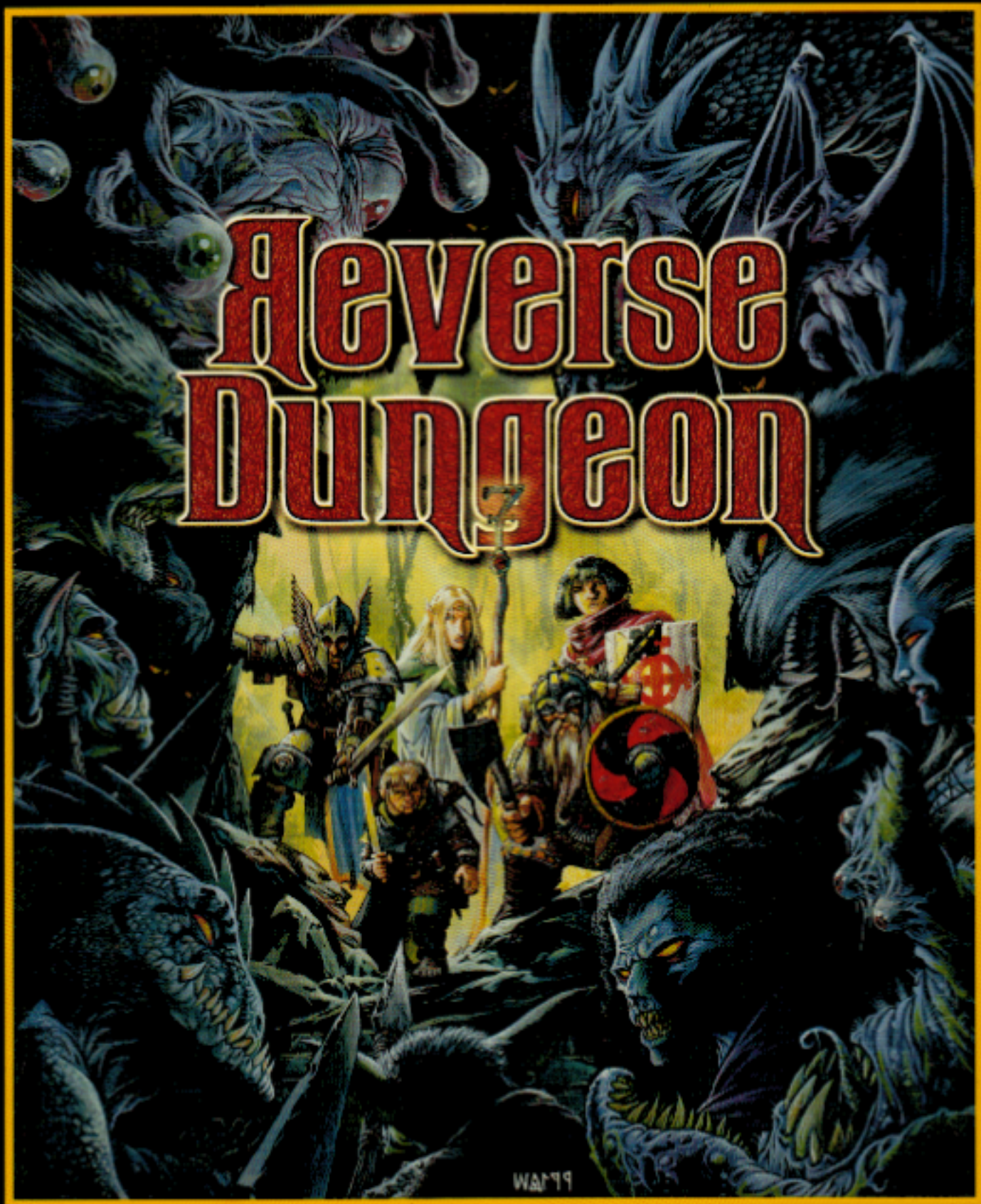


Advanced
Dungeons & Dragons
Adventure



W&T '99

John D. Rateliff and Bruce R. Cordell

Advanced **Dungeons & Dragons**[®]

Reverse Dungeon

John D. Rateliff and Bruce R. Cordell

Credits

Design: John D. Rateliff and Bruce R. Cordell

Editing: Thomas M. Reid

Creative Direction: Ed Stark

Art Director: Dawn Murin

Cover Art: Wayne Reynolds

Interior Art: Dennis Cramer

Cartography: Dennis Kauth

Graphic Design: Tanya Matson

Typesetting: Nancy Walker

Project Management: Larry Weiner, Josh Fischer

Production Manager: Chas DeLong

Based on the original DUNGEONS and DRAGONS rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.

ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, AD&D, DUNGEON MASTER, and the Wizards of the Coast logo are registered trademarks owned by Wizards of the Coast, Inc. MONSTROUS MANUAL and MONSTROUS ARCANA are trademarks owned by Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

All Wizards characters, character names, and the distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks owned by Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

Distributed to the hobby, toy, and comic trade in the United States and Canada by regional distributors. Distributed in the United States to the book trade by St. Martin's Press. Distributed in Canada to the book trade by Fenn Ltd. Distributed worldwide by Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and regional distributors.

This material is protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America. Any reproduction or unauthorized use of the material or artwork contained herein is prohibited without the express written permission of Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

This product is a work of fiction. Any similarity to actual people, organizations, places, or events is purely coincidental.

©2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc. All rights reserved. Made in the U.S.A.

U.S., CANADA
ASIA, PACIFIC, & LATIN AMERICA
Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
P.O. Box 707
Renton WA 98057-0707
+1-800-324-6496



EUROPEAN HEADQUARTERS
Wizards of the Coast, Belgium
P.B. 2031
2600 Berchem
Belgium
+32-70-23-32-77

Visit our website at www.wizards.com



Table of Contents

Introduction: The Other Foot.....	3	Weather.....	28
Using The Reverse Dungeon	3	Village of Ardeche	28
Plot Synopsis	3	Aftermath.....	33
Consequences	4	Cast of NPC Adventurers.....	34
DM Difficulties.....	4	Other NPCs.....	35
Golbintown.....	5	The Vault Level	36
Rules for Goblin PCs.....	5	Guardians and Artifacts	36
Leader-Types	5	Why Is This Here?	37
Special Goblins.....	7	Rules for Vaunt-Level PCs	37
Female Goblins.....	7	Room Descriptions	38
PC and NPC Replenishment.....	9	Scenarios: Intruders.....	54
Roleplaying Goblins:		Intruders from Above	55
Notes on Goblin Culture	9	Xorns.....	55
Burial Customs.....	10	The Drow Embassy	56
Population.....	10	The Do-Gooders.....	59
The Pecking Order.....	11	The Master Thieves	61
Yar-Gock Goblin Tribe.....	11	Lichland.....	63
Caves of the Yar-Gock.....	11	Rules for Lichland PCs	63
Traps and Tricks.....	17	Room Descriptions	63
Scenarios: Goblintown and Beyond.....	20	Scenarios: Down with Undead!.....	77
The First Raid	21	Crusades.....	77
The Second Raid	22	Cast of Undead Slayers.....	78
The Third Raid	23	Demons Unbound	79
Turnabout Is Fair Play:		A Daring Plan.....	80
Raiding the Village.....	24	Conclusions	88
The Surrounding Area	25	Ongoing Adventures.....	88
Wandering Monsters.....	26	Wrapping It Up.....	88
Displacer Beast.....	26	Appendix: Playing the Bad Guys.....	89
Blink Dogs.....	26	Bad, or Just Plain Evil	89
Croccodile	26	Bad to the Bone	89
Giant Owl.....	28	How Far Is Too Far?	90



Introduction: The Other Foot

Welcome to *Reverse Dungeon*! This is the adventure where everything is backward. Instead of playing bold adventurers who journey into monsters' lairs to wipe them out and loot their stuff, the players take the role of the monsters, determined to stop pesky heroes from invading their homes. Instead of being "the good guys," the players get the chance to be "the bad guys." This module is also unusual in that it's not one adventure but a sequence of three, unfolding like a reverse campaign. Players do not necessarily keep the same monster characters throughout; in fact, they can switch to different characters between each scenario, and sometimes in the middle of a given scenario (a monster's life is often nasty, brutish, and short).

Using 'The Reverse Dungeon

Reverse Dungeon is unlike other adventure modules TSR has published and thus requires the Dungeon Master (DM) to read the module ahead of time at least as carefully as he might for a standard adventure. Because the player characters (PCs) play monsters, the players are familiar with the dungeon ahead of time and may work to devise traps, ambushes, and other nasty surprises for nonplayer character (NPC) adventurers. In a sense, the players become co-DMs, at least while preparing the dungeon. Of course, PCs are not automatically aware of NPC adventurers' plans or movements; that remains the purview of the DM.

This product is set up in three sections: Goblintown, The Vault Level, and Lichland. Generally speaking, each section corresponds to a physical level of the entire dungeon (see the "Reverse Dungeon Cross Section Map"). Additionally each section assumes the PCs play monsters associated with the level in question. Each section contains several separate scenarios orchestrated by the DM that involve the invasion of adventurers or rival monsters into the PC monsters' dungeon territory. When all the scenarios of a section are played out, for good or ill (see "Consequences," below), the players move on to the next section.

Although each section allows the PCs to pick a new monster to go with the new section, the DM should allow players to hold onto their monster characters if they want to, although this requires the DM to "beef up" lesser monsters to stand up to more dangerous

threats presented, especially for goblin PCs. Allowing goblins to pick up and use some of the artifacts presented in The Vault Level is one way of evening the playing field. Another way is to allow each PC to control a small goblin troupe of 5 or 6 lower-HD goblins.

Each of the three sections contains a subsection entitled "Scenarios." Refer to these sections to find out how NPC adventurers and rival monsters intend to threaten the PC monsters in each dungeon. Besides providing several scenario outlines, each "Scenarios" section also provides complete NPC statistics. Note that threats aimed at one level that are not eradicated by the PC monsters may have to be dealt with in the next level, by the next set of PC monsters, if the DM desires.

Finally, familiarize yourself and your players with the information contained in "Appendix A: Playing the Bad Guys" before actually starting the adventure. This provides a great introduction to the concept of *Reverse Dungeon* and provides both players and DMs with guidelines on how to proceed.

Plot Synopsis

The scenarios of *Reverse Dungeon* focus on the dungeon complex below a large hill, as shown in the "Reverse Dungeon Cross Section Map." Natural geological processes formed a series of limestone caverns hundreds of thousands of years in the past. An ancient culture subsequently expanded the caverns through mining. These mines later served as home for several demihuman races, until the hill and caverns were claimed by a wizard named Blaise some 600 years ago. Blaise expanded the mines and caverns into a true dungeon complex, and he capped the hillock with the traditional wizard's tower. Today, the tower stands in ruins, goblins have **reinhabited** the upper caverns, and most outsiders assume that Blaise is long gone. This assumption is false.

Blaise, now a lich, resides in the third level of the dungeon (labeled "Lichland" on the Cross Section Map). The wizard allows the goblins to inhabit the uppermost level of the dungeon (Goblintown), since he has no use for the level and finds the goblins a convenient cover. In fact, the current generation of goblins are not even aware of what the lower levels hold (though they suspect the tunnels exist).

As the adventure opens, the goblins have led an entirely autonomous existence. However, frequent



raids into nearby human civilizations have drawn unwanted attention, and adventurers are about to begin to invading Goblintown. The PC goblins have the opportunity to defend their lair and possibly take the battle to the nearest NPC adventurer marshalling point: the village of Ardeche. If Ardeche falls, the goblins are victorious.

The second section, The Vault Level, physically lies directly below Goblintown. Appreciative of "wizardly tradition," Blaise created this trap-and-monster-filled level to guard magical curiosities accumulated by the wizard over the years. The scenarios in this section deal with various threats to the security of the vault, allowing the PC monsters to defend the dungeon with their native wit and monstrous attributes.

The final section, Lichland, is the bottommost artificial level of Blaise's dungeon (though a cavernous area called the Hellspike Grotto lies directly below Lichland). Here, Blaise and his undead servants plot monstrous evil and attempt to bind demons to their service. PCs have the opportunity to play powerful undead creatures. The scenarios in this section are fairly straightforward: The demon-binding has gone awry and must be dealt with, but worse, clerics of a local monastery have begun to infiltrate the dungeon and, if not repulsed or destroyed, could prove the undoing of Blaise and the PC undead. A final preemptive strike on the monastery by the undead could cement their hold on the region and ensure the dungeon's continued existence. If the threat of the monastery and its holy power is not eliminated, the dungeon eventually falls, with the monsters destroyed or scattered.

