins, as well as numerous works of spectacular jewelry, statuary, and pure gemstones.

This wing also holds the barracks of the royal garrison. These are troops who are not as proficient as the honor guards, but are still fanatically committed to their governor's safety. The companies include four groups of 100 warriors (F2) each. Unlike the honor guards, these troops are quartered in communal barracks, and don't have the privilege of keeping their spouses and families here with them.

The fifth wing is another garrison wing, containing royal guards of the second echelon. They too, are loyal and courageous warriors (F3) who have proven themselves, even if they're not quite so capable as their comrades across the atrium.

The sixth wing is devoted to guest quarters for dwarves who visit from other realms,

as well as noteworthy citizens of the outer cities of Kayolin, many of whom visit Garnet Thax with the important business of their home cities.

Noble Quarters

The second level of Garnet Thax is devoted to the homes of the various ranking officials of Kayolin. These homes are less palatial than the royal apartments, but are still splendid in their own right. Marble is the predominant building material and lines the walls and floors. It is also used to create numerous statues and columns that distinguish the various residences according to their owners' vanity.

The most coveted apartments here are the large estates fronting onto the balconies of the Governor's Atrium. There are 18 of these, three on each of the atrium's six sides. The occupants of these include the four praetors who are the governor's chief assistants, as well as the commanders of his three military brigades, the delvemaster of Kayolin, the respective clan chieftains of the Hylar and Daewar, the chief wardens of water, gems, and metal, and several prominent merchants whose families have established their fortunes over many generations.

Midlevels

Most of Garnet Thax is a mixture of residential quarters and small manufactories and shops. The social gathering places such as inns and commons are situated around the balconies that surround the Great Atrium, while the workshops and forges occupy the quarters farther back in the depths.

Aghar Haven

In an act of generosity unique among the dwarves of Krynn, the leaders of Kayolin have given over an entire level of Garnet

Thax to the dwellings and lairs of the realm's population of gully dwarves, not that any Hylar or Daewar would *want* to be a neighbor of these dirt-encrusted runts.

The Aghar level is below the midlevels, and is a mess of refuse and gully dwarf treasure. (Refuse and treasure are indistinguishable to any non-Aghar.) Gully dwarves scurry about as if they had something important to do, though most of the activity is centered around finding out what the other gully dwarves are doing. This has created a self-continuing cycle of activity that serves to keep the Aghar occupied with themselves. Aside from occasional forays to steal food and treasure, most of the gully dwarves are worn out just from maintaining this busy schedule.

Highbulp Prestingisticus is the master of this level. He is an enormously fat Aghar who sits on a great throne that has been made from an ogre's discarded battle helm. From here he issues orders to his followers, mostly directing them to investigate the activities of other Aghar, who in turn have been ordered to spy upon the first group.

Deeplevels

The lower levels of Garnet Thax contain the great smelters and foundries of the dwarven city. Lacking a source of volcanic heat, they are fired by coal-fueled forges, with the smoke vented outward through chimneys that carry it away from the population centers above. The heat produced in these levels is intense, and serves to warm the air in the atrium and the rest of the city.

Den of the Horax

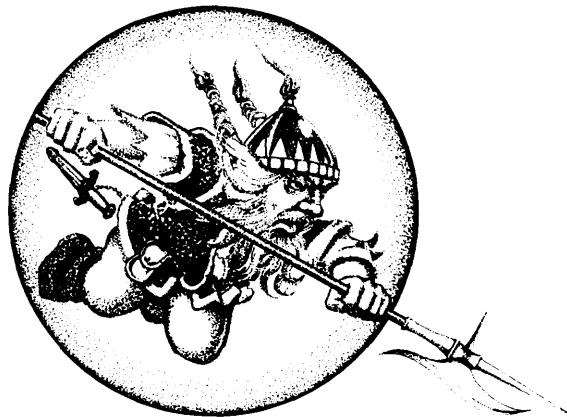
Lurking in the depths of the Garnet Mountains is a slowly evolving horror that is not yet suspected by the folk of Kayolin. These insectoid/reptilian horrors called horax have

been growing in number over the past centuries, and have already wreaked havoc on several dwarven operations.

Unfortunately for the dwarves, in every instance of horax depredation so far, there have been no dwarven survivors to report the threat. Whether these armor-plated insects have barged into the lower levels of a mining operation, or attacked the dwarves attempting to explore the bottomless pit of the Governor's Atrium, they have slain every dwarf unfortunate enough to encounter them.

Soon, their teeming numbers will outgrow the confines of the hive. Thousands of eggs have been laid in the great egg chamber. For long years they have been suspended in a kind of stasis, as if awaiting a communal sense of when they should emerge.

Horax: AC 3; MV 15; HD 4; #AT 1; Dmg 2d8; SA -1 initiative, crush; THAC0 17; XP 270, young 15



ZHAKAR

0 - Present

HOME OF THE CURSED ONES

The realm of Zhakar is notable for being the most recent dwarven state to arise. It is a mere ripple in the River of Time when one considers the long and colorful history of these people on Krynn. This is only the beginning of the uniqueness of Zhakar.

The Zhakar dwell in some of the ruins of pre-Cataclysmic Thoradin, and they trace their ancestors to the Theiwar clans of that kingdom. But the race has been corrupted almost beyond recognition by disaster, poverty, and disease. Their city is in some ways a ruin, in some ways a thriving metropolis both above and below the surface of the ground. In other ways it is nothing less than a nightmare.

Their realm lies amid the most forbidding terrain upon all of Ansalon. The highest mountains on the continent surround them, and many of these peaks are dangerously live volcanoes.

THE ZHAKAR DWARVES

Based on appearances, the Zhakar are easily the most repulsive dwarves on Krynn. They are also the meanest, nastiest, quickest to anger, and most willing to kill. They distrust members of almost every other race, and display particular disdain for other types of dwarves.

They have been known to cooperate with ogres over a short term period, when both groups have a similar objective. The Zhakar also maintain limited trade with the humans

of Sanction, reserving their dealings for the most unsavory and low-principled merchants in that city of chaos and evil.

Zhakar are short in stature, no bigger than gnomes on the average. Their skin is corpse-white and their eyes roll like translucent balls of ivory in their sockets, so that an observer can't tell which way a Zhakar is looking. When they grow hair, it is stark white or dirty gray, but their racial disease makes them prone to mange and eventual baldness. Elder Zhakar tend to lose their hair (including beards) in patches, leaving gaps of red, wounded flesh.

Because of the mold plague's (see "The Plague of Zhakar") effects on their eyes, Zhakar have superior infravision (up to 90'). They are hampered in daylight, however, suffering a -2 penalty to all attacks under anything brighter than a heavy overcast.

Like other dwarves, the Zhakar are ferocious fighters. They do not fight in regular formations, preferring berserker-type attacks, harassing fire from ambush or height, and quick feint and maneuver through the mountains that they know so well.

Zhakar savants of 4th level or higher possess the innate abilities to *cause blindness* and *deafness* to a range of 50'. Savants can use these powers three times a day and they commonly employ them in combat at the start of a battle.

Relentlessly territorial, the Zhakar routinely kill anyone who trespasses into their realm and gets caught. Occasionally a prisoner worth ransom will be held for a long time. Only once in the history of the realm have Zhakar dwarves fought beyond the borders of their realm. They were recruited into the service of the Dark Queen during the



War of the Lance, a campaign that proved to be an unmitigated disaster.

All of their trading activity occurs outside of Zhakar, primarily in Sanction, though the villages of Saltcove and Fangrock are also visited by Zhakar merchants. Because of the hideous appearance of most Zhakar, they tend to keep themselves veiled in porous black cloth when they leave their realm.

Despite their disfigurement and bitterness, the Zhakar are skilled at most tasks that dwarves do well. They are not great builders, but their weapons and armor are on a par with the best. Surprisingly, the Zhakar have also produced many fine poets.

The Zhakar are also unique among dwarves in that they disdain potent drink. They prefer instead a watery tea made from a refined fungus powder, a drink that is poisonous to any non-dwarf who samples a sip. Those who partake must successfully save vs. poison at +2, or collapse with 1-6 hours of gagging sickness.

THE PLAGUE OF ZHAKAR

In the wake of the Cataclysm, poisonous volcanic gases seeped into the lower food warrens, mingling with flood waters and the ruins of several great smelting centers. From this festering mess was born a deadly mold that swept through the surviving dwarves, proving fatal in more than 90% of the cases.

The plague's symptoms are hideous and obvious. The afflicted one's eyes grow milky and terribly sensitive to light: thus the improved infravision and daylight combat penalties. Patches of fungus appear on the lips and other exposed skin. The fungus alternates over time with periods of blistering or scabbing flesh.

The current Zhakar do not die from the plague, but they are all afflicted by the time they're 20 years old, and often much earlier. There are no known cures, though the

Zhakar who spend a lot of time in Sanction are not so badly afflicted as the rest of the population. A *cure disease* spell will remove the disease, but will not prevent the character from becoming re-infected if he is exposed.

For each year spent away from Zhakar, 10% of the character's skin will return to normal. The effects on the eyes and the hair loss that has already occurred are not reversible.

The plague cannot be given to another character by a suffering dwarf. Visitors to Zhakar do stand a chance of acquiring the disease from the mold, regardless of the visitor's race.

The chance of getting the mold plague is 1% after a week spent in Zhakar, 2% after two weeks, and so on up to 10 weeks. After 10 weeks the character has a 10% chance (non-cumulative) each additional week of becoming infected by this horrid and disfiguring affliction.

The first effects of the plague appear within one day of infection. The sufferer's skin will be completely covered by the mold within 2-200 days.

THE LANDS OF ZHAKAR

Thoradin, and Thorin before it, was a mountain kingdom, nestled in the heart of the Khalkist Mountains. For 1,000 years both of these realms were accessible by passes, valleys, and roads that connected them to lands east and west of the mountains. Though Zhakar stands in the same site, the same cannot be said of its accessibility.

The reason is the Cataclysm. As the nation of Istar was crushed into a sea basin, the Khalkist Mountains convulsed with volcanic activity. New mountains spewed and churned upward, rivers vanished into the ground, and gentle ridges were sheared away into jagged cliffs and precipitous





gorges. Finally, the gap of the Newsea roared into the land, carving away much of the land to the west of Thoradin.

As a consequence, Zhakar is a very difficult realm to reach. For centuries its existence was not generally known, and even in the present Zhakar is merely a rumored place to most people beyond the immediate region of Sanction and Khur.

RIVERS

Zhakar stands above the gorge of the Stonecrusher River, which flows all the way to the Newsea. In the course of a 60-mile run, the river drops more than 12,000 feet, resulting in a tumbling series of waterfalls and rapids. It is a narrow stream and no more than three to five feet deep, but so rapid that fording it is a deadly undertaking.

Directly before Zhakar the river widens into a grassy valley. Here it is deep and slow before it is again channeled into its narrow gorge to resume the plunge to the sea.

A tributary called the Spillway joins the Stonecrusher about 20 miles from Newsea. This stream is even narrower than the Stonecrusher, and follows a deep and twisting gorge downward from the crest of the Khalkists.

Both rivers are excellent sources of food, particularly salmon and trout. Crossing is possible only where bridges are shown on the map, unless one wants to take his life in his hands.

MOUNTAINS

To the south and east of the kingdom soar towering pinnacles of jagged rock connected by knife-edged ridges and separated by yawning chasms. The highest peaks reach 15,000 feet above sea level, while the valleys between these mountains are no higher than 3,000 feet above sea level.

These ranges have proved an effective barrier between Zhakar and Khur to the east, and Sylvanesti to the south.

One seldom-used pass does carry a tortuous footpath northeastward, I in king eventually to Khur. The pass crosses at the headwaters of the Stonecrusher River, and entails a climb of 6,000 feet from the valley floor. This is Stonecrusher Gap, a narrow defile that skirts the middle slopes of a smoking, smoldering volcano prone to frequent eruption. The mountain is commonly known as Mount Horn.

This pass is always guarded by a party of 12 Zhakar. The dwarves remain hidden in shadowed niches along the narrow pass, and will attempt to capture any trespassers into the realm. If it is a large party, the warriors delay any intruders while several messengers carry word back to the city. Once every decade or so the guardpost is destroyed by a volcanic burst. The Zhakar patiently rebuild the trail and assign a fresh company of warriors to the duty.

The ogre realm of Bloten lies to the southwest of Zhakar, also separated by high mountains. Several pathways lead to a low, sheltered valley where the village of Fangrock provides a place for these two peoples to meet.

The Ghost Range is a steep and narrow crest between the river valleys of the Stonecrusher and Spillway. This ridge looks like the serrated edge of a saw blade, with many sharp, conical peaks jutting upward in a forbidding row. The peaks are reputed to be the lairs of many dangerous spirits who drive intruders mad before the lucky ones are allowed to leave.

North of the Spillway sprawls a tangled mass of impenetrable mountains, unequaled anywhere on Ansalon for sheer vertical terrain. Griffins live among the high peaks, while mountain goats struggle to survive on the steep and snowy slopes and vales. Some



of these heights are active volcanoes, and lava flows, ash eruptions, and wafts of noxious gases are all common here.

Game animals live in these mountains: mountain goats, sheep, bears, marmots and other rodents, soaring birds of prey, vultures, and nimble mountain deer. Sojourners have little trouble finding enough to eat.

Also common in the mountains are draconian patrols. The creatures are often deserters from the dragonarmies, although sometimes the Highlord in Sanction sends out formal patrols, especially in the near vicinity of his city. All types of patrols are conceivable, though only the sivaks will be encountered in truly precipitous locations.

Draconian Patrols

- 1. seven baaz
- 2. four kapaks and six baaz
- 3. five sivaks
- 4. two auraks and five kapaks

SALT COVE

This shallow bay on the shore of the Newsea is a den of pirates and, in recent years, a thriving community of draconian deserters and mercenaries. Wharves of hardened basalt jut into the harbor where brackish water is protected in a deep, narrow cove. A curving arm of rock, formed by a flow of living lava, protects the little bay from the storms of the Newsea.

The waterfront is a maze of shanties and stone huts, offering a selection of taverns, inns, drinking establishments, bars, and saloons to the weary seafarer. Fights are common and murder is only avenged if the deceased has large-sized friends. These establishments also offer the vile tea favored as a beverage by the Zhakar.

The population of Saltcove is about half humans. They are a disreputable lot, to the man. The other half of the population is a

mix of Zhakar dwarves, ogres, and baaz and kapak draconians. Hill giants and the more powerful draconian types might also be present, though not as common.

There will be as many as five ships in the harbor at any one time. Though the waters here are not bad for fishing, most of the activity is directed toward piracy.

The town is surrounded by a low stone wall with four towers at the corners. A tumble of rocks has been placed above the harbor mouth, held back by steel cables. If enemy ships are sighted, these rocks can be released to plunge downward and seal off the harbor from outside intrusion.

Most any type of goods is available in Saltcove, though prices will average double the Ansalon norm. Thieves are common, and various gangs control different quarters of this smelly, violent town. They commonly charge a toll for anyone who wishes to do business there.

FANGROCK

This is a village of ogres lying on the fringes of the Bloten realm. By mutual agreement with Zhakar, dwarves and ogres meet here and cautiously exchange trade goods.

A series of stone caves hewn into the base of a box canyon form most of the structures here, although the muddy pool in the center of the canyon is also surrounded by wooden shacks.

Ogres and dwarves are the most common folk here, though draconians and humans are tolerated. The ogres primarily bring goods such as lumber, grain, and herd animals to offer in trade for coins, or metal objects manufactured by the Zhakar.

ICEHOME

Icehome is nestled amid the glaciers that mark the southern faces of these high moun-



tains. It is a village of the yeti-kin called the saqualaminoi. They live in a series of ice-caves that have been hollowed out of the sheer faces of the glaciers. In about 12 caves there are 20 bulls and an equal number of females. There are few young, since most of the children were carted off as slaves during the War of the Lance. The offspring who do live here are very young, having been born since the war.

The village is not known to either the Zhakar or the ogres, though both folk know that the yeti-kin live somewhere in these looming heights. Still, the saqualaminoi keep to themselves as much as possible, and survive primarily by taking game. When storms howl through the winter months, however, the bulls will sometimes venture into lower realms in search of food or other treasures.

The chieftain of the tribe is a hulking brute named Frostbeard. He loathes dragons and draconians, since he associates them with the theft of the village young. He has come to associate the ogres and the Zhakar with his enemies.

MOUNT HORN

Mount Horn is a towering volcano with a narrow caldera containing a pool of bubbling lava. Many vents exist on the slopes of the mountain, and these are prone to exploding outward with a blast of steam or ash. They can easily inflict 6d6 points of heat damage on anyone caught in the blast area, which can be anywhere within 100 feet of the vent.

Mount Horn had a different name to the dwarves of Khalkist. They knew it as Mount Thorin. Deep wells of magma were released by the Cataclysm, destroying most of the ancient dwarven delvings within this towering peak. The mountain is taller than it was, and its shape has been distorted so much by

geological forces that it is not even recognizable as its former self.

Some of the dwarven tunnels are still intact within it. Remnants of the crystal sun-tunnels can still be found across the mountain's high shoulders, and only the DM knows what rare treasures and exotic artifacts might be found by an intrepid team of explorers.

The Stonecrusher Gap is a narrow trail circling around the northern slope of the mountain, connecting the western valley to a more gentle vale leading to the human realm of Khur. High cliffs plunge 1,000 feet or more down the northern face, away from the path, while cliffs that are not so steep slope away above, toward the summit of the mountain.

Twelve Zhakar dwarves have permanent guard duty at the midpoint of this trail. They watch the path from concealed niches above it, and will not hesitate to dump rocks or missile fire on anyone who is not a Zhakar dwarf.

FIRST BRIDGE

This span of stone is made of light, precisely-carved blocks of basalt. It arches over a 150-foot length, crossing the Stonecrusher River just before the water forms the wide channel below Zhakar. The gorge is relatively shallow here, with the water level barely 100 feet below the bridge.

The roadway of the bridge is 12 feet wide, and flanked by low, one-foot-high walls of stone. It has been carefully constructed with several crucial supporting stones on the side closest to Zhakar. In an emergency, a skilled dwarven stonemason can knock one of these stones out in 3-18 rounds. If the stone is knocked out, the bridge collapses.

Directly upstream, the gorge walls rise to nearly 500 feet above the waterway below. From the outlet of the lake until the juncture



with the Spillway, the gorge is almost 1,000 feet deep.

GHOST RANGE

This spine of mountainous summits is dangerous for far more than the challenge of its precipitous terrain, formidable though that may be. The entire ridgeline of the range between the two river valleys is haunted by spectral minions, remnants of pre-Cataclysmic dwarves. The Zhakar avoid these heights at all costs. They consider the mountains an impervious barrier to intrusion from the north.

Several trails traverse the range. They are generally wide and smooth, though often they pass along sheer cliffs, with long drops to one side and steep precipices looming above.

One mountain of the range is slightly unusual. It is a towering dagger of stone, and along its lower slopes are reddish patches of rock, where iron ore has eroded into rust.

The spectral minions are remnants of dwarven bands that went out into the world in the days immediately preceding the Cataclysm, seeking some sign of the disaster they sensed was about to overtake them. When the wrath of the gods descended upon Krynn, they were trapped and killed in the convulsion, condemned to pursue their tasks until they can be freed.

Spectral minions of many different types roam here. Berserkers, searchers, revelers, and warriors can be found throughout the length of the range, and any of them might be encountered in any given location. Guardians and philosophers are only





encountered in specific locations.

Spectral minions are fully described in the *DRAGONLANCE® Monstrous Compendium® Appendix*.

Berserkers: These are warriors who were once members of the Theiwar and Daergar tribes. They roam in war parties of 7-12 individuals and howlingly attack anyone they encounter in the mountains.

Searchers: These minions travel in groups of three, still seeking the hated one who brought the Cataclysm upon the land. All they know is that the hated one is human. Consequently, they will fanatically attack any human they encounter. They ignore other mortals, unless those others try to fight on behalf of a human.

Revelers: These minions gather around spectral campfires and only appear at night. They drink and sing bawdy marching songs and cheerfully invite anyone they see to join them. If the mortals refuse the invitation, the revelers ignore them. If they accept, the characters suffer a *charmed* sleep during which the character's spirit joins the revelry.

Any character who successfully resists the enchantment of the revelers will learn that the reveler commanders have gone to the top of the red mountain, and the revelers await their orders before they do anything else.

Warriors: Crazed by fear at the time of the Cataclysm, some of the dwarven guards turned against each other. Hylar and Daewar joined ranks to battle Daergar and Theiwar. An intruder may encounter a group of these warriors still exchanging blows in the eternal torment of their curse.

There are 12 warriors on each of the two sides in any given skirmish, always holding their own in an eternal stalemate. Characters who join the battle to help one side or the other prevail gain the alliance of the side they helped for the duration of their time in

the Ghost Range. The spectral allies will help the characters fight other spectral minions, but only if the PCs show great bravery.

Guardians: These minions stand at the crests of each pass that crosses the mountains of the Ghost Range. They allow non-Zhakar dwarves to pass, but any other characters are blocked, by force if necessary. There are six guardians at each pass.

A band of 10 guardians stands at the base of a trail that winds up the tall peak with the shoulders of rusty, reddish stone. This is the "red mountain" referred to by the revelers. These guardians attempt to stop anyone who tries to climb the peak, explaining that their captains need to be left alone because they're holding an important council. The minions fight if the intruders keep climbing.

Philosophers: These are the four captains of the dwarven companies. They sit in a circle atop the highest peak of the Ghost Range and debate the next course of action. The debate has been going on since the Cataclysm. They do not fight except in self-defense.

The two sides of the argument are well-defined. The Theiwar and Daergar captains want to lead a raid against Istar, to punish the humans for the injustices they worked against Thoradin. The Hylar and Daewar captains think that they should remain here on guard duty to watch against another Istarian invasion into the heights.

The debate will rage on until someone informs these minions that Istar no longer exists, or that it exists at the bottom of a sea. Once they have been told this, the (mortal) speaker must make a Charisma check to see if he tells the tale convincingly. Each member of an intruding party can try to be believed.

If at least one Charisma check is successful, the captain-minions march down from the mountain, gather up their troops from the length of the range, and vanish into

spectral tunnels that close up behind them. The Ghost Range will no longer be haunted.

GHOST TUNNEL

Because of the obvious disadvantages of trying to cross a haunted mountain range, the Zhakar have excavated a tunnel running beneath the range. It connects the valleys of the Stonecrusher and Spillway Rivers, running fairly parallel to the two bridges over those streams.

The mouths of the tunnel are open cave mouths, but their access trails are well-concealed. An explorer would have to follow a narrow and winding canyon, and then know just the proper side channel to scramble up in order to find the entrance. Dwarves using the tunnel routinely brush away the tracks they leave in the trail.

The tunnel corridor is eight feet high and 12 feet wide, and about five miles long. It rises gently to its midpoint and then descends again. A shallow ditch, one foot wide, runs along the northeast wall of the corridor, carrying a shallow trickle of clear water.

Every 1,000 feet along the tunnel's length is a wayside station, which is a wide spot in the passage (50 feet by 50 feet), where benches have been chiseled into the walls and a deep pool collects the water that flows through the ditches. In the center of the tunnel, a thin stream of water flows out of the ceiling, dividing to flow in each direction down the tunnel.

SPILLWAY BRIDGE

This arched structure crosses the gorge over the Spillway River. It is similar to the First Bridge, except that the water level is nearly 500 feet below the level of the bridge. The span itself is 200 feet long.

Along both sides of the rim of the gorge, downstream of the bridge, are scattered the

rock tailings that were dragged from the mountains during the excavations of the Ghost Tunnel and the much longer Sanction Tunnel. The rock has been scattered amid the normal terrain of the mountains, and is generally not apparent unless one is looking for it.

However, characters with mining proficiency or secondary skill in that area may be allowed to make an Intelligence check if they cross the bridge or otherwise travel along the floor of this valley. Success means that they recognize these rock fields as being created.

SANCTION TUNNEL

This is the most ambitious building project of the Zhakar dwarves. Its existence is a carefully guarded secret. The tunnel was built during the years before the War of the Lance, when it became obvious to the dwarves that they would have a major market for their high-quality weapons and armor if they could get those products into the hands of the humans.

Since bringing human merchants into Zhakar was deemed unacceptable, the dwarves decided to make a trade route to Sanction. The rock that needed to be delved was a relatively soft basalt, and an approximate 25-mile length of mountain needed to be traversed. The project took less than four years to complete.

Unlike the Ghost Tunnel, the ends of the Sanction Tunnel are capped with large boulders to serve as secret doors. These boulders are mounted on carefully balanced hinges, so that a combined Strength of 29 is necessary to swing them out of the way. However, only two characters can bring their strength to bear at any one time.

The dimensions of the Sanction Tunnel are the same as the Ghost Tunnel, except that it has two crests (at seven and 18 miles





from the entrance) as well as a low place, 13 miles in, to serve as a sump for excess moisture and drainage. The very lowest part of the sump has a grate across the floor with an escape channel delved underneath. Water that flows down to here is drained away into the bowels of the Doom Range.

The north end of the tunnel is only one mile from the Sanction-Neraka highway, which was carved through the mountains by the minions of the Dark Queen. Dwarven merchants, taking care to avoid observation, bring their caravans onto the road at this point and then make the rest of the journey to Sanction safely.

DRAGONPEAK

A smoking crack in the summit of this towering mountain is visible for miles away. Within is a great cavern, connecting to passages leading into the very heart of the mountain. This is the lair of a huge, venerable red dragon named Feury, and his consorts and offspring.

Feury (venerable red dragon): AC -9; MV 9 (FI 30); HD 19; hp 142; #AT 3 + breath; Dmg 1-10/1-10/3-30, or 20d10+10; THAC0 -3; XP 18,000

Lyriss (adult red dragon): AC -5; MV 9 (FI 30); HD 15; hp 91; #AT 3 + breath; Dmg 1-10/1-10/3-30, or 12d10+6; THAC0 1; XP 11,000

Red Dragons (4 youths): AC -2; MV 9 (FI 30); HD 11; hp 46; #AT 3 + breath; Dmg 1-10/1-10/3-30, or 6d10+3; THAC0 10; XP 6,000

Feury and Lyriss are veterans of the War of the Lance. Both of them lost their riders at the Battle of Margaard Ford, and retired to the Doom Range rather than report to their mistress to be assigned new human masters. They do not make their presence

extremely obvious, but neither do they tolerate anyone in the vicinity of their mountain.

Their treasure, as might be imagined, is extensive. The trove is kept on a ledge high within the central shaft of the volcano. It can be reached only by flying creatures, or those willing to scale sheer cliff walls with a 1,000-foot fall into bubbling lava as the penalty for failure.

LAIR OF THE SHADOW PEOPLE

A tribe of these gentle and mysterious folk live in a series of caverns that riddle the coastline of the Doom Range. These tunnels are connected to the sump passages beneath the Sanction Tunnel, though the dwarves have no idea that this connection exists.

The caverns inhabited by this clan of the Shadowpeople remain from the western portions of pre-Cataclysmic Thoradin. The central chambers of the city of Thax-Tharken, though drastically damaged by the godswrack, still offer many connecting passages and some of the large, sweeping chambers of the city center.

These central chambers include the lairs of the Shadowpeople counselors. A large, circular chamber, with a domed ceiling that rises to more than 200 feet overhead, is the center of this network of rubble-choked pathways. Great pillars stand in three concentric rings around this chamber, though many of these have fallen and lie amid rubble that has tumbled from the ceiling. Enough of the columns remain in place to give the area a look resembling a shadowy forest of giant tree trunks.

This huge cavern was the central plaza of Thax-Tharken. In the center rises a high tower, and the top of this tower is the home of the Revered Ancient One, who is the spiritual center of the clan.

The passages and caverns around this



central plaza create a maze-like network of stone, with several yawning chasms bridged by crude plank structures, and other places where water or lava flows into deep, permanent pools.

The Shadowpeople strive to remain undiscovered. The clan moved here about a century after the Cataclysm, when no dwarves survived in these isolated caverns. The major points of entrance and exit all face the rocky coastline, where the angry waters of the Newsea have eroded the ancient cliffs. The creatures have one additional escape hole in the thick of a tangled mass of Khalkist peaks.

SANCTION

This forlorn city is torn by rivers of lava and inhabited by the riffraff of Ansalon. It is the former headquarters of the Dark Queen's emperor, the Highlord Ariakus, and is the major trading partner of Zhakar. Ships from all over the Newsea and beyond make the hazardous journey into Sanction's steaming port, and many a vessel leaves with a hold full of Zhakar steel.

The Zhakar maintain several permanent stalls in the teeming markets of Sanction. These ramshackle buildings are each under the supervision of a Barter Warden, who is a Zhakar savant of at least 7th level. He has a staff of 3-18 Zhakar warriors present to help him.

The most common goods found in these trading centers include swords of all types, axes, metal shafts, and spearheads, arrowheads, and blades for all types of weapons. The Zhakar also make fine shields and armor which, if not exceptionally fancy, are generally available at lower prices than those charged by the dwarves of Kayolin or Thorbardin.

OUTER WARRENS

Reminiscent of ancient Thorin, these fields are terraced down the north-facing slopes below the rocky promontory of Zhakar Keep. The dwarves grow wheat, potatoes, and carrots on these fields during the summer months.

Because the slopes are so low (perhaps 4,000 feet below the gates of the keep), they are unusually fertile. Warm winds flow up the river valley from the Newsea, bringing frequent rains and moist air. These are the most fertile fields in all the rock-tossed Khalkist Range.

ZHAKAR KEEP

The ruins of the keep sprawl across a hillside of shattered rock, commanding a view of the river valley and gorges below. It is set amid an encircling ring of towering peaks. After the Cataclysm this was merely an exposed ruin of caverns and tunnels. So much of the overhanging mountains tumbled away that some of the caverns were actually exposed to the sky.

The dwarves immediately set to work, building high stone walls around their ruin, roofing over the exposed sections of tunnel, and delving deeper into the stone heart of their mountain. Soon the area of Zhakar had been reinforced and expanded, until the majority of the city was concealed under the ground.

Now Zhakar Keep looks like a huge blockhouse of stone, with several squat towers placed at the corners, and steep slopes leading away from all of its walls. There is a single entrance formed by double gates of rusty iron in the north wall of the keep. There are other exits from the city complex, but these are all tunnels that lead to concealed entrances within a mile or two of the keep.



GATES, WALLS, AND TOWERS

The main gate of the keep is two four-inch thick plates of iron, covering an entrance eight feet high and 12 feet wide. The gates do not swing. Instead they slide from the sides, driven by a winch-and-gear mechanism. Each gate rests in a trough of stone that is one foot deep, and the top of each gate is inserted into a similar groove above. They are impervious to wooden and stone rams, and even a metal ram would be sorely tested against them.

The gates are opened and closed by only four operators. In the base of each of the two flanking towers is a control mechanism. The gates can be closed from either tower; however, it takes the operation of both mechanisms simultaneously to open the gates.

Blocks of granite form the outer and inner surfaces of the walls, centered around a barrier of iron reinforcing poles. The walls are only 12 feet high, but at the top they have an additional three feet of notched parapet running along their outer and inner surfaces. They are 12 feet thick at the base, and six feet thick at the top.

The entire keep rests on a foundation of bedrock, so there is no place where it can be easily tunneled into.

Five towers stand in various corners of the keep's outer wall. Each tower is 24 feet tall, with a parapet similar to those on the walls on top. Iron doors connect the towers to the walltop ramparts and the ground level inside the keep.

Arrow slits line the tower walls at 12 feet and 18 feet high. There are no interior levels in the tower, but a stairway spirals up the inside wall, and at the archers' post there are wooden platforms running around the full circumference of the wall.

Each tower has a large ballista or catapult mounted on its top. These weapons are

mounted on iron swivels, and each can pivot a full circle.

UPPER COURTYARD

The ground level within the wall began as the rubble-choked pile of Zhakar's upper chambers after the cave-ins and eruptions of the Cataclysm. Fortunately, because of the sloping foundation below the city's mountainous cap, much of the overhead rock spilled off to the side. That rubble was later flattened to form the terraced fields above the river.

The dwarves spent the first four decades after the Cataclysm clearing rubble from this courtyard and building the wall and towers. Now the place is unique because it displays a network of dwarven underground cavern design, mostly open to the sky.

Twelve columns of carved marble stand in a ring in the center of the courtyard. Each column is 60 feet high and eight feet in diameter. At one time they supported the great dome of the city of Zhakar's central plaza. Now they jut toward the sky, mute reminders of the godswrack that tumbled Krynn from above.

A maze-like pattern of corridors winds through the rocky earth of the courtyard. Walking is easy in these corridors, and also on the flat tops of the dividing barriers, which tend to be about eight feet above the corridor floors. In several places, narrow, arched wooden bridges connect the pathways to those above.

Two entrances provide access to the underground portions of Zhakar, the fissure, and the foundry.

THE FISSURE

The fissure descends into a narrow, smoking crevasse that was split into the rock of the courtyard by the force of the Cataclysm.

Two stairways follow the fissure walls downward, one stairway beginning at each end of the fissure.

Warm air constantly rises from the depths of Zhakar, emerging into the atmosphere with gusts of wispy steam. Several times a day (as many as six times per 24 hours), hotter blasts erupt from even deeper in the mountains. These eruptions can include blasts of flame and noxious gases, and last from 2-12 rounds at a time. Anyone on either of the two stairways during one of these eruptions must make a successful saving throw vs. breath weapon. Failure means that the character suffers 1-4 hp of damage per round of exposure. Any ability to resist heat will negate the damage of these occasional fiery blasts.

The fissure is open to the sky at the top. Within the ground it provides access to the main level of Zhakar, 100 feet below ground level. This access is gained through either of two iron doors that are kept closed, and fit very tightly into their metal frames. Their intent is to keep the belches of flames and fumes from entering the city itself.

Below the main city level, the stairways continue downward for more than half a mile. At this depth the warm air gusts become much more frequent, occurring as often as six times per hour, though they only last for 1-3 rounds at a time.

Underneath this level, which is more than half a mile underground, the stairway crumbles into a rubble-strewn ruin. The fissure continues down, and takes on a reddish cast from the fires in the bowels of Krynn. No one knows what lies below, though rumors speak of massive, fire-filled caverns and vast lakes of crimson, liquid lava.

THE FOUNDRY

This low-roofed building resembles a blockhouse squatting on the maze-like ground of

the courtyard. The walls are made of tightly-fitted blocks of granite that were salvaged from the wreckage after the Cataclysm. Long wooden beams support the wooden ceiling, which is only about eight feet above ground level.

There are numerous doors of heavy iron around the walls of this foundry building. Five high stone smokestacks rise symmetrically from the roof, and usually at least one of them will be belching clouds of black smoke into the sky. During periods of heavy activity, which are frequent, all five of the stacks will be spewing smoke.

The doors do not have locks, but they are barred on the inside when the foundry is in operation. The area itself is much larger than the appearance of the building would indicate since, although the roof is only eight feet above the ground, the floor is 16 feet below ground level. Several iron catwalks connect the doors. Some of these cross the center of the foundry, while stone stairways descend from each doorway to the floor of the foundry.

The working area is a hot, smoking chamber filled with firing forges, hammering smiths, and the hissing of steam as hot metal is dipped into the water-filled cooling vats. During daylight hours the din in here is fantastic, and soot-streaked dwarves bustle about in all manner of activities. There are 101-200 Zhakar dwarves working in here. At night things slow down a bit, with most of the activity centered around the forges at the north end of the long factory. The southern portions of the chamber are shrouded in silence and shadow. After sunset 2-40 dwarves remain within the foundry.

Chain-supported lifts are located at each end of the room. These are used to haul raw materials and fuel, as well as dwarves, from the lower levels up to the foundry. Finished metal products and goods from the surface world are loaded into the lift cages and low-





ered into the depths of Zhakar. These lifts are operated by powerful winch and pulley mechanisms. They can be powered by steam when the nearby forges are fired up. If not, each lift can be operated manually by a single dwarf. The more operators, however, the faster the lifts move.

THE MAIN COMPLEX OF ZHAKAR KEEP

The main complex of Zhakar spreads out from a central shaft. It is located in a sprawling network hundreds of feet below the surface of the earth. Six great wings reach outward like the legs of a gigantic insect. Below the main city network is the even more extensive sprawl of the food warrens.

The City Center

The center of Zhakar is a vast, domed chamber. It is vaguely illuminated at all times by the dim, reddish glow that emerges from the two northernmost wings of the huge cavern complex. This domed chamber serves as a city commons, as well as a place for all the population of Zhakar to gather if, for instance, their chieftain desires to address all of his subjects.

Around the periphery of the central cavern are yawning cave-mouths that lead to the side wings. The two lifts that carry supplies to the foundry above descend through metal-and-stonework shafts all the way to the floor of the central cavern. These lifts come to rest at two raised docks where goods are carted up to be loaded aboard. Beneath each lift-shaft is a chamber containing much of the winching and pulley mechanisms.

The dominant feature of the city center is the King's Promenade. This is left from pre-Cataclysmic Zhakar, and consists of two rows of columns that extend in parallel lines, creating a wide, smooth walkway. The

promenade is at a slightly lower level than the rest of this cavern floor, with the surface sloping upward to either side. When the sloping sides are lined with cheering dwarves, they can all see the regal figure of their ruler as he marches past below.

At the southern terminus of the promenade are two massive statues, standing erect with their backs to the cavern wall. These impressive pillars are each more than 50 feet tall and their stone features resemble those of giant male and female dwarves. Below the statues are two massive thrones, each carved from white marble, standing side-by-side and faced to look back along the promenade. These are the thrones of the thane of Zhakar and his favorite concubine.

A great pair of iron doors is set in the wall between the two statues. These connect to the royal apartment quarters, occupying half of one of the city's great wings. The other half of that wing is taken up by the royal dungeons, where enemies of the thane (and an assortment of ex-concubines) languish in dank, dreary holes.

The portion of the city between the promenade and the lift stations is a wide plaza where several fountains splash noisily. Numerous small metal huts dot the expanse. These are private quarters for dwarves who wish to get away from their families or clan attachments, yet not be seen in public.

The Zhakar think of themselves as a hideous people, so they are very self-conscious about public displays of affection. In fact, most Zhakar are almost abnormally private about who their friends are and what they do with those friends when out of sight of their families, so these little huts are very frequently used.

Royal Wing

This palatial delving contains the quarters of what had once been the thane of Zhakar.

Since the Cataclysm it has been traditional for the ruler of this city to declare himself a king. The other clans were annihilated by that dire event so there are none to dispute this claim. Certainly most of the Zhakar think that it's quite appropriate for their ruler to be a monarch.

This kingship is so far not hereditary. Because the majority of Zhakar dwarves are infertile, there has yet to be a king who has produced even a single offspring, much less a son who would be deemed worthy of the kingship. Instead, when one king perishes the next is chosen by means of loud debate and the organizing of factions, many of which are not afraid to brandish a few weapons in the name of their chosen ruler.

Perhaps because of the violence inherent in this system, the Zhakar dwarves are very male-centered in their view of authority. Unlike other dwarven cultures (and certainly differing from the elven and human peoples of Krynn), the Zhakar males ruthlessly dominate their females on the family level, the political level, and the working level. Females work hard at such tasks as coal-digging and mining, but they are never trained for positions such as blacksmith or mining engineer. Each king of Zhakar has worked vigorously to insure that this status quo remains in place.

Currently the king is Zhak Pillarstone, a slightly demented but extremely vicious dwarf who gained his post through the brutal disposal of his rivals. He lives in an opulent style that, as far as he is concerned, is no more than he deserves.

The entry to the royal wing is a pair of double doors of solid gold, inlaid with a mosaic of emeralds. Crystal chandeliers illuminate the approach, and the finest tapestries that could be salvaged from ruined Thoradin line the walls of the approach hallway.

The doors slide in grooves instead of

swinging on hinges, and are always manned by a staff of Zhak Pillarstone's elite guards (F4).

The interiors of the royal chambers are decorated in similarly sumptuous fashion. Tapestries hang on the walls, and works of art are placed conspicuously on viewing stands or in wall-niches throughout the apartment. The art includes statuary from the finest dwarven carvers, as well as examples of jewelry, crockery, and elaborate weavings of gold and silver thread.

Within these vast caverns live the king, and his current concubine. The Zhakar dwarves do not mind their ruler summarily deposing his concubine and sending her into the dungeons (generally for a failure to conceive), but they would be horrified with the notion that their king would be living with two females at once.

The king of Zhakar maintains an opulent dining room, complete with a multitude of columns and the finest foodstuffs that his isolated kingdom can acquire. The royal kitchens contain an exotic variety of foods, far more than the king and his guests could ever eat. On more than one occasion the royal cooks have thrown out rotted foodstuffs that their monarch never ate, while at the same time near-famine runs through the city beyond his palace.

A staff of 36 Zhakar waits on the king in every respect of his life. Guards patrol every room of his private residence, as well as stand on constant alert at his door. He has tailors, cooks, maids, valets, barbers, and food-tasters on his staff.

The food-tasters are deemed necessary since more than one Zhakar king has perished from food poisoning, though no one has ever proven these deaths were deliberate or accidental. After all, a great many Zhakar citizens die of food poisoning amid the dank and mold-infested climate of their home.





ZHAK PILLARSTONE, KING OF ZHAKAR

7th-Level Warrior

Strength:	18/57
Dexterity:	12
Constitution:	18
Intelligence:	11
Wisdom:	11
Charisma:	8
Armor Class:	-4
THACO:	8
Damage:	1d8+7
hit points:	71
Height:	4'
Weight:	180 lbs.
Movement:	6
Alignment:	Neutral Evil

Special Abilities:

Infravision: 90'

Equipment: *plate mail* +6; *battle axe* +4; *plague scepter*. The *plague scepter* serves as a *footman's mace* +4, and allows the king to infect its victim with the mold plague when an attack is successfully delivered to bare skin.

Appearance: Zhak Pillarstone is unusually tall for a Zhakar dwarf. He stands upon bowed legs, but his shoulders are broad and his arms muscular and quick. His face is pocked with the effects of the plague, and most of his hair has fallen out. His eyes have remained unaffected and he has a disconcerting ability to stare at someone with penetrating force, such that the recipient of the stare begins to feel quite afraid.

History: Zhak gained the throne of Zhakar by convincing his fellow dwarves that the previous king, Whez Lavastone,

was using his powers as a savant to lead his people into slavery for the Dark Queen. Following Zhakar's disastrous participation in the War of the Lance, Zhak had no difficulty persuading many hundreds of Zhakar that they had been betrayed. He led them in a revolt that culminated in the slaughter of Whez Lavastone's family and his gaining the throne for himself.

Ironically, the former king remains alive, imprisoned in one of Zhakar's darkest dungeons. Occasionally Zhak goes down there to taunt him about their change in status. Whez does not respond to these taunts and Zhak thinks the former king has lost his mind. In reality, Whez has hatched many gory plots in his imagination. He desires nothing more than revenge.

Role: Once he gained control of Zhakar, Zhak really didn't have any idea what to do next. Instead of forming a plan, he rules upon each problem as it arises. His decisions are motivated by what will bring him the most profit, or will cause the most embarrassment, pain, or suffering to his enemies. He will shamelessly appeal for bribes to each side in a dispute, and the dwarves willingly pay everything they can, knowing that whoever the judgment goes against will suffer very much indeed.