Consequences

The AD&D" game rewards normal PCs who successfully complete adventures by providing level advancement. Rewards (and consequences) are handled a bit differently in *The Reverse Dungeon*.

In Goblintown, rules are provided to allow PC goblin characters to advance to higher HD creatures as they survive the depredations of dungeon-looting adventurers. Likewise, possibilities for advancement, or at least powering-up, are given in the second two sections, as the PC monsters fight off threats to their areas.

Even though the product is presented in three sections for ease of use, the DM should remember that the dungeon is a single entity. Thus, how well the PC

monsters do in the initial level will have some effect on the scenarios of the subsequent levels. Such effects include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 1) PC monsters of the previous level may be available as henchmen of the PC monsters of the next lower level if the previous levels' scenarios played out to the advantage of the monsters.
- 2) If the PC monsters of the previous section fail or die, the DM should complement the current sections' scenarios with the threats noted for the previous section, if applicable.

DM Difficulties

Just as the players may have a some difficulty fitting into their new roles, Dungeon Masters used to traditional adventures may have a little trouble adjusting to the *Reverse Dungeon*. Usually, the DM has a keyed map and reads out descriptions of new- areas as the player characters explore them. Here, in five out of the six adventures, the players are familiar with the layout of the dungeons-as familiar as w-e are with the rooms in our own homes-and it's the NPCs who don't know the floor plan.

This means, of course, that the DM has to master the trick of masking DM knowledge. Just as in normal adventures, when the monsters under the DM's control do not always know the locations or plans of the PC heroes, the NPC adventurers exploring those areas should fall into traps, make wrong turns, and miss a few secret doors. The NPCs may be smart, experienced, and tough (especially in Lichland, the last section), but they're not omniscient. Don't deny your players the thrill of seeing an intruder walk right smack into some horrible trap or ambush their PCs have labored to set up. By the same token, though, don't eliminate the occasional "aarrgh!" when the pesky NPC adventurers sidestep disaster at the last second (either through skill or sheer dumb luck).

A Final Note

Reverse Dungeon is all about taking roleplaying one step further to see what the view looks like from the perspective of the folks who normally exist only to provide challenges to the heroes. With luck, players will not only have a blast seeing how the other half lives (so to speak) but may come away from this adventure with a new appreciation of their foes and, thus, of their heroes as well.



Goblintown

In this first part of the adventure, the player characters are goblins belonging to the Yar-Gock tribe. They are about to receive the unwelcome attentions of a band of adventurers dedicated to wiping out the “threat posed by that vile band of humanoids” and, incidentally, loot all their treasures. The goblin characters must survive multiple attacks on their lair, repel the marauding heroes, and eventually raid the nearby village to end the threat.

Rules for Goblin PCs

Goblin player characters should be rolled up the same way as any other PCs, with the following modifications:

- Goblins do not choose a class, unless it is the goblin shaman.
- **Ability scores:** roll 2d6 for each stat, assigning the results to Str, Dex, Con, Int, Wis, and Chr. Add +1 to Con and subtract -2 from Chr.
- **HD:** 1-1 (1 to 7 hp).
- **THACO:** 20
- **Armor Class:** Goblins are AC 10 when unarmored, or AC 6 when wearing typical goblin war gear-thick leather armor (the equivalent of studded leather) and a small wooden or leather shield.
- **Damage:** 1d6 (spear, club, stone-headed mace, short sword) or 1d4 (sling stone). The Yar-Gock tribe lacks the capacity to make metal weapons, but they have a small hoard of short swords and metal-tipped spears looted from unsuccessful adventurers in the past. Most of these are in the hands of the tribal leader (the Mogur) and his bodyguards; the rest of the goblin warriors have to make do with flint-headed spears, clubs, and sling stones (1d4 damage per stone).
- **Size:** Small. Goblin warriors average about 4 feet high. This enables them to survive and even thrive in cramped quarters but limits them to smallish weaponry such as the short sword, spear, and mace.
- **Special Abilities:** infravision (60 feet range), detect new construction (25% chance).
- **Special Weakness:** partially blinded by sunlight or other bright lights (-1 penalty to all attack rolls).

Compared with typical PCs (humans, elves, dwarves, and even halflings), goblins are weak and unimpressive. They prefer ambushes and tend to run away from fights where they lack an overwhelming numerical advantage. The average goblin warrior knows that if he fights one-on-one with even a novice (1st-level) adventurer, he'll very likely lose. This has given them a reputation as cowards, but what others call cowardice, goblins call being smart, playing it safe, and above all staying alive. “Live to fight another day” is a tried-and-true goblin philosophy.

Where goblins do excel, and what enables them to hold their own in a hostile world, is teamwork. Individually weak, the goblin war band can be effective and deadly when its members work together. They also are very good at using their home terrain to their advantage, where darkness and cramped quarters prevent larger and stronger foes from using their size and weaponry to best advantage. Goblins often employ traps to even the odds. All these strategies should come into play in the course of this adventure/scenario.

Some players, and not just power gamers, may become frustrated by the prospect of playing such relatively weak player characters. Encourage them to give it a try anyway; the change could do them good. However, to give them a fighting chance against the damage-dealing machine that is an adventuring party, allow them multiple player characters. During character creation, have each player roll up not one but three goblin warriors. He or she now has the option of running the characters one at a time or all three simultaneously. The “three characters at once” option simulates the goblins’ innate lawfulness and ability to work together effectively against larger, more powerful, but less organized foes. It’s up to the player to decide whether the three are related, a goblin clique, or simply an informal group whose interests tend to coincide. Wise players will use the multiple characters to increase their options, spread around damage, and rescue the fallen, thus giving all three greatly improved odds of survival.

Leader-Types

At the start of the adventure, all the PCs are ordinary goblin warriors. However, they have the potential to advance through the course of the





adventure. Since the trait goblins most admire in a warrior is the ability to survive, for every five battles or combats the player character survives he gets to add 1 hit point to his total. A goblin who reaches maximum hit points (7) should be considered as HD 1, improving to THACO 19 and gaining +1 to each ability score. He either becomes the new tribal leader, or **Mogur** ("Boss"), if that position is vacant, or an elite warrior, one of the Mogur's bodyguards. Note that any goblin leader may, at any point, be challenged by one of his peers to a fight to the death (challenges from lower-ranking warriors are ignored, with the offender unceremoniously put to death). Following a legitimate challenge, the one-on-one battle takes place three days later, with the victor being the undisputed leader. Note that only one challenge may be made at a time, so (for example) three characters cannot all plot to challenge a leader on the same or consecutive days; this keeps tribal leaders from being worn down by a conspiracy of their peers.

A goblin who reaches this level and then survives a further ten battles advances to subchief or **Kumar** ("Champion": HD 1+1, 8 hp, +1d3 to each stat). Access to better food and gear typically causes such an exceptional warrior to be able to wield larger weapons (for example, battle-axes) and gain scale mail armor (for AC 5 when used with a shield), either through plunder or slave labor from some captured dwarf. A tribe with a Kumar as leader attracts additional warriors and females from neighboring tribes equal in number to his own tribe's population, drawn by the mixed allure of safety and reflected glory such a powerful leader promises, thus replenishing battle losses and doubling the size of his tribe. A Kumar who can survive ten more battles (and the plotting of envious peers and underlings) becomes a chief or **Katar** ("Goblin King"), doubling his minions yet again and gaining 1d8 additional hit points (for a total of 2 HD), plus 1d3 to each of his ability scores. At the beginning of the adventure, the Yar-Gock tribe is too small to have a chief (Katar) or subchief (Kumar) but it does have a leader (Mogur) and four elite warrior bodyguards, all tougher than ordinary goblin warriors. Alas, all five are fated to die in combat with the adventurers in the course of the scenario. If playing ordinary goblin warriors proves too much of a stretch for your players' roleplaying muscles and they demand tougher characters from

Female Goblins

Goblins dwell in a male-dominated hierarchical society with the goblin chief and his cronies on the top and the women and children on the bottom. Malnutrition contributes. If there's not enough food to go around (a common enough occurrence), the males eat first, the females next, and the children last. In times of famine, unwanted children (especially female children) are often exposed, left for dead. For those spared such a fate, a lifetime of deprivation often leads to underdeveloped muscles. Female goblins are not taught the use of weapons and are never allowed to become warriors. Instead, they are kept hard at work providing food for the tribe, raising the young, and doing the multitude of tasks necessary to keep skin and soul together in a subsistence hunter-gatherer culture living in a marginal environment.

That said, DMs should feel free to ignore this unsavory bit of goblin culture if such blatant discrimination would spoil the group's fun or if his or her players would really enjoy playing female goblin "amazons." The DM can rule that the tribe at some point in the past was almost exterminated (an all-too-frequent occurrence) and that only the females and very young children survived, so that the female goblins were forced to assume traditionally male roles until the children finally grew up, by which time the tribe had become accustomed to the new ways. If the tribe has been isolated from other goblin groups for a generation or two—then equality between the sexes, or even female dominance, will have had time to take root and become the new standard, to be as staunchly defended as any other aspect of their culture.

the get-go, consider making these tribal leaders available to them as PCs. A player who takes an exceptional goblin as his character does not get three PCs but only one; the "three PCs per player" rule only applies to those playing ordinary goblin warriors.

Special Goblins

A final option for goblin player characters are the spellcasters: shamans and witch doctors. The Yar-Cock tribe venerates the lesser goblin god



Bargrivyek, patron of unity among and within goblin clans. Bargrivyek's agents are particularly concerned with mediating disputes, often by focusing rancor on external targets (elves, humans, or other humanoids). By helping goblins work together toward common goals, they unify goblin power with the goal of extending goblin territory at the expense of other races.

No goblin forsakes the warrior's life by choice. Often, however, a goblin who is punier than his fellows or one who has been lamed in an accident will survive only if he can prove that he has some skill they lack. Spellcaster goblins thus tend to be smarter than their fellows (+3 to Intelligence for witch doctors, +3 to Wisdom for shamans) but unfit to serve as warriors (-2 to Constitution, -1 to Strength). They gain +2 bonuses to all saving throws but roll 1d4-1 rather than 1d8-1 for hit points and do not advance as warrior goblins. Instead, for every ten combats the spellcaster survives, he (or, rarely, she) advances one level, gaining +1 to each ability score and +2 to his prime stat—either Intelligence or Wisdom—up to a maximum of 16 in either. The highest shamans can advance is 5th level; witch doctors can reach 3rd level in both priestly and wizardly magic. Goblin spellcasters do not gain extra spells for exceptional Wisdom, nor do ability score minimums or penalties for low prime scores apply.

Goblin Shaman

A goblin shaman has access to the following spheres: All, Charm, Combat, Divination, Elemental-Air, Elemental-Earth, Guardian, Healing, and Protection (for DMs using the *Tome of Magic* [TSR#2121], they gain access to the optional spheres of War and Wards, as well). Bargrivyek's clergy have no power over undead, but they do gain a humanoid or demihuman language per level, chosen by the player ("Common" is an allowable option; the characters all already speak Goblin). They also have the power, once per day, of performing a divination (typically by casting bones and then interpreting the results); this is the equivalent of an augury that foretells weal or woe. The shaman does not actually ask a question but simply empties his mind, performs the divination, and then waits to see what omen the god sends. Finally, all of Bargrivyek's shamans occasionally *speak in tongues*, sometimes falling down and babbling wildly in a

mix of many languages, not all of them known to the speaker. Afterward the shaman has no memory of what he has said, but this odd manifestation of divine power through the mortal vessel has a tendency to scare the willies out of all who witness it, friend and foe alike. Goblins are heartened by the sign that their god is with them, gaining a +1 bonus to all their attacks, damage, and saving throws; their enemies suffer -1 penalties to all such rolls and must roll a successful saving throw vs. spell or flee in panic as if stuck by a *fear* spell.

Goblin Witch Doctor

A witch doctor is the goblin equivalent of a priest/wizard. Advancement is as with shamans, except that a witch doctor begins at 1st/1st level then gains a 2nd level of priest, then a 2nd level of wizard, then a 3rd level of priest, and finally a 3rd level of wizard. Witch doctors do not gain the *speaking in tongues* ability, but they do have the ability to curse one foe per level once per day; this special curse inflicts a penalty to all attack, damage, and saving throw rolls equal to -1 per level of the witch doctor's wizard ability (thus to a maximum of -3 when the witch doctor is 3rd/3rd level). Witch doctors gain access to all the spheres and spells available to shamans and also to a single school of wizard spells (player's choice). Witch doctors never wear any type of armor, relying instead upon charms, their own wits, and the will of the gods for protection.

Shamans and Witch Doctors in Goblin Society

Witch doctors and shamans occupy their own peculiar niche within the tribe. Because of their calling, they cannot ascend to the dignity of Mogur, Kumar, Katar, or even bodyguard. But the very fact that they are out of the running for the chieftdom means that they are prized as advisors and allies by those who do seek such honors or who, having gained them, would like to retain them. Since shamans and witch doctors are charged by their god with the well-being of the tribe as a whole rather than that of any single individual, they often become "the power behind the throne" who guide the destiny of the tribe through generations of goblin rulers. A Mogur may hold his position for a year or three or five; a clever witch doctor might establish a dominance that lasts ten, twenty, or even thirty.

Note that female shamans and witch doctors, while rare, are possible. Even though the goblin



gods staunchly uphold the essential chauvinism of the race, gods are nothing if not inscrutable, and occasionally a girl-child will be blessed (or cursed) with divine power. Such a character is an exception to the general bias against female goblins. The distrust and awe with which the average goblin regards shamans and witch doctors subsumes any consideration of her as a person. That she is a powerful spellcaster touched by the god is more important than that she is a “mere female,” and the rest of the tribe, from the Mogur to the smallest goblin-imp, will treat her with all the respect and caution deemed prudent by a superstitious people in the presence of supernatural powers.

Like the warrior caste, the god-touched maintain a strict hierarchy; no two shamans of the same level can live in the tribe at the same time. Furthermore, no shaman can advance beyond 3rd level if the tribe has a 4th- or 5th-level shaman living. Similarly, there can be only one witch doctor of each level at any one time (one of 1st-level wizard skill, one of 2nd level, and one of 3rd). Since they are charged by their god to urge goblins to work together for the good of the tribe, goblin spellcasters are not allowed to challenge each other; the younger ones must wait (sometimes impatiently) for their elders to die before advancing themselves. In practical terms, however, shamans and witch doctors are rare enough that it is rare for a tribe to have both, much less multiple shamans; many tribes lack even a single spellcaster. Typically there will be only a single shaman, who chooses a young assistant when he senses the end is near, and that goblin-child replaces him without fuss when the time comes.

A player who chooses a shaman or witch doctor as his or her character is an exception to the “three characters for one” rule; goblin spellcasters are so exceptional that, in order to preserve game balance, the player gets only a single character rather than three generic warriors.

PC and NPC Replenishment

This adventure is quite likely to be hard on the goblin PCs. Expect casualties—a goblin’s life is nasty, brutish, and short. Not to worry; there are plenty more goblins where those came from, at least early on in the adventure, and players can simply roll up another trio of goblin PCs for their next set of char-

acters. Likewise, assuming a moderate level of success, the tribe should inflict some losses on the marauding adventurers. Additional NPCs have been provided to replace those slain by the PCs. The DM is encouraged to use the “death’s door” rule (whereby characters are knocked unconscious at 0 hit points but do not die until they reach -10 hp ten rounds later), as it gives impatient NPC adventurers time to move on while surviving members of the tribe bind their fallen comrades’ wounds. Adventurers are often inattentive to details and may not notice that they’ve been fighting the same goblins each time they enter the complex.

Roleplaying Goblins: Notes on Goblin Culture

The concept of privacy is largely foreign to goblins. Thus, the tribe shares communal sleeping quarters (see “Caves of the Yar-Gock” Map), with two exceptions. The first is the shaman or witch doctor (if any player character took on that role). The second and more important is the Mogur, who prefers secure and commodious shelter commensurate with his exalted status, with his bodyguards between him and the approach of danger. Goblins have no concept of monogamy: all adults in the community share in a communal marriage, with the alpha male (the Mogur) having first choice from all available mates. Pair-bonding is unknown but affection is not, and his favorites may form an unofficial harem. His bodyguards have next choice, then the remaining adults sort themselves out as suits their inclinations. Shamans are a special case in this as in so much else; some practice celibacy, a few devote themselves to vigorous coupling, and the rest behave no differently from other goblins in this regard. It depends on the individual and his (or her) private vision of Bargrivyek’s service.

Children, the inevitable result of such casual carnality, are frequent—the average female goblin is pregnant about once a year from the age of ten to about thirty-five—but child mortality is high; only half the children born reach adulthood. Children remain with their mother only until weaned (at the age of about 10 months), thereafter being raised by the tribe as a whole. Puberty comes at about age 10; thereafter the young goblin is considered a full-fledged adult member of the tribe. A goblin lucky



enough to avoid death from hunger, disease, or violence lives some 50 years (a rare few have reached 55 or even 60). While hierarchies are of extreme importance (every goblin knows his or her exact place in the pecking order), heritage is not, and the children of chiefs are treated no differently than any other goblin-imp. Some sages, observing that goblin leaders are bigger and stronger than their minions, have speculated that they actually form a sub-race of goblins. In fact, they are simply battle-hardened goblin warriors who have benefited from rising to the top of their race's food chain; better food, better conditions, and constant activity leads to larger, heavier, healthier goblins.

Food is, of course, a perennial concern of every goblin. Most goblins are hungry most of the time; the small size and relative weakness of the average goblin is a direct result of malnutrition. Their hunter-gatherer mode of existence would produce a sufficiency in lush surroundings, but in the marginal areas to which they have been forced by habitat competition from humans and demihumans, they barely scrape by. The males engage in hunting every day, sometimes bringing down prey as large as a deer but more commonly concentrating on small game such as rabbits, camprats, and birds. The small pond near their cave supplies fish, mussels, crawdads, water-bugs, and other edibles. The tribe formerly brewed a **fishhead** beer, but the only goblins who knew the art perished in an unlucky raid and all attempts to rediscover the trick by trial and error have proved disastrous, foul-smelling failures, undrinkable even by a goblin (these trials did produce a potential weapon, however; see "Traps and Tricks," below). If all else fails, there is always the mainstay of their diet: the omnipresent rats that are half pet, half domesticated livestock.

Like most intelligent carnivores, goblins can scavenge. They also need some plant "roughage" to stay healthy. Food-gathering is less prestigious than hunting, being largely "women's work." Female goblins dig tubers, collect nuts, acorns, and wild grains (mainly grass seed), and pluck various greens (nettles, dandelions, sorrel). All these are thrown into a huge ever-boiling pot or cauldron filled with "Goblin Stew"—a mess of boiled bones, bits of rat, more-or-less edible plants, and anything left over from previous meals; the whole is something like stew, something like gruel, and virtually inedible to anything fussier than a goblin (even

hobgoblins turn their noses up at it). Despite their reputation to the contrary, goblins are not cannibals, although desperate or starving goblins are not to be trusted alone with a plump, defenseless halfling.

Most goblin goods are foraged, taken on raids from unwary travelers, outlying farms, or unlucky adventurers. They do make garments and leather goods (such as pouches, slings, belts, and thongs) from the hides of animals killed for food. Typical noncombat activities for male goblins include planning hunts, practicing with weapons, and making tools (including chipping flint for spear points, smoothing spear shafts, and tying spear points to shafts with leather thongs). They are fairly skilled at mining; their work is not up to dwarven standards, but adequate for their needs. Typical chores for female goblins are food gathering, grinding grain between two large flat stones, caring for the young, plaiting basketry, and other domestic tasks. Weaving would be beyond their capacity even if they had access to suitable fibers, but they can fashion simple clothing from cloth "acquired" from elsewhere. The tribe has no smithing skill, so consequently, metal weapons, tools, and pots and pans are limited to highly prized booty from raids.

Burial customs

They don't. What would be "grave goods" in other cultures are quite practically recycled for use by the living. Bodies of their fellows are left for scavengers (if under pressure from predators, goblins may substitute unwanted but not yet dead members of the tribe—including sickly infants, crippled warriors, and aging slaves). Goblins are quite unsentimental about the dead, however well they admired or loved the deceased in life---a dead goblin eaten by predators today means one more day of life for his or her former comrades. Hence, adventurers never stumble across "Lost Tombs of the Goblin-Kings." The idea of carefully locking away dead bodies, often with useful stuff, is incomprehensible to goblins---only more proof that all other races (dwarves, humans, and elves in particular) are quite mad.

Population

This particular tribe is small: about thirty adult males (including the PCs), some forty adult females, and sixty children of all ages from



newborn to nearly adult (ages 0-9). The current Mogur, Hrap, has 1 HD and 7 hp, as do each of his four assistants. The goblins lack a Kumar or Katar; their own group is too small, and no nearby tribe supports one to whom they could pay homage. Similarly, there is no shaman or witch doctor unless a player opted to play one as a character. Worgs are also absent at the start of the game, but should any player character advance to the dignity of Kumar, his growing reputation attracts 1d6 wolf-riders with mounts, bestowing great prestige on the tribe. Player characters may also elect to travel as an embassy to another tribe and barter for three wolf pups, thus converting their goblin warrior PC into a wolf-rider over time. Finally, the tribe, poor as it is, does have a few slaves: two kobolds (Mop and Lug), a lamed **bugbear** (Hrezek), and a blinded dwarf (old Grubfinder, formerly known as Hler Hvitserkson). These are kept shackled at all times.

The Pecking Order

Every goblin has strong sense of "place." A manifestation of their lawful evil nature, it plays a major role in maintaining cohesion within goblin society.

- Mogur
- witch doctor, if present
- shaman, if present
- wolf-riders, if present
- elite warriors (the Mogur's bodyguard and peers)
- goblin warriors
- female goblins
- goblin-imps
- the old, crippled, and sick
- slaves and prisoners

This stratification applies to every aspect of goblin life—who eats first when there's not enough food to go around, who gets first pick of loot from a raid, who makes the decisions, who's responsible for protecting those lower on the scale, who gets sacrificed if necessary for the good of the tribe as a whole. The player characters start out as typical goblin warriors; relatively well off by goblin standards but not part of the elite. Through the course of the scenario—with luck and good roleplaying—they should rise to become the leaders of the tribe, becoming those responsible for its salvation or destruction.

Yar-Gock Goblin Tribe

The cave complex that has been home to uncounted generations of goblins (at least ten) was originally a set of simple natural caverns cut into the stone of the hill by an underground river (a remnant of which still flows through the caves, providing a valuable source of drinking water). Many thousands of years ago, these were expanded into mines, although neither the race who did the mining nor what they sought are known. Over the following ages, the abandoned mines became a refuge and then home to tribes of humanoids, demihumans, and early humans ("cavemen") in succession. Finally, some six centuries ago, a powerful wizard took control of the cave, hiring a clan of dwarf builders to raise a tower atop the hill and delve multiple dungeon levels beneath it. Roughly 100 years later, in a spectacular explosion, the tower was cast down and the wizard vanished, apparently the victim of some magical experiment gone awry. Goblins claimed the abandoned upper level of the dungeon and have been here ever since, always returning and recolonizing the spot whenever the local tribe is wiped out by monsters, rival humanoids, **xenophobic demihumans**, or adventurers.

Caves of the Yar-Gock

Area 1. communal Quarters

This large chamber, shaped like an inverted triangle, is the heart of the complex, the place where the goblins spend most of their time. Cooking, child-rearing, socializing, eating, wrestling contests, mock battles, sleeping, lovemaking, and many other activities take place here; if the Mogur decides to call a meeting of the whole tribe, here is where it convenes, in the only room large enough to hold the entire population all at once. Three passages lead off, one to the east (ending in the side door), one to the west (ending eventually in the secret entrance), and one to the south (ending in the main entrance). In addition, a secret door is hidden in the middle of the west wall; all the goblins know it is here but dare not open it (area 20).

The walls of the room slant inward, rising to meet in a small circular area at the center of the roof (that is, the whole chamber is shaped like a hollow **three-sided pyramid**, or the inside of a d4). An obvious



trap door fills this circular area but, as it is 60 feet above the floor, no goblin has ever yet succeeded in reaching it to find out what lies beyond, although a few have broken their necks trying. Should a character (PC or, more likely, NPC) attempt this and somehow succeed, there is a very real danger of being knocked from any precarious perch by falling stones from above once the door is opened (Dex check to avoid them); anyone below hit by the stones suffers damage as if falling from that height (6d6 points). The area beyond is a collapsed basement for the tower that once crowned the hilltop. Moving the tons of rubble is impossible from this side, but there is room for two or three small (goblin-sized) characters to haul themselves up and crouch in. This spot may serve as a hiding place for NPC adventurers, a sniper post from which to attack said intruders, or a trap (dropping a rope ladder directly beneath the trap door is sure to lure the adventurers into figuring out a way to open it for themselves, with possibly gratifyingly disastrous results).