Zhak is deathly afraid of dragons and draconians. Though he has been to Sancton, he has vowed never to go back, since the scaly lizardfolk are so common there. Any draconians caught within his kingdom are tortured and killed before the king himself, and no sight amuses Zhak more.

He is afraid that the dragons will come again, and demands that guards in Zhakar Keep maintain a careful watch on the skies. Any reappearance of the great serpents is likely to send him into a paroxysm of terror.



The king's dungeons comprise the second half of the Royal Wing of Zhakar. These are a series of dark, small chambers, mostly fitted with iron doors, in which any prisoners against whom the king holds a grudge are confined. The dungeons can also be reached by a side passage that circumvents the royal chamber, so that the king does not have to see the miserable and unkempt prisoners being dragged through his living quarters.

Many of the cells hold nothing more than skeletons, or the rotted remains of skeletons from a century or two before. There are several guardposts throughout the dungeon area, though these are staffed with the typical Zhakar warriors (F2), not the elite fighters that make up the royal guard.

The dungeon has its own kitchen and a staff of cooks, all of whom have been hideously disfigured by the mold plague. These workers tend toward sloth and irresponsibility, so the hapless prisoners are lucky if they get fed once every two days.

The prisoners include males and females, and they are almost all Zhakar. Since these dwarves tend to kill outright any foreigners who are discovered in their lands, those intruders who make their way to the royal dungeon might actually consider themselves lucky, if they can. There are a couple of exceptions though, such as an elven lord from Silvanesti, held for a king's ransom, and a Knight of Solamnia who was taken in Sanction and brought here so that the king can learn so details of the knight's order, and his local strength.

The Zhakar citizens are all here on the order of the current king. The death of a king and the appointment of his successor is generally cause for a great rotation of the prison population. Most of the old prisoners are released, and a whole new batch, consisting of the new king's list of enemies (which he has spent a lifetime compiling) are brought in for incarceration.

The Residential Wing

This is the largest of Zhakar's wings. It is made up of many levels, each of which is honeycombed with apartments and rooms where the dwarves of this underground city live. Each level has many inns and gathering places which are mostly visited by the Zhakar who live nearby.

There are also a few markets and shops scattered among the dwelling-places, but Zhakar has a much lower standard of living than Thorbardin or Kayolin. Even the basic requirements of food cost twice or three times the rate of the other dwarven realms.

The streets and corridors of the residential wing are never deserted, but neither are they bustling thoroughfares. The dwarves that are going from one place to another do so quietly and directly, without meeting the eyes of strangers. Any attempt to start up a conversation will cause the initial speaker to be regarded with suspicion and hostility.

Wings of Fire

The two northernmost wings of Zhakar are rough-hewn caverns that extend into regions of lava, spurting gas, and blasts of fiery air that are nearly as dangerous as the breath of a red dragon. These wings are not entered by most of the dwarves of Zhakar, and those brave folk who do so generally have a good reason.

The entrances to each of these wings are high, arched cave-mouths. When viewed from the city center, these caves glow red, and clear flashes of bright fire are often visible snaking along their ceilings.

The caverns and passages in this portion of Zhakar bend and twist tortuously. Many climb steeply, while others descend toward pits and pools of fire, only to end in precipitous ledges overlooking these fiery lakes. They have not been mapped, nor would



such a map prove particularly useful since the constant volcanic activity, flowing and hardening of lava, and explosive convulsions are always changing the overall shape of these passages. A map made one year might serve for awhile with a certain amount of accuracy, but by a decade or two later there would have been enough cave-ins and forging of new passages that the original diagram would become quite obsolete.

It is rumored that some of the passages from this part of Zhakar extend all the way to the base of Mount Horn. No dwarf, or anyone else, for that matter, has been able to explore far enough to prove or disprove these tales.

It seems likely that the vast caverns, far below the level of Zhakar City, must connect to points far away. Their visible extent is vast, and many of them lead to bays and passages that twist and bend out of sight of the farthest point an observer can reach.

Temple Wing

These caverns are the remains of ancient temples that had once been devoted to the worship of Krynn's gods. Since the Cataclysm, the dwarves of Zhakar have refused to acknowledge most of the immortal pantheon, though traditions of Reorx worship still persist.

The true gods of Krynn were all known in ancient Thoradin and in the city of Zhakar. Their temples still survive in the modern city of Zhakar. Each god had a name specific to Thoradin, in addition to its commonly acknowledged name.

To the left, as one advances into the temple wing, are a series of arched passageways leading to various temples that were once dedicated to the gods of good. These have all fallen into disrepair, and are dusty and filled with rubble. If one of devout faith were to enter, they might find that some

presence of the true god can still be reached.

In order, these temples are dedicated to Paladine, Kijo-Jolith, and Mishaki.

Paladine the Judge: This is a circular chamber with a domed ceiling and a ring of columns around the periphery of the chamber. A great empty throne, the seat of Paladine's judicial wisdom, stands opposite the chamber's entrance.

Kijo-Jolith, the Axe: The son of Paladine was highly regarded in Thoradin, for he was viewed as a master of battle and war. His temple is a network of connecting passages leading toward a great altar that is reached by a series of high stone stairways. Now his chamber looks like an armorer's museum. Axes, pikes, halberds, and crossbows stand around the walls. It is rumored that these weapons can come to life and attack any intruder who displays improper reverence to the gods of good.

Mishaki the Healer: This benign goddess is now despised and scorned in Zhakar, for the dwarves here have long given up on any hope of future health or well-being. Consequently, Mishaki is assumed to have abandoned them with even more spuriousness than any of the rest of the pantheon.

Her temple was once a place of flowing fountains and glowing gardens of phosphorescent fungus. Now the fountains have dried up, though the fungi still survives. In fact, it thrives on the floors, walls, and even the ceiling so much so that the entire interior of this cavern is illuminated by a soft, greenish glow.

The temples to the right are dedicated to powerful gods of neutrality, Reorx, Zivilyn, and Shiner.

Reorx, the Tamer of Chaos: This temple is still attended by clerics, and is visited by

worshippers at all hours of the day and night. Some 24 priests tend to the duties of their faith, supervised by Macks Hammerfall, a cleric (C8). He is one of the most influential citizens of Zhakar, so much so that even the kings listen to him.

A great statue of the god stands in the center of the large, circular temple chamber. This image has been carved since the Cataclysm. Normally dwarves do not worship Reorx by carving his image into stone. Perhaps because of the deforming disease that plagues Zhakar however, these dwarves have created an image of their god suited to his ideal. The statue of Reorx stands nearly 30 feet tall, and depicts a dwarf of full beard, strapping physique, long and muscular arms, and legs like supple pillars of stone, suitable for supporting this grandiose figure.

Zivilyn the Wise: This is another temple that was dedicated before the Cataclysm and has now fallen into disrepair. A central chamber is full of musty tomes, mostly rendered unreadable because of mold and rot. A series of small alcoves surround the great central library. These were once alcoves where priests worked on religious writings. Now they are used by those citizens of Zhakar who wish to find an extremely private and remote place to gather.

Shiner the Silver One: The goddess of commerce to humans is Shinare. The dwarves however, view this deity as a male who supervises all worthy labor. A few scattered offerings are still thrown into this ancient sanctuary, since high-quality work is still valued by the dwarves of Zhakar.

In the time before the Cataclysm, Shiner was worshipped at a high silver forge, with an eternal flame burning before it. The priests of Shiner abandoned him at the time of that catastrophe, and eventually the silver forge became corroded and stained beyond recognition.

Some dwarves still come here to bring an example of a high-quality blade or tool that they have made, leaving it as an offering to the nearly-forgotten god. These offerings remain in the temple for as many as six weeks, but then they vanish. It is assumed that they get stolen, but in fact Shinare claims them as her due, and in return has extended her blessing to this temple.

No one has yet noticed, but since these offerings have been made, a small fire has grown in the firepit beside the forge. It seems to be fed by lava seeping through a crack in the floor, and it does represent the returning blessing of this important god.

THE TEMPLE OF THE WORM

A bizarre and corrupt cult once flourished in the darkened depths of Zhakar, in the time before the Cataclysm. This was a group of priests who discovered a monstrous worm living in a deep subterranean cavern. The worm was hailed as a god, and for a time these priests gained a great deal of influence in Zhakar.

The temple and cult of the worm are described in "The Valley of Fear" in the adventure DL 15, *Mists of Krynn*.

WARRENS OF ZHAKAR

In the volcanic depths of Zhakar, below the levels of keep and city, are the darkest regions of this dwarven realm. Known in Thoradin as the Kintletarr Warrens, they once produced vast amounts of food, enough to feed the Theiwar of Thoradin, with excess left over for trading to the other clans.

The warrens remain as an extensive network of caverns, many with ample supplies of fresh water. They are divided into three general areas. Originally each was delved and stocked with materials that would be of





use to the inhabitants of the city and the surrounding kingdom of Thoradin. Now, some of these uses have changed.

Water Warrens

The Zhakar have delved troughs and channels through the rock of their mountainous home to collect water in these large, natural caverns. In the old days of Thoradin, these cisterns were merely reserve holding tanks, with the actual freshwater supplies located in pools above the city, where gravity could provide water pressure throughout all the levels of Zhakar.

The Cataclysm changed all that. The overhead tanks vanished with most of the rest of the mountainous roof, and these caverns were left as the only watertight pools with easy access to Zhakar. Unfortunately, they are too low in elevation to provide pressurized water to most of the city.

However, the water warren is a complicated network of passages and flowages. Many caverns are bridged, so that the water wardens can inspect them without having to do so underwater. Several of the lower pools hold large schools of sightless fish, and these are regularly harvested by the Zhakar. Coupled with the great reptiles raised in the lizard warrens, these scaly creatures provide the bulk of the protein in the dwarven food supply.

Water from the warren flows through numerous underground channels so that it passes underneath virtually every part of the city. Many wells have been drilled through the rock, so that the Zhakar dwarves never have to walk too far to find a place where they can lower a bucket and lift it up full of water.

The water that flows away from the water warrens is also used to provide life to the fungus warrens, which are even farther below the surface of the world, and to the

lizard warrens, which are nearby. These warrens require plenty of clean water, and the warren system is large enough to meet this capacity.

A series of secondary lifts is located between the forge center and the water warrens. These lifts consist of many buckets mounted on long, looping chains, attached to pulley and winch mechanisms. When the forges are cranking out heat, the dwarves can use steam pressure to operate these lifts. Otherwise, dwarven laborers spend many hours turning the great windlasses. The net result is to carry water up to several large holding tanks in the foundry and forge areas. This water is the only pressurized supply in Zhakar. It is used exclusively for manufacturing operations.

Lizard Warrens

In the years prior to the Cataclysm, the Zhakar dwarves kept small, subterranean lizards as pets. Since then, these lizards have been bred into increasingly larger sizes, and have been trained for a variety of special uses.

The warrens where these creatures are raised have been divided into numerous small caves. Most of these hold the standard lizards, the *fastclaws*, that provide the transportation and food for so much of Zhakar. The fastclaws mill about in these great caverns, racing up the walls and across the floors. Heavy iron grates seal off any entrance into these pastures, and other grates are arranged so that portions of the herds can be corralled, sorted, and selected for training or slaughter.

A few of these warrens are the plush, comfortable stalls of the *warclaws*, however. These great monsters are the equivalent of heavy warhorses, and each is as valuable to his Zhakar rider as a warhorse is to his armored knight. The warclaws have soft bedding of moss and down, plentiful

food (much of which consists of their fellow lizards), and a steady supply of fresh water.

Fungus Warrens

The deepest levels of Zhakar are the fungus warrens, where in ages past the farmers of Thoradin grew a variety of fungi, harvesting it regularly to meet the food needs of the city and its environs. Now, while some fungus is still harvested from these dark and damp caverns, the deeper warrens have taken on a sinister life of their own.

The fungus warrens receive a good supply of water from the neighboring water warrens. This flowage comes from leaks and cracks in the pools that hold the water, so that even if the dwarves decided to dam up the flow they would not be able to shut off the supply of water to the fungus warrens.

Much of this warren is still useful to the Zhakar, for a great variety of edible and nourishing plants still grows here, safely removed from the light of the sun. In the nether reaches, however, few Zhakar dare to tread, and from these caverns fewer still come back.

The following individual chambers are described with their unique traits.

Mushroom Capstone: This is the largest cavern of the warren. At one time it was a placid and dignified place, with pools of water, fountains and statues, and many secluded benches for strolling dwarves to sit and reflect. Softly-glowing fungus lined the walls, casting the entire chamber in a lovely shade of green.

Since the Cataclysm, this is no longer the case. The plants that live here have taken over the entire chamber, so much so that the stones of the walls, floors, and ceilings are completely invisible. In fact, in most places it lies beneath at least 20 feet of flourishing fungus.

Of course, a passage still opens into the capstone chamber from above, allowing Zhakar harvesters to enter and gather as much of the lush plant life as they can. This chamber is the only one where the Zhakar still come to make this harvest. Water trickles into the chamber through cracks in the ceiling, and it creates a fine mist in the air.

Numerous passages through stone lead to the other caverns of this vast warren network. These passages are all choked with masses of fungus, so that they're virtually undetectable from within the huge capstone chamber. One of them might be noticed by the flow of water, since the mist gathers in pools on the floor of the chamber and then flows away, draining through porous mushrooms on the southeast wall of the chamber.

Other passages also exist, as do maps of the old warren network. A map of the post-Cataclysm warren network is carved into the wall just outside of the Capstone chamber's entrance. Though it is partially screened by a growth of mold and mildew, it can be noticed with the same chance as a secret door. Once scraped clean, it provides a clear look at the various passages through the warren.

If one knows where to dig, he need only chop a five-foot plug of mushrooms out of the way to get into one of these winding nether passages.

Plague Warrens: When the mold plague first descended upon Zhakar, afflicted dwarves were quarantined in this network of chambers and passages. The treatment was not entirely inhumane. After all, the dwarves had a plentiful supply of food and water, and the need to isolate them from the main population seemed quite necessary given the rapid spread of the disease. The plague spread so quickly that even the quarantine was insufficient protection, though.

By the time the disease spread through all the parts of the city, those unfortunate souls





ZHAKAR LIZARDS

These unique creatures provide a number of things to the dwarves of Zhakar, including food, transportation, and fighting ability. Most of the lizards are the fastclaws, but the largest and most powerful are trained as warclaws.

	Fastclaw	Warclaw
Armor Class:	5	3
Movement:	15	15
Hit Dice:	1	3+3
THAC0:	20	17
No. of Attacks:	1	3
Damage/Attack:	1-6	1-8/1-6/1-6
Special Attacks:	See Below	See Below
Special Defenses:	Fire Resistance	Fire Resistance
Magic Resistance:	Nil	Nil
Size:	M	L
Morale:	3	11
XP Value:	15	120

Zhakar lizards are lean, powerful creatures with muscular hind legs, dexterous front legs, and clawed feet that can grasp any extruding piece of rock, enabling them to climb vertical cliffs as easily as they cross a flat floor.

Their predecessors were three-foot-long animals that were raised in Thoradin as pets, and also used for pest control and food. In the centuries since the Cataclysm, they have been bred so carefully that even the average fastclaw has a five-foot-long body with a four-foot tail, and weighs nearly 150 pounds. The warclaws are even larger, averaging eight-foot bodies and six-foot tails.

Zhakar lizards have keen infravision, with a range of 90'. Their nostrils are also very sensitive. They can detect any unusual odor, even the scent of a creature that might have passed through a cavern four to six hours earlier.

Their eyes are very sensitive to sunlight, however. In conditions of bright daylight, the Zhakar lizard's movement is slowed to 9, and all of its attacks suffer a -2 penalty on hit rolls.

Combat: All Zhakar lizards have sharp teeth, and are quite willing to bite anything or anyone that annoys them. This is the first attack choice of the warclaw. The next attack is with its front claws.

Both the fastclaws and warclaws have a unique ability. Their tongues can shoot outward with blinding speed, striking something as much as eight feet (fastclaw) or 12 feet (warclaw) away from the lizard. The target of the strike is always treated as AC 10. Even objects or creatures moving very quickly can be struck by this tongue.

A sticky secretion allows the tongue to attach to the target. If it is light enough (less than 10 pounds), the lizard can draw it into its mouth. It cannot, however, lift itself up by attaching its tongue to the ceiling or some other raised object. This is a favorite technique for snaring bats, which are one of the food staples of the Zhakar lizards. It can also be used to deflect an arrow that is shot at the lizard or its rider. If the lizard uses its tongue, it cannot make another attack that round. The lizard cannot use this tongue attack at all under conditions of full daylight.

Both types of Zhakar lizard are immune to normal and magical fire-based attacks.

The warclaws are trained to carry Zhakar warriors into battle. The dwarven riders often use a combination of light lances and crossbows for their armament.

Capacity: The fastclaws are sometimes used as beasts of burden. While not as strong as a horse, their underground adaptability makes them very useful. Their carrying capacities regarding encumbrance are 100/200/300, respectively.

who had been sent off in the initial quarantine were quite forgotten. They languished here for years, some of them growing more and more bitter and resentful at the fate that had cursed them so darkly. Forgotten by their kin, abandoned by their nation, these dwarves became infused with hatred and self-pity.

At the same time, a bizarre confluence of energy and power was occurring in the thriving fungus population around them. Many types of spores were borne on the wind after the Cataclysm, and erosion brought some of these into the depths of Zhakar. The mushrooms and other fungi in here began to grow wildly, choking off the exits, eliminating the air supply, and gradually closing in on the spiteful dwarves who'd been imprisoned here.

Finally the last living dwarves were absorbed by the fast-growing fungus. Many of the Zhakar were choked and killed by this chaotic growth, but a few of them, among them priests and savants and fighters armed with magical weapons or armor, were held in a kind of stasis by the fungal growth. For years they dwelled in horrible union with the very types of plant that had brought the mold plague into being. By the time the last of these Zhakar outcasts had perished, some essence of their nature had been transferred to the formerly insensate plants.

It was this fusion of the hateful Zhakar minds, twisted even more by deformity and banishment, joining the ever-thriving mass of mindless plant life, that has created the burgeoning menace in the depths of Zhakar. It is a menace that the dwarves living overhead do not even know exists.

By the time a century had passed after the Cataclysm, the quarantined dwarves had been forgotten. The warrens were once again the province of the flourishing plants who were still regarded as a blessing by the

Zhakar living above. Yet still, the bizarre life forms continued to evolve.

Currently there are more than 1,000 of the smaller fungifolk, the *movers*, gathered in the deep caverns. The colony also has 40 of the giant *beaters*. While the individual creatures are free to move around, the central intelligence of the colony is gathered in the Brain Room.

Brain Room

The central intellect of the fungifolk is gathered in the four mushroom-covered mounds in the middle of the round cavern. These are the corpses of the last four dwarves to perish from the mold plague. It was around these dwarven seeds that the initial will and intelligence of the bizarre plant colony began to develop.

Numerous passages give entry into this cavern, but all of these entrances are choked shut by mundane fungi. An intruder would have to hack his way (or otherwise clear his path) through six feet of mushrooms before he could gain access to the fetid air of the brain room.

The central intelligence of the fungifolk is not located in any particular place within this room, though it pulses through a current that cycles around the four tall, rounded mounds. The intelligence can be destroyed only by destroying each of these four centers. Each has an AC of only 10, but possesses 100 hp from the sheer mass of its size.

The monster's will has grown increasingly evil and ambitious as the number of its creatures has increased. It dimly senses that there is a whole wide world beyond the confines of its cavern network, and it is preparing to send its seeds outward using the movers and beaters.

The master brain is protected by 24 movers and four beaters. These guards are





FUNGIFOLK

Born of an arcane mixture of the worst features of the Zhakar dwarves and the most poisonous, chaotically-growing fungi in the dark reaches of the warrens, these hideous creatures have evolved to the point where they are mobile, and ready to expand their domains.

There are two primary types of fungifolk. The movers are scuttling little toadstools, about three feet tall, while the beaters are elephantine masses of mushrooms that accomplish great harm by the size and force of their huge bodies.

	Movers	Beaters
Armor Class:	10	10
Movement:	9	3
Hit Dice:	1	8
THAC0:	20	13
No. of Attacks:	1	2
Damage/Attack:	1-6	1-20
Special Attacks:	See Below	See Below
Special Defenses:	See Below	See Below
Magic Resistance:	Nil	Nil
Size:	M	L
Morale:	20	20
XP Value:	15	975

Though these creatures trace their origins to stationary, unknowing plants, they have slowly been expanding in powers of intellect and mobility. The fusion of Zhakar abilities with the dark-seeking vitality of the fungus has bred a colony-type of intelligence that has been increasing over the past three centuries.

The fungifolk are for the moment passive creatures, content to increase their numbers and slowly develop the power and intellect needed to accomplish their aims. They possess the scheming villainy of the Zhakar,

coupled with the furious sense of rage developed by the first, quarantined plague victims.

These mushroom-shaped monsters have sensed their destiny approaching. Teams of movers bound through the deep caverns of the fungus warrens, while the beaters simply grow. Already they loom like giants in the dim recesses of these caverns, but they are ready to lumber forward on command.

Combat: The movers fight in large groups. They move by forming their bodies into balls, bounding along the ground. They are capable of leaps reaching 20 feet up into the air and can eject sharp spines from their bases. These spines stab outward like thrusting rapiers. As many as 12 movers can attack a man-sized target during a round. Even more can attack a larger opponent.

Movers can be killed by blunt or piercing weapons such as hacking weapons (axes and swords) that inflict enough damage to kill by actually slicing the monster in two. After 1-6 rounds, these two movers bounce back to life.

Beaters are great mushroom-headed beings that lumber along deliberately. Two blunt, thick tendrils hang beneath the cap. These are the creature's arms, capable of lashing out at any target within 10 feet.

Beaters can batter against rock indefinitely, pummeling it into gravel like a giant chisel. A beater can chip away a 12-inch thickness of rock per hour. However, the creature suffers 1 hp of damage per round. A shaker will gladly expend itself for the greater good of the colony.

A fungifolk of any type will explode into thousands of spores upon contact with direct sunlight.



stationed all around the room, and all of them will immediately converge to attack any intruder.

With its full strength, the brain is capable of controlling its appendant creatures, the movers and beaters, as far as 2,000 feet away. If each of its four "brain stalks" in the center of the room are destroyed, this range is decreased by 500 feet.

When the time is right for expansion, the

brain intends to send its creatures sweeping outward from the brain room, battering through any rock barriers and driving any competing organisms from those chambers. When it has cleared a large, dank chamber near the limits of its range (1,500 to 2,000 feet away from the brain room), the brain intends to seed another colony, hoping that it will be able to reproduce its power indefinitely.



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Songs of the Loremaster



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SONGS OF THE LOREMASTER A NARRATIVE HISTORY OF THE DWARVES ON ANSALON





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INTRODUCTION

The *Songs of the Loremaster* are the tales of the dwarves, from their earliest history on Krynn through the triumphs and travails of the centuries before and after the Cataclysm.

The tales are intended for the player (particularly the player of dwarven characters) and the Dungeon Master alike. These are the tales that a young dwarf hears at his grandfather's knee. These are the legends that have given birth to a sense of pride and purpose in these determined and pragmatic demi-humans.

The tales are told from a variety of viewpoints, though they have mostly been compiled from original dwarven sources. Differences of detail must be expected in the various realms about Krynn.

AN ELVEN NOTE

I am Quivalin Soth, and my ballads and poems have woven the stories of the elves into the histories of Krynn. During my many centuries, songs I scribed have become common fare among human, kender, and dwarf. For many of them, a tale by Quivalin Soth is a story from the ages, treasured and cherished for the generations to come. Astinus himself, Supreme Historian, has consulted me for the truths of ages past.

There is a folk historian who has labored to spin the tale of Krynn and her people for an even longer time than have I. His name is Chisel Loremaster. At an early age he was seized by the magic of the Graystone, and the peculiar gift of this sorcery was his own immortality. He became a Scion, invisible to his own people and the world, yet ever watching and recording, presenting the tale for future ages.

He retains the stubborn intractability of his dwarven blood, and his observations are col-

ored by his prejudice and resentment. Yet, for all this, his words are wise and his stories bear the seed of truth within a fruit that might have grown in unpredictable directions.

Listen then, to the words of Chisel Loremaster, and he will sing for you the tale of the dwarves.

Quivalin Soth,
Exalted Bard of the Elves

CAUTIONARY WORD

The reader is hereby warned that the following text has been drawn almost exclusively from sources of dwarven creation. The point of view expressed is uniquely that of the dwarves, and ignores much commonly accepted wisdom.

*This is not to say that it is inaccurate. In fact, perhaps because of their reclusive nature, the dwarven viewpoint has been oft-neglected in the official histories, and perhaps even in the pages of the *Iconochronos* (Loremaster's Book). Therefore, it seems fit to present their tales as they recite and believe them.*

Sometimes, this creates outright discrepancies with the commonly-told stories. In many more instances, the relative virtues and faults of participants are radically altered, even when the basic structure of the narration remains the same.

Nevertheless, it is time these tales were shared with the population. I leave it to the perusers, be they noble or common, educated or ignorant, to decide for themselves the accuracy contained within.

Astinus Loremaster,
Master Historian of Krynn



THE MAKING OF A WORLD BELOW

The scribing of histories must inevitably be filtered by the perspectives of the recorder. I am well aware of the fact, and ever endeavor for a dispassionate and objective point of view. Scrupulously careful research and careful, skeptical examination of evidence are the needs of the historian.

However, these are not necessarily the traits of historians from the other peoples of Krynn. The elven sage Quivalin Soth has a very real concern for the truth and, aside from a tendency to color his accounts with the undeniable arrogance of the Silvanesti, his chronicles provide real insights into the past. As to dwarves however, he knows next to nothing, and thus his overlong attempts at documenta-

tion are filled with more conjecture (much of it racially biased) and speculation than fact.

As for human scribes, the best that can be said about them is that they have written little of my people. The Lorekeeper himself Astinus of Palanthis, has seemed to tolerate this neglect with benign humor. And as for us dwarves, this is quite a satisfactory arrangement.

The tales that have been bandied about, through the verbal recountings of ignorant humans, have in many cases reached the level of slander. I find myself honor-bound to recount these things I know to be the truth, that I might refute some of the more grotesque and ludicrous of the tales.

I remain in the present and the future, but most especially to history

Chisel Loremaster,
Supreme Historian of Dwarvenhood



THE FORGING OF THE SMITHS

The Smiths, forerunners of the dwarves, first appeared during the Age of Dreams. They were the potent children of Reorx himself, born of the clash when his hammer smote the Chaos. In time, the bravest and wisest among them would become the dwarves, while others would degenerate into gnomes.

One of the most pernicious of false myths concerning origins of the dwarves recounts that, during the Age of Dreams, Reorx selected the Smiths from among the humans on Ansalon and retired with them to Taladas. As with so much falsehood, this tale has its roots in the truth, but leaves those roots forgotten and forlorn in its branching imagination.

The creation myths of Krynn feature the gods of good, neutrality, and evil creating mortal races to match their immortal ambitions and designs. These were the elven, human, and ogre peoples, respectively. According to mistaken mythology, the first Smiths were supposedly drawn from the ranks of these humans.

In truth, dwarves were *not* crafted with the three mortal races mentioned previously, but not because they postdate the rest. The Smiths were already present in the world. They were forged with the creation of Krynn, even before the time of the All-Dragons War.

It is well-known that the immortal hammer of Reorx, smashing against the mass of Chaos, broke pieces of the hammer's immortal substance away, where they were cast into the heavens as the stars. What is not so widely understood is that other parts of this hammer also sparked away, chipped by the strong opposition to Chaos. But they were not so hot or fiery as the stars. These fragments were formed later as the Smiths, when Reorx used his hammer to forge the Chaos into Krynn.

Thus, as the gods formed mountains and seas, light and dark upon the world, the first beings already came to rest upon Krynn. Strong and vital, diligent and brave, these beings were the Smiths. They looked very much like dwarves have looked throughout the ages. However, there were few Smiths. While dragons and beasts populated Krynn, the Smiths became reclusive. They excavated fortresslike homes, often using caves or other enclosures of stone for protection against a hostile world. The Smiths played no part, so far as is known, in the wracking conflicts that swept the world when good and evil dragonkind waged war against each other.

THE FIRST MIGRATION

Finally, when the war had been settled and the other mortals were formed and placed upon Krynn, the Smiths came forth and mingled with the world. The elves in the forests and the ogres on their mountains fought with the ancient folk, and jealously drove them from their abodes. Like humans, the Smiths were forced into the flatlands, the barren plains, and windswept coasts that had been claimed by mankind. Here they were not welcomed freely, but their own might, coupled with shrewd determination, enabled them to form homes and communities among men.

All of the other races bickered and fought, and gradually the ogres, through their brute strength, began to prevail. Though the Smiths strove to remain aloof, they were often of necessity drawn into these battles and increasingly destructive wars. Especially implacable in their strife with the ogres, the Smiths became the hated enemy of that monstrous race. Where humans were enslaved when they failed to repel the brutal enemy,





THE STATUS OF REORX

During a discussion of the Age of Star-birth and the Age of Dreams, it is worth noting the errant, but commonly recognized, understanding of the place of Reorx in this hierarchy of gods. The truth is self-evident. If Paladine were indeed the greatest of gods, would he have entrusted the taming of Chaos, the forging of the world, to an underling?

In fact, Reorx here is clearly shown in his proper place as ascendant among all the gods. A deity of neutrality is far more suitable for this immortal mastery than any representative of good or evil. In the latter cases, the patriarch of godhood could not help but polarize the balance into impossibly skewed directions. Only a neutral god could truly and justly rule.

This is not to say that Reorx's status has remained unchallenged throughout the ages, or that his true importance will ever be recognized by members of the other races. Yet the significance is established by the simple fact that it is Reorx who is the Tamer of Chaos, Reorx who is the Forger of the World, and Reorx who is the Father of the Smiths. True, his hammer was forged from the substance of all the gods, but this is only proper. And Reorx alone wielded the tool.

During the passing of centuries and millennia, Reorx has remained steadfast and mighty in the minds of the Smiths and their descendants. It is only because of the arrogance of the elves and the frantically increasing populations of mankind that his true importance has faded from common acknowledgement.

Smiths were increasingly slaughtered in cold blood.

Their numbers were depleted by these onslaughts, and slowly the Smiths became increasingly rare. Eventually it became clear to Reorx that their very existence was threatened. The Tamer of Chaos could not let this happen, and so he determined that he would take his favored children to safety. This determination lay at the root of the First Migration.

This epic ocean crossing is a feature of all histories, but the key difference between the other false versions and this version of the tale concerns the very origins of the Smiths. Humans claim that Reorx selected suitable men and women, and that over the course of time this folk became shorter and sturdier, assuming the forms of dwarves. This tale is so preposterous that it would be dismissed as humorous were it not so widely held.

The clear fact of the matter, as this chronicle should set to rest once and for all, is that the Smiths were *already* a distinct and unique people. Reorx gathered them to himself *because* of this fact, not through any sort of ridiculous selection procedure.

A considerably greater aura of mystery surrounds the exact nature of the migration. We know in a general sense that the destination was the great continent of Taladas, the full breadth of the world removed from Ansalon. However, the Age of Dreams was a time of tempest and chaos across the ocean waters of Krynn, and it seems unlikely that the dwarves crossed those seas by any type of ship or craft as they were to do later, during the Second Migration.

Instead, they must have either burrowed beneath the ocean, perhaps through the center of the world itself, or been transported by some more magical means. Either explanation is plausible when one considers the truly unusual and potent abilities inherent in Smith magic.

THE NATURE OF THE SMITHS

These folk were powerful in unique and now-vanished ways, possessing within themselves a mastery of the world matched by no other peoples in all the history of Krynn. The magic of the Smiths was not sorcery. The Smiths as a race predate even the birth of the moons of magic. Instead, they possessed the power of the elements of the earth, together with an inherent capability to master these powers and employ them toward their own, constructive ends.

In the Age of Dreams, elemental magic extended far beyond the borders it has fallen within during the progression of history. Beyond the elements of earth, air, fire, and water, the powers of the Smiths mastered substances as diverse as iron and smoke, wind and stone. There was no end to their knowledge and their power, and with each new generation (admittedly this was a very long time) more fields of mastery were added to the archives of the Smiths.

These skills were inherent and fundamental to the race. It was only, however, when they were taken away for training by Reorx himself that the Smiths assumed true mastery. Then, each element assumed its own place in the hierarchy of society.

The mastery of air, for example, provided its wielders with full capabilities of breathing and buoyancy, such that these Smiths could levitate at will and breathe in the airless reaches of submarine and even ethereal environments. Smiths who specialized in the element of wind could actually attain flight, though they did not possess air-generating capabilities.

Those Smiths whose mastery was of the earth learned deep and fundamental abilities from their immortal lord. The Tamer of Chaos taught them to shape mountains and hills.





The Smiths extracted metals and used their powers to shape those materials into all manner of useful devices. Great machines were created, sculpted by master Smiths without the use of hammer, anvil, or flame.

Those who mastered water obtained corresponding powers of movement and survival. And others mastered fire in its aspects as melter, molder, transformer. Those who mastered stone utilized its strength and mass to create great images, lofty statues, and vaulted fortresses that have never been matched in the modern eras of Krynn.

Under the tutelage of Reorx, the Smiths achieved wonders of design and invention that have never been duplicated, and perhaps never will again. For their ultimate waning was caused by a fundamental change in the physical nature of the world.

THE TRUE STORY OF THE GRAYSTONE

The waxing of sorcerous magic, as embodied by the three moon-gods of Lunitari, Solinari, and Nunitari, spelled an inevitable threat to the elemental magic of the Smiths. Though the moons of magic had been in existence since the end of the Age of Starbirth, it was not until magic-users among the elves and humans had practiced for many generations that the true boundaries of sorcery became apparent. Even as the moons were banished from Krynn, the power of their sorcery flourished. With the growing might and presence of this potent power, the Smiths of Krynn found their own elementally-based magic on the wane.

THE MAKING OF THE STONE

The treachery of the gods Hiddukel and Chislev (The Flawed One and The Beast, to the Smiths) is well-documented. Tricking Reorx by appealing to his vanity, they per-

suaded the Tamer of Chaos to create a miniature image of Krynn to bestow on the trio of moons. The three gods of magic had been banished from the world at the end of the Age of Light and claimed homesickness for the remembrance of Krynn.

Into this stone Lunitari, Solinari, and Nunitari poured the essence of all types of magic, creating the Graystone, an artifact of virtually unlimited magical power. With its increase of this power in Krynn, Reorx could not help but perceive the Graystone as a threat to the mundane world and the elemental magic that still held sway there. Yet he was bound by the rigid conventions of the gods. Since he had bestowed the Graystone freely, he could not ask for its return. Since the stone had been the result of trickery, Reorx felt justified in resorting to trickery to arrange for its return. For this task he found willing accomplices in his Smiths.

AN AUDACIOUS PLAN

The designs and creations of the Smiths were always increasing in size and complexity. Great ships of iron surged across the seas, driven by elemental power instead of wind. Huge chariots raced on the surface of the world, surpassing the speed of the fastest horse. And even the birds were challenged in the great vault of the heavens, as the creations of the Smiths took to the air. Yet none of these devices seemed to represent the pinnacle of accomplishment.

As a result, the idea of the Great Machine grew in the minds of the Smiths, perhaps planted by Reorx himself. The purpose of this machine is lost to us, though legend indicates it had something to do with war. The concept seems to have been born among a great multitude of the Smithfolk. Throughout the great land that would one day be known as Taladas, the greatest minds-the most powerful crafters of these people-gathered and set

their talents toward the making of this mighty machine.

Undoubtedly this mass inspiration was the work of Reorx, for never before had so many Smiths applied themselves to a single project. How long did the construction of the Great Machine take? We will never know for certain, though it seems likely that the task occupied the better part of a generation. When the machine was done, so legend says, it would overshadow any other war machine ever developed. Though the Smiths were not an aggressive folk, they believed that this machine would forever make them invulnerable to the warlike designs of their neighbors.

Finally the Great Machine was done, except for the final and key ingredient. The power for the device could only come from one source, and it seems that all the Smiths understood this need. To make the machine work, they would need to acquire the Graystone, which was still ensconced firmly among the moons of magic, where its power had continued to increase. Yet this acquisition was not a simple matter, for it required an ascent to the moons before it could be accomplished.

THE QUEST OF MILGAS KADWAR

Unlike the machine, constructed by a great melding of Smith-minds, the device that enabled the Smiths to acquire the Graystone was reputedly the work of a single individual. Who was Milgas Kadwar, the great crafter who built the magnificent skyhook? He is only known as the "lowest of the low" among the Smiths. But the reasons why are lost to history. Nevertheless, his invention must be regarded as one of the greatest accomplishments of the Smiths.

Doubtless the skyhook was the product of great elemental magic, but whether it drew upon the air, the ether, or some other source of power is a matter of conjecture. It worked

well enough to hoist Milgas through the skies, all the way to the moon of Lunitari, where the Gray stone was secreted.

On the morning before Milgas set out on his great quest, it is said that he awakened to find a soft net coiled about his bedchamber. Its strands were as light as spiderwebbing, yet no strength on Krynn could tear it. Milgas understood that he had received a gift from the gods, and that its purpose could only be to capture and hold the Graystone. What he did not realize was that the source of the gift was none other than treacherous Hiddukel. Hiddukel, The Flawed One, wanted the Smith to use this device to retrieve the stone for the evil one's own purpose.

Strapping the net to his back, Milgas set out on his mission. The dwarves do not consider taking the stone a theft, any more than they regard the removal of iron ore from the ground a theft. In their minds, the Graystone was an inanimate mineral, one that resided an inconvenient distance from their home.

The climb to Lunitari occupied young Milgas for many days, as he latched his hook into the ether and then climbed its long, ascending shaft. Reaching the top, he somehow secured himself to the ethereal essence, at the same time raising his pole and hook to an even greater height. In this way he made his way to the magically-infused surface of Lunitari.

He found the Graystone in a shallow cave and quickly wrapped the net about it. Hastening from this hiding place, he began his rapid descent back to Krynn. Although there are no records of pursuit, it is well known that Milgas climbed down much more quickly than he ascended. All the while the Graystone rested against his back, its magical power blocked (at least in part) by the enchanted and godmade net. Below him waited the greatest crafters of the Smiths. They were the ones who had created the Great Machine, and awaited only the crucial final element to





their great construct. Gathered in a circle on the ground, they watched Milgas descend, waiting with barely contained excitement for his safe return.

Yet the net of Hiddukel had its own purpose, which was to gradually yield itself to the arcane might of the stone. Thus, at about the time Milgas again set foot on the dirt of Krynn, the strands of the net were dissolved by magic, and the stone immediately floated free.

Again, scurrilous rumors exist in other cultures, declaring that Milgas' clumsiness caused him to fall, and that the stone was released through his carelessness. The story is absurd, given the nature of this Smith's accomplishments in scaling to the very heights of the moon without mishap. Once again, this is clear evidence of other peoples determined to deny the dwarves their rightful place in the histories of Krynn.

WILD MAGIC LOOSED

The first effect of the Graystone was instantaneous, and struck Milgas and the gathered circle of about 200 Smiths. Immediately the released power of the stone penetrated to the core of these beings, twisting their nature in deep and fundamental ways, silvering their hair, rendering their skin into a rippling, metal-like surface of gold. This circle of Smiths became the Scions.

Even before this first effect could be absorbed by the stunned witnesses, the stone floated into the air, was seized by an errant gust of wind, and quickly floated away from the clamoring Smiths. The tale of its mischief as it crossed the face of Krynn is well-known.

It is known that the Graystone was carried by the wind. It did not wander by some arcane will of its own. Smiths who had mastered air, wind, and storm all tried to recapture it, employing their powers to restrain or bring the stone to earth. But they found their

powers useless against the capricious gem, and even the air around it refused to bend to these Smith spellcasters.

As the Graystone drifted across the land, it seemed to suck the essence of the earthmagic from the world, replacing the elemental power with its own brand of wild, untamed sorcery. The appearance of the Graystone marks the end of the Smiths as folk of magical power, for as the elemental magic faded, their machines and artifacts ceased to function and gradually fell into decay.

As the Graystone wreaked its havoc across this vast land that was not yet Taladas, the humans of that place rose up in fury, determined to smite the folk whom they wrongly blamed for the careless release of the potent gem. With their last vestiges of elemental power, the Smiths lifted a great barrier of mountains around the lands wherein they dwelled. Sheltered behind this impenetrable barrier, they labored diligently to build the vessels that they believed would take them to safety. They were desperate to escape the havoc of the Graystone. At the same time, aggressive human armies began to find their way through the mountainous barrier before the barges were completed. Heroic efforts of Smith warriors who were finally devoid of elemental magic, coupled with the unspeakable power of the Scions, enabled them to hold the enemy at bay.

THE NATURE OF THE SCIONS

Scions came as close to magic personified as any creature ever to walk the face of Krynn. Their other-worldly silver hair and gold skin appeared for all purposes to be actual metal! And it is with almost casual ease that they mastered even the most complex of wizardly enchantments. Truly the Scions were a source of superstitious awe, terror, envy, and wonder

to their former kin.

The mastery of elemental magic disappeared with the creation of the Scions, almost as if all the power formerly embodied in the entire race had been concentrated in the persons of these few enchanted individuals.

In the course of their alteration, the Scions had become something other than mortal. This is not to suggest that they somehow approached godhood, but rather that they had been so fundamentally changed that certain aspects of their existence no longer resembled life. They showed, for example, no tendency to age. Also, they lost all trace of sexual identity as there were no males and no females among them. Rather, they were simply the Scions. Rumors hold that they needed neither food nor drink, though these tales cannot be confirmed.

While the Scions embodied almost unlimited power, it is certain that the Smiths regarded them with a great deal of fear. Though there is no evidence suggesting that the Scions tried to enslave or otherwise master their former cousins, the thought cannot have been far from the minds of the unchanged Smiths. Deprived of their own elemental magic, the Smiths felt very vulnerable against the great might of their altered cousins.

All the folklore concerning the Scions indicates that, contrary to the fears of the Smiths, these magical creatures labored hard to save their people from the vengeance of a world gone mad with magic. Perhaps they felt their own culpability. Remember that the Scions were the same Smiths who had labored so diligently to build the Great Machine, and who had dispatched Milgas to acquire the Graystone. The guilt of this action cannot be denied, though it can be understood more clearly when one realizes how cruelly they had been manipulated by Hiddukel and Chislev. Indeed, even Reorx had been misled, for nothing could have been farther from his

wishes than to encourage the chaotic spread of wild magic across the world.

THE SECOND MIGRATION

The Smiths set out for Ansalon in their fleet of rafts, driven away in part by the armies of men. However, another strong motivation for the migration was the desire to flee the effects of the Graystone, which had continued to plague the continent of their home. It is with a sense of irony, then, that we consider their destination, for they sailed back to the land their forefathers had departed so many centuries before. And even as they made their epic voyage, which reputedly lasted for more than 10 years, the Graystone arrived at the same time. When they reached Ansalon they would find waiting for them the very threat they had labored so hard to leave behind!

The "rafts," incidentally, were not the flat platforms generally evoked by the term. These were deep-drafted ships, made from huge trees and containing multiple layers of decks. They were propelled by banks of oars and several masts of sails. The Scions used their powers to harness the wind and waves to their own needs. Though they were neither maneuverable nor speedy, the rafts were massive and sturdy, and each is known to have carried more than 1,000 passengers.