The room's other features of interest include a stone chair carved into the north wall (the Mogur uses this on formal occasions, such as his address to the PCs in the opening scene), a midden-pit in the northeast corner (a filled pit strikingly like the one at area 12, full of cracked bones sucked dry of marrow, well-chewed scraps of hide or leather, and other refuse), and the former channel of the underground river along the west side. The rest of the tribe's worldly possessions have been accumulated over the years as a result of various raids on passing caravans, the village, and the occasional adventurer that didn't make it back out. These goods include a host of mismatched cookware and utensils (such as cracked pottery cups, bowls, and plates, an iron skillet or two, one large cooking kettle, a few dull butter knives, a rusty metal bucket, and two leaky wooden ones), a few poorly built barrels of various sizes, perhaps half a dozen woven baskets (in fairly poor condition), 60 feet of old, frayed rope in several pieces (no piece longer than 30 feet), a disintegrating fishing net, one small metal mirror (dented), some timbers and firewood, and lastly, enough well-used furs to serve as goblin sleeping pallets. Most of this stuff is either throwing around loose in the chamber, waiting to be used, or has been put to use in some fashion to aid in the day-to-day activities of the tribe (for example, pieces of rope hold a rickety tripod together from which the cooking kettle hangs).

Near each entrance stands a makeshift barricade of woven branches that can be shoved across the passage to keep out trouble in case of attack.

Area 2. Elite Warriors

This small room, once a guardroom and torture chamber, is now home to the tribe's elite warriors, who serve as bodyguards for the Mogur. When the adventure begins, there are four of these: Haebin, Kharf, Wogz, and Herpulh; after these are slain, the room remains empty unless the PCs become elite warriors and lay claim to it.

No trace of the old torture equipment remains; the room is empty except for the soft furs used as sleeping pallets by the bodyguards and a few spare weapons. However, the old cell at the back of the room still has intact bars and a working lock. The key—a huge metal affair fully six inches long—is normally kept in the lock but is worn around the neck of one of the elite guards whenever the cell is in use. Unknown to the goblins, the cell has a secret door in the floor; opening it reveals a shaft with handholds cut into the side that leads down to the illithid's chambers in room 22 on the Vault Level (a typical example of Master Blaise's sense of humor).

Area 3. The Mogur

The goblin leader's room lacks a door, like all the other chambers in this complex, but a curtain hangs across the corridor to mark the entrance. Mogur Praek has ruled the tribe for six years now—quite a respectable record—and has come to feel secure in his position. He reached accommodations with the most likely challengers among his elite warriors long ago, arranging the deaths of the most dangerous and buying off the rest (the four bodyguards) with his generosity in sharing out booty. Praek has noted the most promising among the player characters and keeps a wary eye on them; after the first raid he assigns them to the position that seems likely to offer the most danger and greatest chance of their getting killed. Later, he will be slain himself in a surprise attack designed to leave the tribe disorganized and leaderless.

His unofficial harem also sleeps here: three female goblins he has singled out to receive his favors. Every year or so he gets tired of one and chooses another to take her place, but one

particularly strong-minded female goblin named Daku has kept her post year after year. This is not just because he finds her attractive, but because she is his unofficial advisor, being the daughter of a former chief who has seen much and understands goblin politics better than anyone else in the tribe. Two of the three harem members die in the same attack that kills the Mogur; if the DM wants, Daku may survive and give any new chief the benefit of her experience and practical advice.

The tribe has little treasure, but what there is of it is here, hidden inside the bear skin that forms the Mogur's bed. The little hoard consists of 804 cp, 51 sp, 8 gp, and a gem (a piece of yellow quartz worth 50 gp; Praek believes it to be a topaz worth at least 500 gp).

Area 4. The Gallery

The walls of this ancient chamber are decorated with cave paintings-animals, humanoids, and monsters crowded together in black and red ochre. The tribe's shamans have always considered this a holy place, coming here to meditate at times and open themselves to Bargrivyek's will. All the quiet eyes staring out from the walls give ordinary goblins the creeps, and they avoid this place whenever possible. Accordingly, it has become an adulthood ritual of young males (along with making their first solo kill) to spend a day alone here with a light, "watching the pictures" and being watched by them in turn. There

is no treasure here in the normal sense, but any shaman or witch doctor who meditates here (a solitary experience requiring at least a full night) has a 5% chance of gaining a vision from Bargrivyek; this usually takes the form of a vision or a fit of *speaking in tongues* at some point during the next day.

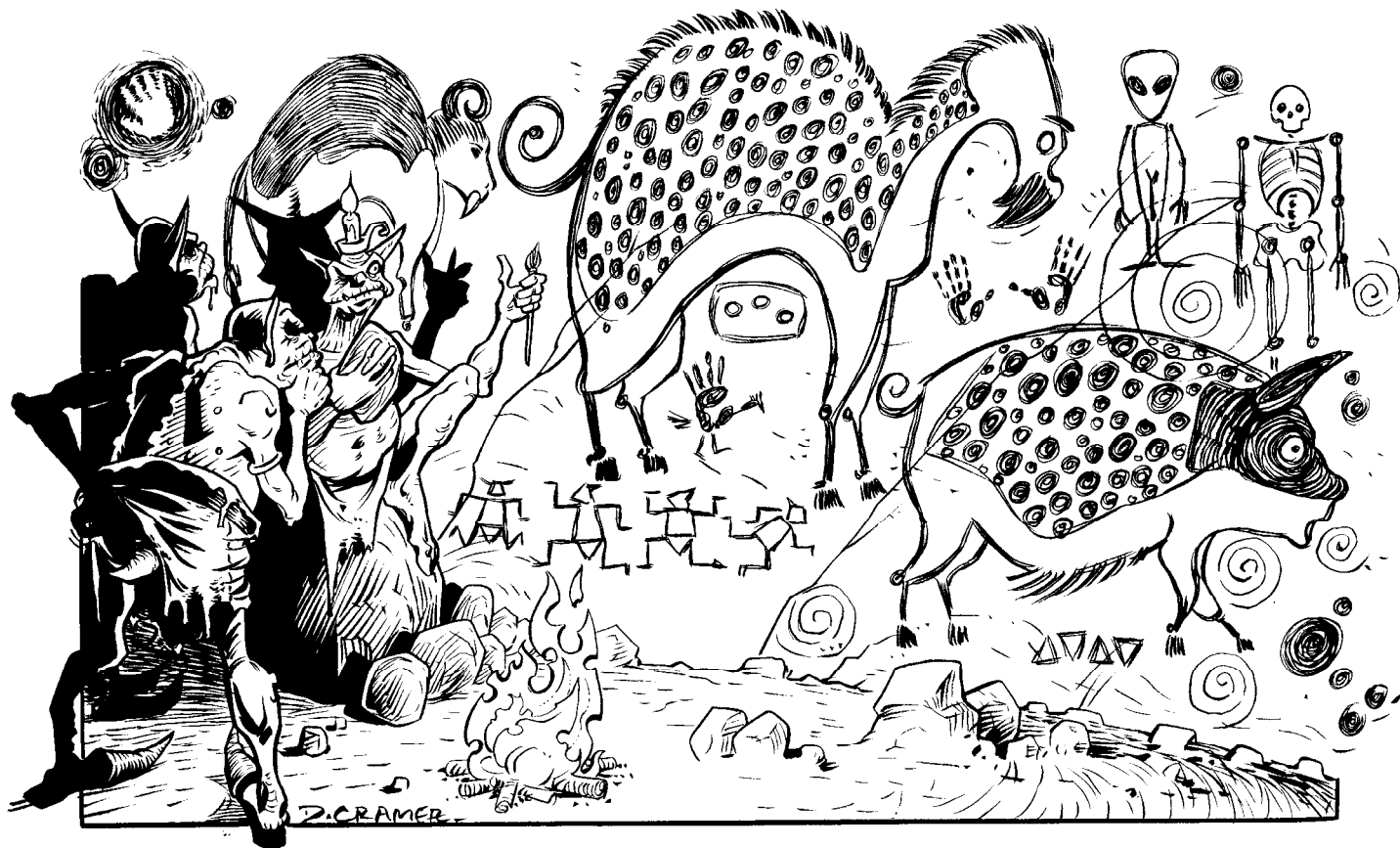
Area 5. Shaman

This area is empty if no player chose to create a shaman character. If there is a PC shaman, he (or she) can claim this room, assigning any acolyte to the small alcove off the passage leading here. The walls are covered with bizarre charcoal drawings (made by past shamans when in dream states inspired by either Bargrivyek or **fishhead** beer). A straw pallet and stone bowl complete the furnishings.

Since shamans are respected and feared, other goblins-even an elite warrior or the Mogur-approach this place with caution.

Area 6. The Flint Works

At this point, the passageway has been widened by scraping away the north wall, creating a long, thin room. The exposed wall is a seam of high-quality flint, used by the goblin tribe for spear heads, stone knives, scrapers, and any other cutting tool. From time to time, the supply of loose flints suitable for shaping runs low and the goblins mine away more of the wall until they have a supply adequate for





another year's use. Anyone striking the walls here with any kind of iron or steel draws a spark, raising both a fire hazard and a useful potential trap.

Area 7. Watch Post

This small room serves as a guardroom to protect the side door from unauthorized incursions and as a staging ground for raids. Three to five goblins are posted here, one a designated runner whose task is to flee down to the main chamber (room 1) and raise the alarm in case of trouble. Usually, though, the warriors stationed here while away the nights working to get sharper points on their spear-tips, engaging in mock-combats to hone their fighting skills, gambling with dice made out of animal bones, or simply talking the night away.

Area 8. The Side Door (East Entrance)

Partially shielded from view outside by a screen of thorn trees, this cave mouth is about 8 feet wide and 6 feet high. The angle is such that direct sunlight rarely shines in, enabling goblins to see perfectly well even if they stand just inside the entrance. The goblins know that their comings and goings through the main entrance (area 15) are sometimes watched by carrion crows and others, so when stealth is important they use this exit to launch a raid. This is also traditionally the route by which bodies are carried out of the lair and up the hill, where they are deposited in the old ruined tower for scavengers. Although the tribe does not remember, this habit dates back to the era when the tower was occupied and the wizard collected dead bodies of all kinds for experiments and reanimation.

Area y. Women's Workroom

An oddly shaped room formed by knocking out the walls of two sets of parallel mineshafts, this place is where the female goblins withdraw when they have work to do that would be ruined by the trampling or jostling that characterizes the large central chamber. Typical tasks relegated to this place include weaving mats or baskets, grinding grass seeds or acorns (depending on the season) into a paste, dressing the kill brought back by the hunters, or chewing leather (shaved bits of animal hide) to soften it.

Area 10. Children's Playroom

When the children of the tribe would be a nuisance underfoot, they are banished here. Most of their time is spent in play (mostly mock battles). A deep well shaft near the back of the chamber allows a cool draft of air to waft up from below, and from time to time an inattentive or unpopular child falls to its death somewhere in the darkness below. While the adults could cover this well-shaft to prevent accidents, they choose not to—goblins are a cruel and practical people who use this method to weed out the overly curious as well as the unlucky.

Area 11. Shelf

Mostly used as storage, in times of need this raised ledge doubles as a refuge and guard post. Raised about 7 feet above the level of the passage floor, it is large enough for a whole goblin patrol to lie flat and ambush unwary trespassers as they pass below. The height advantage has also proved useful in the past to aid in defense against determined intruders; consider characters lying or kneeling on the ledge to have 50% cover, causing attackers from below to suffer a 4 penalty to all attack rolls directed against the defenders on higher ground.

The shelf currently has little in the way of useful equipment, but it does have a coil of rope (60 feet), a pot containing the equivalent of three vials of flammable oil, and a number of empty barrels and crates stolen over the years; if filled with loose stones, these could make effective bombards to tip over onto anyone passing below.