But in the crossing, the Smiths faced obstacles both enchanted and mundane. The first raft was reputedly smashed upon a reef before the shoreline of Taladas had fallen from sight in the stern. All of its passengers were lost, for the huge vessels lumbered too slowly to come to the aid of each other in the event of calamity.

And calamity would strike with grim frequency over the course of the great voyage. Tales recount rafts being smashed by great schools of dragon turtles or capsized by capricious hurricanes. Vast, swirling whirlpools appeared with random savagery, drag-





ging several of the vessels into watery graves. One by one the vessels were destroyed, and even the potent magic of the Scions could not hold the rampant forces of nature at bay. The years passed in grim determination as the dwindling number of Smiths strove bravely to reach the forgotten shores of their earliest home.

Finally the headlands of Ansalon rose before the suddenly hopeful sailors. Fifteen rafts remained as they once again drew close to land. Here the powers of the Scions came to the fore, as the huge arks filed between the reefs, angling toward shore.

But the gods had one more blow prepared against the hapless refugees. As the last two rafts veered toward the coast, a great swirling storm overtook them, driving them together in an agonized splintering of timber and flesh. Crushed and pulverized, the wreckage sank beneath the waves, carrying their passengers to certain death within sight of the goal that had beckoned them for so long.

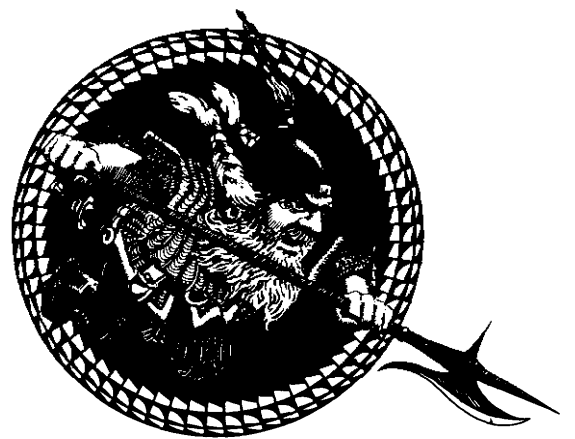
Thirteen rafts reached shore, coming to ground at the base of the high bluffs that ringed the generally placid Bay of Nordmaar, on the northeastern coast of (pre-Cataclysmic) Ansalon. Here, in the shadows of these limestone promontories, the final tragic act in this vast migration was enacted.

BANISHMENT OF THE SCIONS

All of the Scions had survived the voyage, for even those who had ridden on the lost ships had, via their magic, been able to reach the safety of a nearby ark when their own vessels had met with disaster. But finally the fear and envy that had possessed the Smiths for so long came to the fore, and drew the dwarven folk together against their magically-altered kin. This resentment exploded into slaughter.

It was a massacre the Scions did not resist, for any one of them could have easily vanquished a great host of the mundane folk. One after another, the Scions were seized, wrapped in heavy chains, and thrown into the deep eddies along the coast. Their bodies disappeared into the sea, and shortly thereafter the telltale bubbles of their last breaths rose to the surface.

The slaughter continued until there were but 13 of the Scions left, one for each of the rafts that had survived the crossing. Those 13 were set upon one of the rafts, and bid to sail, never returning to the company of their former peoples again. And so the few surviving Scions took to sea, where they passed from the awareness of the world, leaving their historical role in the past. Rumors claimed that they had all perished somehow, but few believed them. The Scions were felt to be immortal, and with their great powers of magic it is quite possible that these survivors still dwell on Krynn. Concealed within the cocoon of their magic, they could live among humans, elves, or dwarves, and their very presence could remain completely undetected.



KAL-THAX

The Smiths took a new name for themselves when they reached the shores of Ansalon. From now on they would be known as the dwarves.

DIRE LANDING ON ANSALON

No sooner had the dwarves set foot upon the shore of Ansalon than they learned something that drove their entire group to the very pinnacle of despair.

As the dwarves busied themselves gathering firewood and establishing a camp, a thick darkness cloaked the group. The sun set into gray haze, and thick clouds prevented any glimpse of star or moonlight. Only the fires of driftwood fought the darkness, and these flared high as the dwarves piled on many logs.

They built 13 fires, one for the survivors of each raft, and gathered around these lone sentinels. A vast new world loomed around them, an entire continent cloaked in the darkness.

One thing they fervently believed about this place that gave them courage against the consuming night was that they had left the magic-wreaking Graystone behind! In order to escape from the enchanted stone they had embarked on a perilous crossing. More than half of them had perished on this flight, and their magic-corrupted cousins, the Scions, had been banished on its account. Yet at least they had escaped the Graystone!

Imagine the growing sense of unease, then, as a familiar gray light filtered through the coastal mist. At first in disbelief, then in growing horror, and finally in complete panic and despair, the dwarves saw the enchanted orb floating toward them.

The Graystone had crossed the ocean with them! In its wake came creatures of magical alteration such as minotaurs, hobgoblins, and crawling lizardmen. The perverted hordes followed the gemstone blindly, taking no notice of the people who cowered around their fires on the shore.

A HERO

Only one dwarf moved forward. This was Kitlin Fishtaker who, with his two-tined spear, had been a successful procurer of food during the crossing. When storms wracked the sea, he calmed the frightened passengers on his raft, and many of them hailed him as the one who had seen them through the turmoil.

Now Kitlin Fishtaker would not allow the plague of his people to strike them again. He advanced toward the Graystone, raising his spear in his hand. At his approach, the horde of creatures in the stone's wake took note of him and swarmed to the attack.

Kitlin Fishtaker did not hurl his spear at the hated artifact. Instead, he scrambled up to the top of a high, crested rock jutting from the coastal cliffs. Here he called to the Graystone, challenging it with insolent taunts.

Whether the stone heard and reacted is unknown. It might instead have been a vagary of the coastal wind that altered its course. It floated inland, away from the huddled mass of refugees on the shore. The Graystone floated to Kitlin Fishtaker, its followers snapping and snarling in pursuit. The beasts scrambled toward the dwarf, but they could not reach him on his high outcrop.

The stone floated to him, drifting into a gentle circle as the courageous fisherman raised his spear. Swift as lightning he struck, and magic crackled along the shaft of his





spear. Kitlin Fishtaker stood outlined in wild magic, while the monsters below him cowered and cursed in fear.

When the magic storm ceased, the dwarven hero was gone. There remained only the blackened prints of his boots on top of the rock and a jagged double-slash of rocks leading up the cliff.

The Graystone drifted inland. It would be long before it troubled the dwarves again with its presence. Nevertheless, mere knowledge of its proximity would provide the impetus for the next centuries of dwarven existence. The habits of living that developed during those dark years would form ingrained traits that would govern dwarven behavior for all the millennia to come.

THE FOUNDING OF KAL-THAX

Bleak with despair, many dwarves abandoned hope. It seemed that their lot was ever to be cursed by the stone of wild magic. Some of them took shelter in the ground, hiding in the caves and caverns they found along the shore. Others of the hardy folk took to their great barges. They would sail along the coast of Ansalon, and find other places to lay their Cold Forge.

THE GREATEST KAL-THAX

The first dwarven homeland was formed among the natural caverns and sea caves along the coast of Nordmaar. In both human and dwarven modern histories it is considered to be a mysterious place of legend, often dismissed as merely a temporary shelter until the dwarves (as they called themselves now) had progressed to the point of excavating the ancient realm of Thorin, 300 years later. Many do not even believe that Kal-Thax existed at all.

Kal-Thax was really much more than any legend indicates. It was a great kingdom in its own right. The name Kal-Thax means "Cold Forge." The bleak imagery is inescapable. Bereft of their elemental magic, cut off from the fertile lands of their homes, the dwarves could only view their new domain as a chill prison/fortress, useful only as protection from the tremendous threat of the wandering Graystone.

Although many stories indicate the dwarves simply occupied caves that already existed, detailed histories indicate that this is the first incidence of great excavations on the part of these stocky demi-humans. True, the Kal-Thax caverns were vast to begin with, and they continually changed as they were formed from the living limestone of the world. But the dwarves set themselves to excavation with a vengeance, boring many tunnels to connect the natural passages, and constructing great vaulting chambers in the rock. These caves plunged deeper into the world, away from the sun.

As the dwarves delved deeper, a strange obsession possessed them. It was an urge to seek refuge from the world of light, sun, and magic in the nether reaches of the underdark. They constructed great gates of rock, pivoting on hinges of limestone, to seal their domain against the outside. They learned to harvest fungi and other crops that could grow in lightless reaches, and they developed skills at draughting smoke away from their forges and kilns, so that they did not exhaust the breathable air within their huge, but finite, chambers.

Undoubtedly the most driving force behind their self-imposed containment was fear of the chaotically magical Graystone. The dwarves shunned magic of all kinds, and many of their numbers were devoted to constant vigilance on the many gates of Kal-Thax, always watching for some sign of intrusion. Occasionally a band of ogres (and later,

minotaurs, who became increasingly common during the Graystone's reign) threatened the dwarves of Kal-Thax. Sometimes these issues were resolved in battle, but the dwarven folk were not true warriors. More often they simply drew deeper into their cocoon, reinforcing and rebuilding their gates whenever those sturdy barriers were smashed down.

THE TOWER OF GARGATH

During this time, the Graystone was imprisoned by the Lord Gargath, who created twin stones that would neutralize the floating gem. *Pathfinder* summoned the Graystone with a beacon of magic that reached to the farthest corners of the world, while *Spellbinder* wove a web of magic that held the Graystone firmly in place once it had answered the irresistible summons of *Pathfinder*. Together the two stones secured the Graystone at the top of a high stone tower. At the time, the dwarves only heard of this through rumor and legend, for none of them ventured onto the surface of Ansalon to observe for themselves the progress of events.

DWARVEN SOCIETY EVOLVES

In the depths of their "Cold Forge," the dwarves labored at the crafts that Reorx had taught them. Without the use of their elemental magic, they lost the art of creating moving machinery. Even their sword steel grew tarnished and weak. They found no metal ores amid the layers of limestone, and the wood they had carried underground with them gradually rotted.

During the course of their occupation of Kal-Thax, a younger generation of dwarves grew to adulthood and began to question the assumptions of their parents that had condemned them to an existence out of sight of the sun. Some of these youngsters ventured

onto the surface, returning with meat and fruits that had been unavailable below.

In these excursions of the younger dwarves, the seeds of adventure had begun to sprout. The urge lacked only a grand compulsion to motivate the stocky folk into taking action that would improve their circumstance.

Such compulsion, when it came, was to be discovered deep within the bowels of Kal-Thax itself. Its strength could not be denied, for the message was received from none other than Reorx himself.

THE FACE IN THE WALL

The dwarves worked diligently to expand the network of Kal-Thax, excavating new caverns, developing canals and water wheels for transportation and power, and gradually working their tunnels into new reaches of the underdark. One day, a delver broke through a wall into an already-existing cavern that had no natural access to the outside world. Leading his party of diggers, this explorer moved hesitantly forward, into a place that was vast and dark, and yet somehow, alive.

Water dripped in many places, striking surfaces of slick rock with resonating chimes. The whole place rang in a deep, minor key. The music was soft and shifting. Its doleful ring continued through a variety of notes and chords.

Raising their whale-oil lanterns, the file of dwarves approached the far wall of the great cavern. A strange formation of rocks reflected the pale light, forming a gloomy visage of shadow and texture. Only when they drew very near did the dwarves stop, gasping in the collective realization of what lay before them.

The wall before them was the image of a great, brooding face!

This dwarven miner and his party sat in amazement before the great visage. They felt in strong measure its grief and sadness. There





was no movement apparent in the stone features, save for the steady dripping of the cave-water, yet they could not escape the feeling that this huge image was somehow, undeniably, a living thing.

At last, the miner sent one of his helpers back to the main warrens of Kal-Thax. Many learned elders, accomplished heroes, and curious and adventuresome dwarves made the long trek into the living cavern, which was in the farthest extremity of Kal-Thax to be discovered or excavated. A great host gathered before the face on the wall, but it was a young child who voiced the truth that the rest of them had failed to perceive.

"Why does Reorx weep?" he asked, his tiny voice penetrating through the ringing music of the chamber as if the thrumming chords ceased their sound momentarily, that all might hear these words.

Indeed, the recognition became clear to all. This was the image of Reorx, and he did weep! In fact, closer examination showed that the water dripping down the face seemed to emerge from the craggy rocks that framed the image's eye sockets.

THE QUEST FOR PURPOSE

Life in Kal-Thax changed considerably with the discovery of the face, which seems to have occurred some two and a half centuries after the Cold Forge was initially settled. All mundane practices seemed to lose their importance, such as the harvesting of food, the excavations into new passages, and the bickering between individuals and families. The population ate enough to stay alive, but the rest of their energy was directed toward the image discovered in the deep rocks.

The visage was treated with reverence approaching awe. Those dwarves who went to meditate before the face did so silently, and even when a great throng of them gathered in the chamber there was no talking, not

even the sounds of restless movement. It was as if these dwarves became the stone equal to the image they studied, desiring to emulate their god in whatever facets they could discern. In this sacred chamber the populace of Kal-Thax refrained from eating and drinking as well, and those who came and left did so with such silence that they might have been practicing skills of thievery.

ENDLESS DEBATE

In the upper halls of Kal-Thax, great debates raged. What was the significance of the face? Why did Reorx weep. What action did he want of his favored children? About the only point of agreement was the common notion that the face had some crucial significance. Reorx obviously tried to tell the dwarves *something*, but the nature of the message became a cosmic mystery that kept the argument raging for several decades.

Some dwarves held that Reorx rebuked them for a lack of piety, that their delvings had not been sanctified in his name, and that consequently he could no longer offer his blessings to his children. They wailed and cried. In fact, some of them advocated self-inflicted punishments, fasting, and vows of silence, in a desperate effort to prove themselves worthy of their god's respect and devotion.

Others declared that they had failed to create the city that Reorx had desired of them, that the Cold Forge was inadequate as a dwelling and that the dwarves were presumptuous in thinking it grand or mighty. With a slightly greater following than the guilt-ridden critics of their own worthiness, these dwarves suggested that they devote more efforts to the construction of Kal-Thax, including a greater reach of temples and shrines. They sought the respect of the gods by showing the immortal ones that the dwarves could raise great monuments and wondrous altars to all their

**Ansalon & Locations of Kal-Thax
Circa 3,000 P.C.**





deities. Reorx, naturally, was granted full patriarchal status over the pantheon.

Both of the preceding points of view received great volumes of debate, and proponents of each spent days, weeks, and finally, *years*, in contemplation of the inscrutable visage. Yet neither side could gain any logical momentum, any indication that they understood the wishes of their god.

ACTION

At the same time, other dwarves began to depart from Kal-Thax, seeking to learn about events on the surface world. They returned with alarming stories, and through these gradual and tentative explorations a picture of the world above began to grow in the minds of the Kal-Thax dwarves.

The surface of Ansalon was a place in chaos. The dwarven explorers found many settlements abandoned, and others wracked by strife and violence. Great armies of ogres and minotaurs, humans and elves, marched back and forth across the land with no discernable purpose save brutality and destruction.

The dwarven explorers, striving to remain unnoticed and discreet, could see no pattern of alliance or objective. In one year the ogres and humans would battle the elves. In the next year, the humans would stand alone against the elves who had allied with the former allies of mankind. In one epic strife, a dwarven observer saw four armies, each battling *all* the others with apparently impartial violence.

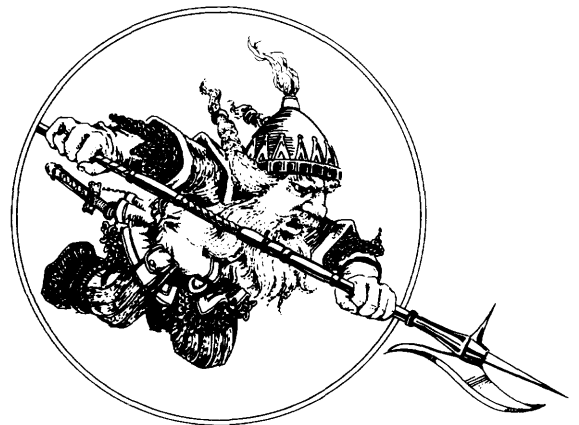
Most significant were the tales of the Graystone, which was now called the Graystone of Gargath, for the human lord who had imprisoned it. The magic of the stone still warped the land, and had worked considerable corruption in the mind of Lord Gargath himself.

Some of these venturesome dwarves inevitably encountered members of the other

races on the surface of Ansalon. As often as not the stocky, bearded strangers were viewed as curiosities, and thus they came to interact with peoples of all the different races. Remember that the population of Ansalon, unlike Taladas, had no basis for blaming any of their troubles on the carelessness of the Smiths. From these interactions, the dwarves pieced together a picture of the situation that was more accurate than the necessarily opinionated outlooks of the involved peoples. These dwarves returned to Kal-Thax strongly convinced that they understood the problem. It was the Graystone of Gargath.

Reorx would not be pleased with them unless they took responsibility for their actions, and sought to return the Graystone to its rightful place on Lunitari, sparing the peoples of Krynn the nightmare of its chaotic ramblings.

Indeed, as the debate raged, it seemed to many observers that the granite visage lost some of its mournful air, instead taking on a look of grim resolve. The idea swept through Kal-Thax like a surging flame, drawing more and more of the dwarves into its grip. The Graystone was the source of their heartache! They would reverse the great blight they had brought upon the world, and once again they would stand in the favor of their god!



WAR WITH GARGATH

An emissary was selected to go to Lord Gargath and seek a return of the gemstone. Horas Graybrow, a veteran leader of the migration and founding of Kal-Thax, accepted the responsibility of that noble undertaking. Along with an escort of several dozen young warriors and priests, he went onto the surface and made the journey to Gargath.

Horas and his party traveled for more than a month, moving generally southward. Since many armies ranged across the plains, he chose to lead his little band along the lower crests of the Khalkists. This choice of routes would have profound effects on the future of Krynn. For the time being, it simply offered the small party of dwarves a chance to travel in relative safety.

The fortress of Gargath was visible from the high ridges of the range. A circular wall of stone surrounded the famous tower. According to the best contemporary accounts (all of which have been passed along through word of mouth) the tower itself was of a height that seemed to challenge the mountain summits. Even a conservative estimate would be 1,000 feet, which is not an impossible reach if one considers the strong magical basis for its existence. The pale gray light of the captured stone could be seen emanating from the high parapet during the hours of darkness.

When the dwarves approached the great wall, which enclosed a circle nearly one mile in diameter, the gates were thrown open and a grand parade of humans bid the dwarves to enter. Garlands of flowers were strewn along the avenue before them, and a cheering multitude flanked their march toward the very base of the tower.

Here they were met by the infamous Lord Gargath himself, and feted with drink and food. Music was raised to the heavens, and

the humans commenced a great celebration while the lord of Gargath explained that he welcomed the dwarven party as his honored guests.

The veteran Horas was made suspicious by the tumultuous welcome, and watched through narrowed eyes the frenzied celebration. He pretended to drink and eat of the bounty, but he took no wine, consumed no meat. Instead, he watched, and he became convinced that he beheld a scene of utter madness.

Lord Gargath spoke boastfully of his cleverness in using the twin stones, Spellbinder and Pathfinder, to secure the Graystone in its lofty prison. The lord bragged that he had dwelled in the shadow of the stone for many years, but that he had never suffered any effects from the powerful magic imprisoned just above him.

As day passed into night the celebration grew more frenetic, with dancers wheeling through the darkness. The people of Gargath burned no torches or candles. Instead, a ghostly light seeped from the height of the tower, illuminating the scene like a dreary valley beneath a heavily overcast midwinter sky. One by one the dwarves of Horas's party succumbed to the enchantments of their hosts, falling into slumber from which their leader could not awaken them.

Finally, only Horas remained. Gargath pressed more food and drink upon him, and the dwarf found his host increasingly suspicious of his sustained consciousness. Finally the human lord tired of the game. Seeing that all the rest of Horas' party were immobilized, he summoned his castle guard and was about to set them upon his remaining guest.

At this moment the celebration was interrupted by a tapping at the fortress door. It was





a soft noise that somehow cut through the chaos and could not be ignored by the humans. When the gates were cast open, an old beggar stepped within, announcing quietly that he sought lodgings for the night and would gladly pay for his keep with the stories spun by his golden tongue.

The men of Gargath expected their lord to cast the arrogant visitor out, or perhaps mete out an even more brutal response. They were astonished when, in a flurry of welcome, the ruler invited the beggar into the castle and bade him sit in a place of honor beside the hearth.

Horas Graybrow moved to the side, allowing the newcomer to take his seat. The old man began to spin his tales, and it was as if a spell of entrancement hushed the vast, crowded chamber. For hour after hour the beggar talked, speaking of great histories, of dragons and elves and gods, creating pictures with his words, pictures that lived and breathed and danced through the minds of his listeners.

All the listeners, that is, save one. Horas alone got a glimpse of the speaker as he really was. This was not a human. It was a creature with a stature of a dwarf, but covered with skin of rippling gold, with hair like strands of fine-spun silver. In that glimpse Horas knew that this was a Scion, one of the 13 who survived the landing of the Second Migration. His purpose here was obvious, and Horas took advantage of it.

While all the humans were engrossed in the tales of the old wanderer, Horas Graybrow crept from the castle of Gargath and began to make his way across the plains in a return to Kal-Thax. For a full month the Scion, who was in reality Chisel Loremaster, weaved his tales about the humans. Then, like the dissipation of a wisp of smoke, he disappeared.

When the human lord realized the trick that had been played upon him, his rage was a fearsome thing. He ordered all the rest of

the dwarven party to be put to death, but found to his further rage that the drugs with which they had been sedated had already served to poison them quite fatally. Thus, Gargath was denied even that outlet for his cruelty.

THE MARCH TO THE GRAYSTONE

The dwarven ambassador, Horas Graybrow, went quickly back to Kal-Thax to report on the disturbing results of his mission. He tried to avoid the habitations of humans, for his experience in Gargath had taught him that they could not be trusted. But finally, traveling alone and short of provisions, he was forced to turn to strangers for food.

He fell in with a band of human warriors, led by a man who wore plate armor of bronze. This fellow was Sir Evian Thane, a forerunner of the brand of knights that would soon become a force for law and justice across Ansalon.

Sir Thane, however, had lost his lands to a horde of minotaurs. At one time he had held sizeable estates, not too far from the holdings of Lord Gargath, and the knight suspected his neighboring lord's complicity in the creation of the monstrous horde. At the time of his encounter with Horas, he was simply wandering the plains of Krynn, seeking game and gathering such grain as his band could find. Nevertheless, they shared this bounty with the wandering dwarf, and in the course of their conversations they realized that both of their peoples faced a common foe.

Horas told of the treachery worked by Lord Gargath, and of the growing power of the Graystone. This tale, coupled with the growing numbers of minotaurs wandering the plains, convinced the human knight that something must be done to counter the threat. Horas was already determined on this

point, and thus was born the first plan of cooperation between humans and dwarves.

ALLIANCES

Sir Thane had four sons. He sent them to the four directions to gather humans to his banner. All the folk of the plains had encountered the horrors of wild magic in one form or another, and these young knights would try to band the disparate peoples together to wage war on Gargath and destroy the stone once and for all. Of course, the means of its destruction was still somewhat vague, but the task was one which drew upon a strong and common motivation.

Taking Sir Thane as a human ambassador, Horas finally returned to Kal-Thax with news of his embassy's results. Naturally, the dwarves were inflamed to anger by Gargath's dire treachery. They also feared the growing effects of the magic, and so they determined to mount an expedition with their new allies in an attempt to bring Lord Gargath to his just end.

The dwarves by themselves were not numerous enough to form a great host, but they were much better armed and equipped than their far more myriad human allies. By common consent the dwarves devoted their labors to forging and crafting weapons and armor, while the humans gathered ever more warriors from across the face of Kryn. Each of the four sons of Thane returned with many thousands of men, and after more than a year of preparation, a mighty army set out across the plains.

As they drew near to Gargath, they discovered another army that also approached the magically-raised ramparts. Stopping to parley, the dwarves once again sent Horas, whose wisdom and speaking skills had formed their first alliance. They encountered a host of elves from Silvanesti, determined to claim vengeance for the afflictions of magic that

had begun to sour even their enchanted home. The elven forests had trembled to the crush of invading bakali lizardmen, and strange mutations had begun to affect some of the trees and blossoms of that enchanted wood. Like the humans and the dwarves, the elves blamed these unwelcome changes on the power of the Graystone and joined their forces.

As the great armies drew into a siege about the tower, another force marched down from the mountains. These were ogres, and their appearance created great consternation among the allies, for all of them thought that this new arrival represented a dire threat. Yet, as the dwarves and their allies turned to the defense of their camp, the ogre lord, Brackthatch Glour, approached with hands upraised in the sign of parley. Even this non-threatening advance would not have prevented bloodshed, were it not for the tolerance and growing wisdom of Horas Graybrow.

The dwarven ambassador had come to be honored as a leader among his people, and he persuaded them to speak with the ogres, to learn the secrets of their hearts. The brutal humanoids, it seemed, had developed every bit as much hatred and fear of the magical stone as had their smaller neighbors. Brackthatch had brought his troops on an epic march, crossing the crest of the Khalkists in winter, just so that he could confront the human lord who posed such a threat to the world.

AN IMPORTANT DISCOVERY

Amid the warriors making the march to the tower was a solid and sturdy dwarven veteran named Agate Thorwallen. He had organized a company of crossbowmen, and trained them to a peak of readiness. His men had acted as scouts during much of the march, and their route had taken them through the





heights of the Khalkist Mountains. This fact means little to the campaign, but matters a great deal in the future of the dwarves.

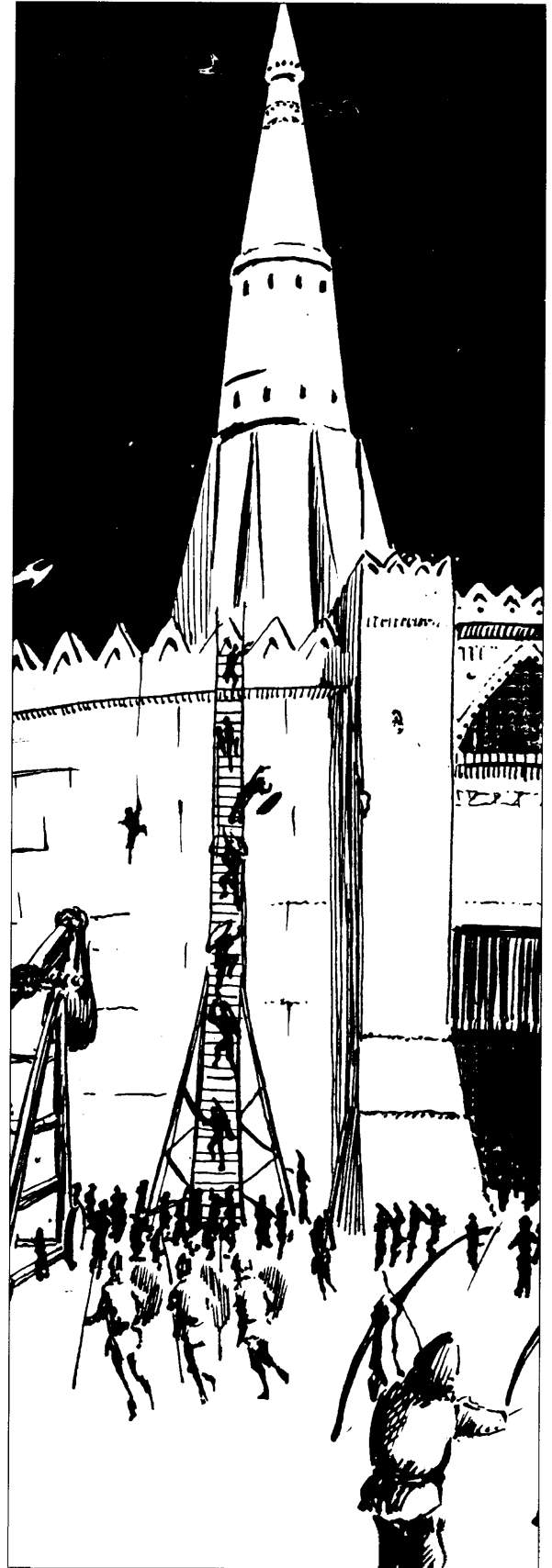
Thorwallen's epic march scaled heights of dizzying grandeur through terrain more mountainous than any encountered by the dwarves since their return to Ansalon. Propelled by curiosity and a growing sense of destiny, the dwarven captain took his company some distance out of the way of a direct march. Agate announced that he wanted to investigate a narrow niche he observed in the mountains to the west, claiming that he feared an ambush from that unexpected direction.

The stolid dwarves marched up a narrow defile, flanked by steeply-sloping walls of rising stone to either side. Before them the notch in the ridgeline beckoned, and when they finally crested the pass, Agate Thorwallen and his men beheld a scene of consummate wonder. A deep valley, a place where two mighty rivers joined, swept away from a lofty mountain crag. A symmetrical series of terraces surrounded this crag, far too regular to have been naturally formed.

Ever mindful of the need to reverse his march and join the armies gathering around Gargath, Thorwallen nevertheless took the time to explore the valley and its central massif. He recorded his observations in preparation for his return to Kal-Thax, and a copy of his journal entry has been preserved in the Great Library at Palanthas.

Agate Thorwallen wrote the following description.

The first of the rivers followed a wide channel, though it was shallow and gravel-lined in its bed. We had no difficulty crossing. As we marked our ford with a cairn of large rocks, Chisel Mane pounded an inscription into a flat stone face. As he hammered, the ringing of the stones took on a beautiful note of perfection, a ringing sound that carried through the waters of the river itself



Awestruck, possessed of a deep sense of wonder, we named this stream the "Hammer-song."

just beyond this first channel flowed another, not so wide but deeper and more rapid of current. A hurried crossing did not seem feasible, so we turned our feet upstream, toward the high mountain and its surrounding belts of plateau. Along the way we found the skeleton of an ogre, clad in the remains of a bronze breastplate, bearing the ring that might once have supported a shield in his right hand. The corpse had floated along the river until it had encountered a gentle eddy. Here it had come to rest, leaving a grinning skull and a skeleton in comfortable repose, looking back up the stream.

Humbly we named the second stream the "Bone" River.

Finally our steps took us to the lowest of the broad terraces. We found ditches and causeways, with a solid retaining wall of stone embracing the rising slope before the next level. That place too, showed signs of careful construction and a long history of use.

Terrace after terrace showed these signs of care, but there was no sign of any current resident. Each terrace was placed so as to collect as much sunlight as possible, so that the vegetation growing here was far more verdant than we expected to find in these lofty heights.

On the top terrace, which encircled a high shoulder of the mountain summit, we found a wide niche leading into the massif itself. A granite arch, simply made of two pillars and a capstone, framed this entrance, indicating nothing about the dark recesses beyond.

Obviously, this place had been built by a powerful and capable people. But who were they?

With hearts pounding, we entered the niche in the mountainside. A ceiling lofted overhead, more than three times the height of any dwarf Advancing slowly, we allowed our

eyes to adjust to the darkness, observing that the stonework showed the labor of many powerful diggers. The walls were only roughly finished, but the floor beneath our feet showed the smoothness of many thousands of heavy feet.

At last we reached a mighty cave, hewn from the living rock of the mountain and rising overhead into a great, curved dome. Pillars of granite, rough-hewn like the walls but stronger than the stoutest tree trunk, stood around the perimeter of this great, dark cavern.

Even in that darkness we sensed that this was a place of destiny. Slowly we walked about, a hundred trail-weary dwarves staring in wonder at the work of ageless craftsmen.

Brick Hale, my chief lieutenant and a dwarf with many years' experience in observing the world around him, guessed that it was the work of ogres.

I agreed that it could have been nothing less.

One of the younger troops wondered why it had been abandoned. Brick explained that at one time the ogres were people of culture and accomplishment. It was only in the later years of the Age of Dreams that they grew degenerate, becoming the monsters we know them to be today he told us.

They could have built this place, I mused. But when they left it, their claim upon it was abandoned. So I made the claim in the name of our people. This was a place we were to remember!

One of our bowmen called to us from a shadowed place near the back wall of the cavern. We joined him to find a narrow crack in the stone surface. Warm, moist air puffed outward, bearing the scent of metal and fire steeped in the bowels of the earth. If we had needed any further proof of the rightness of our claim, this was it. The place we had found would never be a Cold Forge!

Hushed with awe, we emerged from beneath the crude arch. From the wide ter-





race we looked upward to see a needle-like crag, looming over the tunnel entrance like a sentinel over the entire vale.

Then, to the west, the setting sun dropped into a rounded swale along that jagged mountain rest. It was so like a bed that we named the range the "Suncradles," and with that name it seemed that we put the final sigil to our claim.

We spent the night on that lofty terrace, exposed to the wind, but warmed by a sense of destiny and spirit.

It was with torn hearts that we took up the march to war on the following day. Yet as we approached Gargath, and the horrors of the campaign loomed before us, there was not a man of my company who did not feel a renewed sense of hope from the discovery we had left behind.

The destiny Thorwallen refers to will become clear as the history of the dwarves unfolds. But for now we must be content with a return to the enchanted realm of Gargath, where the masses of warriors gathered and prepared to exact their revenge.

FIRST ASSAULT

In the shadow of the great spire of Gargath, gathering across the foothills of the Khalkist Mountains, the humans, elves, ogres, and dwarves prepared for the great assault. The battles have been well-documented, yet some facts must be set forth.

The actual crafting of weapons and armor for the attacking armies was performed by the most skilled crafters among the dwarves. However, these implements were primarily made of bronze, though iron was employed by a few of the most talented workers. The secret of steel was not yet understood.

Many of the most imaginative dwarves set about to build the great war machines that were to batter down the walls of the fortress

and allow the attacking host to gain entrance. From the comfortable vantage of history it is easy to laugh at these constructs, or dismiss them as the rattletrap schemes of crazed gnomes, impractical and virtually useless in the world. But the war machines they created for this siege were powerful, ingenious devices. Each of them represented a technological attempt to come to grips with a vexing problem.

From the scrolls of Chisel Loremaster we gain a closer approximation of the truth as he describes the first of these great machines rolling toward the high walls of Gargath.

The device rolled upon huge wheels fashioned from the cross sections of many vallenwood logs. Each was several times greater in diameter than the height of an ogre. The actual structure was a tower of heavy wooden beams nearly 100 feet high. Bronze sheets flanked the pillars of the tower as protection against fire. A great ball of iron, affixed to the head of a powerful ram, was suspended midway up the great machine.

The problem of climbing the gradual slope approaching the walls of Gargath proved vexing, but not insurmountable. Contrary to many legendary accounts, the machine was not powered by steam. Instead, it relied upon the brute force of 200 oxen, lashed into five long traces. Each of the beasts had a scale-mail blanket across its head and shoulders, as defense against the arrows and stones that would inevitably rain from the battlements.

The war machine was a device far more grandiose than anything previously seen upon the face of Krynn. It rolled forward like an unstoppable monolith. A full complement of human archers lined its lower levels, while a company of massive ogres brandished their clubs on the upper platform, bellowing curses at the towering fortress before them. Slowly, deliberately, the oxen pulled the device closer to the walls.

When the war machine reached its point of nearest approach, the oxen were to be led to the side because of the five long harnesses before the machine. A full battalion of ogres would then drive the tower the last hundred feet to the wall. However, this is the point where the power of Gargath disrupted the carefully laid plan.

A magical shower of flames tumbled from the wall, dropping like spattering drops of oil amid the great bovines. Panic quickly seized the oxen, and the creatures bolted in all directions, dragging their heavy harness behind. At first the tower lurched to a halt, twisted slightly by the panic-stricken oxen, who were bellowing and bucking. The stampeding animals exerted great pressure on the base of the structure, pulling it gradually to the side, away from the high stone wall.

Soon, the force of gravity took over. Canted at an unsupportable angle, still manned by its howling complement of ogres and men, the tower tilted farther and farther down the gradual slope. As it tipped it gathered momentum, and in another minute it crashed to earth in a splintering chaos of screaming men, yowling ogres, and twisted, shrieking plates of bronze. Many of the oxen were crushed beneath it, while those that survived broke free from their traces and charged, bellowing, into the ranks of warriors following the tower toward the walls.

These men and dwarves could only give way before the mindless stampede. Within a few minutes, chaos wracked the attacking forces, and the enemies of Gargath streamed back in disarray from the source of their frustration. The tower, for now, would stand.

Chisel Loremaster,
Tales of the First Alliance

CONTINUING CAMPAIGN

The second device was equally ambitious, employing several huge catapults casting fireballs at the walls of Gargath and the lofty tower beyond. Learning the lesson of their first assault, the dwarves enlisted ogres to push this machine for the entire course of its approach, rather than rely on the oxen. The bombard lumbered forward, stopping just short of the wreckage of the first machine before it began to lob its fiery missiles into Gargath.

According to Chisel Loremaster, this war machine actually inflicted significant damage on many of the wooden parts of the fortress complex. According to the dwarven historian, clouds of oily black smoke rose into the sky from numerous fires, until the billows grew so thick that they actually obscured the view of the tower.

It is as historically certain as anything can be from the vantage of three millennia that this second war machine did in fact burn to the ground. Whether it was ignited by return fire from the fortress, or through the actions of a fire-bearing sortie of the Gargath forces, or perhaps by a magical barrage of flame similar to that which routed the oxen, remains unknown. Even the Loremaster provides no specifics.

Nevertheless, the second machine did burn to the ground, its stores of oil erupting from the heat and belching great balls of smoke and fire into the air. Again the attacking forces withdrew in confusion, while the defenders jeered and challenged them from the still-unbreached walls.

At this point some of the attackers, particularly among the ogres and humans, began to lose heart with the venture. It seemed that nothing they could do would even chip an entrance through the walls, much less gain access to the tower or provide the means of defeating the magic-using lord of Gargath. The ever haughty and aloof elves roundly





criticized the courage and ingenuity of their allies, such that those long-lived warriors were driven from the camp at the points of many swords. The siege of Gargath seemed to have reached an unsuccessful conclusion.

A NEW HERO

It was at this juncture that a dwarven hero, Rudden Magmast, gave a speech of unification and motivation. He stood upon one of the great wheels that had supported the war machines, exhorting the men, ogres, and dwarves to follow him in one more try. It was Magmast who proposed that the attackers build the *Colossus*.

Revisionist historians have attempted to portray the Colossus as no more effective (at least by design) than its predecessors. This is undoubtedly because modern scribes are hampered by their understanding of gnomes, as that pesky folk have lived and behaved since the time of the Graystone. However, the honest (dwarven) historian can relate the tale closer to the truth.

The Colossus performed exactly as was intended. The brainchild of Rudden Magmast, the huge machine was conceived not as a vehicle to carry the attackers into battle, but as a device to batter down the wall of Gargath, giving the assaulting forces entrance to the courtyard and the tower beyond.

Again we see the influence of revision in the tales which have commonly been spread across Ansalon. These storytellers believe that the Colossus could not have worked because, in their twisted logic, it was built by gnomes. In fact, as will be illustrated, the gnomish race as it is currently known did not even exist until after this attack had been made. The builders of the Colossus were dwarves. They were steady, stolid, and pragmatic. The machine they devised did exactly what it was supposed to do.

FINAL ASSAULT

Unlike the previous two war machines, the strength of the third and final device rested not in what it could do, but in what it was. The towering structure loomed even higher than the battering ram had, but its upper decks concealed no ranks of archers or assault troops. Rather, it was a top-heavy structure packed with heavy stone. Huge beams, tipped with iron balls, provided a wide base of gravity closer to the ground. These same beams doubled as the traces with which the dwarves pressed the Colossus forward.

Finally, as the huge object drew near to the walls, it came to the wreckage of the two previous machines. Here it stopped. But not because it got tangled in the wreckage, as most historians claim. Instead, it reached this point by its advanced design.

The creaking structure swayed and wobbled, its huge weight of stone barely balanced by the wide counterweights at the base of the tower. Having achieved this vantage, the dwarves carefully and deliberately withdrew these heavy beams. Then the huge structure tipped forward. Propelled by the massive weight of stone, the top of the tower crashed upon the wall of Gargath and tore a massive breach in that previously impregnable barrier.

BREACH AND BATTLE

Rudden Magmast raised a banner and led the furious charge of the dwarves. Scrambling over the wreckage, the warriors of Kal-Thax spread through the shattered courtyard of Gargath, sweeping the defenders before them. Behind them came legions of humans and ogres, inspired by the courage and ferocity of the dwarven advance. There are some claims that a few elves participated in these final moments of the battle, but this has not been confirmed.

No one knows the exact cause of the Graystone's final release. Chisel Loremaster claims that Rudden Magmast led his frenzied attackers up the winding stairs, fighting toward the top of the tower and leaving the stone steps slick with the blood of human defenders. When he reached the upper platform, Lord Gargath himself pried Spellbinder free from its mount, and sent the magical stone crashing to the courtyard a thousand feet below, where it shattered.

Released from the imprisoning power of Spellbinder, the Graystone was once again free. Before the anguished eyes of the attackers, it floated into the air, releasing pulsing waves of magic over the assembled armies.

Some of the dwarves were mutated into gnomes. They became tiny, trivial creatures who lost all the best features of their fathering race. Whether these ridiculous demi-humans actually pursued the stone toward the west, or whether they were driven from the camps of the righteously offended dwarves, cannot be accurately determined.

It is well-known that the Graystone did not create the race of kender from dwarves. Rather, it seems likely that in the course of its meandering passage, the magical stone passed over the army of elves who had already withdrawn from the battle. It is common knowledge that elves are a humorless and haughty race, obsessed only with the grandizing of their own arrogance.

Nevertheless, some of their less-odious traits such as curiosity, a sense of poetry and wonder, and perhaps even a childlike naivete, were crystallized by the Graystone into the diminutive race of kender. After all, their pointed ears, clean-shaven chins, and perpetual obnoxiousness are clearly drawn from the elven mold. But there is no dwarven pragmatism or physical strength, and are no beards, that would indicate dwarven extraction,

Clearly, the antecedents of the kender were not the dwarves. If the tale has been misrep-

resented through history, it is only because conventional lorekeepers rely too heavily upon the reports of unreliable sources, and do not even consider the evidence of their own common sense and eyesight.

HISTORICAL REBUTTAL

Because of the extent to which history is revised and asserted in the dwarven version, objectivity deems it only prudent to allow or even require the presentation of a contrary point of view.

To His Excellence Astinus of Palanthas, Supreme Historian of Krynn

In the normal course of events I should make every effort to remain aloof from the fractious and disputatious accounts of pugna-cious dwarvenhood. I will allow the bearded midgets to have their own interpretations, tailored to their own misguided perceptions of the events that have formed the history of Krynn.

Where the honor of the elves is at stake, however, I must take exception.

I beg your indulgence in my rebuttal, for there occur in the previous passage two assertions which cannot be allowed to stand. Firstly that the elves abandoned the assault on Gargath before its conclusion, and secondly (and most scandalous!), that the race of kender is somehow extracted from the elves!

Both of these pretentious claims are patently false, a fact which I am honor-bound to prove.

In the first case, numerous accounts of elven warriors have survived the ages. Indeed, it was an elven warrior, an ancestor of the great Sylvanos himself, who led the charge up the winding tower, only to see the object of the campaign float away from the attackers.

I would point out that, as the life-expectancy of elves is so very much greater than





that of any other contemporaneous peoples, one can hardly question the veracity of elven accounts. It is in fact possible for an elven eyewitness to tell his story five or six centuries after an event. This is something quite unthinkable for the pathetically short-lived humans, and even the barely more long-lived dwarves!

I have spoken to elven descendants of veterans of the Siege of Gargath, a fact which no other historian can claim. The tales of dwarves and humans are merely fanciful interpretations of legends dating back through unthinkable ages. Yet, to the elven historian they are stories learned at the fireside from those who actually witnessed history in the making.

Despite the odiousness of the first exaggeration, the second claim is the one that raises serious and ugly possibilities. Were it not for the lofty dignity and serene patience of elvendom, such scurrilous accusations might be viewed as just cause for war.

Dwarven sources claiming that we are the forefathers of kender? The very suggestion is ludicrous and insulting in the extreme. To discern the truth one must look beyond trivial superficialities. Does the Esteemed Historian think that racial patterns are determined by such inconsequential indicators as facial hair?

Instead, one must look at the complete picture. It is common knowledge that elves are the wisest of the races. They possess the most dignity, and who could argue with the fact that they are the most physically beautiful? Elven seriousness and deliberation is a widely recognized trait, not to mention their longevity.

It requires only a cursory study of the aforementioned facts before any reasonable scholar must dismiss such cosmetic trappings as pointed ears, beardlessness, and physical stature. Of course, the necessity for some minimal scholarship ability admittedly rules out any dwarf reaching the correct conclusion. Nevertheless, I am certain that any dispassion-

ate observer cannot conclude other than that the dwarven version of events is libelous, slanderous, and represents a grotesque distortion of facts that are as self-evident as the beard on any dwarfs face!

In deep respect and eternal loyalty,

Quivalin Soth, Bard of Silvanesti

RESULTS OF THE GARGATH CAMPAIGN

Following the release of the Graystone and its subsequent disappearance to the west, the dwarves made a long and bleak march back to their Cold Forge of Kal-Thax. Even in its failure, the siege and its necessary marches had forever changed the face of dwarvenhood upon Krynn.

The astute reader will remember Agate Thorwallen, dwarven captain. His troops had fought with courage and tenacity. When Rudden Magmast led his charge up the tower stairs, it was Thorwallen's bowmen who held the courtyard at the base of the tower, preventing the lord's men from mounting a feasible counterattack.

After the siege, Agate Thorwallen remembered the pristine heights of the mountains he had scaled during the course of the long march to Gargath. He had mined samples from those slopes, and returned with these to Kal-Thax. There he laid them out for his countrymen to see.

The stones made a compelling argument. Many of them were rich in metal ores. Copper, iron, and nickel were all present in significant quantities. He also described a cavern that belched forth great clouds of sulphurous heat. Finally, he told them of mountain vistas, of windswept heights and jagged, rocky crags.

Many of the dwarvenfolk heard music and prophecy in his tales. Agate Thorwallen

recruited from the people of Kal-Thax, promising them a difficult trek and many years of hard work. But he held before them the promise of something that would, one day, be much greater than the dour limestone caves of Kal-Thax.

It was a message that, for the generations since the Second Migration, the dwarves had been waiting to hear. Many thousands of them swore to follow the war hero, anointing him chieftain of a new band. Indeed, Chisel Loremaster indicates that by far the majority of Kal-Thax's population embarked on the epic trek, following in the footsteps of Agate Thorwallen into the foothills, and then up the steep slopes of the Khalkist Mountains.

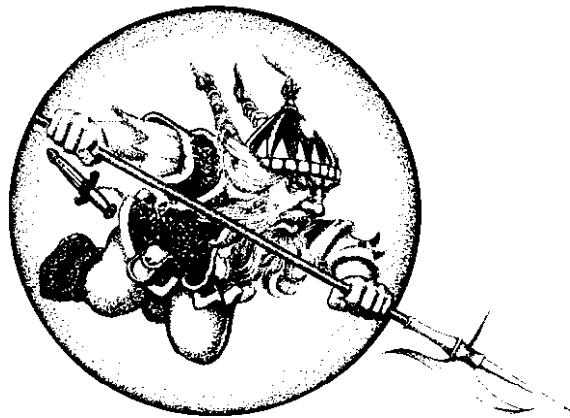
He showed them the terraced hillsides and, within the mountain itself, the great hall he had discovered on his earlier march. The place was the work of ancient ogres, the dwarves deduced. The work was crude, but sturdy, with the excavations truly massive in scope. The broad terraces were perfectly positioned to capture a great deal of sunlight, far more than would normally warm this lofty elevation.

Of course, the ruins of the ogre fortress were much smaller than the dwarves required. At the point of their first dwarven occupation, the entire network barely equalled the scope of one large dwelling chamber in Kal-Thax. Still, the chambers were solidly built, supported by massive pillars of stone that, despite their being crudely chiseled, had been standing for the better part of a thousand years with no sign of decay.

The halls would provide shelter for the dwarves through the coming winter. More importantly, they led to a natural passage in the heart of the mountain that was the source of the warm gasses Agate had first noticed about this place. One of his first tasks was to lead a party of explorers into this crack, following down into the earth, until they reached the hidden source of its warmth.

In the heart of the mountain, Agate showed his dwarves a smoking cave. It was not a dripping channel eroded through limestone, but a smoldering crack blasted through the heart of mountain stone by a force beyond imagining. Carefully the dwarves crept within, led of course by Agate and a few of his wisest companions. In the deepest depths of the crevasse they found a bubbling pool of melted rock. Searing heat surrounded the bold dwarves, as they found veins of fabulous minerals that sliced through many of the surrounding heights.

Here, in the place they would call Thorin, the dwarves prepared to make their home.



THORIN, THE FIRST KINGDOM

Nestled in the heights of the Khalkists is the deep, wide valley that the dwarves called Thorin. The ogres who first inhabited this place were long forgotten by the time the dwarves arrived. Though the latecomers quickly claimed the abandoned ruins, by the time they had dwelled here for a few years the signs of ogre habitation were almost completely buried beneath the works of the ambitious dwarves.

The exceptions to this were the broad terraces that surrounded the ogre lair. Even when the dwarves erected their great keep and the vast delvings of Thorin, the wide fields on the mountain slope were maintained and fertilized as a primary summer food source.

To those who lived here, the place would be called Thorin, the True Home.

Agate Thorwallen brought his dwarves here in a summer-long march that took them through winding valleys and over lofty, windswept passes. When they finally reached the deep vale, their new leader announced that they would found a dwarvenhome for the ages. History has shown that he spoke the truth.

The deep cave was only one feature of this place, though the caverns around the pool of magma would become central to the new realm. The dwarves immediately set to delving, for they reached the valley in late summer and they knew that winter would come early to these high peaks. Forests were logged and lumber was carried to the heights to form the frameworks of temporary buildings. Stone was mined from the mountains, commencing to take shape as what would one day be the Great Keep of Thorin. And the passages excavated by the stoneworkers were shored up and finished, so that all the people would

find shelter here for the coming winter.

Chisel Loremaster gives us the following telling account of this first autumn's labor.

Even the children lent their hands, wielding axes against wood or chisels against stone. The first shelters were long lodges of plain pine logs, with roofs shingled in the slate that coated so many of the lower foothills. Carts were hauled by the strongest dwarves, while others formed long files to carry each log up, ever higher, into the cradle of stone among the high peaks.

The weary dwarves set about making a home in these lodges and high tunnels. They found that the rock was far harder than the limestone that had surrounded their Cold Forge, and this caused grumbling and dismay as the new residents began to understand the work required before they could make of their place a moderate fortress, not to mention a home with the comforts they had grown used to in Kal-Thax.

Still the builders persevered. Bronze and iron picks grew dull against the hard granite, while hunters grew wiry and strong from the long uphill march when they returned with game. Animals were abundant since the region had never been hunted. And one advantage of the heights was a plentiful supply of ice, so that meat could be stored for the future.

In the meantime, the miners, delvers, and smiths cleared out a great cavern around the bubbling pool. The heat from this molten rock, they knew, would warm them throughout the winter.

When the snows closed the passes and filled the mountain valleys, the dwarves withdrew into their new home and closed their stone gates against the winter. Warmed by the



vapors that naturally rose from the heart of the mountain, fed by plentiful stockpiles of meat and grain that they were able to freeze for the en tire winter, the people of Thorin spent a winter of surprising comfort.

Finally, spring came to the high valleys, and the dwarves opened their gates to a growing season in their lofty abode. But already they knew that Thorin was the best home the dwarves had ever had.

Chisel Loremaster,
The First Best Home

Already some of the dwarves had grandiose ideas. The innate comforts of their new lair, they felt, provided a base for developments the like of which the world had never seen. Even before the end of that first winter, these innovative and hard-working folk had set to work.

It was Agate Thorwallen who devised the system of stone flues by which the molten rock could be diverted to the forges. Supplies of shiny black, highly flammable firestone were plentiful in a neighboring valley, and much of this was brought to Thorin for use as supplemental fuel.

INVENTION AND DISCOVERY

Sometime during the early inhabitation of Thorin, the dwarves began to discover the true potential of their eternal heat source. One of the first developments was something that would have been impossible in the Cold Forge. It was the discovery of the procedure for making glass. The clear, crystalline substance was created by dumping sand into the living magma. The dwarves immediately began to discover its many uses.

Dwarves of Thorin quickly developed skill as glass-blowers, making a wide variety of

carrying and storage vessels, as well as mugs and platters for dining. Plates of glass were shaped to serve as dividers between rooms, allowing light to pass while blocking vapors and sound. The addition of a thin sheet of silver was soon discovered to provide a near perfect mirroring of the light that struck the front of the pane.

Mirrors were first employed for the typical purposes of vanity, but this was not a primary attraction to the dwarves. Soon diligent inventors discovered ways to send light far down tunnel passages, simply by arranging a network of mirrors at the proper angles of reflection.

The early windowpanes developed by the dwarves were rippled and distorted with bubbles and variegations in the surface, a fact that led to the development of the lens. Dwarven crafters soon realized that bending the glass this way or that would result in focusing or diffusing the light passing through it. A century or two later this discovery paid its ultimate tribute, with the invention of the great sunlenses that were placed at the mouths of the suntunnels. There they gathered light and, through mirrors and an assortment of lenses, carried warmth and illumination into the heart of the subterranean lair.

The largest chamber delved by the ogres had been a vast, empty space. It was featureless except for the towering columns ringing the outer wall and standing in the center of the room. The dwarves determined that this would be their central meeting hall, a place they would call the Grand Gather.

Dwarven delvers excavated a great series of concentric levels in the floor, gradually descending toward an arena-like platform in the middle. Here they would eventually place the seats of their chieftains and the great tables of their councils. By the time they were finished, the Grand Gather was an auditorium that could hold the entire current population of Thorin, some 8,000 dwarves.





The Grand Gather became the seat of formal meetings, as well as the showpiece of Thorin, wherein honored guests from the humans and elves would be treated to feasts, celebrations, and ceremonies. The halls leading to the Grand Gather connected to the outside world, and were designed to allow ventilation by fresh air.

At the very back of the gather the dwarves excavated a passage that connected to the pulsing heart of their mountain realm. In these early years this was still a dark and forbidding place, but many dwarves chose to live and work near the bubbling source of heat that seemed to promise everlasting warmth and productivity for this place.

Even in its first creation, the gate at the back of the Grand Gather was a solid, almost impenetrable structure. It was as if the dwarves, even then, understood that they could afford to permit access this far into their realm, but never, under any circumstances, would a visitor or an intruder get any farther.

DARK DISCOVERY

During the course of the delvings that would become the smelters and foundries of Thorin, several dwarven miners came upon a bizarre, black stone. Twice the size of a clenched fist, the rock seemed to be some kind of gem, for it was covered with smooth facets, and reflected light with an inky sheen. The dwarf who first lifted the stone felt a strange sense of disquiet, and the black stone was immediately taken to Agate Thorwallen in his temporary offices in a corner of the Grand Gather.

As the stone was carried through the subterranean city the sense of unease spread in its wake, almost as if a trailing mist of corruption wafted through the air wherever it went. Agate himself, the first chieftain, felt a disturbance bordering on terror when the gem was brought into his presence.

Many of the veterans of the Graystone War felt a prickling of memory, as if the stone was some kind of embodiment of magic. Its emanations were strangely evocative of the powerful stone of Gargath, as if this stone too, wished to wreak great havoc upon the dwarves.

Imagine Agate's consternation as, barely an hour after he was presented with the black stone, delvers came to him with a red stone of similar properties. It glowed like a ruby with an unquenchable fire in its heart, a large gem of fabulous beauty but very dangerous aura. Shortly thereafter, stones of blue, green, and crystalline white were uncovered and brought to the dwarven hero.

Gathering in the corner of the Grand Gather, the five colored stones pulsed and glowed, as if eager to unleash their chaotic power on the innocent dwarves. Word of their discovery spread through the city, and many leaders and wardens gathered around their chieftain. They did not approach too closely, for the sinister emanations were apparent to them all. Breathlessly they awaited their leader's word.

"We have uncovered vestiges of magic," he announced finally, his firm voice belying the fear he felt within. "They must be taken and destroyed, before their potential can be released upon the world."

"But how destroyed?" asked Briggit Thorwallen, as if she sensed the danger implicit in her husband's announcement.

"They must be melted in the forges of Kryn itself," replied the chieftain, his tone grim.

"Throw them into the firewell and be done with them!" cried his wife.

"To do that would be to risk all Thorin, if the task fails. That is a thing I cannot do! Instead, we must take them beyond our realm, seeking an even greater forge in which to attempt their melting."

Even Briggit could see the wisdom in this plan. But Agate Thorwallen was not the kind of dwarf who would entrust such a task to

others. He would lead a party of four trusted warriors. They would carry the potent stones to the north, away from Thorin, to a place where he had seen "three great mountains smoldering against the sky."

The student of Krynn's history will recognize these stones as the five dragonstones, the gems imprisoning the spirits of evil dragonkind. They had been laid in the bedrock of the earth by the elves, following the First Dragon war. It had been their intention that the corruptive forces remain forever lost to the world.

But the elves had not reckoned with the diligence of delving dwarves. The dwarves did not merely cast these stones onto the surface and dismiss them from their minds. Instead, they made an (ultimately tragic) effort to dispose of them.

One bit of anti-dwarven slander can be put to rest. From the tales of the elves, presented by that master of distortion Quivalin Soth himself, one would get the impression that the dwarves took no care whatsoever with the disposal of these gems. The truth is that Agate Thorwallen understood he dealt with powerful and evil forces, and that the failure of his efforts to dispose of them was not through carelessness nor ignorance, but instead through additional agents of evil.

From the ancient description of the three smoking mountains south of Thorin, we apparently have a reference to the Lords of Doom, the three volcanoes that a thousand years later would surround wretched Sanction. We see that even in the Age of Light these peaks were potent forces of internal heat.

From the *Observations of
Chisel Loremaster*

Agate and his four companions set out in early spring, each of them bearing one of the enchanted stones. The dwarves traveled quickly, keeping to the high ridges, always making for

the great, smoking peaks that would give them the means to destroy the stones, and remove all taint of magic from Thorin.

It was in their camp, built among cold rocks in a high, snowy swale along the range's crest, that disaster struck. The dwarven party had unknowingly trespassed into a realm of ogres. The brutes surrounded the dwarves during the night and set a great avalanche thundering into the swale where Agate and his party camped.

The weight of snow came crushing down on the dwarves, and as they leaped to arms, one of their number was swept away by the slide. The four remaining dwarves turned to battle the enemy that surrounded them on the heights.

Next the ogres sent a crashing landslide of boulders into the valley. The dwarves bashed with hammers and picks, striking the stones away as fast as they fell, but in the end another dwarf fell to this brutal attack.

Now a ring of three dwarves stood against a hundred ogres, and still the brutes were afraid to attack. Instead, they gathered a great pack of wolves, and the predators went snarling and snapping into the midst of the dwarves. For long hours the three dwarves fought, until a great ring of slain wolves surrounded them. Finally all the wolves were killed, but by then another dwarf had fallen.

Only Agate Thorwallen and Slate Cliffbrim were left. Standing back to back, they awaited the charge of the ogres. But still the hulking monsters, great cowards at heart, stood back from their ancient enemies. The ogres gathered a great store of dried wood and, setting the branches alight, tumbled them from the heights onto the dwarven camp.

Agate and Slate took up axes, bashing away the tumbling, sparking logs, and for long hours they stood in the midst of inferno. Finally Slate succumbed to the blaze, and only Agate Thorwallen, first chieftain of Thorin, stood before the ranks of his enemies.





Now at last the ogres charged, lumbering down the steep slopes to sweep away this impudent figure who dared to survive all four of their attacks. The dwarf met them with drawn sword and raised shield. For a day and a night and the following day he stood in the midst of a raging ring of ogres. Dozens of them fell to his sword, until he stood upon a small mountain of his slain foes. Furiously the ogres attacked, but with great determination he fought them off.

Finally, when the sun set on his second day of constant battle, the frailties of mortality overcame Agate. Whether he slipped in his weariness, or, as the ballads of Chisel Lore-master claim, he actually fell asleep from exhaustion cannot be ascertained. With the lapsing in his skills, the heroic dwarf was slain by the surviving ogres.

Only then did the brutes discover the five gems that had been carried by Agate's party. Pleased with their find, they took the dragonstones to their lairs deep in the Khalkists to cherish them. It was not many years later before the caress of air awakened the serpents, releasing the five dragons of evil from their imprisoning stones.

Thus began the Second Dragon War, which would ravage much of Ansalon and particularly Silvanesti. The dwarves of Thorin, safe in their mountain fastness, would remain aloof from this strife, which earned them much enmity from the elves. In fact, the arrogant members of the Sylvan Folk would claim that the war was started by dwarven carelessness.

At the very least this account should serve to set that scurrilous accusation to rest forever.

FURTHER BUILDING AND DELVING

At the same time, the labors of the dwarves took them in two different directions. The

inhabitants of Thorin remembered their time underground in Kal-Thax as a period of cowering terror. They had not chosen a subterranean existence because of any abhorrence of sunlight. Rather they had sought their Cold Forge as a refuge from the terror wrought by the Graystone. Therefore, when granted a choice of living arrangements, many dwarves preferred a life in the open air, with daily exposure to the sun, the wind, and the weather. This longing led to the building of another of Thorin's unique components.

THE GREAT KEEP

Inspired by structures of humankind that the dwarves had observed during the period of the Graystone campaign, the keep would be a walled fortress designed to withstand attack. At the same time, the dwarves were not about to make a mere copy of a human dwelling. There were things that the builders of Thorin wanted in this structure, and they would take steps to make sure that those objectives would be met.

The keep was to be a place of fresh air, exposed to the weather. Those who would work and live there were dwarves who consciously shunned the underground caverns of their kin, and they had no intention of building themselves a cold, lightless cave of stone. Thus, the keep of Thorin would have windows, and it would have many balconies.

The structure took shape one level at a time, gradually rising from the knoll that overlooked the great valley of Thorin. It was virtually encircled by balconies, each of which was connected to the interior by several doors. Of course, the first level was raised above a high, smooth wall. Their defensibility would never be totally neglected. Each of the ascending walls slanted outward from the one below, creating an almost impossible challenge for any foe who tried to scale the fortress from outside.

INNER FIRES

As remarkable as was the keep, it paled in comparison to the wonders delved into the very heart of Thorin's mountain. Here, centered above the pool of magma that was the dwarven home's heart, Agate Thorwallen conceived the idea of the Great Suntunnel.

Already in the early stages of Thorin's delving, the dwarves employed mirrors and lenses of glass and clear quartz to channel light into the deep reaches of the mountain fastness. Additionally, they bored pipes and aqueducts through the rock, allowing flowing air and water to reach every portion of Thorin. The paths of access to the magma pool were expanded as more and more smelters and forges were built to exploit the supposedly inexhaustible heat source.

But the dwarves noted a gradual waning of that warmth. The fiery magma was depleted by the many demands placed upon its fundamental energy. Faced with the threat of a return to the Cold Forge such as they had so long cursed at Kal-Thax, the dwarves bent their ingenuity to the problem.

For many years before his death, Agate Thorwallen had noticed a long crack angling downward from the mountain summit, leading straight toward the magma pool. No light reached the bottom of this crack, since it was too narrow and winding to permit illumination, but the dwarven chieftain had noticed that, as the sun reached the height of the summer solstice, light extended a long way into the narrow aperture.

The dwarves made a shrewd guess about the effects of further delving, and promptly set about expanding and straightening this narrow crack into an airshaft and vent that would, on one day each year, allow direct sunlight to penetrate into the heart of the mountain. They hoped that this blast of energy would prove sufficient to reinvigorate the heart of their realm, fueling the forges and

smelters throughout the coming year.

For a full year teams of delvers worked on the crack. Engineers and mathematicians calculated the angles, while the most skilled excavators in the entire realm were called upon to enter the shaft and work on widening it. Huge nets were arranged to catch the rubble that fell from these delvings, for Agate foresaw the potential for disaster if their magma pool should become filled with cold rock from above.

Finally, after a year of diligent labor, the dwarves stood back and awaited the day of the summer solstice. As the sun climbed toward noon, many dwarves gathered around the bubbling pool. Though its temperature had faded somewhat, the rock was still molten, still dangerously hot.

When the sun reached its zenith, rays of light spilled down the shaft, but did not quite reach to the bottom. The design was off by less than a degree, which was enough to cause the light to diffuse against one of the tunnel walls near the bottom. Yet even in those passing moments of illumination, the cavern grew dangerously warm. The magma bubbled and surged upward, driving the dwarves into a hasty and undignified retreat.

The failure of the design had proved a life-saving blessing. The fault was easily corrected. It was simply a matter of widening one section of the tunnel. The modifications were completed shortly after the end of the summer. Thus, the dwarves had to wait 10 more months before they would again have the chance to test Agate Thorwallen's idea.

Because of the reaction caused by even an imperfect exposure, the dwarves took precautions during that second solstice. No one stood near the magma pool, and even the sections of Thorin nearest to this great suntunnel were evacuated as a precaution.

The second solstice arrived, and the sun again crept toward its noon height. This time, at zenith, the rays spilled straight down the





shaft, struck the magma, and resulted in the great fireblast that would in future years signal the great festival of Balladine. The flash spread through Thorin with explosive force, sweeping upward, and leaving in its wake a magma pool that bubbled and churned with renewed intensity.

Thanks to the diligent precautions, no lives were lost in this, the first Fireflash of Balladine. Had the suntunnel been properly aligned the first year, the resulting carnage would have been unthinkable. Not only was the population blissfully unaware of the threat, leaving doors and gates open through the vast complex, but all the greatest minds of Thorin had gathered below to witness the effects of their miracle. In one stroke, the leaders, inventors, and builders of Thorin would have been killed by the work of their own design.

In later years, as the dwarves of Thorin mixed with the human realms that came to flourish to the east and west, particularly the men of Golash and Chandra, the rite of Balladine became the central holiday of the dwarven year. A great trading festival was established, and human guests and sometimes elves, ogres, and kender were invited to camp on the wide terraces and share a time of festival and fellowship. Yet always, within the great mountain, the true meaning of Balladine was the re-igniting of the mountain's internal fires.

THE PROSPERITY OF THORIN

The realm of Thorin quickly surpassed every other dwarven settlement on Ansalon. During the period of the great city's delving, dwarves still lived in the Cold Forges (still called Kal-Thax) in several different places upon the continent. The original shelters on the north coast had been mostly abandoned, though a

small population remained. Also, the cliffs of Karthay were host to small bands of dwarves, and a very large population flourished and developed in their own Kal-Thax far to the southeast of Thorin in the Kharolis Mountains and across the broad peninsula beyond.

FURTHER DELVINGS

Only in Thorin did the excavations of the dwarves truly approach magnificent stature. Miners expanded their tunnels from Thorin and created many smaller digs some distance away from the great city. And aided by the tremendous stocks of a wide variety of mineral ores in the Khalkist Mountains, the dwarves gained access to copper, iron, tin, nickel, coal, lead, silver, and gold. The major problem that they faced, after several decades of exploration, was the transport of these ores back to Thorin, where the actual smelting and forging operations would take place.

To solve the problem, the people of Thorin followed the examples of some of their human neighbors. The horse had been domesticated for a long time, though the dwarves had shown no inclination to riding. However, with the growing necessity to haul heavy loads over mountain roads, the dwarves began to consider some options. They brought long-legged ponies from Istar into the mountains, but these poor creatures struggled and strained when forced to work at high altitudes. From Golash the dwarves traded for shaggy mountain ponies. They thrived in the lofty Khalkists but were too small to serve the heavy hauling needs of the dwarves.

THE CALNAR HORSE

The solution finally came from crossbreeding these horses together with other strains from farther south. Many generations later, the Calnar horse was established. These shag-hoofed

beasts, with their barrel-chests and long legs, could breathe the thin air without difficulty, and were large enough to move through even the heaviest drifts of snow. Dwarven diggers had wasted no time in carving a network of narrow roads connecting the various mining outposts to the main bulk of Thorin.

Within 100 years after the fortress was established, a stable herd of these magnificent creatures served all of the dwarves' cargo-hauling needs. While it was much later before they took to riding the great beasts, the basic breeding stock of the Calnar horse remained unchanged for many centuries thereafter.

Eventually the steeds were furnished with high, deep saddles with rope ladders attached so that the dwarves could reach the lofty perches. The dwarves used their horses to carry scouting parties and messengers throughout their mountain kingdom. Even then, however, the dwarves of Thorin did not practice any organized cavalry techniques, probably because the mountain terrain surrounding them was unsuitable for operations with mounted troops.

THE BIRTH OF THE CALNAR

The dwarves of Thorin rapidly progressed with the development of their technological wonders, such as aqueducts, the lift system, improved metallurgy, and increasingly complex inventions. At the same time, there was a growing sense of purpose among them. It was a feeling that the destiny of the dwarven people rested upon their shoulders. They had little communication with their kin who had been left behind in Kal-Thax and did not even suspect that other Cold Forges had been established across Ansalon. Still, the sense of purpose became a strong bond among these people.

For this reason, they decided that they needed a name that was more specific than simply "dwarves." After all, they represented the pinnacle of accomplishment for their race! Therefore they gradually adopted the term "Calnar," which means the "True People."

There was a growing sense of identity and pride among these dwarves. The terror of hiding from the Graystone was forgotten, even as the stone itself (which had apparently drifted out of Ansalon) vanished from the memory of the people. Strife was common enough on a personal level, but the Calnar steadfastly resisted the development of clans, castes, or classes within Thorin itself.

Even at this level of culture and development, the Calnar resisted adopting any structure of rulership and government more formal than tribes. Their leader was a chieftain. He had several officials, namely the Chief Trader and Chief Delver, who also held positions of high esteem in Thorin. Scouts patrolled the extremities of the realm, but there was no standing army as such. The Calnar were a remarkably unwarlike people.

LIFE IN THORIN

The citizens of Thorin had a great deal of freedom when it came to choosing their life's work. Naturally, every Calnar was expected to work, but this was not a burden since, true to their nature as dwarves, nearly all of them wanted to work. No culture in the world offered its members choices from so many different roles.

The first choice was between working outside or within the mountain. Calnar needed farmers, traders, freight haulers, hunters, scouts, builders, messengers, timber-gatherers, and signallers. Many of these folk often took quarters in the great keep which grew, layer by layer, over the gates of the city. A very small minority of others chose to live



even beyond sight of Thorin itself, in the mining warrens and hunting camps of the outlying regions. Some of these far-flung settlements took on the appearance of small villages, though most had a very temporary life.

Within the fortress the dwarf was faced with even more options for work. The host of mining operations, smelting and smithing, forging, stonecutting, tutoring, weaving, cooking, brewing, building, and service activities kept thousands of dwarves busy without ever bringing them within sight of the sun. These dwarves took quarters in the great city, usually seeking a place to live near where they worked. As Thorin grew, this became a thriving metropolis sprawled through many levels in the heart of the mountain.

THE FIRST PACTS

Briggit Thorwallen served for nearly a century as the chieftain of Thorin after the death of her husband. Near the end of her reign, as the fortress assumed its great proportions, she began to give thought to the world beyond the Suncradles, beyond the ridges that so effectively encircled her home. Naturally, these thoughts made her think of humans.

The two nearby nations were Golash, a sprawling fiefdom that filled a series of long, low valleys to the north of Thorin, and Chander, a mountainous realm to the south. It was said that, on the 75th igniting of the Firewell, during the summer solstice celebration of Balladine, Briggit Thorwallen was inspired with the idea that would not only ensure peaceful relations with her neighbors, but dramatically increase the prosperity of the realm.



During the following year Briggit sent ambassadors to each of the neighboring kingdoms. They extended invitations to a grand convocation and trading festival in Thorin, to be held on the occasion of the solstice during the following summer. The ambassadors provided the chief of each human clan with a gift to seal the invitation. It was a sword of the finest Calnar steel, forged in the deep and mystical firewell of Thorin itself.

Each of the human lords accepted on behalf of his people, commencing an annual occasion that was to be observed, uninterrupted, over the course of the next four centuries. Other visitors to future festivals of Balladine would include elves from as far away as Silvanesti, wild ogres, as well as their more refined cousins from the nearby state of Bloten, and humans from beyond the Khalkists. But always Golash and Chandera would send their agents and their goods.

The first Balladine was a great success. A long caravan from each of the two human realms brought varieties of goods for trade. From Chandera came light grains, objects of wicker and wood, a variety of spices unknown to the dwarves, and all sorts of fabrics and clothing materials. The merchants and farmers of Golash came with fish, sugar, salt, as well as the cattle and swine that were so welcomed at the dwarven dinner table.

For their part, the folk of Thorin offered objects of metal and stone. The masters of steel made daggers, shields, and armor for the humans, as well as hammers, anvils, tongs, wrenches, axes, plows, and other tools. At this first trading consortium the dwarves offered no swords, for these blades, useful only for battle, were unknown in the dwarven kingdom. However, the humans gave them examples in iron and bronze, and the dwarves in future years presented a magnificent variety of blades both long and short.

Other treasured items of dwarven make included gems and jewelry, and objects

crafted of gold and silver. The precious metals proved so attractive to the humans that the dwarves, who generally preferred more practical materials such as steel and copper, were motivated to develop a great manufactory of metal ornaments, prepared (like swords) only for trade with their human neighbors.

The works of dwarven stone carvers were also sought after by the humans. Individual statuary propelled prospective buyers into frenetic bidding, while whole cargoes of dwarf-carved stone blocks were swapped for wagonloads of lumber delivered by the humans.

Feasting and celebration continued for a week, climaxed by a grand banquet on the final night of the Balladine gathering. Here Agate Thorwallen, Perris Fane, lord of Chandera, and Yulek Trill, master of Golash, engaged in a great drinking contest. They were cheered on, and their example was followed by a boisterous throng of humans and dwarves, spreading across the entire first and second terraces of Thorin. The duel resulted in a virtual draw, as none of the contestants could remember who had been the last to succumb. A mass hangover made for a very bleak day of departure.

Nevertheless, as the humans turned their caravans back to home following that first Balladine, there was not a man or dwarf among them who did not believe that a great foundation had been laid for peace and prosperity. By the time Fane and Trill, together with their entourages, had reached their respective homelands, they had each determined that the trading festival with Thorin was something that they would do their best to maintain.

Of interest to the historian is another aspect of this relationship. The humans who made the trek to the high mountains for commerce with dwarves came to call their new allies the "Highest," a reference to the lofty altitude of the realm. The dwarves found this term flattering, and would make occasional





references to themselves as the Highest, enjoying the irony.

They could not help thinking of the term as a comment on the relative levels of culture and technology between the humans and dwarves. This was not arrogance, simply dwarven pragmatism. The term became common enough among the Calnar that it became a sort of nickname of those mountain dwelling folk.

It is significant to historians because the dwarven term for Highest is "Hylar."

THE STEEL AGE OF THORIN

For a period of centuries the people of the Khalkist Mountains knew a era of untold prosperity and peace. Central to this era was the dwarven realm of Thorin.

Certainly there was no place like it then existing upon Krynn. Its majesty would later be matched and then surpassed by Thorbardin, but during this age the dwarves of the Kharolis Mountains (where Thorbardin would one day be delved) still lived in shallow caves or crude stone forts. Though they worked iron into alloys resembling steel, their tools and weapons were dark and brittle by comparison to Calnar blades.

Across Ansalon the realms of humankind fought with savagery, yet did not succeed in bringing order out of their chaos. Ergoth existed as an empire, but her agents were brutal in the repression of all but their own noble cousins. Tribes of Cobar horsemen roamed the plains between the great mountain ranges, subject to no lord.

The city-state of Xak-Tsaroth rose to the south of Ergoth. It was a place of slavers and their property, feared by all who fell within range of its rapacious merchants.

To the east, in Istar, various tribes united in a bid for mastery. Rich with their own resources, Istar created a great market for slaves, dealing with merchants as far away as

Xak-Tsaroth. Yet the Istarions left the dwarves of Thorin alone.

The elves of Silvanesti, haughty as ever in the forests to the south, had no formal relations with Thorin. The wounds of the Second Dragon War ran deep, and the arrogant elves could not overcome their mistaken belief in the guilt of the dwarves.

The Stonetooth clan became the last of the chieftains of Thorin. Colin Stonetooth, second of the clan's rulers, was lord of the realm during Last Balladine.

THE PASSING OF THORIN

For 500 years this realm represented the pinnacle of dwarven accomplishment. It was a status that would last until the dark day of Last Balladine. Thorin itself would remain for some centuries after that bleak treachery, but its character was forever changed.

The full story of Last Balladine is related in the chronicle *The Covenant of the Forge*. Of

particular note to the historian, however, are several facts which must be established for the continuity of this narrative.

After Last Balladine, a band of Calnar departed from their realm. The chieftain, Colin Stonetooth, was shamed at his failure to protect his people. The only honorable alternative left to him was self-imposed exile. Taking the name Hylar for his band of more than 1,000 followers, he set out across the plains. His tale then becomes intertwined with the grand history of Thorbardin.

In Thorin, Colin's son Tolon Stonetooth became chieftain. Ever suspicious of humans, Tolon ended the practice of Balladine, and the dwarves drew deep into their mountain shell. The Grand Gather and all outer portions of the realm had collapsed. The keep and the three sentinels would be abandoned, and for its final centuries Thorin would be a realm that locked itself underground and remained beyond the reach of the sun.



THORBARDIN, THE ETERNAL DWARVENHOME

The epic migration of Colin Stonetooth and his new tribe, the Hylar, has reached the status of powerful legend among the dwarves. It is related in full within the novel *Covenant of the Forge*. The founding of the nation occurred when the Hylar reached one of the original dwarven realms, a "Kal-Thax" in the west. This was not the same place where the Calnar ancestors hailed from, but such a strong common thread runs through dwarven histories that it is doubtful any contemporary dwarf actually realized the fact.

For historical understanding however, the primary significance is that the Hylar were able to best the individual thanes of western Kal-Thax. The Theiwar, Daewar, Daergar, and Klar all submitted to the mastery of Colin Stonetooth's troops. The mere appearance of dwarven lancers mounted on the great Calnar horses served to intimidate their fellows out of any thoughts of resistance.

Also significant was that Colin Stonetooth had the vision to seek a future for *all* the dwarves, and the strength of this vision gave birth to the mightiest dwarvenhome of the ages. At the time of the Hylar migration, the dwarves of Kal-Thax faced relentless pressure from migrating humans seeking sheltered valleys to settle. On an almost annual basis the dwarves met these approaches and threw them back with heavy loss of life on both sides. Once united as a nation, though, the dwarves had the solid power to render their realm impenetrable.

THE FOUNDING OF EVERBARDIN

The cavern that would eventually hold Thorbardin was discovered by the Daewar explorer Urkhan during the course of his extensive subterranean exploration. At this time the Daewar dwelled above ground in a great keep that had been erected upon the slopes of Sky's End Peak at the northernmost extent of the dwarven settlements in Kal-Thax.

The caverns discovered by Urkhan actually lay underneath the Theiwar realms. The Theiwar lived among cliff dwellings excavated among the very summits of Cloudseeker Peak. The Daergar worked deep mines to the south, while the Klar and the Einar roamed the outer slopes of the realm. From the Klar and Einar came the Neidar hill dwarves.

Again it was Colin Stonetooth whose wisdom and foresight convinced all the clans of the advantages inherent in sharing the great cavern. He pointed out that there was plenty of room for all the dwarves who wanted to live underground, with each thane (clan ruler) choosing a separate region of the vast lair for his city.

A key to Thorbardin's founding was the building of the great Peace Road, which wound through the mountains north of Sky's End Peak, eventually reaching the lands of Qualinesti and Abanasinia beyond. The dwarves built the road to accommodate human migration, and never again had to face a major threat to settle the mountains of Thorbardin.



THE KINSLAYER WAR

This conflict was primarily between the elves of Silvanesti and the human empire of Ergoth. The elves and half-elves of the west were divided by the conflict, and so were the dwarves of Thorbardin in a lesser sense.

The focus of the dwarven disagreement was the Theiwar/Hylar rivalry. The Theiwar desired to ally with the humans, though they employed rank treachery to conceal this fact from Sithas, who was the lord of Silvanesti at that time. Eventually it was the Hylar who discovered this treachery, and made efforts to rectify it. Dwarven troops came to the aid of the elven war leader, Kith-Kanan, and proved decisive in the eventual settlement of the war.

Though the elves of Silvanesti never forgave the Theiwar treachery which had resulted in skirmishes being fought in Silvanost, Kith-Kanan and the western elves chose to remember the Hylar cooperation that enabled the war to reach its conclusion.

The major result of the war was the founding of Qualinesti, the western elvenhome. Kith-Kanan, as its first ruler, signed the Swordsheath Scroll with the dwarves as a pledge of eternal peace. Shortly afterward, the grand fortress of Pax Tharkas, erected by both peoples, would lend finality to the pact.

WAR OF THE MOUNTAIN

This was a relatively short clash between the forces of Ergoth and the united dwarves of Thorbardin. At its root lay the rights to mine the Kharolis Mountains north of Sky's End Peak. The Emperor Quivalin V sent legions into the mountains to protect them against dwarven excavation.

In a series of skirmishes, dwarven armies under the command of Willem Ironmaul and the other thanes consistently defeated the humans, who were not nearly so comfortable in the mountain environment as were the

dwarves. Eventually, desertion among the Ergoth legions created such a problem that the emperor quietly abandoned his quest.

DWARVES AND THE AGE OF RIGHT (2000 to 1060 PC)

This was a millennium of unparalleled prosperity on Ansalon, at least until the ravages of the Third Dragon War arose in 1060 PC to bring these centuries of peace to a brutal close. Throughout the thousand years prior to this, the dwarves of Thorbardin had proved to be a major force for good in the world.

ALLIANCES, PACTS, AND COMMERCE

The signing of the Swordsheath Scroll (2073 PC) with the elves of Qualinesti and the human rulers of Ergoth also taking part, signifies the beginning of this halcyon epoch. One year later the dwarves forged the Hammer of Kharas, which would serve for even more centuries as a symbol of dwarven power, pride, and solidarity.

The raising of Pax Tharkas during the century following 2000 PC served as another symbol of the changes that had occurred in the world. Elves and dwarves together created the great gate-fortress, which would serve for more than 2,000 years as a reminder of the peace forged between Qualinesti and Thorbardin.

During this age the mines of Thorbardin produced vast quantities of metals both precious and mundane. The Daergar remained the major delvers, though they employed a great deal of Theiwar labor. At the same time, the Hylar offered the greatest levels of technology and craftsmanship, while the Daewar began to distinguish themselves as master traders and merchants.





The forges and smelters belched smoke, melding elemental metals into steel, while hammers and chisels banged and chipped. They added levels to each of the great cities of Thorbardin, expanded food warrens, and developed more efficient means of production.

A hallmark of this period in Thorbardin's history was peaceful and prosperous trade. As the Empire of Ergoth gave way to the realm of Solamnia (circa 1900 to 1770 PC), the dwarves (and elves as well) remained aloof from the strife that so divided humankind. The matter was settled with only a few human cities sacked, and virtually all casualties were confined to that race, which as everyone knows can replenish such losses far more readily than can demi-humans.

Then, with the conclusion of Ergoth's overthrow, Vinas Solamnus hastened to affix his

signature to the Swordsheath Scroll, insuring uninterrupted peace and commerce with Qualinesti and Thorbardin.

Throughout this era the dwarves cemented their reputation as the finest workers of metal and stone in all Krynn. Their goods were sought by humans, and by those elves who could swallow a bit of their arrogance. Dwarven steel was the most precious metal on Krynn, and many transactions were made using steel arrowheads in lieu of coinage.

It seems that the custom of trading with these arrowheads became so commonplace that the dwarves eventually began minting coins of steel. These coins would eventually become the standard unit of financial measure among all the peoples of Ansalon.

Weapons and tools were the primary manufactured goods to come out of Thorbardin, and these were dispersed to all of Ansalon.

Human traders would purchase their cargos in the trading towns around Thorbardin and then carry them to Solamnia, Istar, Tarsis, Sancrist, and many other fledgling nations. Once they had reached that destination, the goods might be sold and resold many times before finally ending up in the hands of someone who actually would use them. This served to greatly inflate the price of dwarven goods, since each handler might double the asking price from what he'd paid. It also made it very profitable for one to travel to Thorbardin to trade.

Many roads and trading paths evolved during this period of unheralded commerce. With the rise of Istar far to the east in the latter half of the age, these trading routes spanned the entire continent. The Knights of Solamnia insured that these roads were well-protected, and incidences of banditry were surprisingly low.

Naturally, the goods most sought by the dwarves in return for the products of their forges were foodstuffs and lumber, things that had to come from the fertile reaches of the surface world. Humans and a few elves reacted enthusiastically to these needs, and hastened to visit the many trading villages that cropped up around the fringes of Thorbardin's realm. Outside traders were very rarely invited into the undermountain delvings.

Most of the forests within the realm of Thorbardin had been logged away during the first 200 years of the dwarvenhome's history. Thus, aspen, pine, and hardwood were much desired, and Qualinesti became the primary source of this lumber. The elves exhibited much more skill at sustainable logging than did the dwarves. After the Qualinesti timbergatherers had brought hundreds of trunks out of a section of forest, a traveler would be hard-pressed to notice that the trees had been disturbed.

DELVINGS COMPLETED

Though digging, mining, and construction would continue in Thorbardin for more than 25 centuries, the major cities and warrens of the undermountain realm would all be excavated within the first few centuries of its inhabitation.

During the first 90 years of Thorbardin's existence, each clan labored diligently to create one major city for itself. The Theiwar and Daergar would each build second cities later. The Klar city, naturally, was built through the aid of the Hylar and Daewar.

At the same time, the Daergar maintained continuous production from their great mines. The Shafts of Reorx were driven deep into the earth behind both the north and the south gates of the realm. Unfortunately, only the shaft in the south would give birth to the great magma-fire that would fuel the nation's smelters for years to come.

The Life-Tree of the Hylar was also claimed during this early period, though it would not achieve its full grandeur until much later. Still, the Hylar delved many levels for living and working in the great stalactite at the center of Thorbardin. Most of the great roads were also constructed early in Thorbardin's history, with only the Eleventh, Thirteenth, Sixteenth, and Seventeenth roads added after the first 300 years of Thorbardin's might. (Obviously, the roads were not numbered consecutively, but geographically.)