Just past the shelf is the point at which the underground river once emerged. Sealed long ago (any skilled observer can tell that this section of wall is well built but artificial), the "Weeping Wall" is so called because drops of water still seep through and bead on the passage side. The channel through which this stream once flowed clearly runs from this point north and west until it eventually reaches the flooded room (area 16); it looks like a well-worn footpath three to five feet wide and about a foot deep. Anyone breaking through the wall at this point is swept away in the resultant flood, which refills the old channel between here and area 16.

Area 12. Flint Pit

Another excavation left behind by the long-vanished miners, this pit is bell-shaped, being wider at the bottom than the top. Inconveniently located just in the middle of the north fork in the passage, it is about 12 feet deep, with short horizontal shafts or alcoves about 4 feet high, 2 feet wide, and 10-12 feet long running off from the bottom to the northwest, northeast, and southwest. The goblins use this as a watch post, with the guards in the bottom of the pit but quickly climbing up the knobby sides to the top when they hear something approaching. Being gray themselves, goblin's heads peeping up over the brim of the pit can easily be mistaken for just another lump of rock. Depending on the circumstances, the goblins may climb out and attack, hide in the shafts at the bottom until the intruders have passed and then pad along after them, or slip outside and circle around via the side door.

Note that the player characters will be on duty here at the time of the first incursion.

Area 13. Sickroom

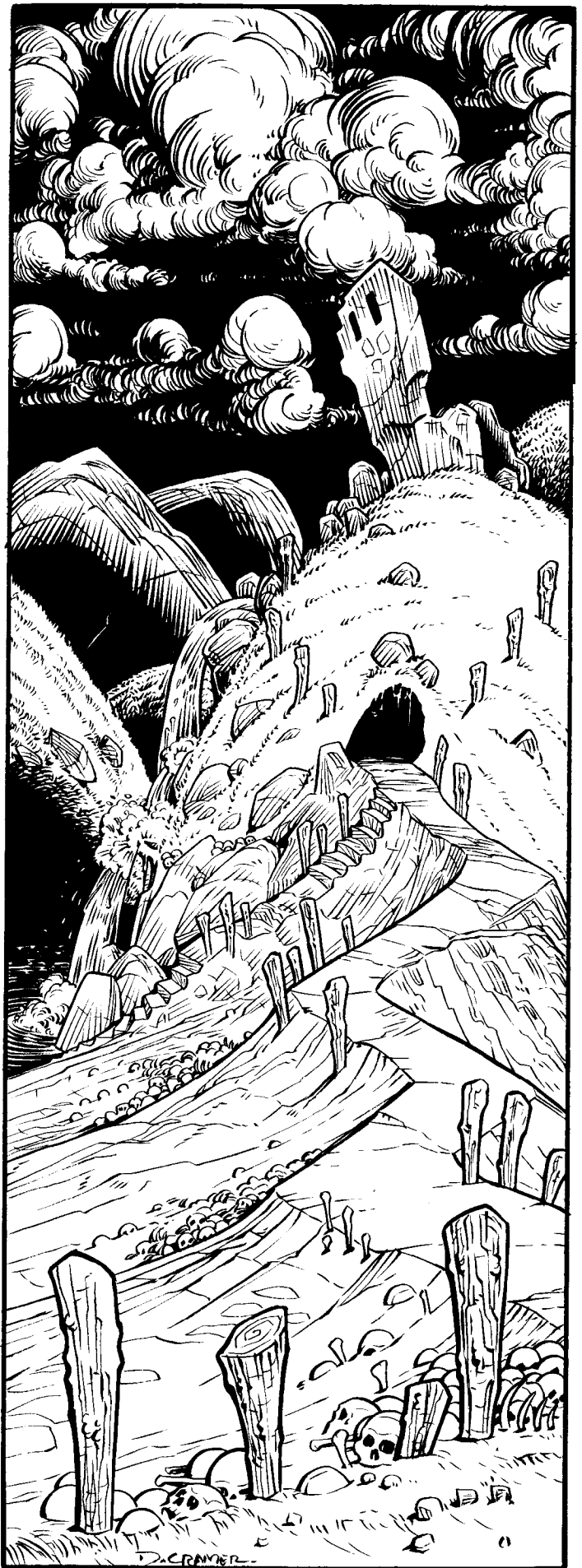
Wounded, sick, or dying goblins are exiled to this out-of-the-way chamber so as to not infect their fellows. Those who recover rejoin the main community in area 1; the rest eventually join the corpses on the hilltop. Goblins do not actively abuse the sick—that would be foolish—but they take such signs of Bargrivyek's displeasure very seriously. A practical folk, they relegate the ill to the bottom of their food chain, meaning that in times of famine these will be the first to starve. A player character goblin might well visit this grim place several times over the course of the adventure, since wounded characters are placed here until they recover, lest the smell of blood attract predators to the heart of the lair.

Area 14. Slave Pen

The tribe's slaves are shackled in this dismal cave, which stinks even by goblin standards. The shackles (two small, one medium, one large) are a tribal treasure from the distant past that keep the slaves hobbled by both ankles even when freed from this room. When here, the slaves are held in place by slipping the shackle over a hook set in the wall overhead.

As noted, the tribe currently has four slaves:

- 1) Two kobolds, Mop and Lug, do general chores (mainly carrying). Captured fair and square on a goblin raid to their lair a half-night's march to the south, they are reconciled to a life of slavery. Clever PCs may draw on the kobolds' labor force in constructing traps once the adventurers' raids begin.
- 2) A blinded dwarf, once an adventurer named Hler Hvitserkson but now a pitiable cringing wreck who goes by the name Grubbfinder. Grubbfinder advises on stonework when the





tribe needs to do mining but otherwise is kept busy with the most menial of tasks, which he performs with pathetic eagerness for the smallest scraps of food; he has lived so long only because of the amusement his sad condition inspires in the dwarf-hating goblins.

- 3) A lamed **bugbear**, Hrezek, whom the tribe only captured by lucky chance, finding him lying weak and weaponless with a broken leg in a pit trap they'd set for a boar. Deciding not to kill him, they have since found his powerful strength (Str 16!) of great practical use in fetching and carrying (a sight that invariably fills the goblins with a sense of superiority). Unlike the kobolds and the dwarf, Hrezek is an unwilling slave who on more than one occasion has lashed out and attempted to crush or throttle one of his captors, so they watch him carefully.

Note that if the NPC adventurers stumble upon this room in their explorations of the caves, they rescue the dwarf, free the kobolds, and kill the bugbear, "putting it out of its misery" in a brief but bloody struggle.

Area 15. Main Entrance (South Door)

This wide, open cave mouth is brightly lit throughout most of the daylight hours (hence the goblin guards' propensity for keeping watch from further back in the tunnel, in the pit at area 12). The entrance is obvious from outside, and indeed, from some distance away, it appears as a hollow eye below the crown of the hill. A path leads down the hill to join the road, and another winds its way around the hill to the pond beside the waterfall on its western side. Unlike the rest of the cave complex, the floor here is sandy, and the walls and roof are composed of a sandstone outcropping. From time to time, an animal attempts to lair here, invariably ending up in the goblins' cooking pot. Travelers bedding down here for the evening are summarily ambushed, usually preceded by a few hidden goblin scouts who creep out the side door and sneak around.

Note that the NPC adventurers enter here on their first foray into the goblin caves.

Area 16. Flooded Room

This room, fed by underground streams, serves as a water source for all goblins in the complex. It also doubles as the tribe's privy, the goblins trusting to the current to keep the water drinkable (by goblin standards, anyway). The water beyond the shelf near the entrance is between 8 and 10 feet deep—deep enough to drown those who don't know how to swim (including the player characters). All the goblins know of the submerged shelf along the north wall; the water is only a foot deep here and can be easily waded. Around the corner, the narrow shelf rises to just above water level and hugs the east wall of the passage, allowing access to area 17.

Area 17. The Lower Passage

Not far past the flooded room the passage splits, with one branch sloping down—still accompanied by the little subterranean river—and the other on the far side sloping up into the darkness. The ledge meanders on around the bend, ending only when the river vanishes into the rock once more. A knotted rope 60 feet long lies coiled at the end of the passage, securely tied to a stout peg driven into the stone floor. This can be used to safely navigate the secret entrance, the **underwater** tunnel between this spot and area 19.

Area 18. The Upper Passage

The dry passage slopes gradually upward from the little underground river, twisting and turning until it ends in a dry, bare room. If the tribe has a witch doctor (which is only the case if a player chooses one as his or her player character), then this will be his or her domain. In that case, a sleeping pallet of some sort and a few personal items may be present; otherwise, the room is empty. The floor, however, is covered with pentagrams, protective circles, and other arcane insignia incised into the stone—remnants of the far-off days when Master Blaise the wizard used this chamber to test spells and summonings. A dark aura lingers still, causing the skin on the back of characters' necks to prickle and for them to imagine movement out of the corners out of their eyes. Naturally, any goblin who is not a witch doctor avoids this place like the plague.



Area 19. Above the Waterfall

This secret entrance to the goblin lair is unusually well hidden. It cannot be seen at all from the ground, due to the overhanging lip of the waterfall that empties into the small lake (actually little more than a pond) on the west side of the hill. While adventurers may search behind the waterfall for a cave, few will think to look above it, especially since the cave entrance is visible neither from above nor below. For those who make the 40-foot climb, they see what seems a small simple cave with a fast stream flowing through it.

The secret entrance is the underground river itself: The channel is too narrow for anything larger than a goblin, elf, or slender human to fit through, and the current is too strong to swim against in such a constricted space. The goblins navigate the submerged passage by means of the knotted rope kept at the other end, in area 17. When the rope is lowered into the water, it reaches to just the other side of the submerged channel. A goblin who ties himself to the end of the rope can be hauled through by his fellows, or he can pull himself hand over hand via the rope. If the rope is absent, this entrance is essentially impassable (short of magic being used). The Yar-Gocks have been careful on the whole to avoid being seen when they come and go via this route, approaching the cave from the hill top and rarely using the passage in large numbers.

Area 20. 'The Secret Door'

The whole tribe knows of this well-hidden secret door in the west wall of the communal room, the location of which is handed down by ancient tradition among the tribe. When opened, it reveals stairs curling down into darkness. The goblins know that the lower levels of Master Blaise's dungeons lie below, but no goblin who has ventured down the stairs has ever returned. For this excellent reason, no Yar-Gock goes this way except under the direst of circumstances. It might occur to the players to have a goblin character be seen disappearing through the secret door and down the stairs in order to lure invading adventurers into pursuing the PC to their doom, but the tribe is more likely to simply leave the door ajar and hide when they hear attackers approaching. For what lies at the bottom of the steps, see room 21 on the Vault Level Map.

Traps and Tricks

It won't take long for the player character goblins in the first encounter to learn that they're no match for the adventurers in a fair fight. The solution, of course, is not to fight fair. It should not be necessary for the DM to point this out, but if the PCs are getting creamed repeatedly by the superior armor, weaponry, and spell power of the intruders, give them subtle hints that this is no way to win a war. The PCs have numbers on their side, plus superior knowledge of the battleground, plus the advantages of having essentially a defensive position. Guerrilla actions, rather than stand-up fights, are the key to their survival. Save the sudden massed charges for the coup de grace, after hit-and-run attacks and clever use of traps have softened up the foe.

Eventually, the PCs should tumble to the idea that traps are a good way to discourage and bloody their opponents. Being goblins, the player characters have limited resources from which to construct traps as well as limited time once the adventurer raids begin. Being lazy as a whole, the tribe has not constructed many useful traps ahead of time. Allow the characters to construct any trap they can think of from available materials. Successful traps may kill, injure, imprison, or distract one or more of the invaders, possibly forcing them to retreat.

The main factors in constructing a trap are resources and time, but the DM must also give consideration to the relative intelligence of the goblins. Rather than try to force the players to limit their own thinking when designing traps, the sections below provide a framework for how successful the traps are once completed and implemented.

First, the players must design a trap, using the resources already available to their characters (including items in the goblin caves, plus anything they might scavenge from outside or as "treasure" from defeated enemies after the beginning of the adventure). Allow the players to set up any kind of trap they can think of, as long as they use only the resources at hand. Then, the DM must assess the trap and determine its complexity and time factors from the descriptions below.

Low Complexity

For goblins, the simplest traps are the best. Traps with a low complexity include those that need no



mechanical activity to operate, few parts, and little construction. Examples include covered pit traps (essentially holes in the floor covered with flimsy camouflage), deadfalls triggered by hand (like dumping a barrel-load of stones or water on the invaders from above), or spreading noxious or dangerous substances in an area beforehand (like fish sauce or oil).