POLITICS OF THORBARDIN

As if to mirror the halcyon age, during these years even the raucous clans of Thorbardin found that they had between them more points of agreement than contention. Trade flourished and wealth was amassed in virtually all quarters of the realm except, of course, among the Aghar.

There were no wars within the under-





ground realm. During the entire age there were only a few skirmishes involving more than 100 dwarves. These all concerned manufacturing and trading rights.

The Daergar, for example, long prided themselves on the intricate nature of their chainwork. They were considered the masters of both chain mail and chains of linked rings, with the tightness of Daergar links and the suppleness of movement that were trademarks of quality. Around 1400 PC, the Theiwar mastered the ability to mimic this chain, and began to manufacture and market it in all the same places where the Daergar dealt.

Matters frequently came to blows in the small towns around Thorbardin, where both clans got into trading wars. The prices of dwarven chain, for a time, reached bargain basement levels, much to the delight of many a human merchant. Finally the Theiwar sent a "trade ambassador" accompanied by 500 armed troops on a mission to Daerbardin.

Fortunately the expedition had to pass through the Urkhan Sea, and they elected to use the barge-line system. A Hylar company intercepted them at the docks flanking the Life-Tree, turning the Daergar party back with bluster and a small display of force. Subsequently (after tempers had cooled) the two clans worked out a system of price-fixing between them, insuring the lasting value of their product in the markets beyond Thorbardin.

END OF RIGHT, THORBARDIN AND THE THIRD DRAGON WAR

As they had so successfully in the past, the dwarven people remained as aloof as possible from this bloody campaign. The war was characterized by the hero Huma and his use of the mighty Dragonlance to turn the tide of evil. The campaigns were waged between an

army of humans, with some help from the good dragons and their enemies of the dragon, ogre, and evil goblin races.

A few companies of hill dwarves joined in the campaign, especially as the evil forces moved toward the region of Pax Tharkas. These dwarves fought bravely, and many died for the cause of good, but their contribution was admittedly limited and local when viewed in the scope of the entire war.

While the rest of Thorbardin took no active part in the early parts of this war, the dwarven realm did go so far as to restrict the sale of weapons and high-quality steel to the Knights of Solamnia and their allies. While it is true that a great many unscrupulous merchants sold dwarf-forged steel to the forces of the Dark Queen, this was done without the knowledge of the dwarves themselves.

Finally, as the forces of evil surged toward the heart of Solamnia and threatened the might of sprawling Istar, the dwarves united under the strong Hylar thane, Wharast White-steel. The armies marched forth from North Gate, and were joined by rank upon rank of hill dwarves. They crossed the plains and threw themselves into the war at the crucial moments of decision. With the help of Thorbardin finally, the knights turned the tide of battle, and the evil dragonforces were stopped.

It is well-known that Takhisis, the Queen of Darkness, was pierced by Huma's lance. In return for her freedom he extracted a promise that she and her creatures would never again return to menace Krynn.

THORADIN AND THE AGE OF RIGHT

With the vanishing of dragonkind began the next epoch of Krynn, the Age of Right. This period would span 1,000 years, carrying civilization through unprecedented growth, chaotic prosperity, renewed bloodshed, and finally a culmination in the disaster of the Cataclysm.

During this age the dwarves would not be content to remain in the security of Thorbardin. Perhaps inspired by the burgeoning population growth, or more likely desiring fresh rock and new minerals to mine, the dwarves of Thorbardin would expand, branching into a pair of new kingdoms, even as the parent realm continued to prosper and evolve.

The dwarven colony that became the kingdom of Thoradin typifies the mortal experience on Ansalon during this period.

RETURN TO KHALKIST, THE SEARCH FOR THORADIN

Some artifacts existed in Thorbardin that dated back more than 1,000 years. These were swords and armor, helms, hammers and other tools, made of a strong and corrosion-resistant variety of steel. While the metal alloys manufactured in Thorbardin were the finest produced anywhere in the world during the Age of Light, dwarven scholars and metal-smiths realized that these ancient artifacts displayed a tensile strength and durability that even outshone their own fabulous work.

These objects were described as being made of "Thoradin steel." Of course, legends told of the dwarvenhome in the Khalkists. The home was once known as Thorin, but became "Thoradin" as the dwarves spoke of a place they'd left behind. The Calnar had been

forgotten, and most dwarves believed that when the Hylar had begun their epic migration to the Kharolis Mountains, they had left an abandoned city behind. That city was reputedly the source of this superior grade of steel.

For centuries, parties of dwarves mostly made up of, or funded by, mercantile interests had sought the location of lost Thoradin. It was believed that those abandoned caverns would make ideal bases for trading. Indeed, with the rise of Istar, the idea took root in the mind of many an avaricious dwarf. After all, the Khalkist mountains rested astride the only land routes connecting Istar to Solamnia. A dwarven trading center there would occupy a truly commanding position.

For many years these myths had circulated, but with no clue as to Thorin's location, no dwarves had been willing to make the necessary sacrifices. They would have to leave grand Thorbardin and return to a life as cave-dwellers and game-killers until they could excavate a suitable delving in the Khalkists. Lacking a compelling reason, such as the unpleasantness of Kal-Thax, or the tragedy of Last Balladine, the dwarves made no plans to migrate to and occupy the remote Khalkist heights.

With the end of the Third Dragon War, however, a new sense of prosperity seemed to sweep the land. The dwarves were not immune to this growing urgency. Istar flourished with trade, and Solamnia rose to new heights of greatness. Could Thorbardin afford to remain the same?

It began with a Hylar named Horn Dunbar, who had been one of the heroes of the Third Dragon War. He had wielded a blade of Thoradin steel, and it had cut down many a *bakali*, the twisted lizardmen who had served





the dragons of evil. In the long nights around the trailfires, he had begun to speculate on the origins of his weapon.

When the war ended and Horn returned to Thorbardin, he felt a growing sense of restlessness with the ways of peace. A skilled blacksmith, he found no pleasure in the forge, no reward in the shaping of metal into tool or blade. Still his mind drifted back to the sword he'd worn at his own side, to the blade of Thoradin steel.

Horn began to talk to the elders among the Hylar, to learn as much as he could about the city their forefathers had left behind in the Khalkists. He learned of the great, terraced hillside, though none remembered it had been the work of ogres.

The determined Hylar spoke to some surviving members of the dwarven parties that had searched the Khalkists for Thoradin. They gave him maps, and spent many hours talking to him about their fruitless explorations. Most dwarves will talk quite freely to a questioner who pays to keep their ale mugs full. It boggles the mind to think what Horn's ale bill was like during these years of research!

Among the other veterans of the war was a skilled captain of crossbows, Beak Skincutter of the Daergar clan. He had fought at the side of Horn Dunbar, and now he began to take note of his old companion's probing questions. Beak Skincutter also developed a growing curiosity about the lost realm.

Finally, admitting their dissatisfaction with a life of peace and prosperity, the two dwarves reached a decision. They would make an expedition to the Khalkists, and either discover the site of lost Thoradin, or locate a suitable place to build a new population center.

Postwar boredom was a common affliction in Thorbardin, and the two dwarves anticipated no difficulties in finding enough volunteers to populate a new colony. They did not anticipate the outraged reactions of the

Daewar and Theiwar clans when the plan was proposed to the council.

The thanes of both these powerful clans accused the Daewar and Hylar of base treachery, of intending to found a nation where only their two clans would be represented. While Horn and Beak had no such exclusionary intentions, their failure to include these other powerful clans in their planning was a lapse in judgment that would have repercussions later. Predictably, the Klar and Aghar clans took little interest in the plans, though members of each tagged along with the expedition anyway.

After heated exchanges in the Hall of Audience, two esteemed veterans of the other clans were appointed to co-command the expedition. Kane Icewall, a scowling swordsman who'd had a snow-white beard since adulthood, represented the Daergar. Thist Whispertooth, a quiet but determined Theiwar chieftain, filled out the ranks of leadership.

EPIC MARCH

A full year was spent in preparation, with at least 10,000 dwarves applying to join the group. Given anticipated limitations in food supply, the dwarves could allow only 600 from each clan. However, when straggling Aghar and Klar were added the total exceeded 3,000. Practitioners of all the dwarven trades were present, and the expedition had a strong military complement with the dwarves who'd fought outside Thorbardin during the Dragon War. Many of them had been east as far as the Khalkists.

The Knights of Solamnia were notified of the migration, and they agreed to allow passage through their lands. But this was only after the dwarves made it clear they wouldn't settle down until safely ensconced in the Khalkist heights. The migration would also pass the borders of the human kingdom of

Kharolis, and the city-state of Sanction, but these were deemed too small to require advance permission.

The migration began in early spring of 998 PC. Throughout that spring and summer the dwarven column plodded across the flat Solamnic plains. By mid-autumn, the dwarves had established a semi-permanent camp in a sheltered vale among the range's foothills.

Immediately, parties of explorers that each consisted of at least one expert delver, as well as skilled mountaineers and a complement of a dozen warriors, spread into the rocky heights around them. These parties were looking for any sign of the ancient realm of Thorin. However, since so many explorations had been done in the past, and none had yielded any results, Horn and his fellow leaders considered other possibilities and clues.

The previous searches had been predicated on the knowledge of the wide, terraced hill-sides surrounding the mountain city. The range had been thoroughly combed, and no sign of these terraces had been discovered. (The perceptive historian will recall that they were swept away by earthquake in 2009 PC.) Therefore, Horn set his searchers to looking for different clues.

Most significantly, he told them to look for a valley where two rivers flowed. The site would be in view of the westernmost crest of the Khalkists, which had been known as the Suncradles. Unfortunately, they didn't know exactly where along the long western crest these peaks were to be found. With a shrewd guess, Horn suggested the highest peaks among them, and it was in the shadow of these peaks that the migrating dwarves made their camp.

By the time the snows started to cover the land, Horn and his fellow leaders were forced to admit that they would need to postpone the search until spring. After all, if no clue had been visible to the searchers when they could examine each rock on the ground, it

would be impossible to learn anything when the entire place was buried under many feet of snow. The search and hunting parties straggled back to the huge camp, and the dwarves settled down to ride out the winter.

Finally spring warmed the lower valleys, and with the melting snow the bands of exploring and hunting dwarves spread through the wilderness again. This time they went in larger groups. Two dozen men-at-arms escorted the parties of exploration, while the huntsmen worked at least in pairs.

OGRE TROUBLES

It wasn't long before one of the exploring parties encountered difficulty. As advance scouts approached a narrow pass that was still covered in winter's mantle, the telltale rumbles of snow fell from the heights above. Forewarned, the dwarves backtracked and observed. With their planned ambush thwarted, a band of ogres broke from concealment and charged down on them. Only by frantic retreat, plus the heroic self-sacrifice of a six-dwarf rearguard, did the remainder of the party make it back to the encampment to raise the alarm.

The 36 ogres in this party showed no inclination to attack 3,000 dwarves. Still, the ogres took up positions on the heights around the camp, and over the succeeding days they were joined by many more of their number. Soon the dwarves were surrounded by nearly 1,000 of the bulky, growling humanoids.

Again it was Horn Dunbar who exhibited crucial leadership in a time of crisis. He spoke eloquently to all the dwarves, appealing to their hatred of their ancient enemies. The dwarves of the four clans banded together and set out against their foes. They scrambled up the snowy, wet hillsides and met the ogres at the crests. For several days, battles raged around the encampment. Several hundred dwarves paid with their lives. Ogres fell too,





and eventually the brutes grew tired with the pitched battle. Unable to focus their determination to a goal as well as could their opponents, the ogres finally broke ranks and grudgingly left the valley to the dwarves.

Horn Dunbar led a search party back to one of the two-river valleys. In the course of probing through the rubble and stone along one of the riverbanks, he came upon a large, carved block of granite. Perfectly-shaped even after a thousand years of neglect, the piece could only have been crafted by a dwarf. Furthermore, its very size indicated that it had once formed the keystone of a very large arch, the kind of arch that would only be found in a truly immense delving.

Fortified with this crucial clue, Horn and his mountaineers examined the slope overhead, and reconstructed in their minds the great rockslide that had brought half the mountain tumbling into the valley. At last, the site of Thorin had been found.

A NEW GOLDEN AGE, THE MILLENNIUM OF THORADIN

This great dwarven kingdom would rise from the ruins of an older realm to dominate the Khalkist Mountains for almost exactly 1,000 years. Its rise was tied to the steady emigration from Thorbardin. Its fall was swift and dramatic, for it occurred in the instant tumult of the Cataclysm.

REDISCOVERY OF THORIN

Following the discovery of the ancient keystone, Horn Dunbar's dwarves quickly swarmed over the steep, high mountain. The great summit they had found must be Mount Thorin. The peak rose more than 1,000 feet from where they stood. And even here they were on a high, windswept shoulder, farther

up than any of the surrounding peaks.

The two rivers had merged during the past thousand years, so that only one wide watercourse flowed down the broad valley. Even after all these years the remnants of twin channels were visible, and two forks of the stream emerged from adjacent valleys just upstream from this deep vale.

And there, to the west, the setting sun dipped into a saddle-shaped pass between two peaks of that western range. It looked so like something going to rest in a baby's bed that the name seemed inevitable. That range could only be the Suncradles.

Additional searching proved that the caverns within the mountain currently served as the lairs for hundreds of ogres. After the great discovery, however, Horn Dunbar was not about to let a detail like that stop him.

Flushed with the importance of their find, the dwarves left the ruin with their presence unsuspected. There were too few of them right now to cleanse the scourge of ogres from the place, but that was no matter. These dwarves were pragmatic, and they were determined to return.

RECLAIMING THE OLD HOME

Making haste back to the dwarven encampment, Horn Dunbar spread word of the expedition's find. He organized every dwarf who could wield a weapon to form a powerful and determined strike force. The rest of the band marched along with them. They would take shelter in a nearby valley that Horn's group had discovered.

Careful exploration allowed the dwarves to discover three entrances into the ruins currently used by the ogres, and another six tunnels that the monsters either didn't know about or didn't bother using. Dividing the attackers into large companies, Horn and his co-commanders each took charge of one group. Leaving the entrances used by the

ogres unguarded, the dwarves slowly, quietly infiltrated the fortress.

The attack showed the subtlety of Horn Dunbar's planning. He did not attempt to exterminate or humiliate the ogres. Instead, his aim was to drive them from ruined Thorin and allow the dwarves to take possession of their ancestral home. So he left them their escape routes. Also, he planned the attack so that the dwarves would seem to come at the ogres from deeper within the mountain than the delvings currently occupied by the ogres. He hoped that the demoralizing effects of such an assault would send the monsters fleeing from the caverns, never to return.

The dwarves attacked with complete surprise, signalling a coordinated assault by the booming of a great drum. For some hours the ogres stood their ground, fighting courageously for the homes that had been theirs for countless generations. But the attack had been too sudden, Horn Dunbar's plan too shrewd. Eventually, the morale of the monsters began to waver.

Finally the ogres fell into small groups, and then in mass fled along the paths Horn had left to them. Once more Thorin was included in the domains of the dwarves.

THE DELVING OF NEW THORADIN

The celebrating dwarves found most of the chambers and lairs of inner Thorin to be intact, though some places adjacent to the lower levels of the manufactories had collapsed and become choked with rubble. The great firewell in the base of the suntunnel was plugged by a hardened cap of lava, cool to the touch. If the ancient fires of magma still smoldered below, they were too far away to be readily detectable.

The gates that had once sealed the Grand Gather to inner Thorin stood as firm as when

they had dropped, but now they formed the outer wall of the cavern network. The ancient earthquake had carried away all of the mountain beyond, which had included the rubble-filled Grand Gather as well as the abandoned keep and sentinel towers. Farther within the mountain, the quake had apparently wreaked little damage.

The ogres had been in residence, seemingly, for a few centuries. Their piles of rubble had been thrown into lower chambers, where rotting bones and refuse created an intolerable stench. The dwarven layout must have been ample and sufficient for the ogres, since they had made no attempt to delve any new chambers. Many arched doorways had been bashed out, however, opening up the walkways for ogre-sized bodies.

Kane Icewall, of the dark-loving Daergar, claimed the lower reaches of the Great Sun-tunnel for his clan, and none begrudged the claim. There the Daergar began to set up forges and smelters again, as well as exploring the mining potential of the nearby rock.

Both the Daewar and Theiwar desired the caverns along the Grand Concourse, and fighting between the two seemed inevitable. Again it was Horn Dunbar who intervened, utilizing his considerable skills to calm the opposing factions. He devised a compromise wherein the Theiwar moved into the western side of the concourse, while the Daewar claimed the caverns to the east.

As for the Hylar, they lived up to their ancestral name. They moved into the higher levels, grouped in their rings around the central shaft. They busied themselves clearing many of the remaining compartments, for Thorin had been built to hold many times the number of dwarves that now lived here.

EMISSARY TO ISTAR

Within a year the dwarves again ventured out to gather food and to secure their claim on





the new realm of Thoradin. At the same time, they sent ambassadors to the eastern realm of Istar, where they entered into negotiations. By previous agreement with Thorbardin, the dwarves of Thoradin would not try to open trade with Solamnia. Therefore the colony devoted all of its early mercantile energy toward Istar.

The dwarven goals were the establishment of a great trading center in the Khalkists, and the development of good roads by which the humans could easily travel from Istar to Solamnia. The dwarves, naturally, could collect a steady income of tolls from this road.

These trade missions were warmly welcomed in Istar. The population of that thriving realm had fast outstripped its supplies of metal tools and coins. Also, the human craftsmen among them were competent but were no match for the skilled smiths, carvers, and forgers of the dwarves.

Negotiations determined that the dwarves would maintain embassies within the borders of Istar, from where the materials manufactured in Thoradin would be offered for sale. The dwarves also returned home with a lucrative contract for the minting of Istarian coins in Thoradin.

At the same time, the dwarves promised to build a road for the humans that would traverse the heights of the Khalkist Range and greatly facilitate communications between Istar and Solamnia. A high pass with a characteristic column of stone rising from the saddle, Stone Pillar Pass would become the site of the major trans-Khalkist highway for the next nine centuries.

GROWTH AND PROSPERITY

For steady decades Thoradin thrived and expanded. More and more dwarves came from Thorbardin, drawn by tales of the prosperity growing from the steady Istar trade. The road through Stone Pillar Pass was completed

in less than 10 years, and humans quickly made use of it.

Thoradin set up toll stations and enterprising dwarven merchants established a wayside inn near the summit of the pass, and steady income began to roll in. In time, this small post would become a flourishing trade community in its own right.

Trade exchange was established with Thorbardin, since certain types of gems (especially emeralds, much prized by dwarves) and high grade iron ore could only be mined in the Khalkists. Thorbardin offered the services of its master delvers, who had run out of major excavation projects in the great dwarvenhome below Cloudseeker Mountain.

In Thoradin, these diggers and engineers found a great need for their services. Each of the clans felt it necessary to have its own unique city. The nearness of their cousins was a continuing source of irritation in Thoradin, even though the population did not yet use up all the existing cavern space.

Consequently, delvers from Thoradin and Thorbardin combined their energies to expand the ancient city of Thorin into a great network of communities divided by clan. This excavation would continue for centuries, but within the first four decades three additional cities had been outlined and begun.

The original delvings remained the home of the Hylar, and for their city they adopted the ancient name of Thorin. The Daergar claimed a network of delved passages amid some prime iron-bearing orebeds several miles to the west, calling their new city Thoradarax. The Daewar expanded to the southeast into a region of porous rock they would call Thorolck.

The Theiwar delved deep and far, removing themselves from the presence of their kin. The city they delved began in the heart of a broad mountain, and progressed downward into the heart of the bedrock. This place they called Zhakar. Thanks to its depth, it was the

only one of Thoradin's cities to survive the Cataclysm almost intact.

Each of these cities developed its own extensive series of food-growing warrens, manufacturing, and merchant centers. Because Thoradin lacked the huge central cavern that was the characteristic feature of Thorbardin, the tribes of this city became even more clannish and isolated from each other than their kin in the Kharolis Range.

Despite the differences, however, the demands of Istar for dwarven goods were so persistent, and so profitable, that the four clans managed to overlook their differences for almost a century. This proved long enough for Thoradin colony to become established, and to become a definite asset to Thorbardin.

The ogres who inhabited the Khalkists continued to be a vexing problem for the dwarves during the decades of Thoradin's growth. Bands of the monsters occasionally raided the trade road, until heavy and costly escorts were added to each caravan. Also, many tribes of the brutes still inhabited the heights around Thoradin's cities, making it unsafe for unarmed dwarves to travel too far from the cavern entrances.

THE FIRST OGRE WAR

In the late summer of 910, a large force of ogres emerged from the crest of the trade road to swoop down on dwarven caravans. Hundreds of lives and several complete wagon trains had been lost before the undermountain dwellers even knew that trouble was brewing. By the time a strike force of dwarves could be organized and sent atop the mountains, the ogres had vanished.

Over the winter the clans renewed their pacts of alliance, and in spring they sent a great army forth to seek out and destroy the ogres. Beginning around Mount Thorin, they marched through a series of outward-spiraling circles, seeking sign of the monstrous foe.

But for more than a month these dwarves marched up ridges, down valleys, and across lofty summits, without ever catching sight of an ogre. It was as if the brutes had withdrawn from the central Khalkists. But none of the dwarves believed that they would do so.

Finally the force split up, forming four wings divided along clan lines. Scouring every locale, the forces moved gradually apart from each other. Only when many miles of rugged mountains divided the individual groups did the ogres strike.

The Theiwar were the first to feel the brunt of the attack, when more than 1,000 ogres fell upon an equal number of dwarves. Overpowered by the hulking brutes, the dwarven army was forced into a desperate retreat. Sending messages to his allied forces, the Theiwar leader tried to rally his warriors, but the ogre attack was too forceful. The dwarves fell back to the borders of their realm, but not until more than half of them had been slain in a series of bloody fights.

The Daewar, marching to the rescue, were the next to feel the pounding of ogre clubs. Making haste in an attempt to reach the Theiwar force before it was wiped out, the Daewar marched into a bloody ambush. Trapped in a narrow gully, they suffered a rain of boulders and stones as the ogres attacked from both sides. Barely 300 of more than 1,000 dwarven troops escaped the deadly ambush.

The Hylar and Daergar forces finally received word of the debacle, and marched to the aid of their cousins. Aided by reinforcements from within the mountain, the dwarves were able to battle the ogres to a halt. But by no means could they consider their summer campaign a victory. With the coming of the autumn snows, the folk of Thoradin withdrew into their undermountain kingdom. Food would be short that cold season, since so many of the usual forage lands were held by the ogres.





FUTILE CAMPAIGNS

The third year of the war began like the second, with a large force of dwarves marching forth to locate an elusive foe. This time they didn't repeat the mistake of the previous year, but when they finally found the ogres, the monsters had gathered atop a mountain more than 60 miles south of Thoradin. A series of inconclusive but bloody attacks failed to drive the brutes from their defenses, and once again the coming of autumn forced the dwarves to withdraw following an unsatisfying campaign.

The dwarves of Thoradin began to feel as though they were under siege. Food supplies had improved because the war had remained far from Thoradin's borders. But the restrictions on their freedom were vexing to the proud, stubborn dwarves. Also, caravans of Istar had declined to make the dangerous climb into the heights. The dwarves could little spare the troops required to escort their shipments into the human realms, so a virtual cessation of trade resulted.

For several years the dwarves tried to persuade the Istarians to join their campaign against the ogres, but this nation of merchants and buyers was unwilling to risk blood and treasure on behalf of an ally. For nearly 10 years the dwarves fought alone. Every summer they marched on an inconclusive campaign, only to retire to their tunnels in the fall with the full knowledge that they were not the masters of their own domain.

Thorbardin sent several companies of seasoned warriors, but the sons of that great dwarvenhome had little interest in fighting a battle 500 miles away. After a few years with no reports of dramatic victory, these reinforcements dried up at the source. It seemed that Thoradin would live or die on its own.

ALLIANCE TO VICTORY

The first signal that Thoradin would not have to fight alone came in the form of a heavily armored company of Solamnic Knights. Under the leadership of Galric Dukesmount, a Knight of the Crown, these riders offered their lances to the dwarves. They asked nothing in return but a pledge of lasting peace and friendship. It took little debate before the dwarves accepted the offer.

Soon an entire army of humans, armed mostly with weapons of dwarven manufacture, marched up the Stone Pillar Road to take its place beside the dwarves. The offensive began immediately, and with a combination of tactics, the allied forces trapped a great company of ogres, annihilating them to the last wart-faced warrior.

Nevertheless, the ogres proved remarkably resilient. The war would last 40 years, with periods of intensive campaign followed by several years of lull and stalemate. Gradually, bit by bit, valley by valley, the human and dwarven forces drove the ogres from the high Khalkists.

Battles were fought and much blood was shed on each side, but the trend had been established when the humans intervened. The first objective of the alliance was to clear the ogres from the northern Khalkists, reopening the road over Stone Pillar Pass and securing the agricultural lands around Thoradin itself.

By 870 PC the ogres had been driven into a small corner of the range, at the very southern extremity of the Khalkist ridges. Here finally, they asked for truce, pledging to leave the dwarven nation in peace for the rest of time. Weary from four decades of war, the dwarves readily agreed, though the Knights of Solamnia were more than willing to continue the fight.

From this historic peace the ogre nation of Bloten was born. While it would never become an ally or even a peaceful neighbor of

Thoradin, the two races would coexist without warfare for another 350 years.

A GROWING TRADE CENTER

So much commercial transportation began to cross the Khalkists that the dwarves decided to build another road through the mountains. This one would run farther to the south than Stone Pillar Pass, offering the merchants of Istar ready access to the markets of Xak Tsaroth and Kharolis. This road followed the valleys of another high pass along the mountain ridge, this time through a gap called White Bear Pass.

By the second century of its existence Thoradin had become known as an exceptional source of steel, as well as gold, silver, and other metals. The keystone of its reputation was the dwarven skill at minting coins. The Istarian steel piece became the standard unit of exchange across Ansalon, and all Istarian coins were minted in Thoradin.

At the same time, the dwarves increased their trade with local human realms, especially those of eastern Solamnia. A great variety of foodstuffs, as well as lumber, wool, spices, and cotton, were offered to the dwarves in exchange for their ever-popular objects of metal.

THE THANEHOLD

During the century of 700-600 PC, clan factions again stirred trouble in Thoradin, as usual on the grounds that all the other clans were getting a better deal than the griping faction. Instead of letting the situation come to blows, however, the dwarves agreed to form a unifying government. Each clan would have its own ruling thane, but the realm of Thoradin would select one High Thane to adjudicate matters, negotiate pacts with neighboring

states, and act as a unifying governor.

The first High Thane of Thoradin was Basalt Slatefell, a Hylar chieftain who was a direct descendent of Horn Dunbar (who was now viewed as the founder and figurative grandfather of the realm). At first the Daergar and Theiwar objected to a High Thane from the Hylar, but the traditions of Thorbardin still ran through their blood. Also, in some moments of lucidity, the dwarves of the other clans realized that the Hylar had the greatest traditions of fairness and wisdom, and would be the most likely to govern well.

Basalt Slatefell assumed his high office in 613 PC. He proved to be an equitable leader and a clever negotiator, and his ascension to the throne marks the end of violent clan strife in Thoradin.

MORE CITIES

The underground realm of Thoradin was greatly expanded as three cities were delved, Thaxtharken, Menekhtat, and Talak-Siln. Numerous smaller towns were established in delved caverns beneath the Khalkists. The Theiwar had already established an additional gate to the outside, called the Zhalakar Gate. As the realm expanded to the west, two more major gates were added, called Southgate and Westgate.

The new additions gave Thoradin four major points of access to the outside world. Unlike Thorbardin, however, Thoradin also had many smaller entrances. Much like ancient Thorin's trails, these were generally only wide enough for a dwarf to pass on foot, and the actual exits were concealed by cleverly disguised doors of stone or brush.

The new cities were much more mixed in terms of population than the original clanholds. Despite the relative peace brought by the new thane, the population of the original four cities remained fairly divided along clan lines.





Thaxtharken, located over a major source of magma heat, became a major manufacturing center of Thoradin. It was far below the surface of the ground, and the dwarves who lived there became used to life without sight of the sun or the sky. Talak-Siln, which was nearest to the Westgate, became a major trading terminus with the people of the Solamnian plains.

THE SECOND OGRE WAR

The prosperity of Thoradin and the growing dwarven-human bonds were tested in 530 PC when the Khalkist ogres again rumbled out of Bloten and attempted to reclaim the heights of the mountain range. Though more than three centuries had passed since the First Ogre War, the second war had its roots in the same inequities. The ogres continued to regard the Khalkists as theirs by right, and viewed the dwarves of Thoradin as upstart interlopers.

As with the first ogre war, the initial ogre attacks came as a surprise to Thoradin, and once again the dwarves were forced back into their underground realm. There they spent a winter preparing their counteroffensive.

EARLY ALLIANCES

This time the dwarves wasted no time enlisting the aid of human allies. Even during the depth of winter, emissaries of Thoradin approached Istar and Solamnia, trying to recruit aid for the coming campaign. As before, Solamnia proved willing to help. The knights were always looking for foes worthy of their steel.

Even Istar offered to help, though not in the form of bloodshed. Still, ever mindful of the deleterious effects such a war would have on their trading empire, the emperor offered to fund the summer campaign, and even made a

donation of a fine herd of warhorses to Solamnia, provided, of course, that the dwarves and the knights would do the actual fighting. Istar also extracted a promise from its allies that they would not trespass across the borders of the empire. The dwarves and knights readily agreed.

The campaign of 529 was a well-coordinated effort. The dwarves emerged from Thoradin and drove southward, while the knights entered the mountains from the south and the west. Within two months, hundreds of ogres had been killed and the bulk of the monstrous army put to hasty flight.

That retreat, surprisingly, took the ogres out of the mountains and into the borderlands of Silvanesti and Istar. True to their agreement, the dwarves and knights ended their pursuit. They had pledged not to enter Istar, after all. The elves harried the monsters away from their own borders, and suddenly the emperor of Istar found a huge force of marauding ogres lumbering toward the heart of his realm.

Hastily he mustered three of his legions, turning aside the ogres after a long, pitched battle. This fight, called the Battle of Redclay, did not result in an Istarian victory so much as a realization on the part of the ogres that they were fleeing far from their mountainous home.

The year of campaigning ended as the ogres withdrew into the foothills in early winter, gaining the shelter of their lairs without interference from the allied armies. Naturally, the emperor was less than pleased with the course of the war, but he had to face the fact that his own insistence on the integrity of his borders had been at least partially responsible.

Still, he would not allow the interference of foreign troops within his realm. His solution the next year was to send his legions on constant patrol, with the intent of intercepting any ogre incursion before it could penetrate into Istar.

BLOODY SUCCESSES

The 528 and 527 campaigns were the decisive operations in this war, though sporadic conflict would continue until 523. By the end of 527, all the ogre concentrations had been smashed, and the greatest lairs had been seized and destroyed by dwarven miners. The Istarian legions remained on patrol, and the knights continued to send patrols through the valleys.

Remnants of the ogre armies formed marauding bands, and from 526 to 523 they caused some difficulties for the dwarves. Since they remained in the roughest terrain, unsuitable for horses, or even humans on foot, the bulk of the fighting these last years fell on the dwarven irregulars who swarmed after the ogres wherever they could be found.

By the end of the war, the ogres as a nation had been sundered, defeated, and broken so effectively that Bloten essentially ceased to exist, except as an informal gathering of surviving tribes. They would never again menace the peace or prosperity of Thoradin. Ironically, Bloten would rise again not too many years after Thoradin collapsed into ruins.

DWARFMELD

In 522 the dwarves of Thoradin and the Knights of Solamnia affixed their signatures to the Swordsheath Scroll signed by Istar and Silvanesti a little more than a century before (in 630). High Thane Brack Slatefell (grandson of the first High Thane) pledged alliance with those two human realms, and also promised to leave the elves alone.

With the exception of a few punitive campaigns against human raiders or very small bands of ogre brigands, the peace of the Dwarfmeld would last until Istar itself, through the Proclamation of Manifest Virtue, would bring it to a bloody end.

For the second half of its reign, Thoradin continued to cement its reputation as the finest source of minted coins, steel, and other metals across all of Ansalon. Humans used the passes through the Khalkists, and trade flourished for the betterment of all concerned.

Though communications continued with Thorbardin, and with the other new dwarven kingdom of Kayolin, the dwarves of Thoradin grew increasingly isolated from their kin in other lands. The occasional hardy explorer would set out to travel from one realm to the other, but trade between the dwarves was virtually nonexistent. Each realm far preferred to barter with humans for goods that were otherwise not readily available. Messages from one to the other might often take several years to receive a response, and in the matters of politics and alliance, each dwarven realm was strictly on its own.

When Istar proclaimed its first kingpriest (280 PC), the dwarves cocked a wary eye to the east. Yet the new status seemed to have no harmful effects on trade, so Thoradin didn't worry too much about it. When the kingpriest began construction of his temple 20 years later, he sought his stonemasons and arch-builders from among Thoradin's finest crafters. These workers traveled to Istar, many remaining for as long as 50 years, and received very lucrative payments in return for their skills and labor.

By 200 PC, however, growing human arrogance made the situation uncomfortable for dwarves trying to live in Istar. Most of the dwarves returned to the mountains. Trade continued to flourish, but the haughtiness of the human agents dampened the warmth of the relationship, though not its profitability.

THE ISTAR WAR

The beginning of the end for Thoradin (as for so much of the world) resulted from the arro-





gance of the kingpriest of Istar. In 118 PC he declared the Proclamation of Manifest Virtue, which, among many other restrictions, outlawed worship of any evil or neutral gods. Furthermore, the kingpriest extended his edict to include every realm on Ansalon. Specifically, he ordered the dwarves to cease their worship of Reorx!

Naturally, the dwarves were furious with this arrogance. The current thane was Cobalt Rankil, and he acted immediately, closing the borders of their realm to humankind, barring trade with Istar, and forcibly turning back the trade caravans that tried to use the Khalkist passes to reach Solamnia.

Since the elves had closed their realm to Istar some years earlier, the dwarven actions effectively cut off Istar (by land) from the entire western expanse of Ansalon. Naturally, the humans could not let this pass unchallenged. During the summer of 117, the kingpriest sent four of his legions against the dwarves. Two each went up the old trading roads of White Bear and Stone Pillar passes.

The dwarves met each of these forces in turn, defeating them and sending them fleeing back to Istar. Losses were so high that it would be more than a century before the humans dared to send a military expedition against Thoradin.

PROPHECIES AND PREPARATIONS

During the last century before the Cataclysm, Thoradin drew within itself, as if the dwarves sensed that their reign of glory and prosperity was shortly doomed. Indeed, some clerics of Reorx claimed that the world would soon end. Others urged a vengeful invasion of neighboring Istar. High Thane Rankil decided against the latter option. Whether he believed the prophecies or not is unknown.

He declared that life in Thoradin would undergo dramatic changes. Cut off from

the sources of trade that had previously established their prosperity, the dwarves applied themselves to solidifying their delvings, furthering their explorations of the underdark, and studying the signs and signals of the gods for some hint as to what was to come.

Great treasures were expended during this period. At least some of the money was smuggled to Solamnia, where some merchants were allowed to carry on trade with Thoradin, though of course without the knowledge of Istar's agents. Still, without this limited trade, the dwarves would have been left with inadequate food supplies, since the population had grown far beyond self-sufficiency during the centuries of steady importing.

Great stocks of Istarian gold and steel intended for the mints were seized by the dwarves as reparations for the war. This treasure was either hidden or expended. Even if the dwarves used much of it to purchase the labor for improving Thoradin's delvings, it's hard to see how the entire amount could have been used up, especially since most of the work would have been done by the dwarves themselves. In fact, the disposal of this great treasure remains one of the great mysteries of Krynn.

THE FINAL COMING OF ISTAR

In 7 PC, the kingpriest once again decided to send his legions against Thoradin. Perhaps the lessons learned 110 years earlier had been forgotten, or maybe the arrogant ruler simply decided to try again. This time he sent four legions up each of the pass roads, with an entirely different outcome than that of the first invasion.

Perhaps convinced by their own prophecies that the world faced a period of ultimate chaos, the dwarves elected not to meet the human legions in battle. Instead, they with-

drew into their undermountain realm, fighting just long enough to allow the hill dwarves and the miners from outlying settlements to reach the security of Thoradin's great gates. Before they vanished, however, the dwarves brought thundering rockslides down upon each of the major passes and the roads they had so laboriously built.

The gates of Thoradin were concealed so effectively that the humans could not find them. Finally, with no enemies in sight, the kingpriest declared the war a stunning victory, which the evidence of relatively light losses by his forces served to support. He sent teams of human diggers into the mountains with orders to reopen the roads, but the presence of marauding ogres made this work too perilous. The ogres had become a presence in the mountains again as soon as the dwarves withdrew. After several years, the project was abandoned.

THE END OF THORADIN

To the modern dwarves, the significance of the Cataclysm is most often symbolized by the heartbreak of the Dwarfgate Wars. While not to dismiss the truly tragic nature of that conflict, perhaps it has achieved this status because so few dwarves truly understand the scope of the tragedy in Thoradin.

With the thunderous mountain plunging from the sky, this prosperous dwarven realm quite simply ceased to exist. Six of its seven great cities were destroyed outright. Magma erupted from below and volcanic convulsions shook the mountains themselves. Corridors and caverns collapsed, while water and rubble flooded through what had once been six grand cities.

The seventh city, Zhakar, would eventually rise from the ashes, but by then it would be a pale and corrupt shadow of its former greatness.



KAYOLIN, A REALM OF GEMSTONE

Shortly after Horn Dunbar and his companions established the realm of Thoradin, Thorbardin dispatched adventurous dwarves to form another colony. This one would be set in lands granted to the dwarves by the Knights of Solamnia. The grant had been made in return for the dwarven intervention during the Third Dragon War.

In 980 PC a Hylar explorer named Garnet Forgesmoke led a party into the northern Kharolis mountains in search of a place to open the colony granted by a grateful Solamnia. When his miners discovered a rich bed of garnets amid the stones of a mountain stream, the connection seemed too obvious to ignore. Garnet Forgesmoke declared that the new mines would be delved starting at the site of this discovery.

The decision was no doubt helped by the fact that all the nearby mountains showed promising traces of ore. Also, the bedrock of the range contained the largest extent of natural marble ever discovered upon Krynn. Located 300 miles north of Thorbardin, the new colony would give the dwarves an anchor at the very northern terminus of the great mountain range that had sheltered the older dwarvenhome for so long.

Already however, some lessons were being learned by the squabbles that had nearly disrupted the settlement of Thoradin, which had begun a few years earlier. Consequently, Garnet Forgesmoke was determined to begin his new colony as a community of Hylar. Later, when it had been established, he would consider bringing in dwarves of other clans. But in the beginning he would take only his own people.

The Hylar were very quiet about the arrangements for the new colony as a migratory expedition prepared to leave Thorbardin. Pre-

dictably, the other clans objected at first. The Hylar thane responded with the convincing argument that the Life-Tree was growing too crowded. Did the Theiwar, Daergar, or Daewar wish to give up space in Thorbardin to their Hylar cousins? The answers, naturally, were universally negative.

Also, the Thoradin colony was thriving at the time, and those who migrated there could move into an already existing series of caverns. Perhaps even more than the crowding argument, this persuaded the dwarves of the other clans to let the Hylar have the new realm, which would be called Kayolin.

THE DELVING OF KAYOLIN

For 200 years the population of Kayolin remained almost exclusively Hylar. These industrious dwarves excavated a small city that they named Garnet Thax, and immediately set about exploring the mining potential of the area. In addition to the usual necessary metals, including iron, copper, tin, nickel, gold, and silver, they found a variety of gems embedded in various parts of the range.

Many of the original excavations of Kayolin show its origins as a mining colony. Even the city of Garnet Thax itself, except for its central halls and undermountain fortress, follows the veins of ore that led here and there beneath the mountains. Much of Kayolin expanded along the channels of underground rivers.

Water was plentiful in the new realm, though nowhere did it gather into a great lake such as the Urkhan Sea. The dwarves of Kayolin made great use of canals and locks to enhance transportation throughout their subterranean cities and mines.

The dwarves of Kayolin quickly discovered



the advantages of the great store of marble lying literally all around them. They used the stone to line the floors and walls of their delvings, to erect great columns and statuary throughout the realm, and finally, they began to carve out blocks of granite for the simple purpose of export. Over the years, much of the spectacular architecture of Palanthis would owe its raw material to the marble mines of Kayolin.

EXPANSIONS

Trade began to flourish with the nearby Solamnian city-states of Thelgaard Keep, Caergoth, and Solanthis. Xak Tsaroth sent emissaries to Garnet, and even Thorbardin began to desire the smooth and polished stone that came from their new colony.

The Hylar found that they could not meet the demands of all their trading partners. They continued the pace of their mining and delving, but finally decided to encourage merchants and workers of the Daewar to join them, since that clan had historically been the most amicable to the Hylar.

Many Daewar proved amenable to the move, and soon several thousand of the golden-haired dwarves had joined their Hylar cousins in Kayolin. The cities of this new realm grew and flourished. Although none approached the size of Thorbardin's great cities, nor did they achieve the extent of ancient Thorin, the pure, polished marble that lined their corridors and chambers made Kayolin a wonder to behold.

For five centuries Kayolin remained a colony of Thorbardin, paying tribute to its parent realm in the form of gems, steel, and marble. Finally, in 458 PC, the dwarves of Garnet and its sister cities declared their self-sufficiency. Since trade would continue with Thorbardin, the leaders of the southern kingdom did not quibble with this technicality of governance.

Because it stood in the heart of Solamnia, Kayolin suffered none of the military tribulations faced by the colony in Khalkist. There were no ogres to threaten it, and even in later years, when Istarian arrogance became a source of trouble in the world, Kayolin was so far from the source of those difficulties that the dwarves here took little note of the conflicts to the east.

THE CATACLYSM AND KAYOLIN

Kayolin itself suffered virtually no damage from the Cataclysm. Naturally, there were some cave-ins within the caverns, and landslides in the mountains temporarily closed a couple of the realm's gates. The damage was immediately repaired and the gates were reopened within 10 years.

The dwarves of Kayolin withdrew into their fortress in the face of the destruction that had wracked the outside world. As bands of brigands claimed the surrounding lands, the dwarves took a defensive posture, closing off all trade and barring humans from the realm.

Because of this isolationist mentality, it was later than 50 AC before the Kayolin dwarves learned of the most significant effects of the godswrack. This was when a party of explorers set out to communicate with Thorbardin. They made their way to the south for about 80 miles, and then found their way blocked by a deep channel of the Newsea.

Thorbardin and Kayolin, the last two civilized realms of dwarves on Ansalon, were cut off from each other by this impassable obstacle. From here on, each nation was on its own.



DWARVES IN THE AGE OF DARKNESS

All of the dwarven realms suffered from the onslaught of the Cataclysm, as did every other nation on Ansalon. Where the wrack of the gods did not result in outright destruction, it took its toll in scars that would pervert attitudes and disrupt communication for centuries.

The relatively light damage in Kayolin has already been described. The landslides of the Cataclysm carried away the approaches to Thorbardin's North Gate, but like Kayolin, the kingdom itself suffered little internal damage. However, the most profound effect on that realm was from the tragedy of the Dwarfgate War.

The realm of Thoradin conversely, was too close to the heart of the destruction. For all purposes it ceased to exist. The culture that took its place was to be a blight and a shame on the otherwise glorious history of dwarves on Ansalon.

THE SURVIVAL OF ZHAKAR

This modern dwarven realm was actually born in the chaos of the Cataclysm. While Zhakar existed before that dire event, it was merely a single city amid the splendor of teeming, prosperous Thoradin.

The disaster of the Cataclysm brought the mighty halls of Thoradin crashing down around the dwarven wonders that had been carved in that realm's 1,000-year reign. Even the ancient caverns of Thorin, delved nearly 3,000 years before, were almost entirely obliterated by the wrack and ruin. Even the surrounding mountains grew more forbidding as volcanoes erupted, and new ridges rose into the sky between vast and deep chasms that suddenly twisted and split across the land.

Of the teeming glory of Thoradin only one city survived. This was the heart of the Theiwar clan, Zhakar. Though damage was exten-

sive, and many dwarves here were killed by cave-in and collapse, the bulk of Zhakar's population survived.

This is not to say that they prospered. The decades of rain that poured across the world washed away much of the surrounding mountain crest, flooding through the lower portions of the Theiwar city and bringing with it coldness, dampness, and plague. Much of the structural integrity of the delvings were damaged by the quake and erosion.

In fact, so much of the mountain overhead eroded that the upper portions of Zhakar were exposed to the air. By the time of the War of Lance, Zhakar was actually a mountaintop keep with a vast network of caverns and delvings below. Isolated from the rest of the dwarves, cut off from even the nearby human realms by the chaotically shifting mountains, the realm of Zhakar was virtually severed from all the rest of the world.

THE MOLD PLAGUE

The ultimate source of the illness that was to deform and corrupt these dwarves is unknown. It linked to the mold, and the mold undoubtedly flourished because of the wet and dank conditions. Whatever its origins, the plague came to affect virtually every surviving dwarf in Zhakar.

The effects of the plague were hideous. Afflicted dwarves suffered distortion of their skin and flesh, such that their bodies would grow lumps in irregular locations, and their skin would tatter into a pockmarked rag of leathery stuff.

Many dwarves perished from the effects of the plague. Others became insane, whether from some debilitating effect of the illness or simply dismay at the distortion of their appearance.





A percentage of the population proved able to survive the effects of the plague, but they did not avoid those effects. They lived as malformed dwarves, often hideous in appearance, though their physical capabilities remained for the most part unaffected.

Among the clans of the dwarves, the Theiwar had always been disposed toward selfish, even evil pursuits. The affliction of the plague twisted any vestige of goodness from the dwarves of Zhakar, so that one more tragic legacy of the Cataclysm became apparent.

For the first time on Krynn, a realm of dwarves would lean toward the pursuit of evil. Not that they would work toward conquest of their neighbors, but instead their allegiance would gradually shift toward darkness. Zhakar became a region of secrecy and corruption, where those few trespassers who entered would be quickly put to death.

Finally, when the realm made an approach to a neighbor, it would be by emissary to Sanction. Here the minions of the Dark Queen had already begun to recruit allies for her evil cause, and the dwarves of Zhakar seemed like perfect participants. During the second century following the Cataclysm, the Zhakar dwarves secretly excavated a long, undermountain tunnel connecting their realm to the outskirts of Sanction. By the time of Takhisis' great war, this tunnel would become a major supply and trade route for weapons, armor, and other supplies of war.

KHAROLIS:

DWARF AGAINST DWARF

The actual course of that conflict has been described in detail in several scholarly tomes,





most notably in the *War of the Twins* and the *Gates of Thorbardin*. Here the conflict is summarized.

The hill dwarves who lived beyond the stone walls of the mountain realm sought refuge in Thorbardin as wrack and ruin continued to plague the earth. Many humans, from Xak Tsaroth and beyond, joined with the hill dwarves in pleading for shelter.

The mountain dwarves, fearful of plague and famine, closed their gates against those who sought their help. The tragic order was given by King Duncan himself, in the first act of a heartbreaking tragedy that would bring to an end his family and his reign. Bitter conflict divided the dwarves, creating rifts that continued into the modern age.

It was the human wizard Fistantilus who brought the conflict to the stage of ultimate destruction. Magically erecting his towering fortress of Zhaman Keep as a base of operations, he took command of the forces besieging Thorbardin. Conflict raged outside the fortress as the mountain dwarves sent a great army forth to confront their enemies, an army commanded by Grallen, the son of Thorbardin's King Duncan.

When it became clear that nothing would save his army from defeat, Fistantilus reacted with hate and power. He called down a series of potent spells that not only destroyed the enemy army, but also his own forces. The fortress of Zhaman was battered into a ruin, creating the skull-visaged mountain that stands to this day. Fistantilus was presumed to have perished in the wrack.

THE GROWING EVIL

The dwarves of Krynn took little note of the coming storm, as the Dark Queen raised her clerics, returned her dragons to the world, and began the campaign that would result in the War of the Lance. Too wrapped within their own hatreds, distrustful of all humans, elves,

and others, they remained in their mountain realms and let history proceed without them.

Trade was greatly restricted following the Cataclysm, and much dwarven concern was directed to the loss of profits. Their goods had no markets. A great proportion of dwarven productivity shifted from manufacturing to the growing and gathering of food.

Thorbardin continued to drift without direction, for since the Dwarfgate War, it lacked a single king. Interclan rivalry between the thanes was a constant cause of bloodshed and destruction during this period. Beyond the mountain realm, wars and skirmishes raged between humans, ogres, goblins, hill dwarves, and elves. It seemed that the prospects for a return to peace were nonexistent.

THE WAR OF THE LANCE

When conflict finally wracked the world, the dwarves took up arms and fought as bravely as their martial history demanded. Beginning with Thorbardin opening its gates and allowing the sheltering of refugees within, the dwarven contributions were crucial to the ultimate victory of good.

The brave legions of Kayolin took to the field, fighting beside the Knights of Solamnia as the dragonarmies were first slowed, then halted, and finally thrown back against the Dark Queen's temple in Neraka. Many hill dwarves also took up arms against the forces of evil.

In the heart of the dark realms, the corrupt dwarves of the Zhakar actually served among the forces of the Dark Queen, fighting as allies alongside their traditional enemies, ogres and goblins. So much of their dwarven heritage had been lost that the Zhakar made ineffective troops. Also, their refusal to march far from their homeland further hampered the extent of their contributions. Many of them served as garrison troops in Sanction, where they remain to this day.











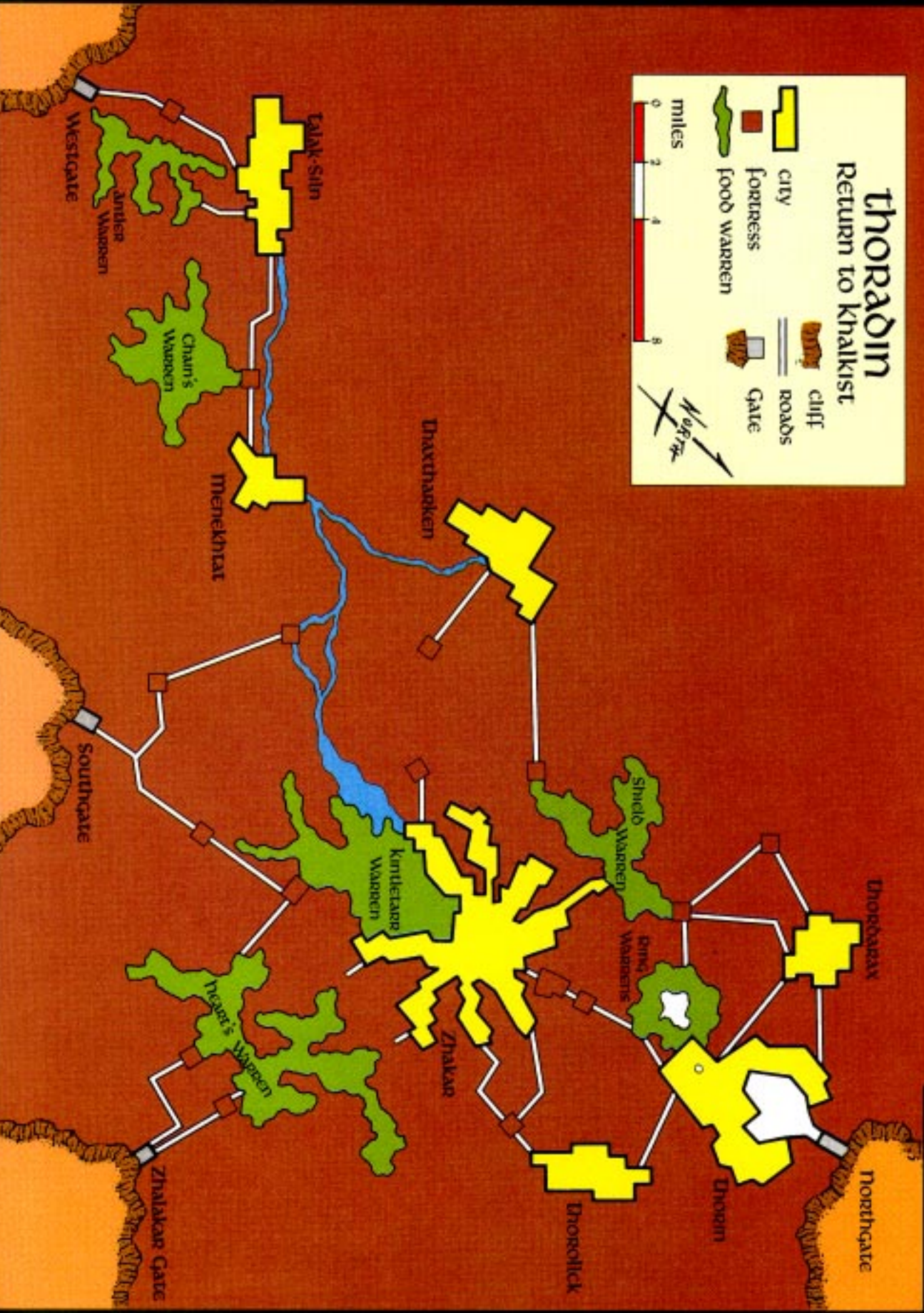
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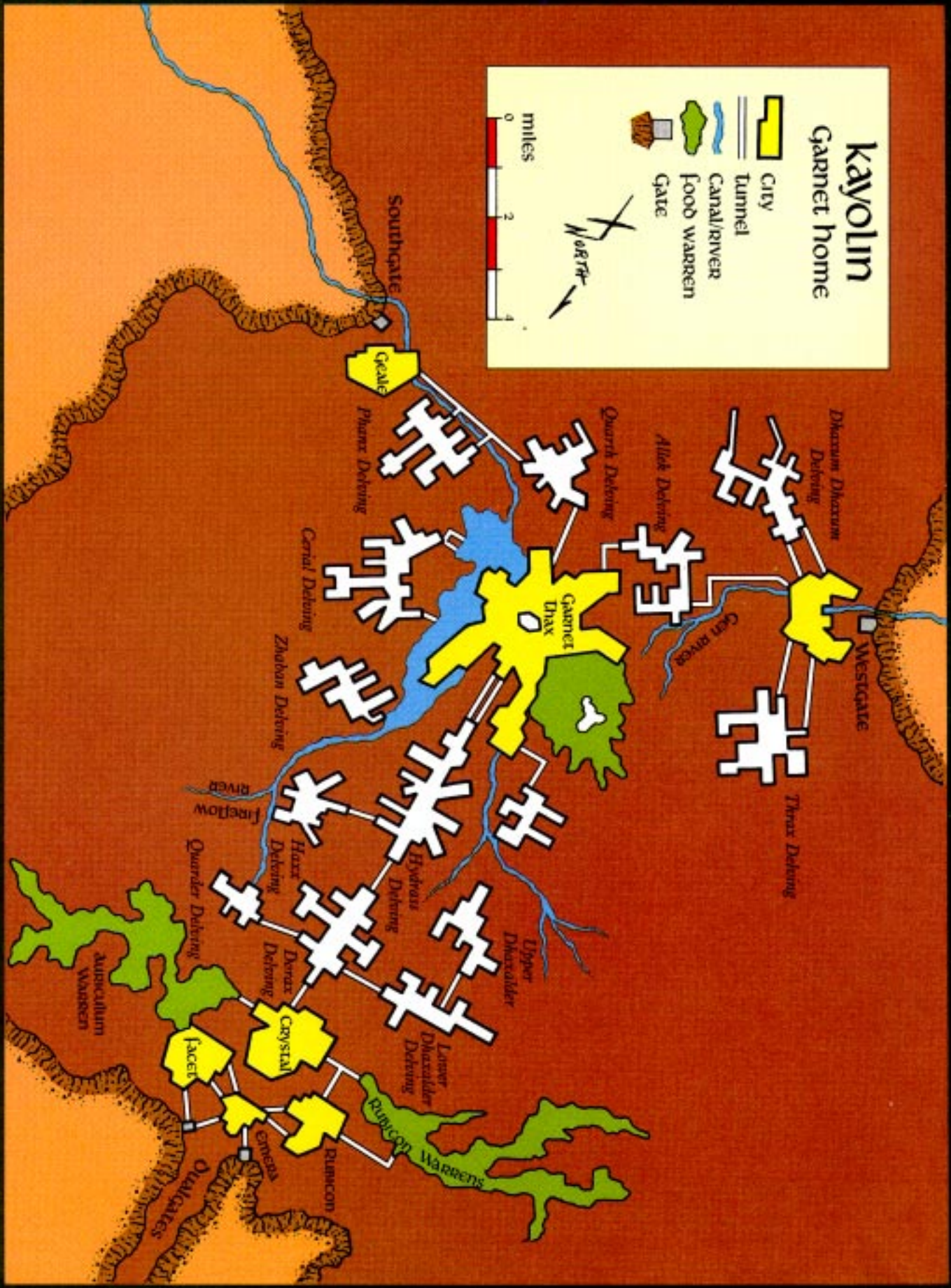
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thoradin

Return to Khalkist

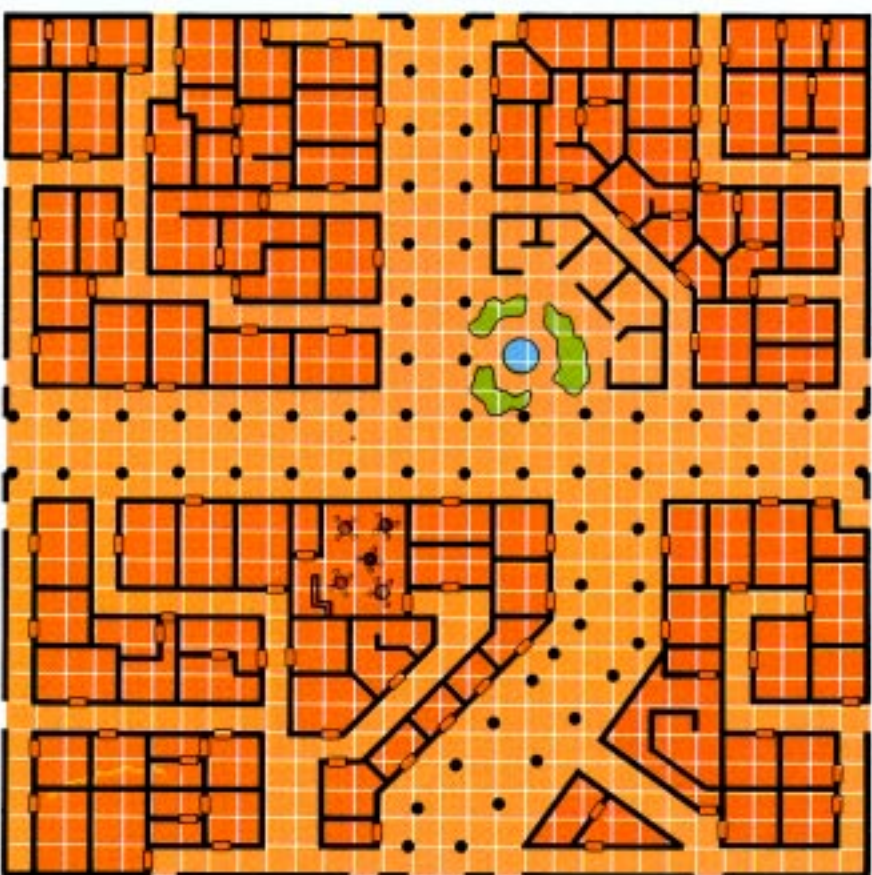
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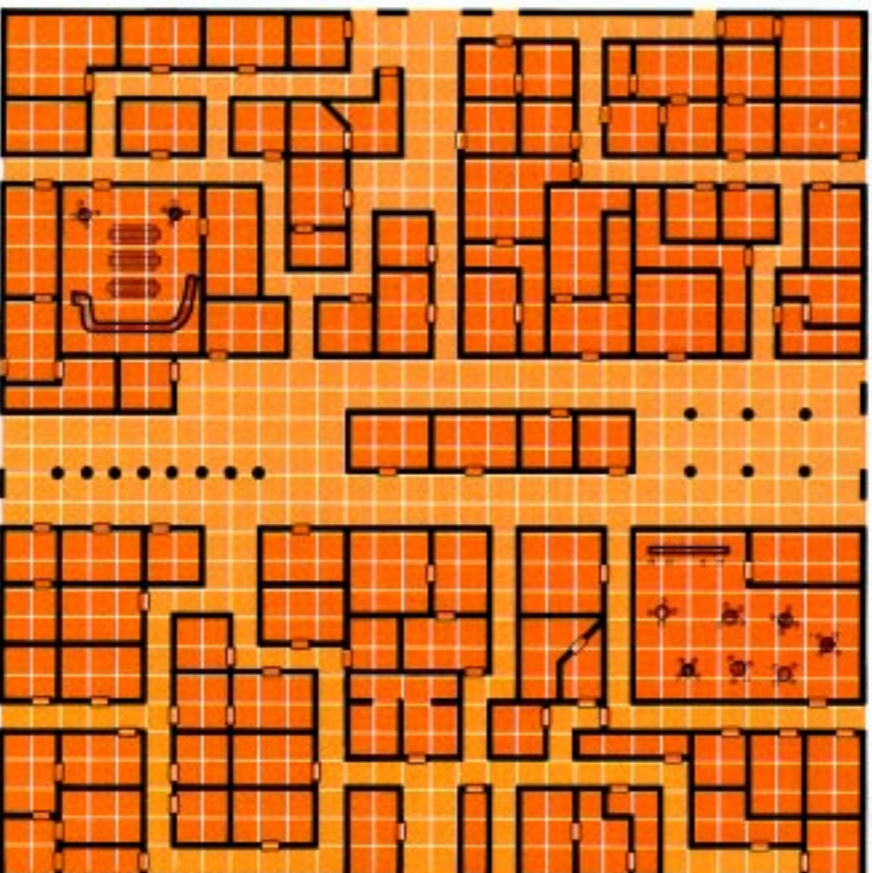




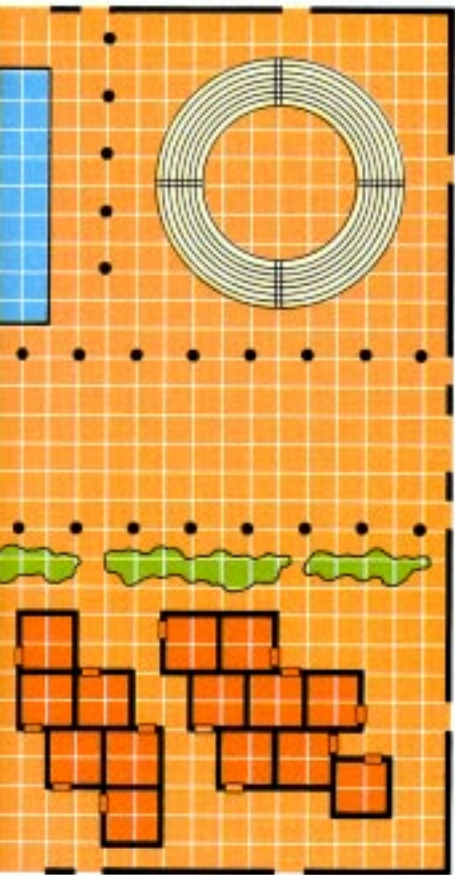
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Type R: Residential



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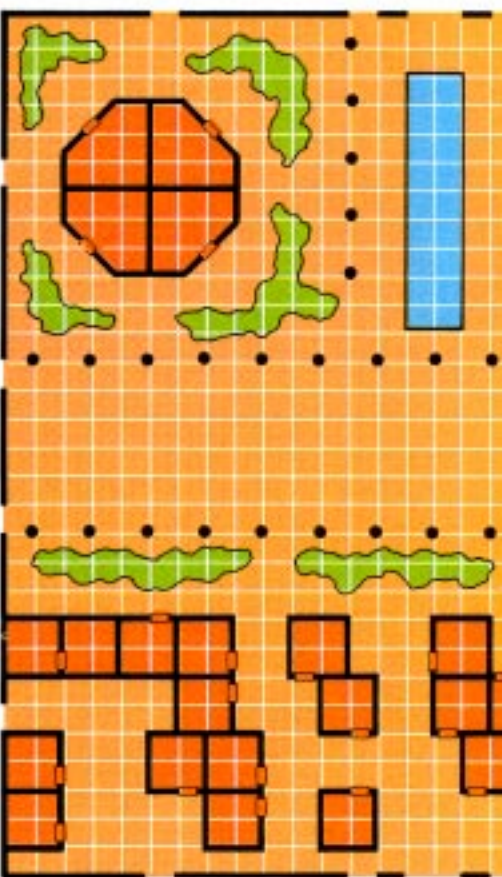


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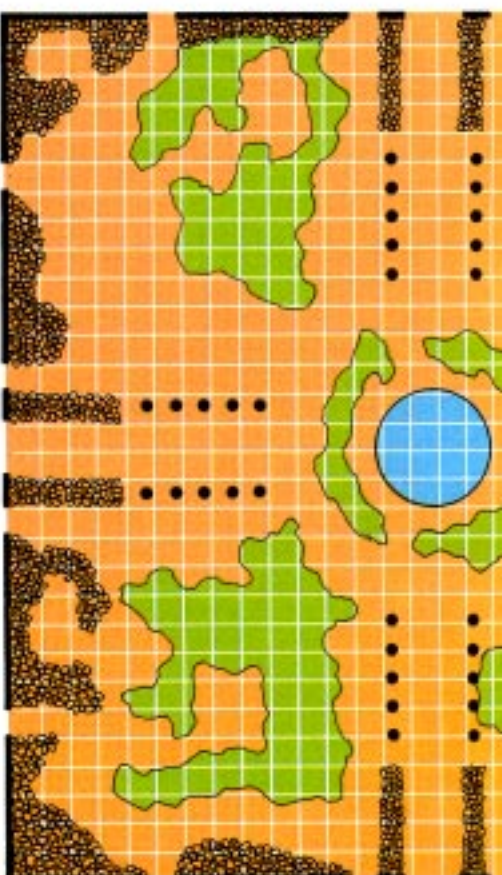
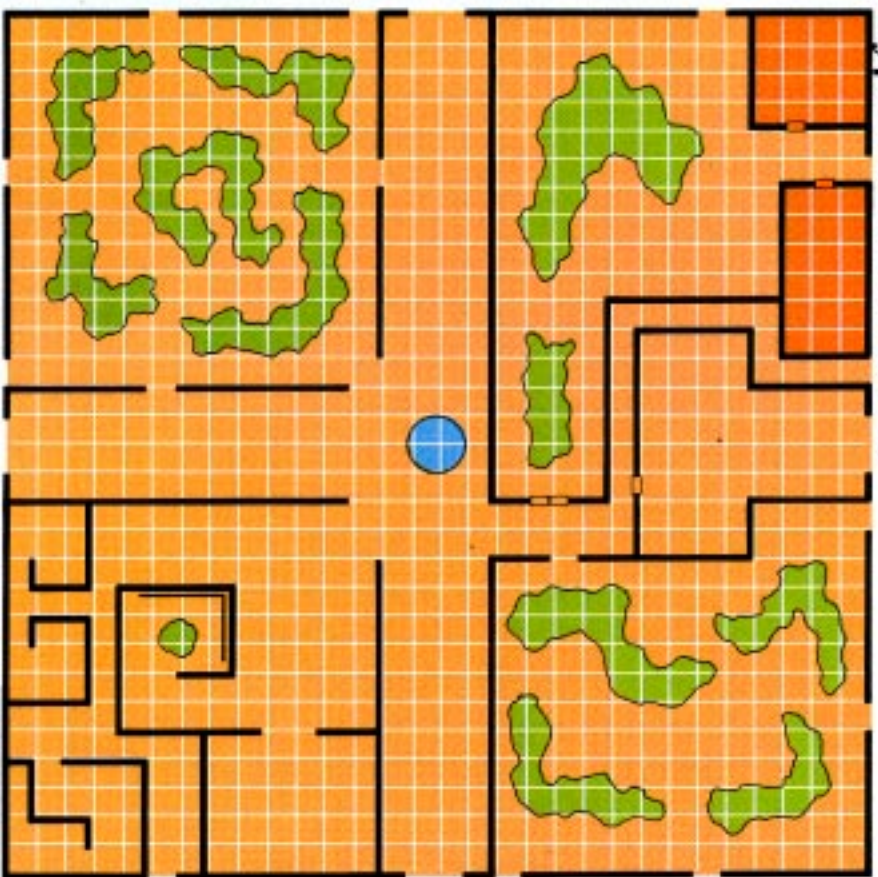


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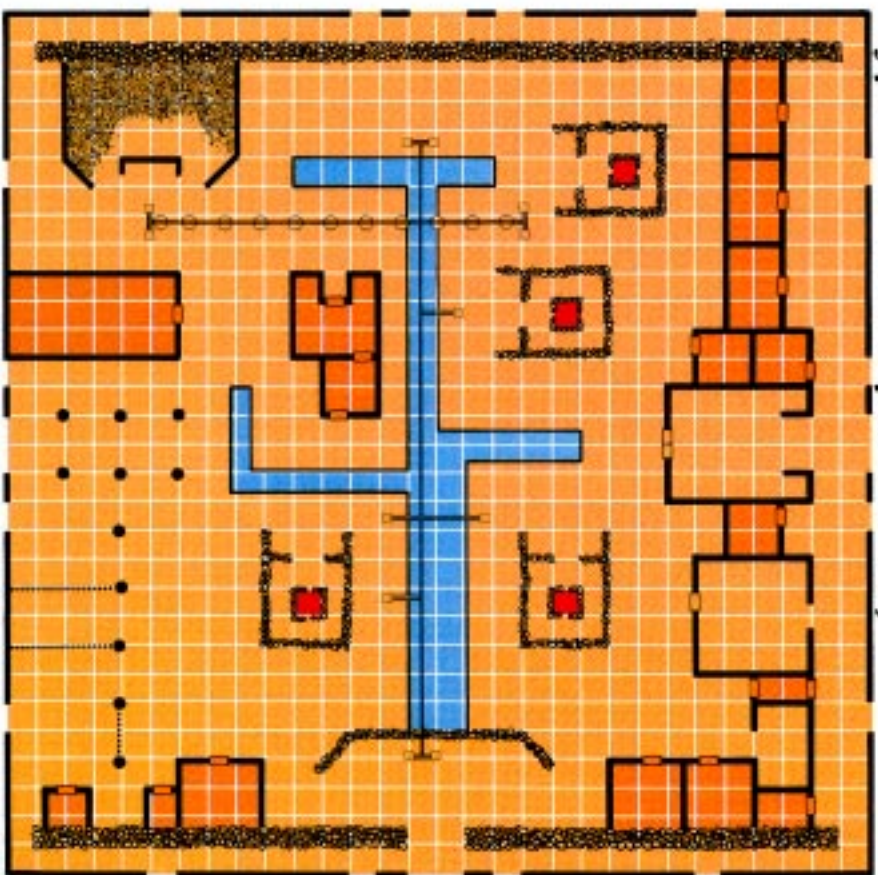




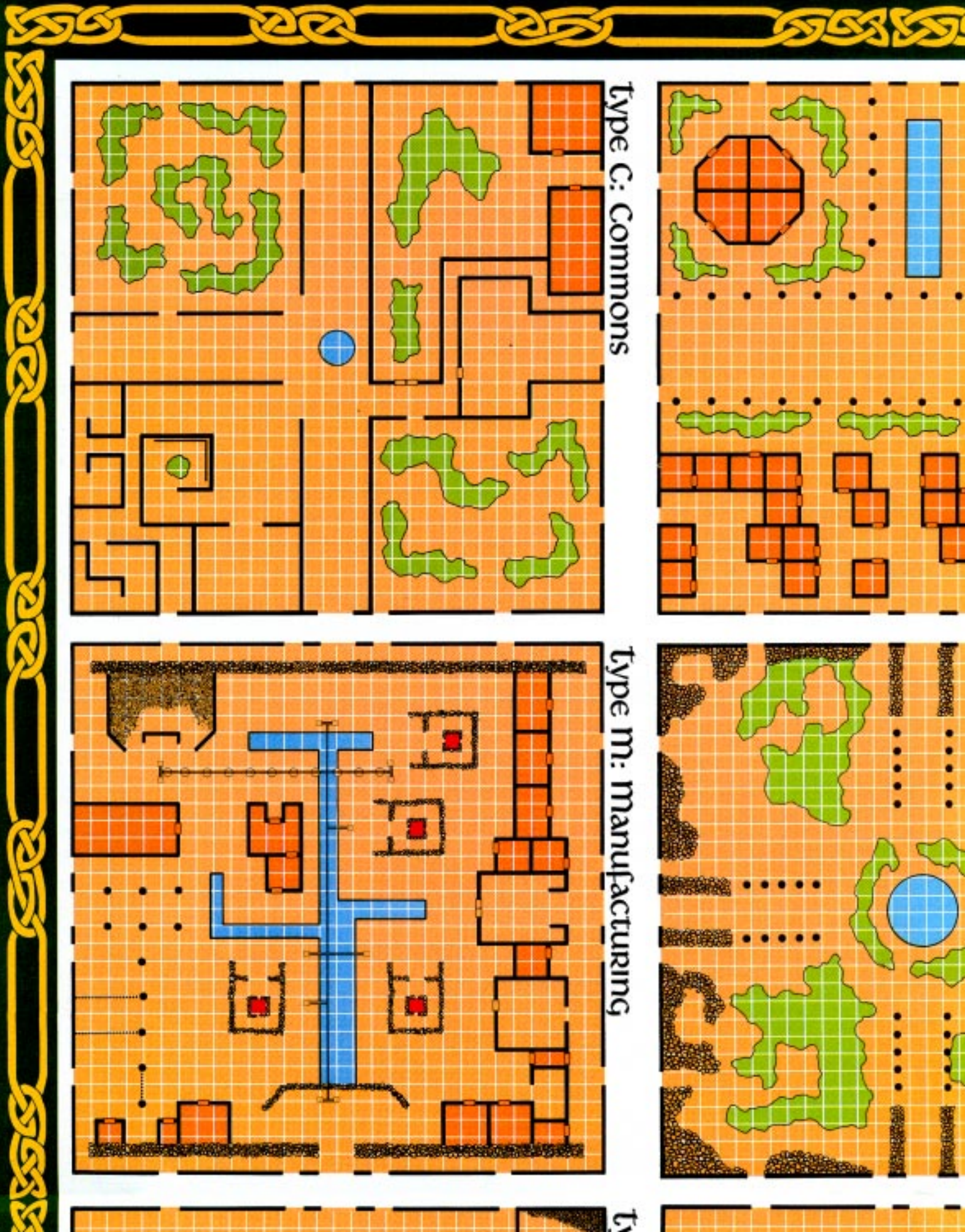
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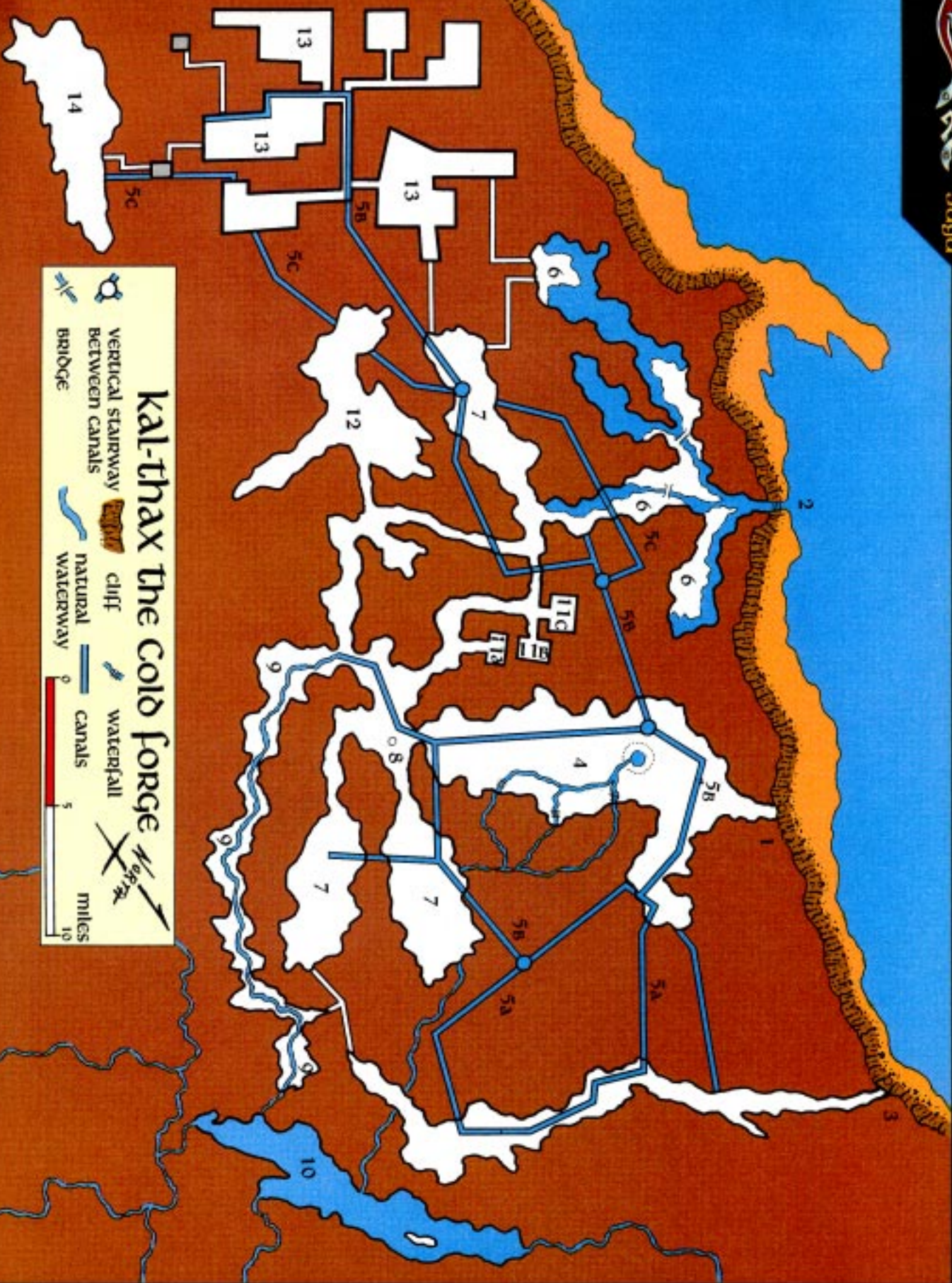
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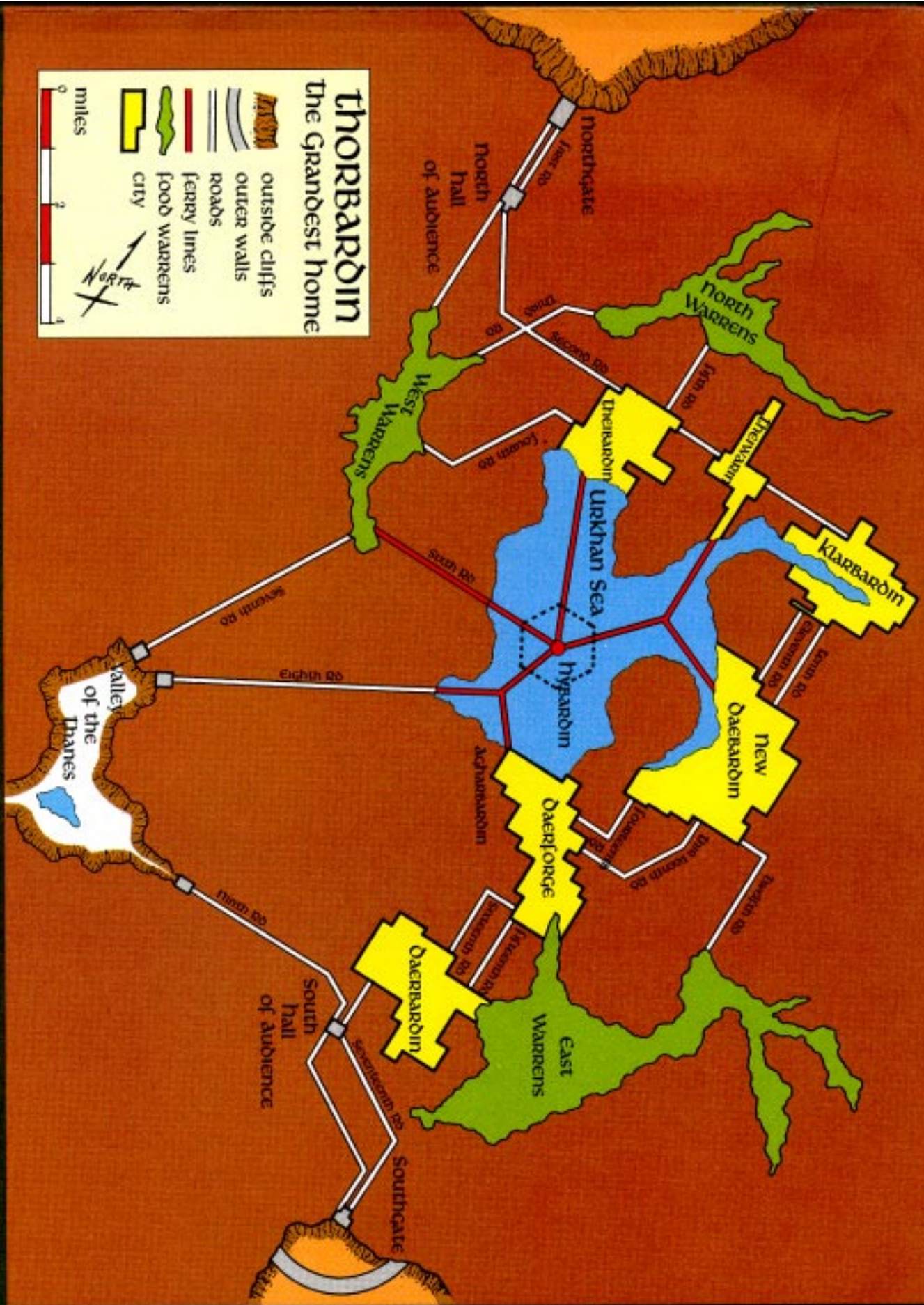
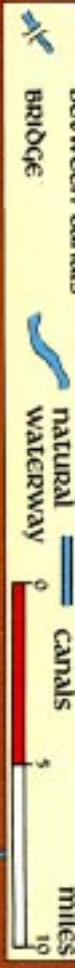




kal-thax the cold forge

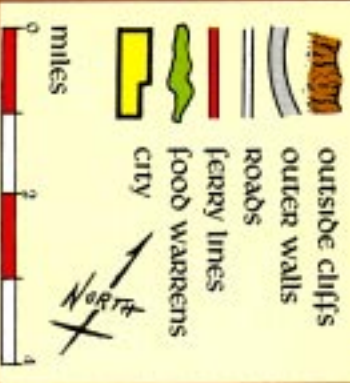
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	bridge between canals		natural waterfall		canals		miles
	bridge		natural waterway		canals		0 5 10