Traps with a low complexity have a rather reasonable chance of succeeding, even though they have been constructed by goblins. A thief gains no benefit to a Find Traps check when such is applicable. On the other hand, these kinds of traps shouldn't malfunction.

Medium Complexity

Medium traps are a little more complicated, and although the players may understand how to design them, the goblins themselves are going to naturally introduce inaccuracies and flaws in the process of construction. Medium complexity traps include those that have simple mechanical motions, or a number of different parts pulled together, or that need a considerable amount of construction to produce. Examples include lining the bottom of a pit with sharp stakes, setting up deadfalls with trip wires, or using a shaman or witch doctor's spell as a distraction.

Traps that get into the medium complexity range start to suffer typical goblin design problems. Whenever a thief character has a chance to detect a trap of this caliber, he or she gains a +15% bonus to the Find Traps score. In addition, there is a 25% chance the trap does not work as designed.

high Complexity

Traps with a lot of complexity have a number of opportunities for malfunctioning or not working at all. These kinds of traps include lots of mechanical activity or numerous parts that must be precisely sized and crafted and carefully assembled. Examples of such traps include spring-loaded or torque traps of any kind (such as a snap-back wooden arm with sharpened spikes), any trap that tries to mechanically create a spark in order to start a fire, or anything that uses ropes, pulleys, or counterweights. Note that it is not just the mechanical processes of the traps that make them difficult for the goblins to successfully employ them; there is

also the matter of hiding the equipment and triggers from the watchful eyes of the adventurers.

Highly complex traps are generally going to have problems. First, they are very hard for the goblins to disguise, so a thief searching where one of these is present gains a +30% bonus to the Find Traps score. Second, there is a 50% chance that the trap doesn't function correctly, if it works at all.

Quick Traps

Quick traps are ones that don't require any exceptional labor beyond gathering existing materials. Creating various deadfalls from existing piles of loose rock or barrels of water, and dumping out oil, caltrops, or fish sauce in a particular location are examples of quick traps. Quick traps should take no longer than one or two hours.

Average Traps

Traps that consume some reasonable amount of time are more common, where a certain amount of preparation or assembly is required to set the trap up. Sharpening stakes to line the bottom of a pit trap, weaving a camouflage cover for a pit, and building a framework out of wood and rope could be considered an average trap in terms of time consumption. Average-length traps usually take 1d6+2 hours to construct.

Time-Consuming Traps

Any trap that requires a great amount of labor, careful crafting with precision tools, or hauling materials from a great distance is going to take a long time to build. This might include trying to dig a pit (especially into the stone through which these caves run), building anything on wheels or that otherwise rolls (goblins haven't quite mastered the art of the circle, yet), or trying to create a cave-in large enough to trap people on the other side. Time-consuming traps require 2d12+10 hours (and occasionally even more, if the DM deems it appropriate) to complete.

Specific Traps

Below are listed a few of the more common traps the players may think up for their goblin characters



to create, along with some of the points that need to be addressed to make them workable.

Pit Trap

Unfortunately, there are only a few pits already in the complex and they are so obvious that no strangers will fall into them without trickery. Player characters may want to prepare coverings for the pits that anyone stepping on would fall through. (Note: Unless well disguised, these will be obviously different from the surrounding stone. NPCs who have seen a pit on one visit will also be understandably suspicious if it has vanished upon their return.) Digging a fresh pit would be a good idea except that the cave complex is made of stone and the goblins have decidedly poor tools; it takes one day for a crew of goblin miners to dig away a single cubic foot. Setting sharpened stakes in the bottom increases the damage by +1d4 per stake the character falling into the pit hits, but it would take a great many stakes to cover the floor of even a smallish pit and be difficult to set them upright in the stone (the best solution is to wedge the stakes in a wooden framework and lower it into the bottom of the pit). Having someone hide in the bottom of a pit to spring out and bash the momentarily stunned person who falls in is a sound plan.

Snare Trap

These are simple to make and would be valuable in throwing an NPC off balance and possibly out of the fight for a few rounds. The chief problems are (1) scarcity of material (the tribe currently has few suitable lengths of rope, one of which is needed if the secret entrance is to be kept viable), (2) lack of motive power (most snares are set outside, where the potential energy from a bent tree can pull the snare taught when the trap is triggered, and (3) difficulty of concealment (most snares will be painfully obvious on the bare stone floor of these caves). The best place to set a snare trap is outside, or at the very least in the sandy entrance (area 15) or from the ledge at area 11, but even here camouflage is still a considerable problem.

Oil Trap

Few sights warm a goblin's heart like seeing someone who's trying to kill him run screaming down a tunnel blazing like a candle. Unfortunately, they have very little oil—only the equivalent of three vials—and no means of replacing this store once it

has been used up. They have no glass vials or other handy containers suitable for throwing, but the female goblins might be able to contrive hollow clay balls after some trial and error that expends one vial's worth of oil. Alternatively, they could just splash the oil on an adventurer (who counts as AC 10, plus Dexterity bonuses, for purposes of such an attack). Setting the oil on fire is no easy matter for a culture without matches. A torch will do it, but it is hard to keep an open flame concealed; sparks from flint and steel catch and burn, but the oil-doused character is unlikely to sit still and wait around for immolation. Luckily, the adventurers are likely to be also carrying torches, and dousing the torch bearer is a simple solution. Flammable oil inflicts 2d6 points of damage per vial the first round and 1d6 points the second round, after which it burns itself out (this damage may be reduced by half if the character immediately drops and rolls). Note that if the goblins can acquire more oil, the areas of the caves with flint outcroppings make ideal spots for self-striking oil puddle traps that ignite anytime someone wearing a lot of metal comes blundering along.

Poison

Poison is a great equalizer, and smearing some on the tips of their stone spears will no doubt occur to some enterprising would-be elite goblin.

Unfortunately, the tribe has no poison at present (it makes the Mogur nervous to have such things in the hands of underlings) nor the means of making any. The only venomous creatures in the area known to the goblins are poisonous snakes (cottonmouths) that live in the marsh to the east of the hill; should any player character undertake a **snake-hunting** expedition in the wetlands, the DM should have fun ad-libbing a hunt-and-be-hunted scene with the goblins poking about for snakes while dodging the (highly territorial) lizard men, perhaps having one of their number being bitten by the very prey they seek. Luckily or unluckily, depending on your point of view, most gnomes have a highly exaggerated idea of the efficacy of natural poisons—a typical snakebite kills a small animal (such as the ones that might make a snake a good meal, say anything up to the size of a rabbit). A human or humanoid-sized target, however, simply becomes very ill 1d6 turns after being poisoned, essentially helpless for 24 hours or so and then at half Strength for a day. A single snake provides enough poison to



coat one spear head; a failed saving throw on behalf of the target indicates that the poison takes effect.

Fish Sauce

As previously noted, the Yar-Gock have lost the art of making fishhead beer. However, in their attempts to re-create the recipe, they accidentally produced a noxious gunk composed of rotting fish juices that stinks to high heaven even by goblin standards. This "fish sauce" smells so bad that **any** human or demi-human drenched in it must roll a Constitution check with a 4 penalty or be rendered helpless for 1d10 rounds, choking and retching through sheer nausea. They have one and a half pots of this made up at the point the adventure begins (the other half has been eaten already); it takes a month to "season" properly, so they do not have time to make more in the course of the adventure (although they should not know that, and setting a few kegs of the stuff on to age is a good idea that impresses other goblins when it comes time to choose new leaders). Note that the Mogur Praek is fond of his fish sauce and vetoes any suggestion to use it as a weapon, making this trap available only after his demise.

Light Douser

Perhaps the most effective traps the goblins can devise are those that snuff out whatever light source(s) the intruders are using. While some of the adventurers are demihumans with infravision, depriving their human companions of the ability to see disrupts party cohesion among the NPCs. The simplest effective light dousers are water or sand thrown onto torches, but inventive player characters will no doubt come up with many variants on the basic idea. Even magical light can be covered with mud (which the Yar-Gocks have plenty of) or paint (which they'd have to steal or make). Remember that darkness is the great equalizer so far as goblins are concerned. Not only does it give them a "home team" advantage given their familiarity with the lair, but it eliminates any penalty from fighting in bright lights, imposing a penalty on their enemies instead.

Scenarios: Goblintown and Beyond

The adventure begins when the player character goblins learn of the threat posed to their tribe by a

group of adventurers recently arrived in the area. These NPCs have decided to explore the old ruins up on the hill, having been drawn to the area by rumors of the wizard's lost treasure. They have already wiped out a goblin tribe a day's journey to the west on their last mission and are familiar with goblin ways and weaknesses. Making the village of Ardeche their base, they get an earful of tales of goblin atrocities from the villagers, leading them to vow to "eliminate the goblin threat" before they leave. They spend several days scouting out the area (including a visit to the ruined tower atop the hill), posting notices to attract the attention of potential henchmen and allies.

The first the goblins hear of them is when one foraging goblin warrior comes across one such poster and brings it home as a curiosity (the tribe is, of course, illiterate, with the exception of any NPC witch doctor).

Hard on the heels of this discovery comes a more serious warning in the form of two survivors from the decimated neighboring tribe. They claim to have been out hunting at the time of the attack, only to return home and find their people slaughtered (in fact, **these** two cowards ran away from the fight, only creeping back later when it **was** safe). They ask to **join** the Yar-Gocks; if refused, they head north to try their luck with another tribe. They can provide few details of the attackers, other than "There was a *dwarf* among them!"

The Mogur considers sending a third of his own tribe to colonize the other caves but ultimately rejects the idea, since it would remove them from his direct control (Praek is not a particularly clever goblin, but he does understand power).

The final sign of trouble, which causes the Mogur to summon the tribe to council, is the loss of a hunting party. Five goblin warriors fail to return at the expected time, and sunrise finds them still missing. The Mogur orders the player characters to find out what's holding them up (and delaying his dinner). The PCs find their headless bodies beside the pond at the bottom of the hill. From the injuries, it appears they fought a battle with several well-armed foes who took the heads afterward as trophies. The tracks of several people—one of them wearing distinctive iron-shod boots (a noted dwarven trait)—lead from the battle site back to the road.



Learning this news, the Mogur calls a tribal council that every member of the Yar-Gocks must attend. The Mogur points out that after the last conflicts with the humans some 10 years back, the village elder in the nearby settlement of Ardeche placed a bounty on all goblins, paying 10 silver pieces a head out of the town treasury for these grisly trophies. From time to time a goblin will kill a human caught alone in the woods or on the road, or the humans will kill a goblin who strays too close to town, but there's been no killing on this scale-five at once-for several years. That the attackers killed the whole hunting party without even one of their number falling in turn is a particularly bad sign. Any goblin warrior or other PC may speak up at the council and offer advice. Various responses presented may include ignoring the problem and hoping it will go away, burning down the village in revenge for their slain comrades, sending out war parties to scour the hill and fall upon the guilty parties (whoever they are), and whatever else the player characters may think of. In the end, the Mogur decides to hold tight and see what happens, ordering the guards on the entrances to be especially vigilant for the next few nights. He even orders guards to stand watch during the daylight hours, just in case. The player characters (six goblin warriors drawn from among the PCs, with all the players having at least one character present if at all possible) are the ones ordered to watch the main entrance from the guard station in the flint pit (area 12).

'The First Raid

The NPC adventurers, not ones to let grass grow under their feet, carry out their first raid on the goblin caves the very next day. After watching the area carefully for an hour or so, they enter through main entrance (area 15). Since they must light torches for the human members of the party to see, the goblin guards (the PCs) each have a 1 in 6 chance of being alerted to their presence (adjusted upward if they are actually alert, rather than just waiting out the day at the bottom of the flint pit). Moving quietly, the intruders head up the passage and come to the flint pit. What happens next depends on the player characters' response. If the goblin PCs attack, run the combat. The adventurers are likely to win, due to better equipment and magic. Curious

to find out what the goblin warriors were guarding, the NPCs turn left and discover first the wounded and sick goblins in room 13 (1d3 warriors and 1d4 female goblins), all of whom they kill and behead. Then they backtrack and go the other way, finding the slave pen (room 14). They kill the **bugbear** (he puts up a good fight, but it's hopeless against several armed opponents), free the kobolds and send them packing (they flee toward the main entrance at top speed), and rescue the poor dwarf, taking him with them. Now with an invalid in tow and one or more members possibly wounded in these first battles, they make their way back to the main exit and leave, fighting their way out if necessary; the wizard's area-of-effect spells should guarantee their escape.