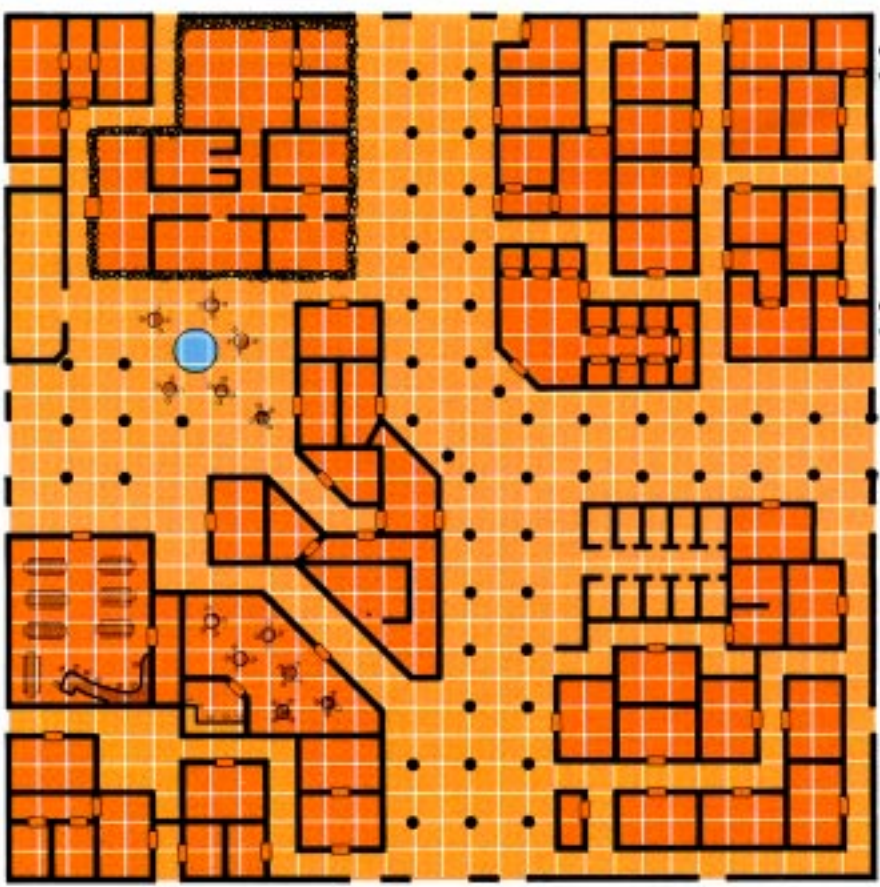
THORBARÐIN

the grandest home

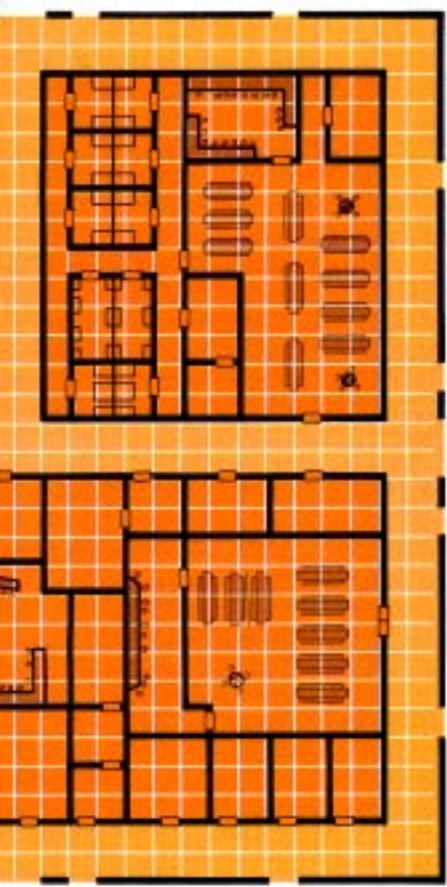




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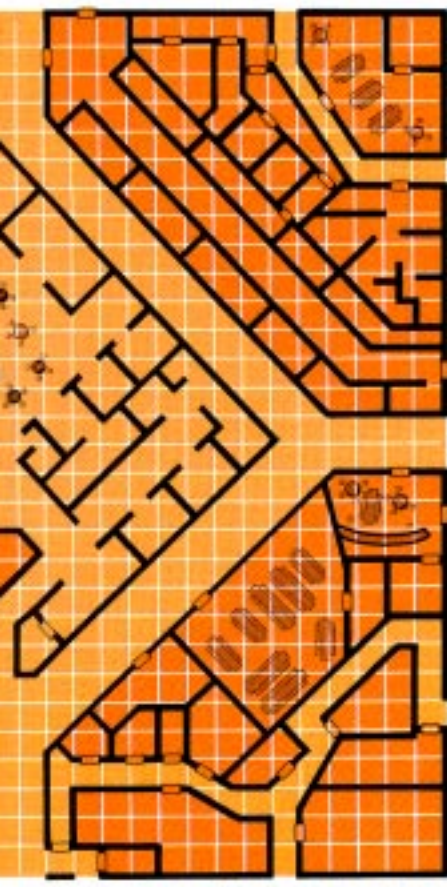
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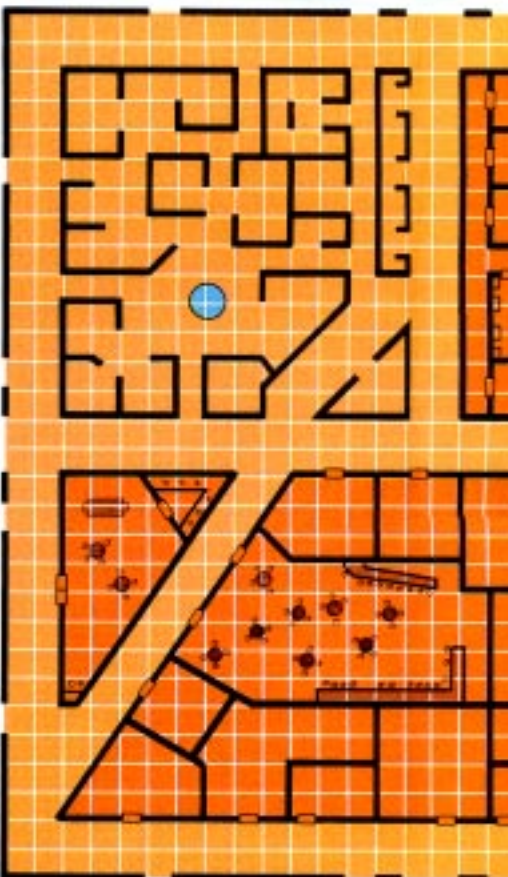


Dwarven City Sections Key to modular maps

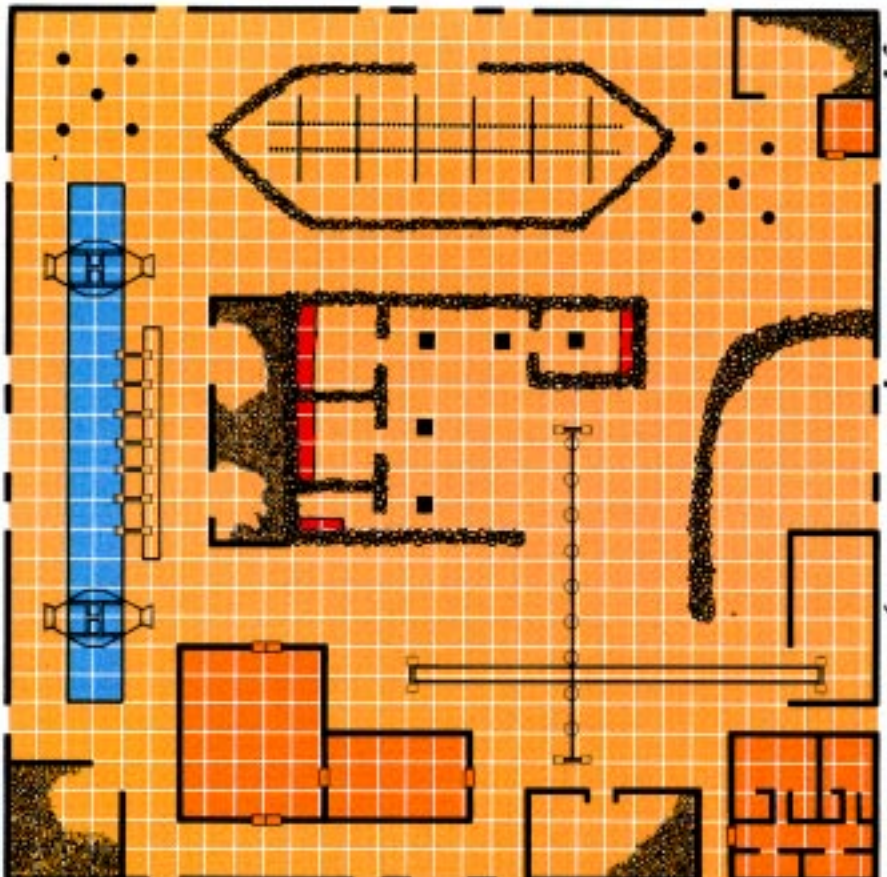
- Cable and bucket
 - Standard wall
 - Column
 - heavy stone wall
 - Tables and benches
 - forge/over
 - Bar
 - Bench seats
 - fungus garden
 - Door
 - pool of water
 - Solid iron door
 - Overhead metal frame
 - Coal stockpile
- One square = 10 feet

Type S: Shops/Social

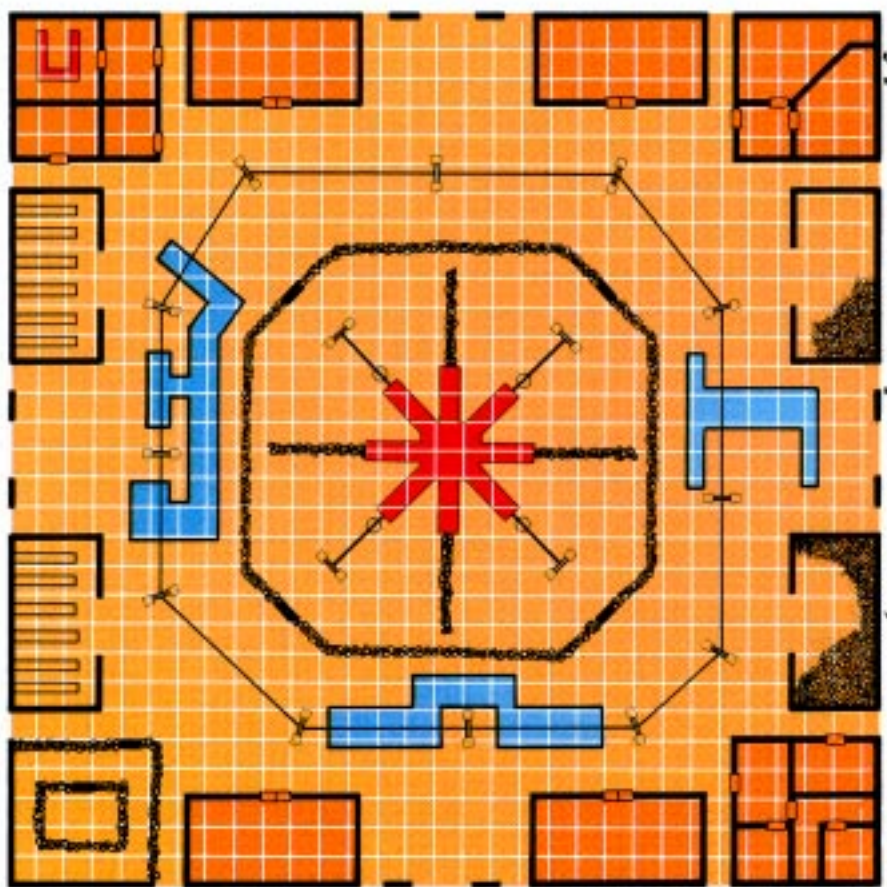




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Type m: Manufacturing



the kingdom of kayolin

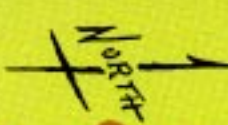
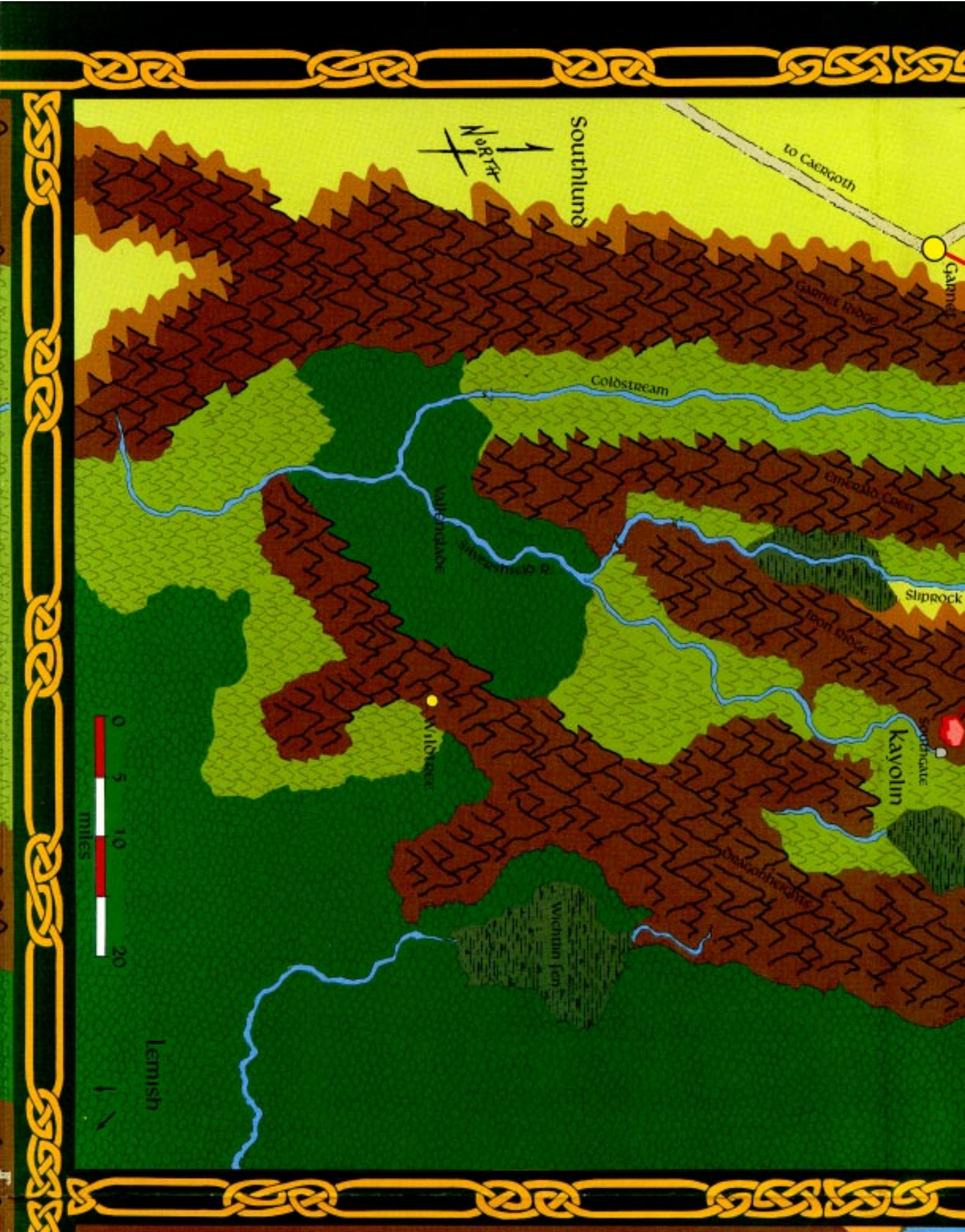
- fen
- river
- waterfall
- gate
- village
- road
- bridge
- mountains
- coniferous forest
- broadleaf forest
- trail
- track
- major delving
- underground road



heartlund

to the laced keep

kayolin



Southlund

to Caergoth

Garnet

Garnet Ridge

Coldstream

Wiltshire R.

Emerald Coast

Sliprock

Iron Shore

Kayolin

Southgate

Wiltshire

Oswarth Heights

Wiltshire Fen

Lemish





Meadowfair

Sano Creek

to Waiveth

qualinesti

Winterhome

Lake of Ice

Undepaluff

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heioarraro

The Spire of Redstone













Valley of Respite

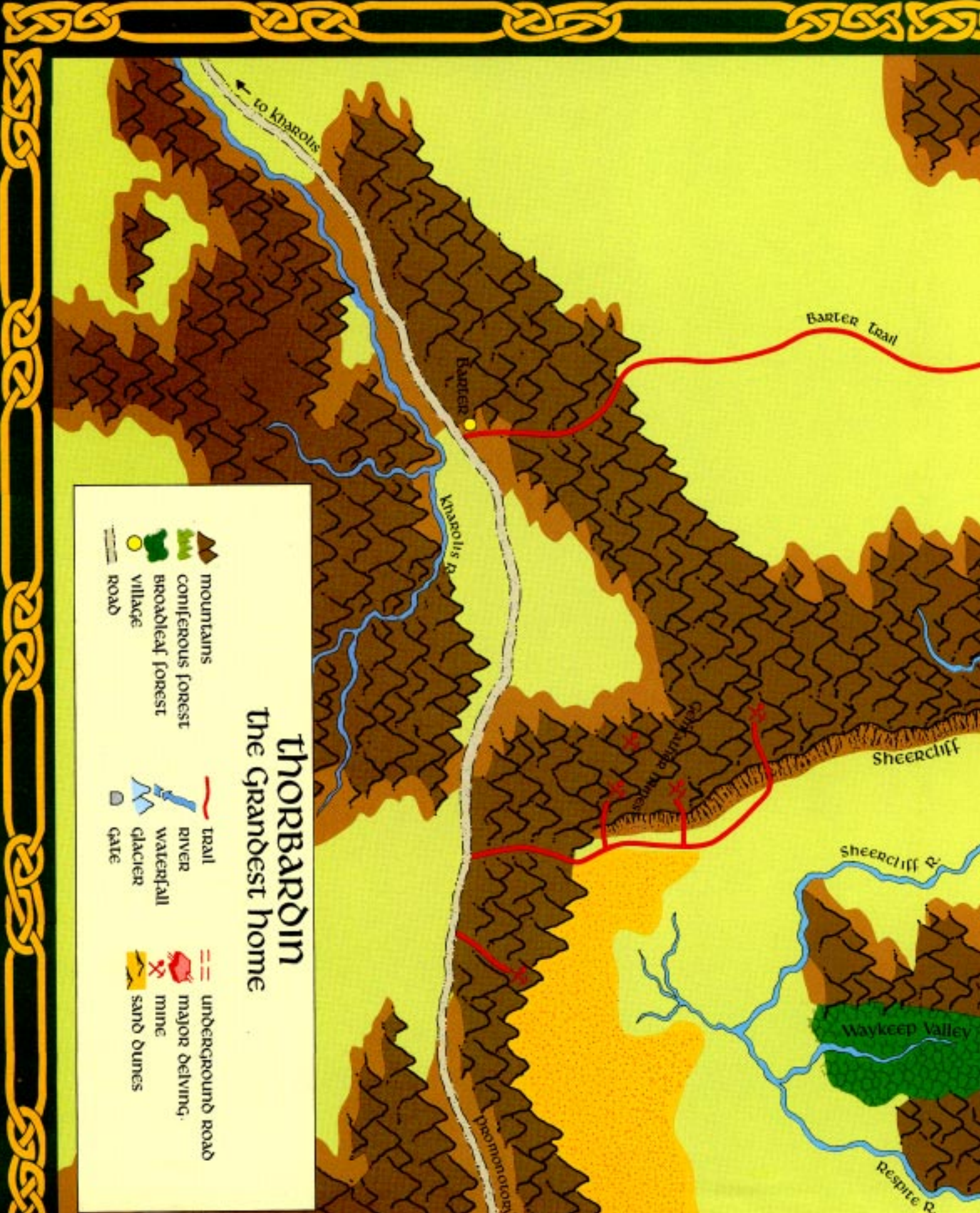
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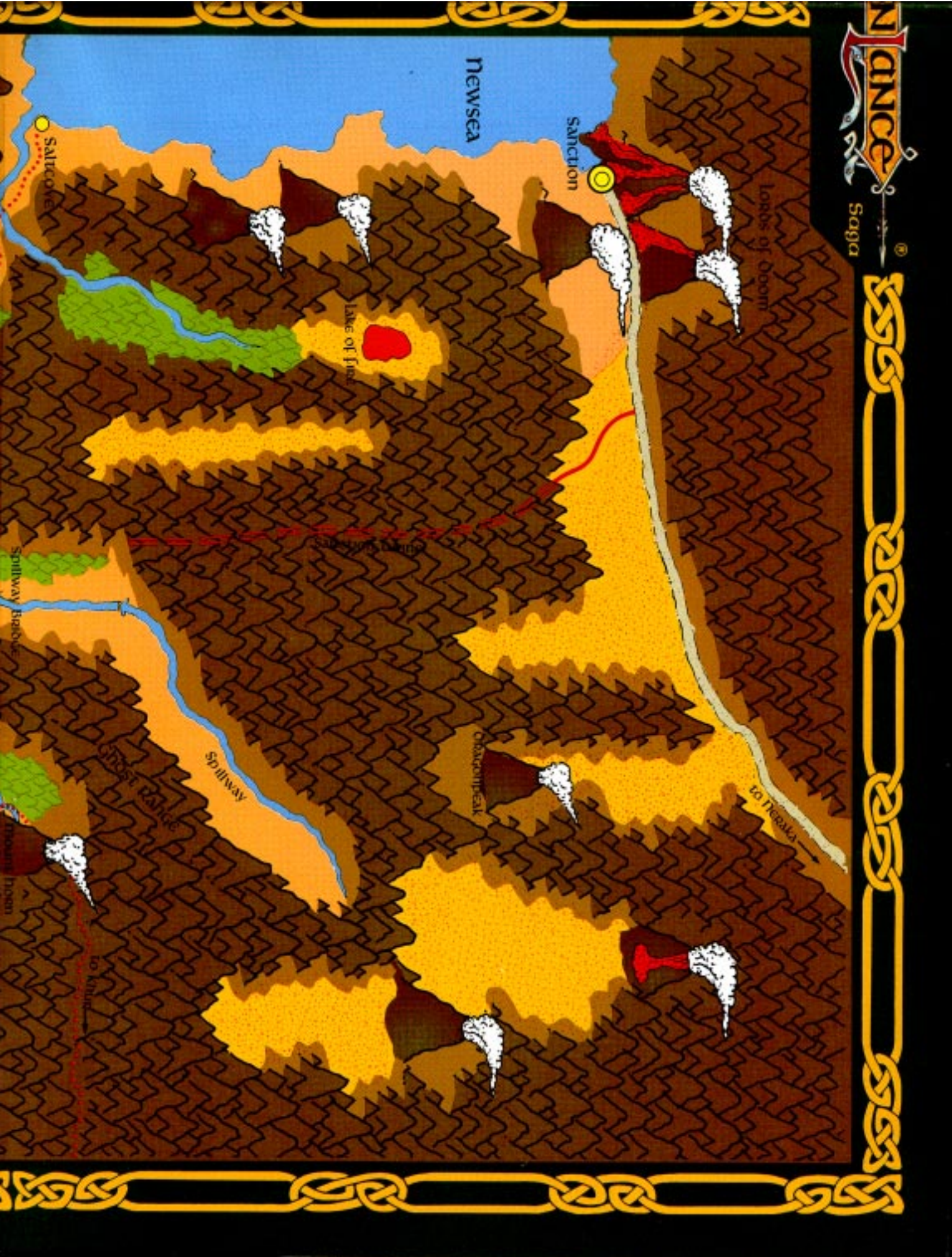
miles

thorbarðin

the grandest home

	mountains		trail		underground road
	coniferous forest		river		major delving
	broodleaf forest		waterfall		mine
	village		glacier		sand dunes
	road		gate		





newsea

Sanchion

Lakes of Fire

Salicove

Lords of Doom

Spillway

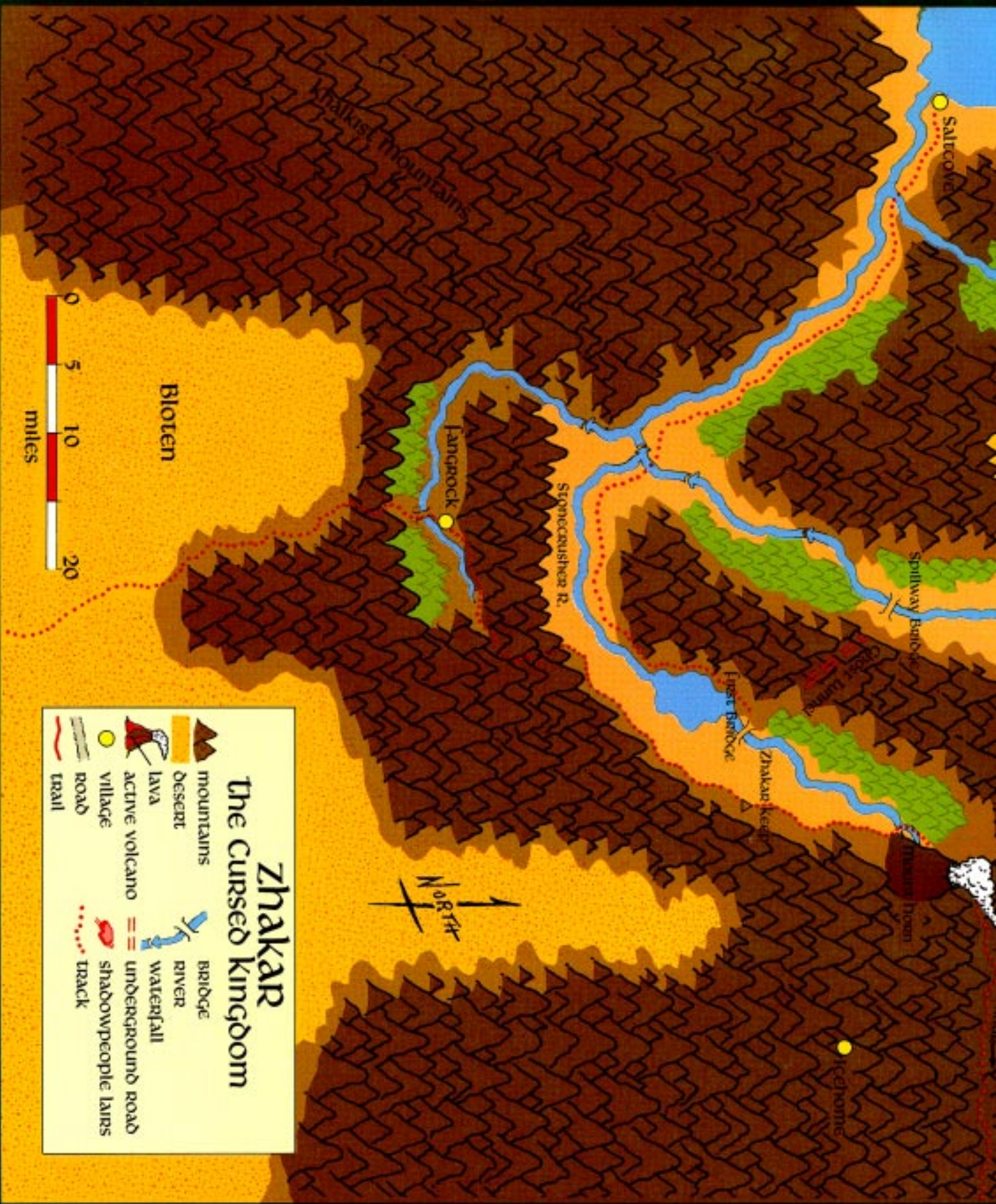
to Herak

Onxqoupsak

Spillway Bridge

Spillway Range

House of Iron



Salcove

Spillway Barde

Icehome

Zhakar Keep

First Barde

Stonecushier R.

Fangrock

Thakist Mountains

Bloten

Zhakar The Cursed Kingdom

- | | | | |
|---|----------------|---|--------------------|
|  | mountains |  | bridge |
|  | desert |  | river |
|  | lava |  | waterfall |
|  | active volcano |  | underground road |
|  | village |  | shadowpeople lairs |
|  | road |  | trail |

0 5 10 20
miles

North



Dax Urharkas

One Bluffs

Great South Road

newsea

Blood Creek

Hills of Blood

Plains of Dergoth

Squillcap

The Bog

Hillhome

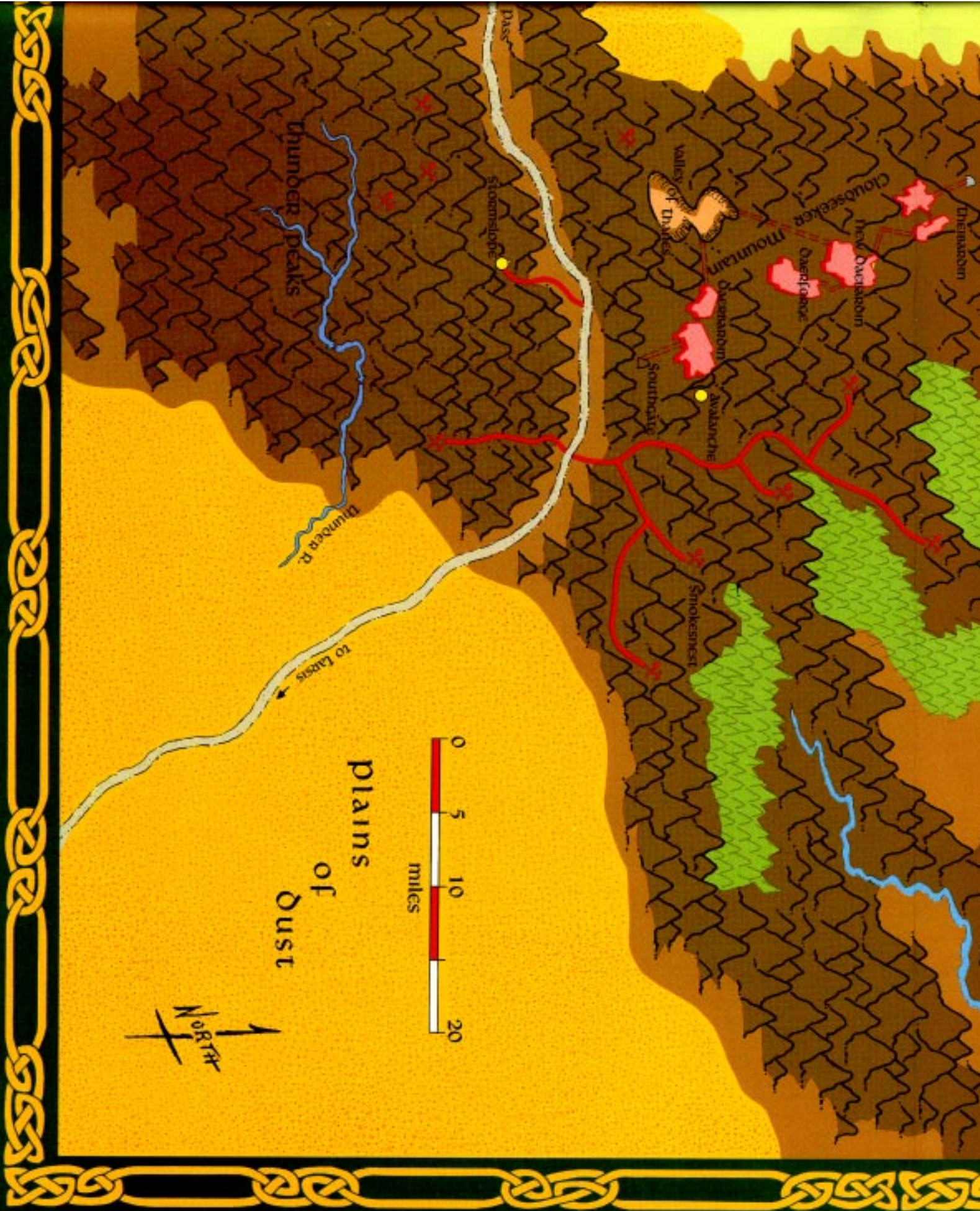
Hillhome Highway

Salmonfall

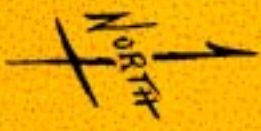
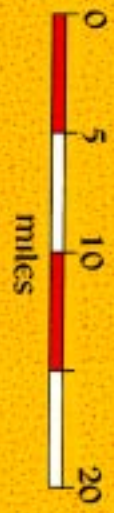
Sky's End Peak

Hoothgate

Utharadon



plains
of
Dust



Dunbar peaks

Dunbar R.

to Lavers

Stormslope

valley of thales

Mountain

Southain

Smokemist

Avalanche

Overgrown

Dagfence

New Ocelaroom

Clouseeker

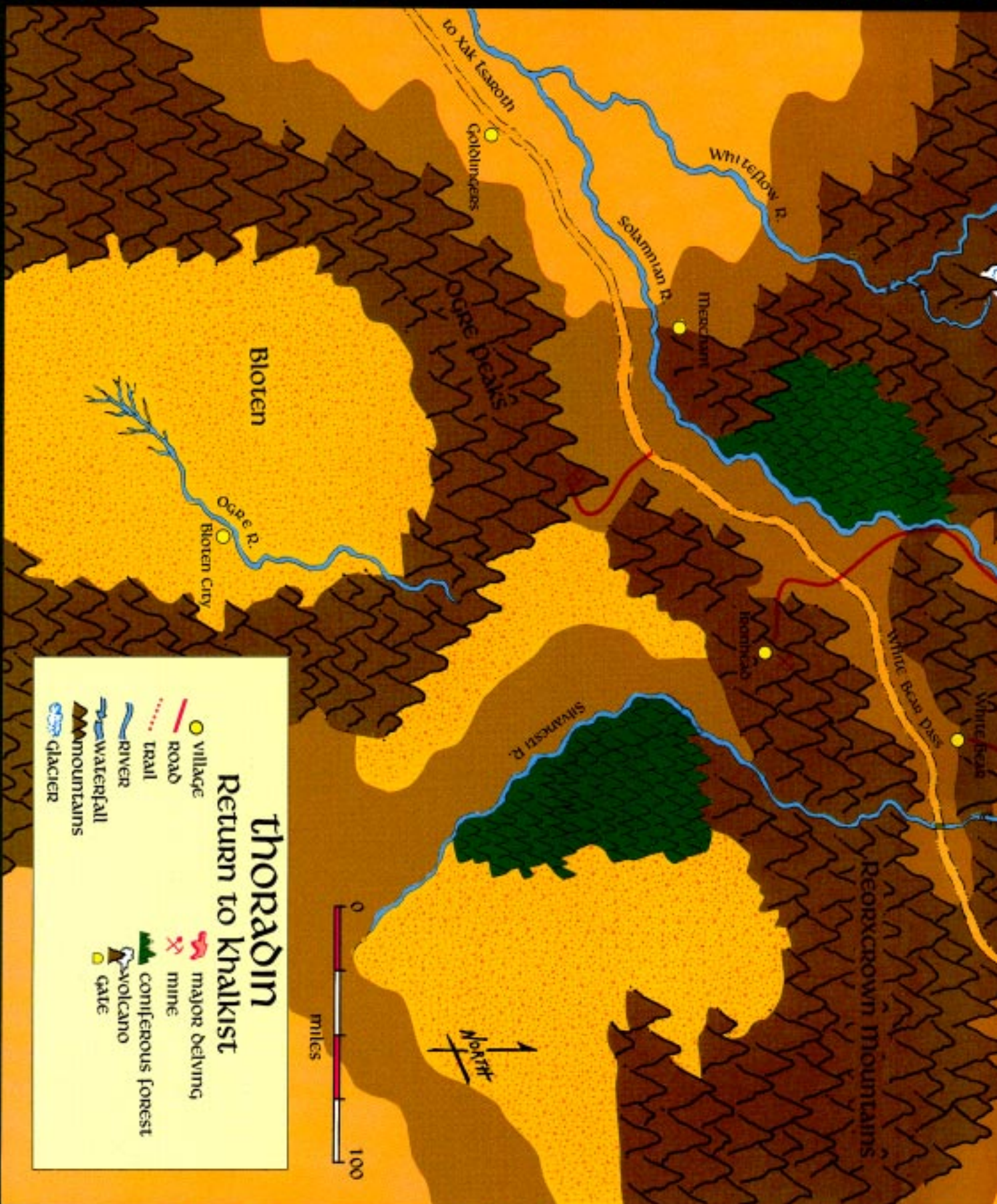
Ereidaroom



THORADIN

Return to Khalkist

	village		major delving
	road		mine
	trail		coniferous forest
	river		volcano
	waterfall		gate
	mountains		
	glacier		





thorin the first home



Squares are 900' x 900'

- C = Commons
- m = Manufacturing
- R = Residential
- S = Shops/Social

Third Sentinel

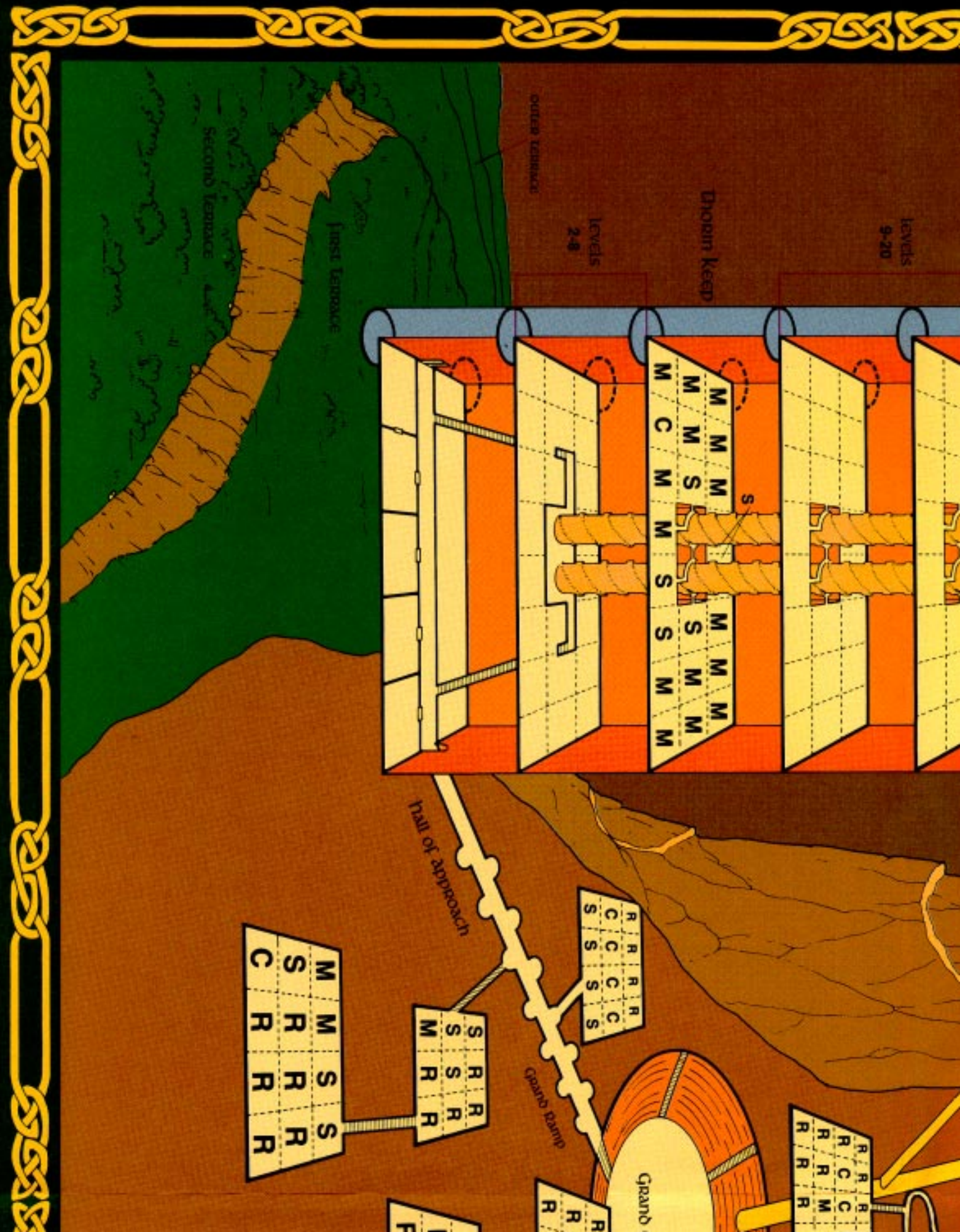
Second Sentinel

R R R R R R R R R R
R R C R R R R R R R
R R S R R S R R R R

First Sentinel

sun collector

R R R R R R R R
R R R S



levels
9-20

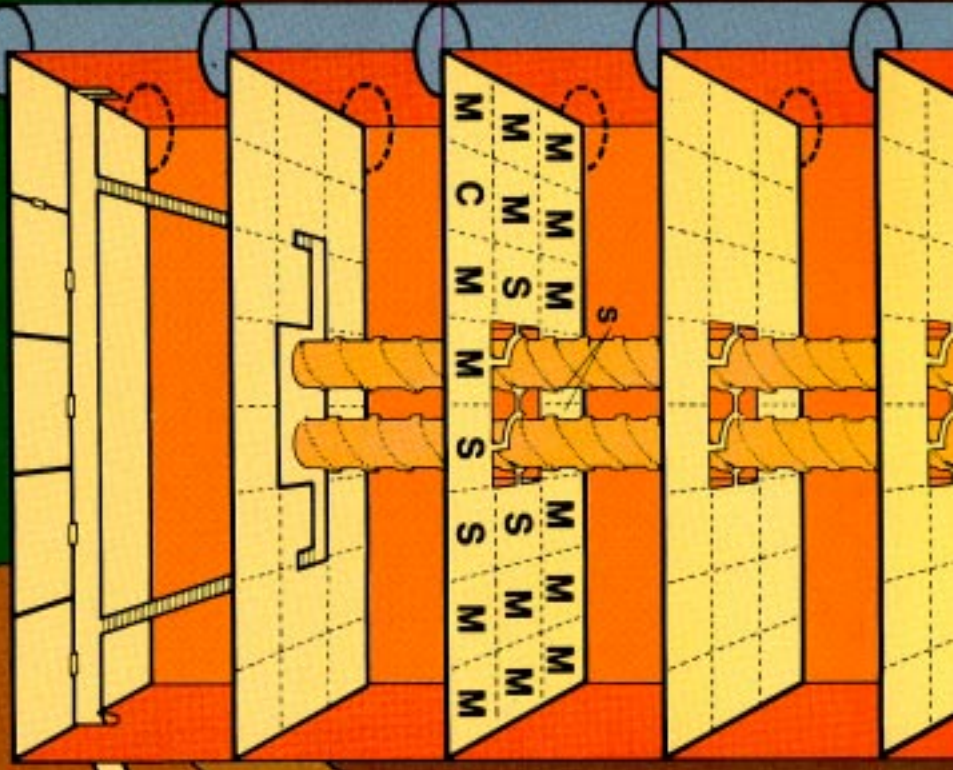
Drooin Keep

levels
2-8

outer terrace

First Terrace

Second Terrace



Hall of Approach

Grando Dump

Grando





Suncrabbes

Khalkisi Mountains

Silverpine

Forest

Pineywood

Goluman Creek

Chanderia Road

Suncrabbe Creek

Hammer

First Sentinel

Mount Thorim

Thorim

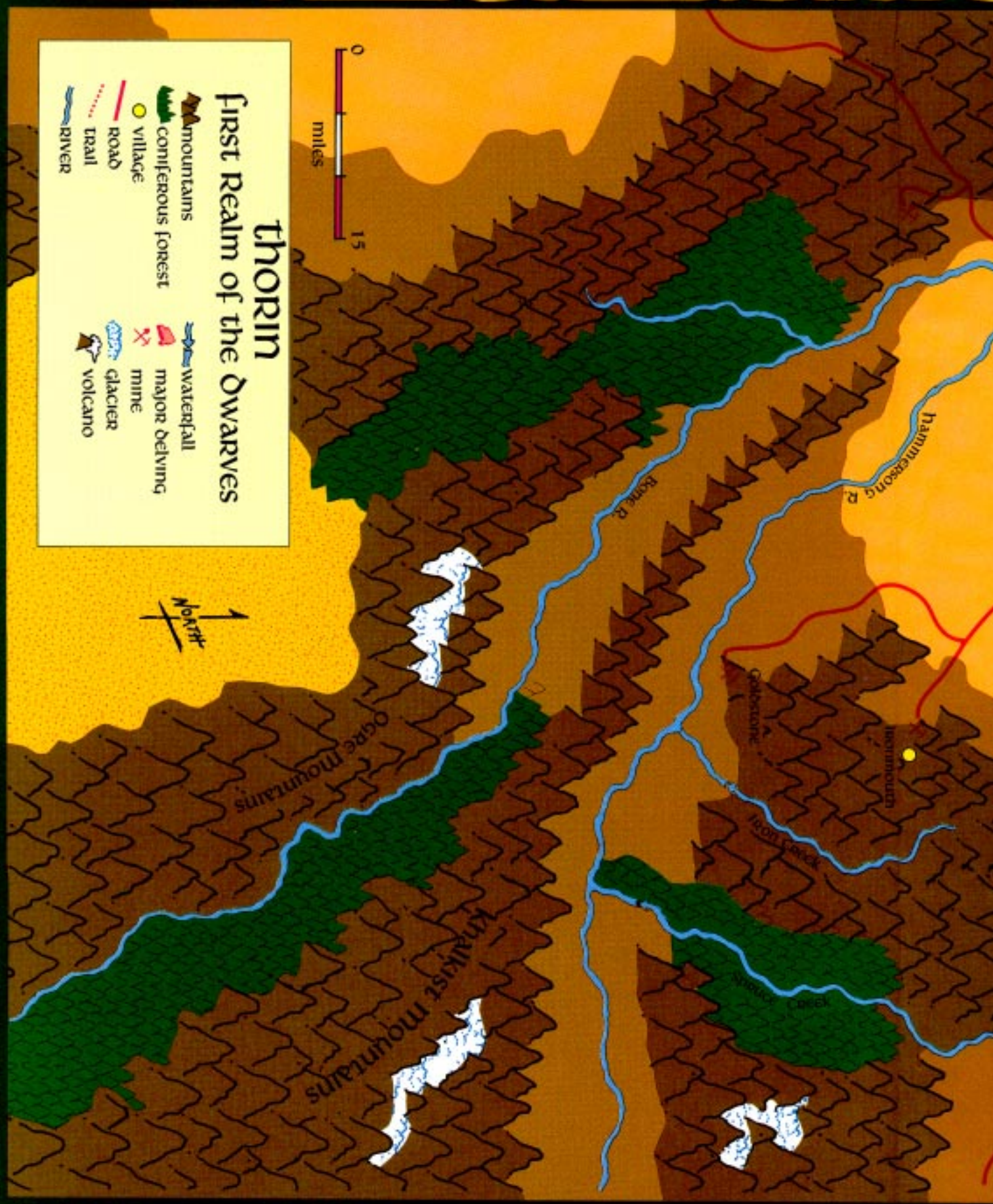
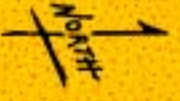
Casvice Pass