If, on the other hand, the goblin guards hide, the adventurers bypass the pit and continue to bear right-PCs who wish may follow them and attempt an ambush from behind. Otherwise, the NPCs check out the Weeping Wall while two of their number climb up to check out the recessed stone shelf (area 11). If still unmolested; they continue to explore, eventually stumbling across first the children in area 10 and then the female goblins in area 9. Being essentially good-guy adventurers, they do not attack obvious noncombatants, but their nerves will be so much on edge by this point that they overreact at the first sign of **hostiles** and begin to slaughter everything goblinish in sight. Thus, a glimpse of twenty or so goblin warriors waiting for them, spears at the ready, in the huge central chamber (area 1) would cause them to start lobbing spells and begin a fighting retreat, killing anything that got in their way.

Player characters who decide to send a runner to warn the goblins to the north that intruders have arrived, and of course to fetch help, will precipitate combat-the NPC scout will hear the messenger leave and the adventurers will shout a battle cry and give chase, trying to kill him with arrows or *magic missiles* before he raises the alarm.

The guards left behind may want to pursue and attack the NPCs from behind at the same point they run into trouble ahead. Or, they may take up a better ambush position atop the shelf near the Weeping Wall (area 11) once the PCs have passed by. Note that there will certainly be casualties among the women and children in this option, as they come boiling out of the side passages (proba-



bly roused by the dying messenger's death scream) just as the adventurers come into sight. Remember that goblins run half as fast as humans, making it highly unlikely that the unlucky runner reaches the central chamber. Once again, the NPC adventurers withdraw, fighting their way out if necessary, if they find themselves badly outnumbered, if they're running low on spells and several of their number are injured, or if they realize they've been cut off from escape.

Whichever of these possible scenarios plays out, on the first raid the NPCs should be able to inflict some damage and then escape. They carry any fallen comrades out with them if at all possible. The purpose of the first raid, from the point of view of the scenario, is to let the player characters know what they're up against: a small, tough core of well-trained adventurers, any one of which is a match for the average goblin. Unless quickly neutralized, they could destroy the entire tribe. This information should stimulate the players to greater efforts in preparation for the second raid.

The Second Raid

The interval between the first and second raids depends on many factors. The NPCs need at least a full day to rest up and memorize spells. If they took a beating, they take an extra day to make sure they recover all hit points and still have a full spell complement before setting out again. If the goblins managed to kill a character, a replacement arrives three days later, attracted by the notices the NPC group posted upon arriving in the area. If several characters died, replacements drawn from the pre-generated characters provided appear at the rate of one every three days. Even if the entire party perished, more NPCs continue to come to the area, drawn by the now widely circulating rumors of lost treasure guarded only by a few goblins.

Once they are ready to move, the NPC band travels to the hill by a roundabout route, swinging up and coming down from the north. Reasoning that the goblins expect them to come again by day and by the same entrance, they wait until night to make their foray, entering by the side door (area 8). Under cover of a clerical silence, they quickly dispatch any guards in area 7. Using an *arrow of direction* they have borrowed from the village elder, they move swiftly and silently through the flint works

(area 6) directly to the Mogur's quarters, stopping only to slay his bodyguard (the elite warriors in area 2) along the way. After killing Mogur Praek and anyone with him at the time (probably just his harem) and plundering the tribal treasury, they go back the way they came, leaving the tribe leaderless and in chaos when the slaughter is discovered a few hours later.

The DM should play out the combats with the watchers, elite guards, and Mogur, alone before the game session or by assigning players the various roles. If the adventuring team emerges from the night's work virtually unscathed, they take a brief detour on the way out to approach the main chamber (area 1), peppering the unsuspecting goblins therein with missile fire and spells from the entrance while the dwarf charges in and chops away at any goblins in the northeast corner. Should the goblins break and scatter, the NPCs kill as many as possible before withdrawing in good order back the way they came. If the goblins give a good account of themselves, either pulling together (multiple goblins on a single NPC target) or falling back to regroup, the NPCs break off the attack and flee, throwing caltrops (which can later be used to good effect by the goblins) to discourage pursuit (that, and a hail of arrows when anyone comes too close).

Again, the details of the raid must be adjusted depending on player character preparations and reactions. The NPC adventurers have planned their raid carefully and fall upon their chosen targets with swords flashing and spells blazing; the side door guards, elite warriors, and Mogur himself all have very slim odds of surviving. Where things get interesting is with the possible melee in the main room (area 1). Good tactics may lure the adventurers in too deeply or arrange for goblins to circle around and bar their way out or tempt them into disaster via the secret door (area 20). Which of these and other options actually play out, and their ultimate result, depends entirely on the players. The most likely outcome is a disorganized, leaderless tribe, leaving the player characters as the natural ones to step into the breach. The chief variable is how many normal goblins are left for them to organize for the final stage of the siege—do only a handful survive, or is the tribe's fighting strength trimmed but still basically intact?



The Third Raid

Once again, the interval between the second and third raid depends on many factors. How badly did the NPCs get chewed up in their attempt to assassinate the goblin leaders? Did any NPC get swarmed by a mob of goblins and killed? If too badly mauled, the NPCs cannot make it back to the safety of town but drag their fallen friends to a temporary camp in the ruined foundations of the tower atop the hill—an ideal spot for the player characters to attack them while they're low on spells and hit points. It is more likely, though, that the adventurers escape more or less unscathed, bearing away the Mogur's head to stick on a pike outside the inn back in Ardeche.

Assume that the NPCs need at least a day or two to recover from their injuries and memorize spells—longer, if they need to replace a fallen party member. That gives the PCs only a short time to prepare for the third and probably final raid. This time the adventurers come in armed with heavy guns (at least one web and possibly even a *fireball*). Their goal is to kill every last goblin or at the least drive them from the lair (those who flee are not pursued, but all who remain are slain). To make matters worse, or so they think, the tribe should now be leaderless, unable to plan any coordinated defense.

Here's where the player characters step in. In the absence of a Mogur or any elite warriors to succeed him, all the surviving goblin warriors have an equal voice in planning what the tribe should do next; eventually a natural leader or council emerges. That is the goblin way and, player characters being player characters, there is little doubt that the PCs now emerge as the dominant voices in preparing for the final stage of the struggle. If they succeed, the tribe survives. If they fail, the goblins are doomed. Allow the characters to make any sort of plan they like, then judge the feasibility of it. Here are a few of the more obvious plans they might come up with:

- Straight-up fights are the worst option, not only unimaginative but doomed to failure. The NPCs use their superior armor, weaponry, and spell power to massacre their goblin foes.
- Ambushing the adventurers, either on the road between the village and the hill or in their camp

atop the hill itself, is risky but may work, especially if the goblins merely sting the now-cocky adventurers and then run away rather than close for a full-scale melee in the open.

- Adopting a purely defensive position in the caves only succeeds if the characters place traps cleverly and keep falling back to lure the attackers into exposed positions. Alert lookouts and quick communication between various guard posts is also essential in any successful defense of the goblin warren.
- Recruiting more goblins, while a good idea, is difficult just now; few rats will climb on a sinking ship. However, the nearest tribe (now that the one to the west has been wiped out), a day's journey to the north, can be persuaded to take in refugees—their status is low, especially at first, but it beats being carved up by adventurers out for blood.
- Enlisting nongoblin aid is difficult, but the DM may want to reward PC ingenuity in coming up with the idea. The beings who live in the dungeon below them are difficult to contact (see "The Vault Level") and more likely to slay intruders on sight than wait to listen to what they have to say. The lizard men in the marsh to the east are inimical to humans and demihumans, but they have no love of goblins either and communication is a problem. Finally, the dragon who lives in the area prefers the quiet life and probably incinerates any goblin who ventures anywhere near his lair (think of it as trying to do a high-pressure sales pitch against someone holding a loaded Tommy gun). PCs who manage to pull off an unlikely alliance should reap the full benefits of their daring move.
- Abandoning the caves altogether is risky but may prove the only option. Should the characters try a mass migration, the DM should feel free to have them be bedeviled by various monsters and predators the whole way—bad news travels fast, and goblins in the open are vulnerable to all kinds of attacks. A small band of warriors should be able to use their hunting skills to lay low, move fast, and get through with only a loss or two; a group of women and children unused to travel is another matter. Lacking the instinct of when to run and when to hide causes lots of casualties—expect losses of anywhere between 30% and 50%.



- Hiding within the caves and somehow hoping the adventurers won't find them is problematic at best: these NPCs are good at what they do and will not overlook obvious clues. Still, there are a number of nooks and crannies where a few goblins could elude notice so, if the tribe is already decimated, it might be possible to convince the adventurers that their work is already done. Note that the NPCs have not found the secret entrance in area 19—they discovered the cave at the top of the waterfall and the fact that goblins sometimes come and go there but not the underwater passage connecting it with area 17. Leaving some false hint of which way the escaping goblins went—for example, leaving the secret door to the next level ajar—adds verisimilitude to the deception, increasing its chance of success.

Once the raid comes, the adventurers are quick and ruthless. Drawing on their previous knowledge of the caves, they let themselves be seen by the side door, but this is a mere feint; their actual approach is through the main entrance. They move quickly and smoothly, like a well-trained commando squad on a search-and-destroy mission, with the emphasis on “destroy.” Play out this part of the scenario, letting the chips fall as they may. Give the NPCs and the PCs alike every fair break. If the adventurers manage to wipe out the PCs, proceed to the second adventure. If the goblins defeat and repel or destroy the adventurers, congratulate them heartily and ask what they intend to do next. Obvious recourses include relocating, recruiting more goblins, and skulking about. If they cry “Revenge!” proceed to the next section.

Turnabout Is Fair Play: Raiding the Village

At some point it may occur to the player characters that they are under a disadvantage so long as their foes keep getting reinforcements while they don't. Once word has gone out of adventurer employment and rumors of lost treasure somewhere on or in the hill, NPC adventurers continue to gravitate to the area. The only way for the player characters to halt this is to destroy the inn in the village of Ardeche—the place where the various NPCs have been meet-

ing. Once the rendezvous spot is gone, the recruitment ceases and the goblins have only the adventurers already on the scene to deal with.

Raiding the town is a big job, especially given the losses the goblins have already incurred. Here's where possible alliances may play a big part. While neither the northern goblin tribe nor the lizard men have any interest in helping the Yar-Gocks defend their lair, both would enjoy a good old-fashioned raid—the prospect of mayhem, vengeance, and loot being irresistible. The dragon could destroy the entire village without hardly blinking but is unlikely to do so without a *very* good reason—villagers mean livestock, which translates into ready food for a big predator like the dragon. Only if somehow convinced that the villagers plot against his life and treasure would the wyrm swoop down from his lair and incinerate the place.

The results of a village raid depend on many factors—such as how many goblin warriors remain of the Yar-Gocks, how many the neighboring tribe send (up to twenty normal warriors, plus another five elite warrior wolf-riders), and how many lizard men join the raid (2d10–5). The presence of adventurers and the role they play in the town's defense is also key: they may either form a tough, mobile core that rushes from hot spot to hot spot or they may spread out to stiffen up the defenses overall. How much warning do the townspeople have that trouble is on the way? At night a goblin raiding party can, with luck, get right up among the buildings before the townspeople know their danger, whereas during the daytime (when goblins are at a disadvantage in combat anyway) there are people out in the field who see the approaching goblins from a long way off and spread the alarm (again, remember that humans run twice as fast as goblins). On the other hand, lizard men are diurnal and do not participate in a nighttime raid. Note that goblins can tolerate muted daylight, such as on an overcast or rainy day, but waiting for ideal weather may not be an option.

All the Yar-Gock goblins have a fair idea of the town's layout, as hunting parties sometimes forage this far, especially in times of famine, stealing a pig or chickens from the outlying farms. They only have a vague idea of what the various buildings are used for, but every goblin notices the inn because of the goblin heads on stakes set up in its courtyard. If the raid takes place anytime before midnight, they



also hear sounds of drinking, singing, shouts, and laughter from the inn's common room. When describing buildings and answering player questions, remember that goblin culture is completely unlike human culture; have fun playing up the strangeness of folks who have lots of buildings for apparently the same purpose (houses, one per family) rather than all sleeping together goblin-style, who keep both food and not-food animals (pigs, cows, chickens vs. horses, cats, dogs), who like to live above ground rather than under it like sensible folks, and so forth.