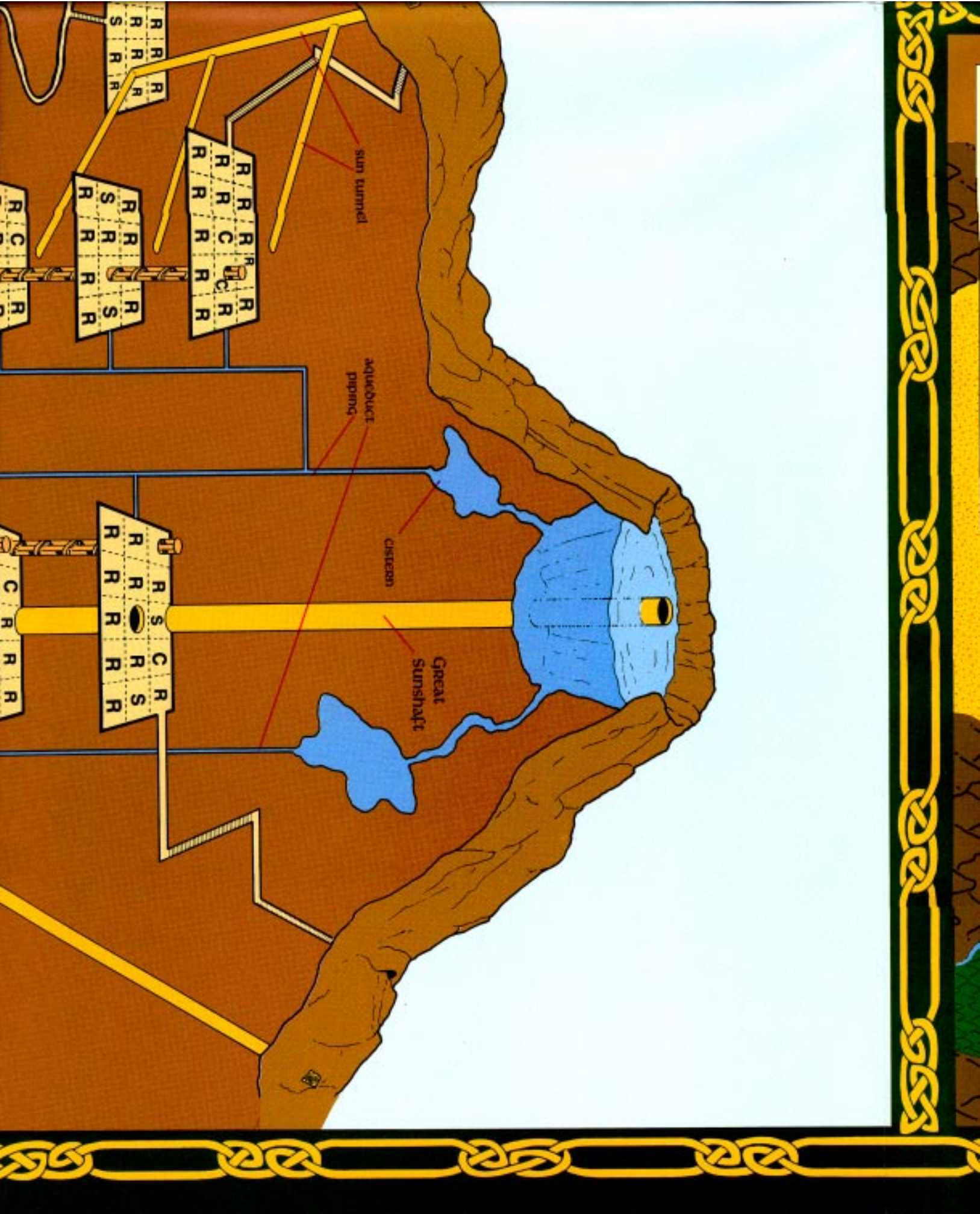
Faebrida

THORIM

First Realm of the Dwarves

- Mountains
- coniferous forest
- village
- road
- trail
- river
- waterfall
- major delving
- mine
- glacier
- volcano



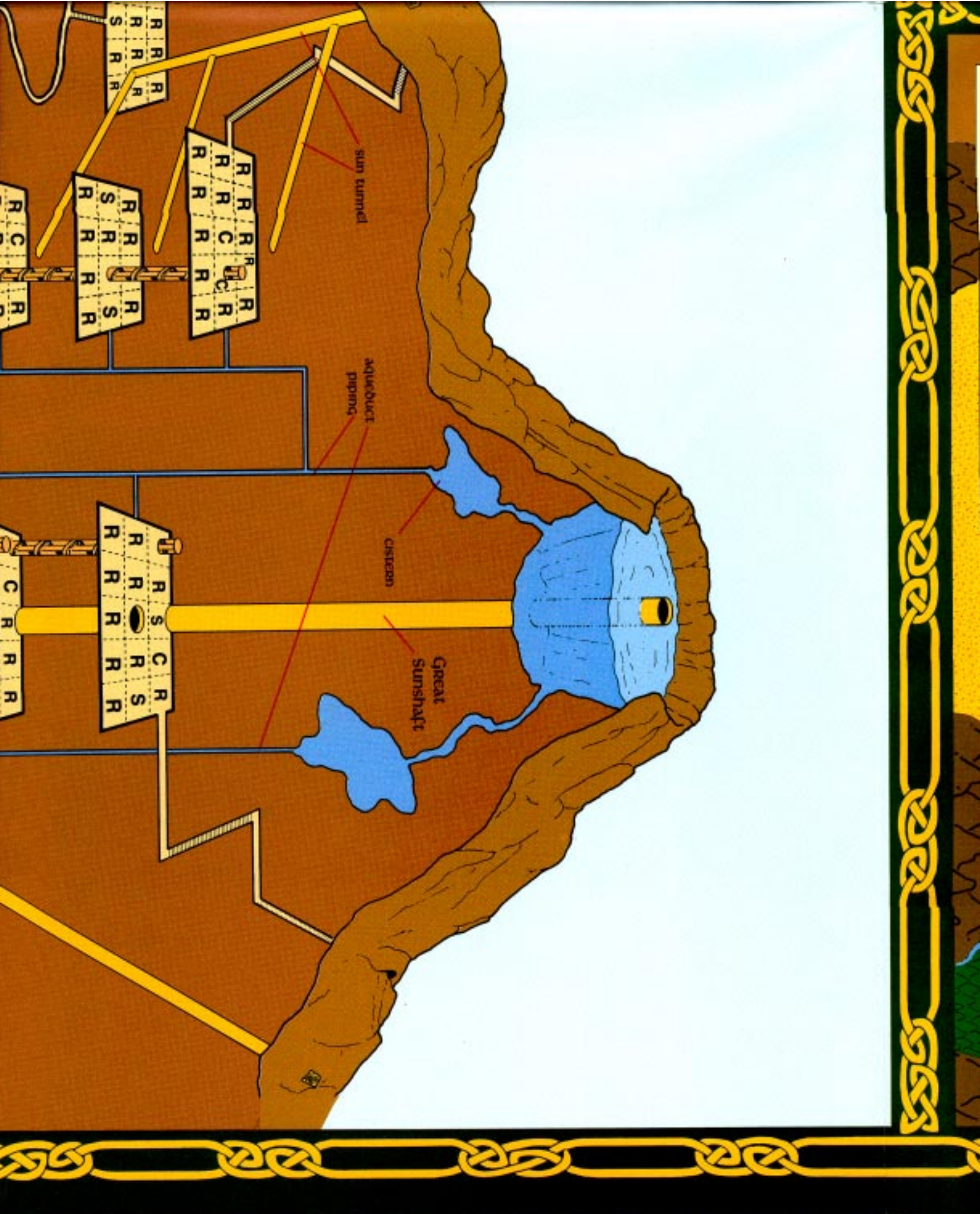


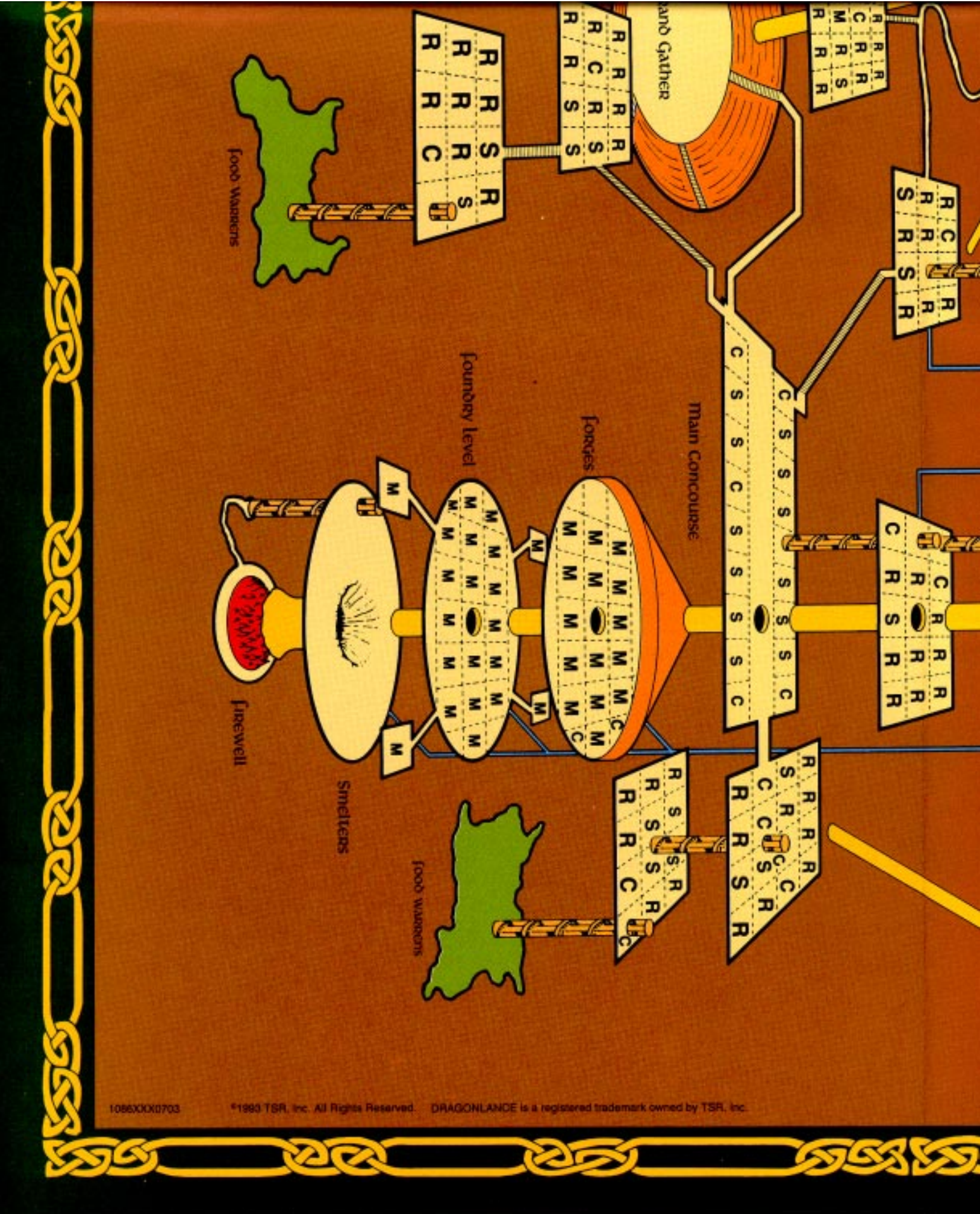
sun tunnel

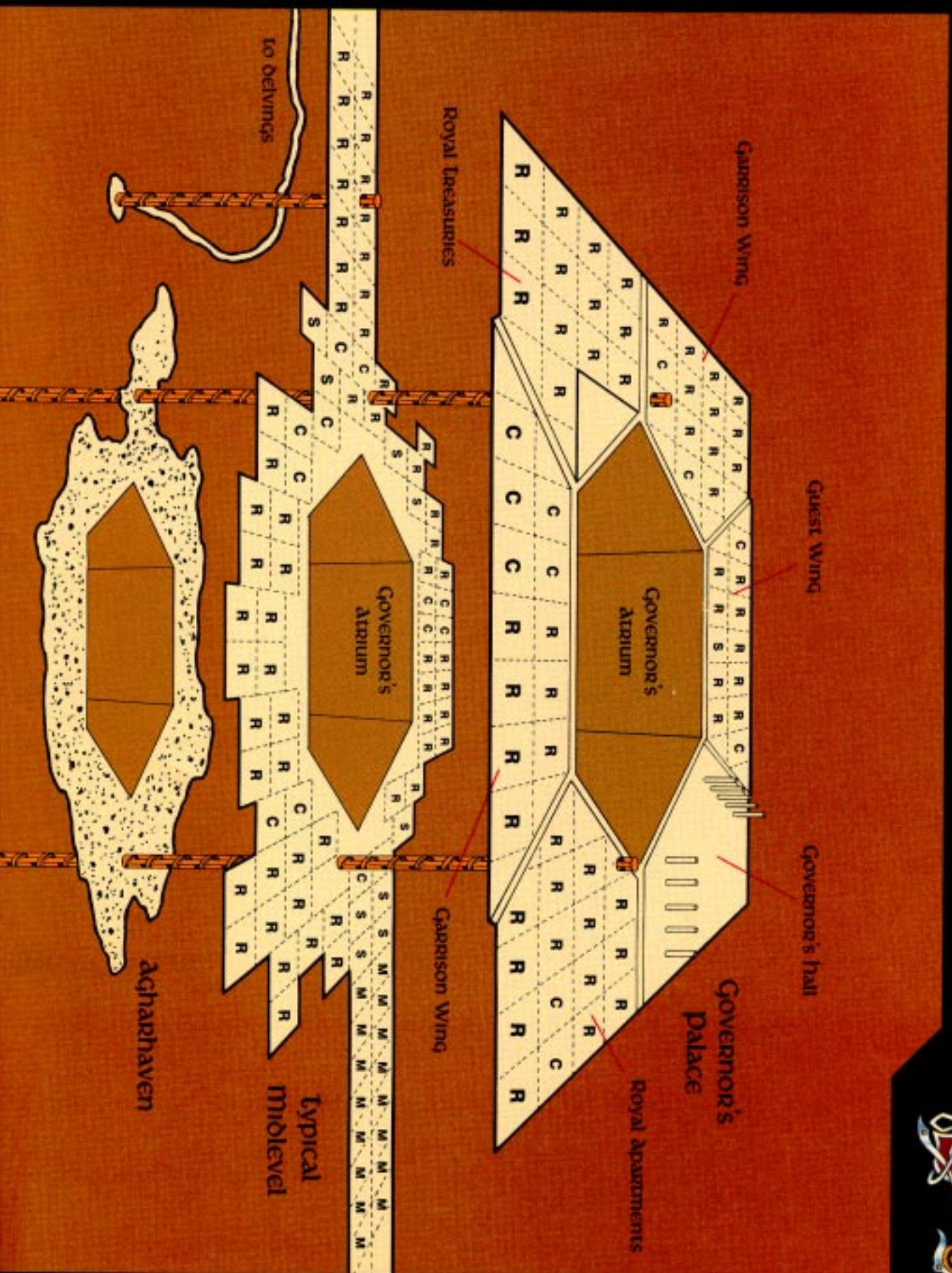
aqueduct piping

cistern

Great Sunshaft







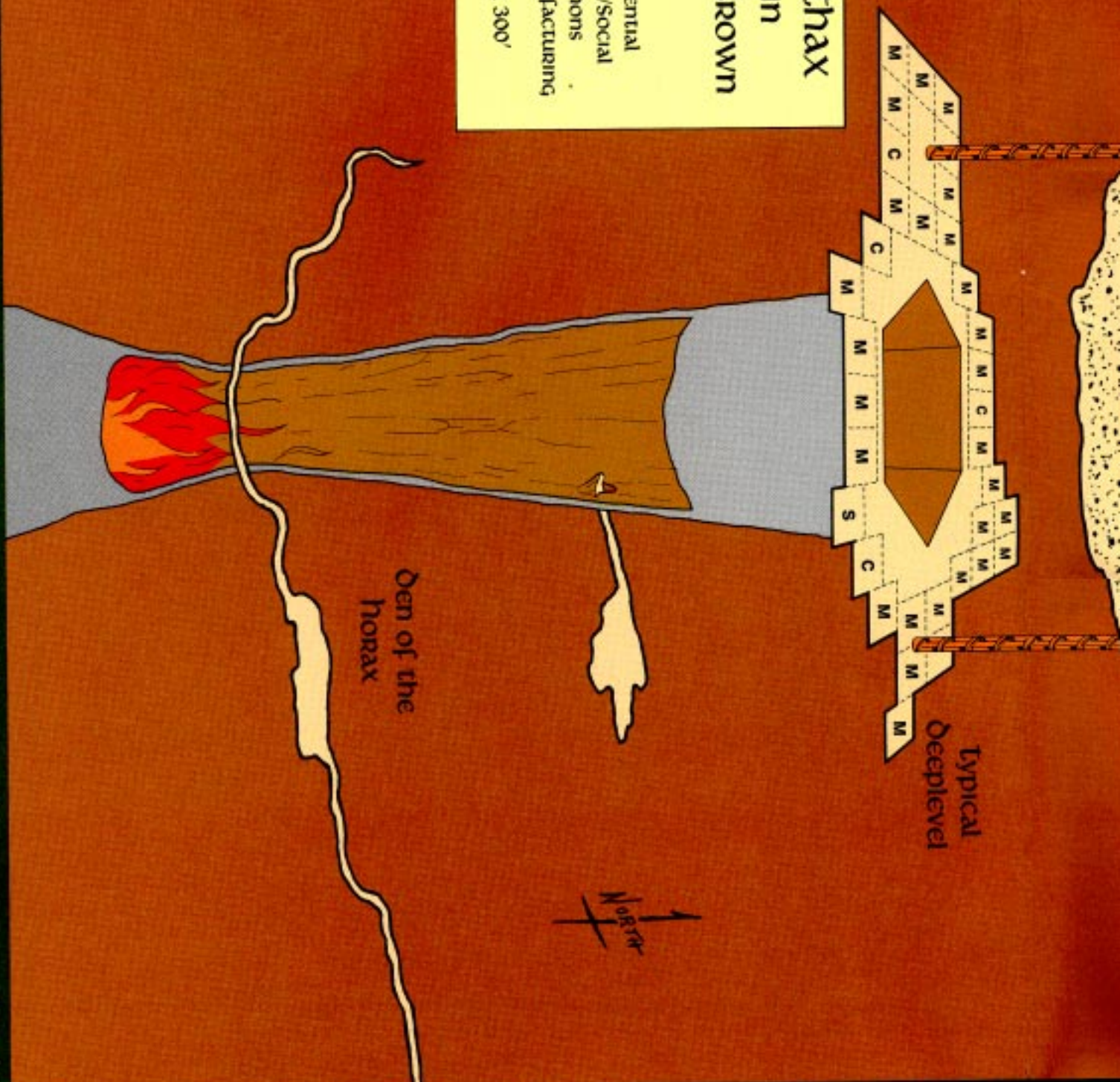
garnet thax Jewel in Kayolin's Crown

map modules:

- R = Residential
- S = Shops/Social
- C = Commons
- m = Manufacturing



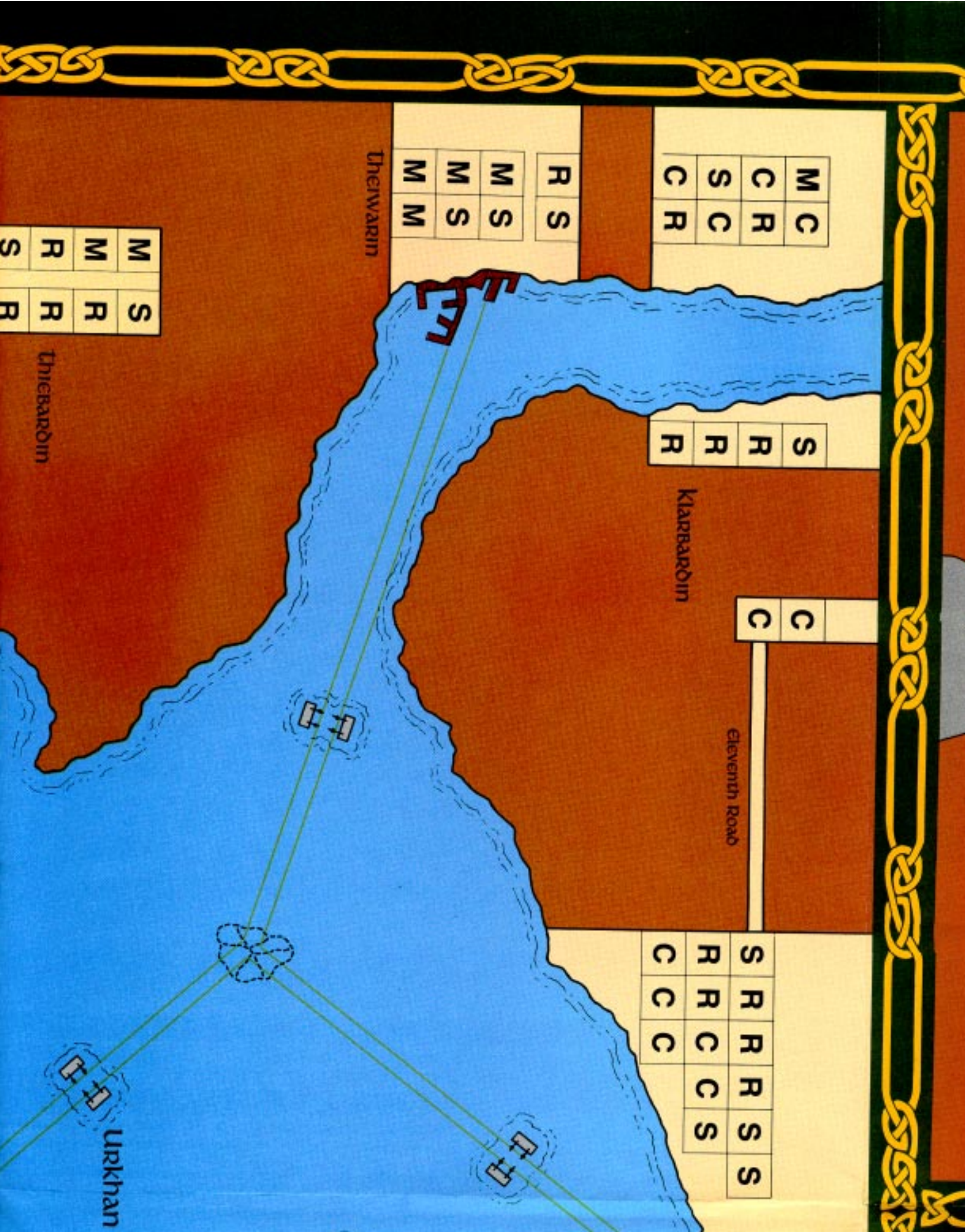
= 300' x 300'



Den of the
horax

Typical
Deeplevel

North



M	C
C	R
S	C
C	R

R	S
---	---

M	S
M	S
M	S

S	R	R	R
---	---	---	---

C	C
---	---

S	R	R	R	S	S	S
R	R	C	C	S		
C	C	C	C			

Theiwarin

Klarrarðim

Eleventh Road

ETM

Thiebarðim

Urkhann

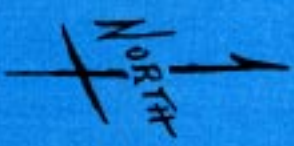
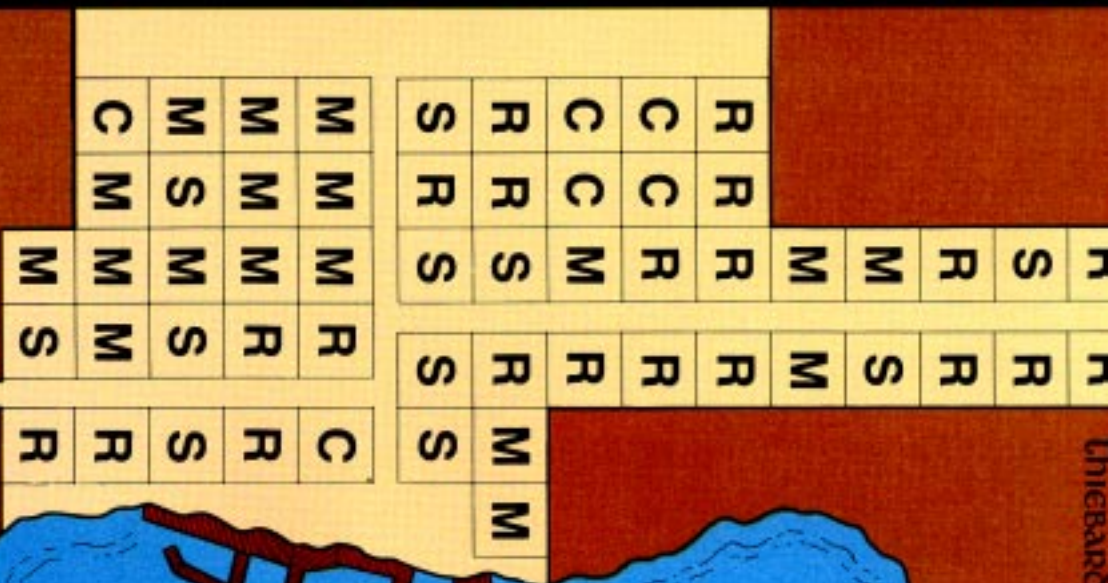
M	M	S
M	R	R
R	R	R
S	R	R

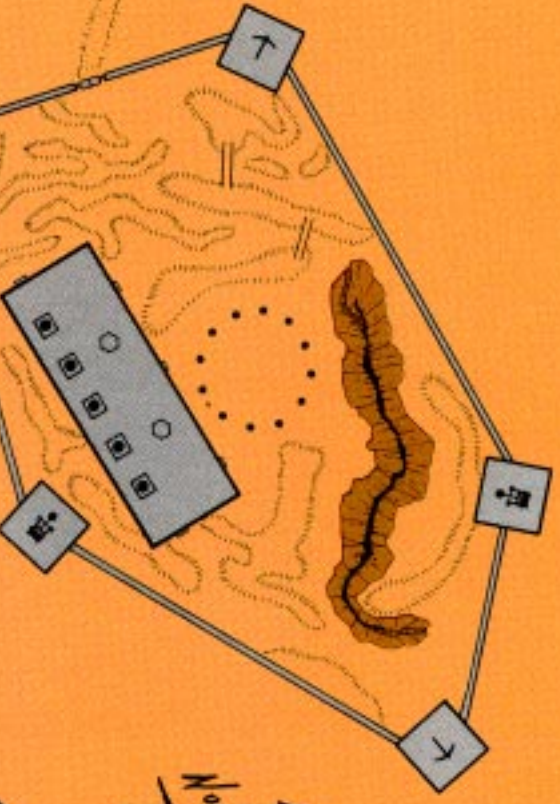
heart of thorbarðin

- key:**
-  ferry lines
 -  pylon support
 -  stalactite support
 -  wharf
 -  road/rack
 -  aquar tunnels
- map modules:**
- R = Residential
 - S = Shops/Social
 - C = Commons
 - m = Manufacturing

Fourth Road

Unigbarðin



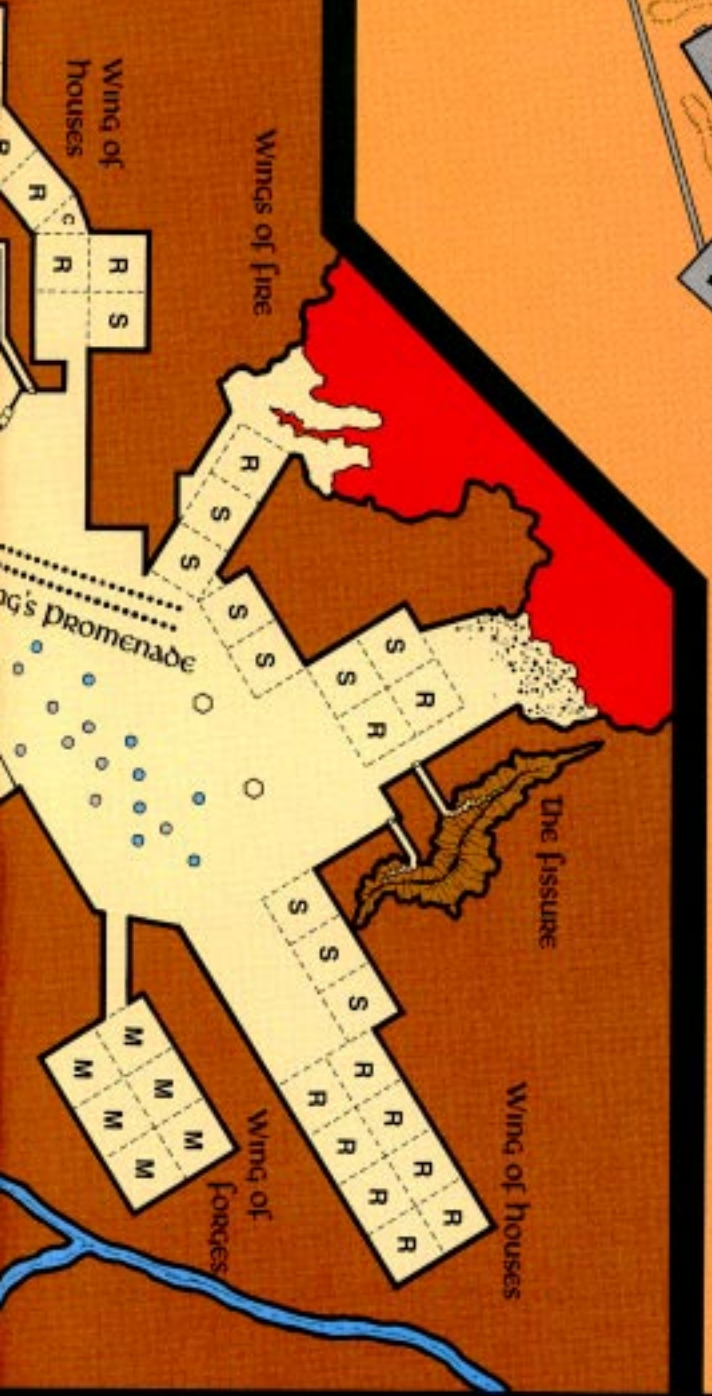


Zhakar home of the Cursed

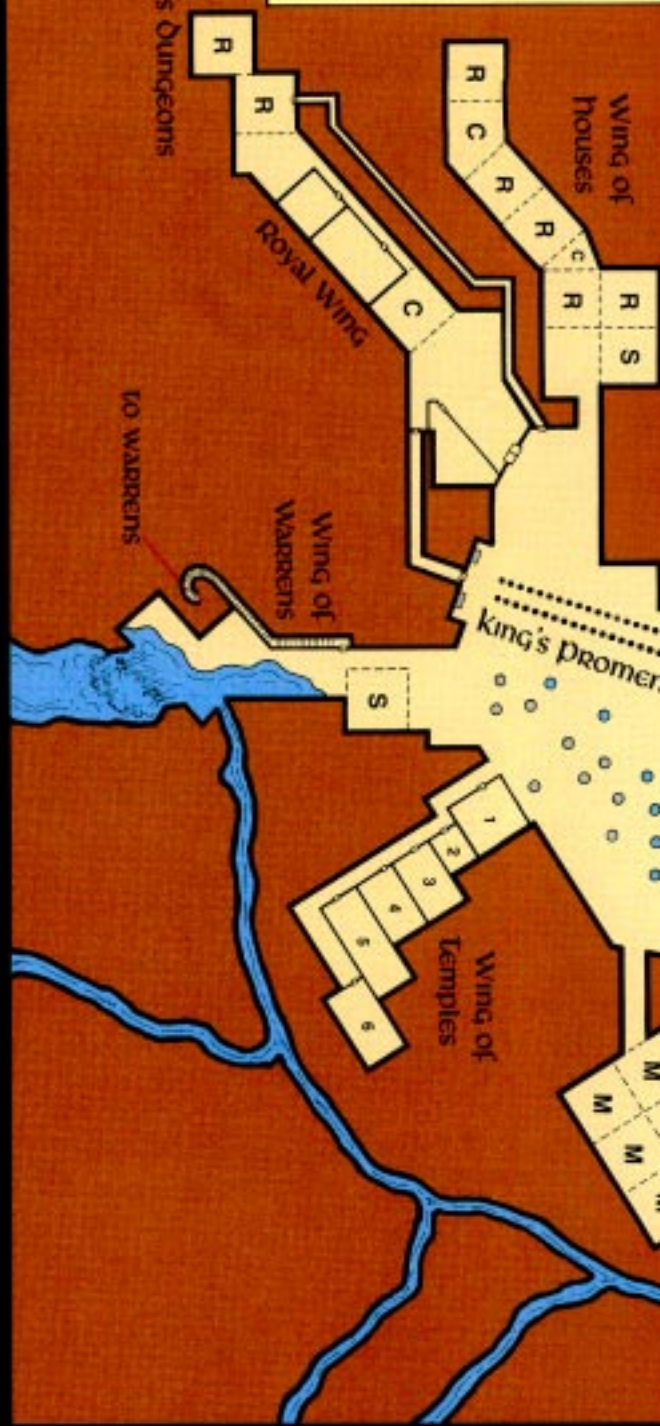
- column
- stairway into fissure
- chimney
- foundry wall
- door
- dirt ridge
- ballista
- catapult
- ||| bridge

Main City Level

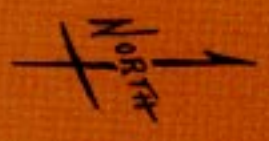
- lift station
- statue/throne
- fountain
- rubble
- privacy hut

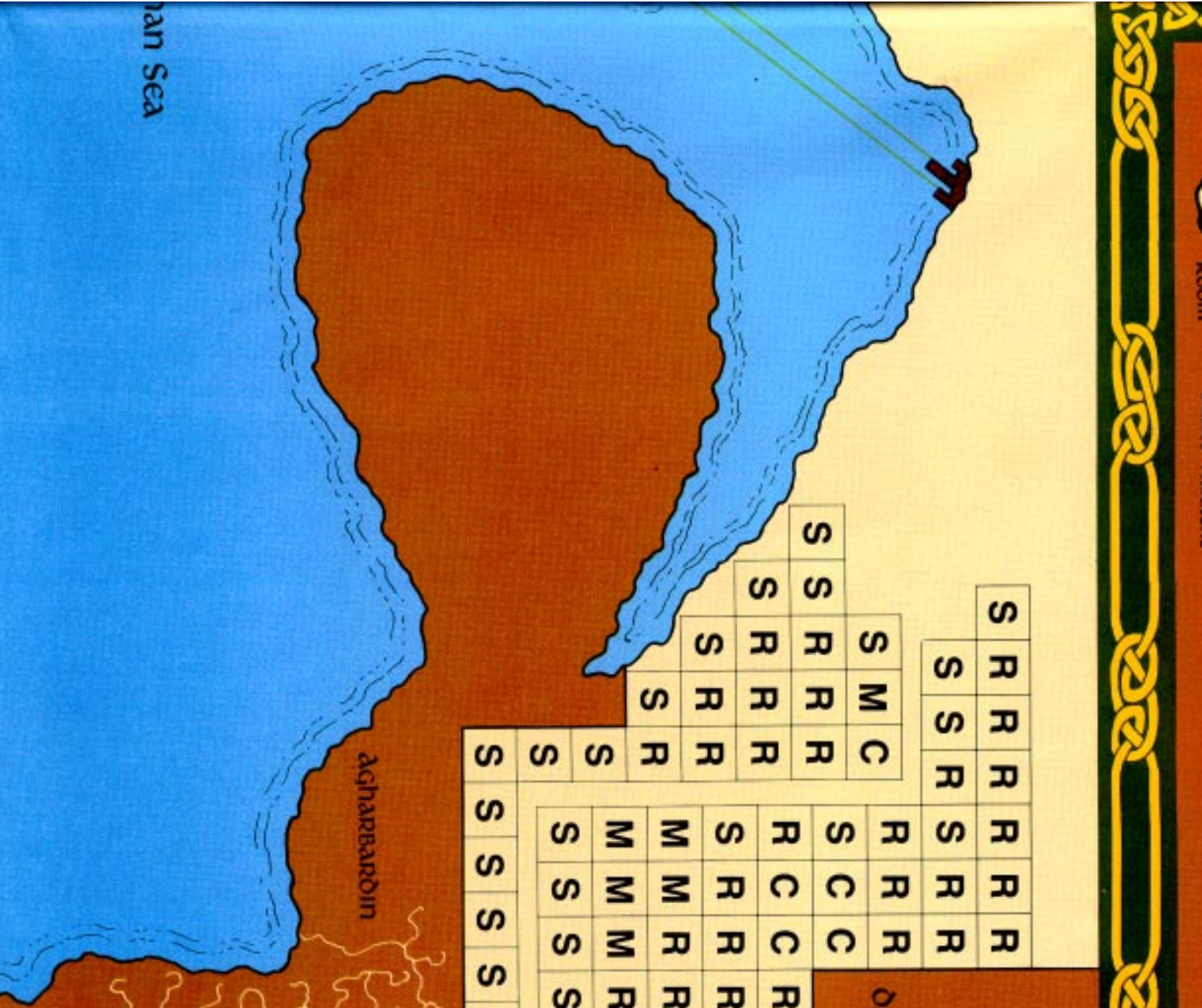


- statue/throne
 - fountain
 - ☼ ruse/ale
 - privacy hut
 - river
- map modules:
- R = Residential
 - S = Shops/Social
 - C = Commons
 - m = Manufacturing



- ### Warrens of Zhakar
- Bridge
 - Pillar
 - Gates
 - ☞ Mushroom Layer





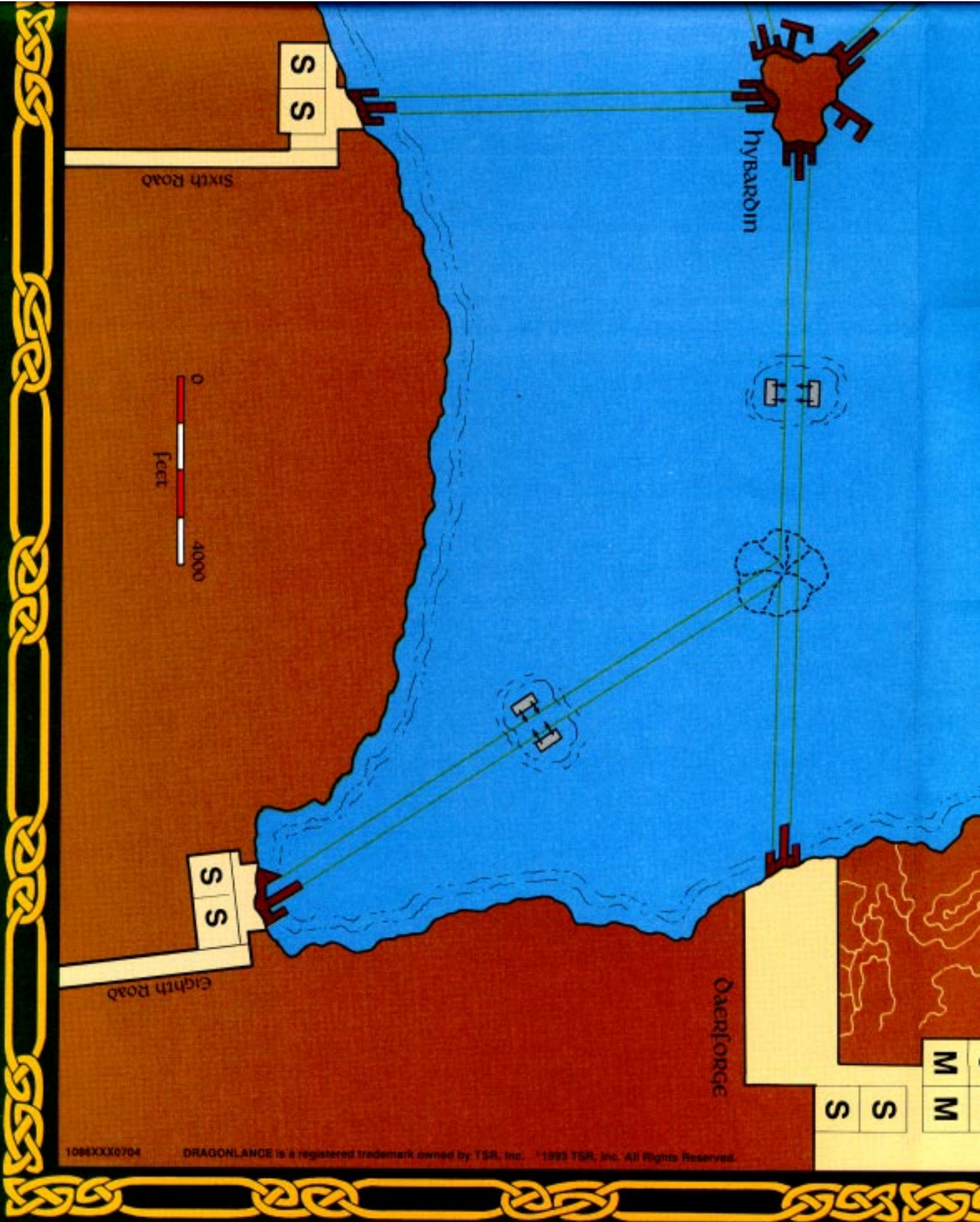
S	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	S
S	S	R	S	R	R	S	R	C	S	R	S
				S	M	R	R	C	R	R	S
					S	R	R	R	R	R	S
					R	R	R	R	R	R	S
					R	R	R	R	R	R	S
					S	R	R	R	R	R	S
					S	S	R	C	C	C	S
					S	S	R	R	R	R	S
					S	S	S	R	R	R	S
					S	S	M	R	R	R	S
					S	S	M	R	R	R	S
					S	S	M	R	R	R	S
					S	S	S	R	R	R	S
					S	S	S	S	S	S	S

New
Daerbarðin

agharbarðin

fourteenth Road

M	M
M	M
M	
R	S
R	S
S	M
M	M



hybarðim

Sixth Road

0
4000
feet

Eighth Road

Daerforge

1086XXX0704

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