One of the key points behind the whole raid is whether or not the PCs recognize their true **target**—the inn—and, if so, whether they succeed in destroying it. A good tactic would be to create a diversion or distraction at one end of town or (even better) some distance off, to lure any adventurers and most of the able-bodied men out of the way when they attack—firing an outlying farmhouse or barn is a good example. Even if the goblins simply sweep into town and attack, the cries of their first victims and shouts of the goblin warriors (whatever the PCs do, it's asking too much of their fellow goblins to attack in silence; impose a morale penalty of anything up to 4 unless they whoop it up) alert the townspeople to their danger. Consult the town key below and play out the various skirmishes one by one as the locals struggle to organize and throw back the unexpected attack. Naturally, the adventurers do their best to defend their hosts. . . .

Ultimately, the player characters' success or failure here determines the outcome of this stage of the campaign. Although they don't know it, they have to walk a fine line; Too much is just as bad as too little. Failure to eliminate the adventurers or burn down the inn causes the village elder to double the bounty he'd placed on goblin heads. Pyrrhic victories are certainly possible: killing too many non-combatants stirs up the wrath of neighboring villages, who call on the local lord, should the DM wish to develop this possibility. **Fearing** a humanoid uprising, he sends troops **into** the area to put down the "marauding goblin hordes" and insure the safety of his subjects, withdrawing only when the goblins are extinct or expelled. The best result for the PCs means the deaths or disabling of the NPCs and the destruction of the inn, ending the current threat and establishing a new equilibrium with themselves as the new rulers of the tribe.

The Surrounding Area

At some point during the adventure, the player characters are going to come out of the dungeon and express curiosity about the surrounding countryside. Here's a brief description of the area as the goblins know it; the DM should feel free to elaborate or make substitutions as he or she sees fit.

The hill

The site of the dungeon is a solitary knoll rising from the edge of the marsh, surrounded by trees and covered with scrub and brambles except for the top third, which is bare grass studded with wildflowers (primarily clover). The foundations and fallen stones from the wizard's tower crown the knoll. The knoll is honeycombed with caves, only the uppermost of which are inhabited by or known to the goblins. Few animals live here other than rabbits, voles, and ferrets, but the hilltop is home to many butterflies by day (which are ignored by the goblins because of their bitter taste), and crickets and fireflies by night.

The Pond

This small lake is fed by the underground river that spills out of the goblin caves in a 30-foot waterfall, draining in turn into the marsh. Its rather murky waters are full of fish (catfish, gar, bass, sunfish, perch) and other pond life such as mussels, turtles, crawdads, waterbugs, frogs, while the reeds along its banks are thick with birds (ducks, herons, swallows, red-winged blackbirds) and insects (mainly mosquitoes and dragonflies). A few huge snapping turtles and the occasional dwarf crocodile are the most dangerous animals here.

The Marsh

Impassable by any land-bound creature, these flooded fields of streams, standing water, and hummocks of reeds and tall standing grasses are home to a tribe of lizard men who jealously defend their territory against all intruders. The lizard folk have a simple lair on a low mound deep in the marsh, connected by a muddy trail along the stream to the dungeon. Many snakes, birds, frogs, bugs, leeches, and water mammals such as muskrats live here; the



small, agile crocodiles are the top of the animal food chain. Note that the water is brackish and warm (a legacy of magical runoff from long-forgotten experiments by the wizard who once lived atop the hill), resulting in frequent fog.

Forest

The area around the hill to the north, south, and west is primarily woods-not dark primeval forests (those all burned down in the wizard's time centuries ago-a matter of a fire elemental summoning that went awry), but thickets and copses. The woods are full of wildlife and game: deer, squirrels, birds, and wild pigs. The displacer beast is the chief predator here, cautious and deadly.

Fields

Some tilled, some filled only with weeds and grasses, these are used by the villagers of Ardeche. The meadows are home to rabbits, field mice, moles, and small birds; the tilled fields harbor many of the same creatures (including crows) when people are not about. Villagers bring their livestock to graze in the meadows by day but are usually careful to be gone before dark, when the goblins come out. Normally this would be prime wolf territory, but the pack of blink dogs chased them all away some time back.

Wandering Monsters

Any of the following dangerous animals may be encountered (1 in 6 chance) when conditions are right; check once per evening (or day) for each encounter when characters are moving through the appropriate terrain.

Displacer Beast

This solitary female wandered down out of the hills a few years ago and claimed the woods as her hunting ground. Still young, she has avoided the blink dogs by hunting primarily at night. A fearsome foe, she prefers to kill or subdue a single target and bear it away to her lair deep in the woods, fleeing if her would-be prey puts up too strong a fight. A good climber, she often takes to the trees and usually sleeps aloft on branches. She has killed quite a few goblins and one or two villagers in her time. Not

above eating carrion, she is the chief devourer of goblin dead. If not slain by PCs or adventurers, she attracts a mate within another year and raises a litter of displacer-kits, significantly increasing her territory to feed all the new mouths.

Displacer Beast: AC 4; MV 15; HD 6; hp 24; THACO 15; #AT 2; Dmg 2d4/2d4 (ridged tentacles); SD displacement (-2 penalty to opponents' attack rolls), saving throws as 12th-level fighter (plus +2 bonus to rolls); SZ L (8' long); ML elite (13); Int semi (4); AL LE.

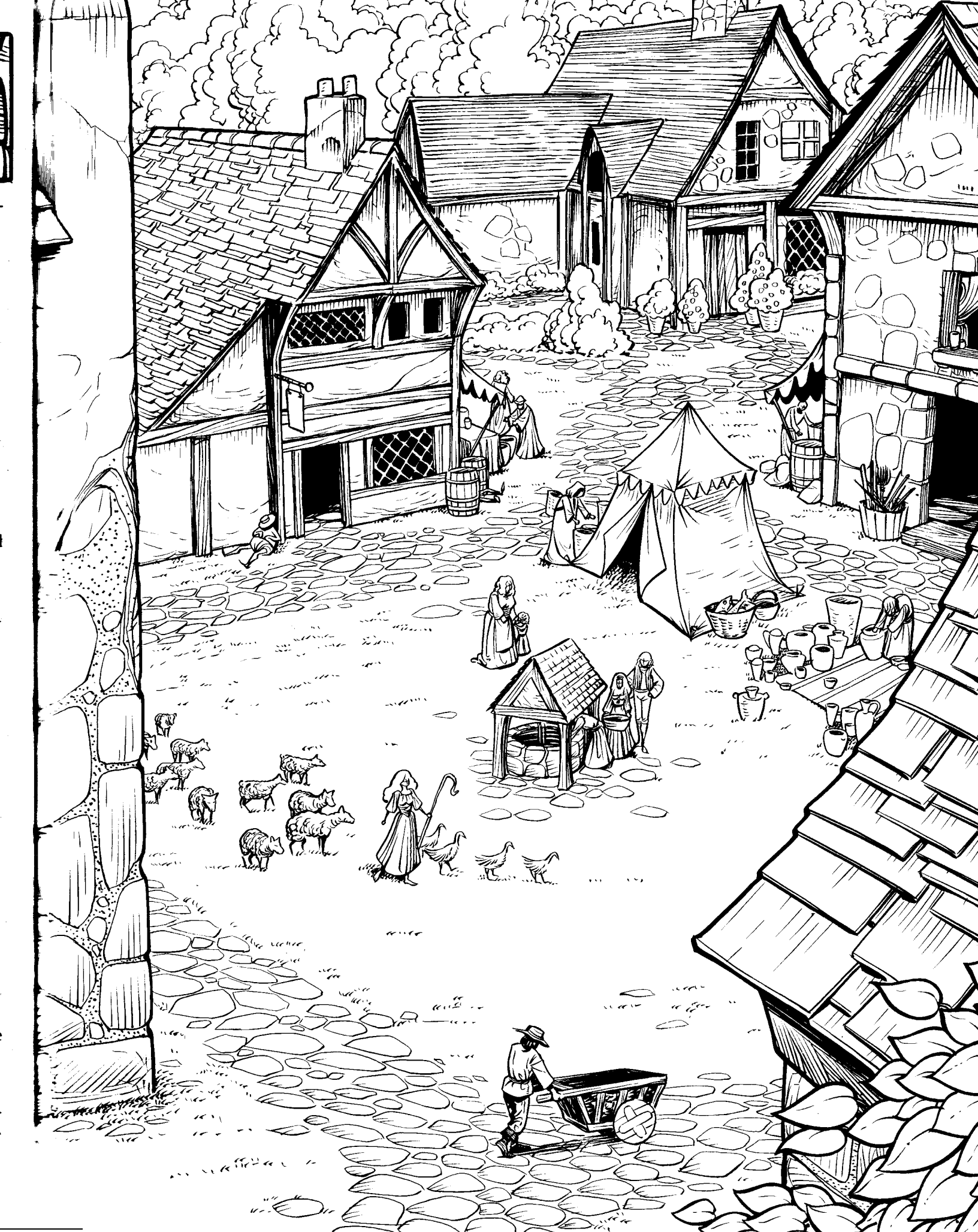
Blink Dogs

This small pack began when a blink dog pet escaped from her cruel master some 20 years ago and mated with a wild dog. Their descendants bred true and have thrived in the area since, feeding mainly on small animals (rabbits, rodents). On the whole, they keep their distance from the townsfolk, who have tried to catch and tame one of their number from time to time. They hate and fear the displacer beast, but she has proven too wily a foe for them to swarm and bring down. For the most part, they hunt in the daytime and prefer the meadows to the woods.

Blink Dogs (5): AC 5; MV 12; HD 4; hp 21, 14, 12, 10, 8; THACO 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (bite); SA *blink*; SD *blink*; SZ M (4' long); ML steady (11); Int average (8-9); AL LG.

Crocodile

The brackish freshwater marsh to the east of the hill is home not only to the lizard men but to a species of dwarf crocodile that is more active, agile, and slightly more intelligent than its larger, more common kin. On occasion these crocs swim up the creek as far as the pond to forage. They can hunt on land as well as water but favor the latter. Their preferred method of attack is to lunge out at a target from hiding and drag it to the bottom to drown. They rarely attack prey that seems likely to fight back, preferring to target stragglers and unwary animals that come down to the water to drink. Unless disturbed, they are usually active only during the day.





Crocodile: AC 6; MV 9, swim 15; HD 2; hp 10 (average); THACO 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (bite) or 1d8 (tail slap); SA surprise (50% chance); SZ M (4'-6' long); ML steady (11); Int semi (2); AL N.

Giant Owl

One of the most frightening monsters in the area, this enormous bird is feared because it strikes silently and swiftly and few of its intended victims are ever seen again. This particular specimen nests some way off, in the hills to the north, and only visits this area once every week or so-luckily for the goblins, since it is big enough and strong enough to carry off one of their number when the opportunity presents itself. It is only encountered at night.

Giant Owl: AC 6; MV 3, fly 18 (C); HD 4; hp 26; THACO 17; #AT 3; Dmg 2d4/2d4/1d4+1 (talon/talon/beak); SA surprise (5-in-6 chance); SW -3 attack penalty in daylight; SZ M (10' wingspan); ML steady (12); Int very (11); AL N.

Weather

This section is entirely optional, intended only for DMs who like to include such touches for added flavor. The default season for this adventure is autumn, although the DM can change this. Note that a winter season means shorter days, longer nights, and less food (most goblins who starve do so in the wintertime); on the other hand, summer means short nights, long days, and more food. Roll each day and again each night on the following table to determine the prevailing weather (note also that summer has more sun and less rain, and adjust accordingly):

1d10 result

1-2	clear and cool
3-4	partly cloudy, warm
5-6	fog
7	overcast, windy, occasional sprinkles
8	overcast, showers
9	rain (downpour)
10	rain (thunderstorm)

The prevailing winds are out of the west, but these sometimes shift to the north (colder weather) or south (warmer, wetter weather); fog results

when the wind dies down or on those rare occasions where it eddies in from the east.

Weather affects the adventure in many ways; a storm can cause the adventurers to delay a raid or cover the goblins' approach when they set out to raid the village. A recent storm leaves behind a lot of mud so that everything that passes makes obvious tracks. Fog reduces visibility but negates the daylight penalties goblins suffer from sunlight, as do overcast and rainy days.

Village of Ardeche

Area 1. Village Green

This pleasant green field serves as pasturage for villagers with animals (cows, horses, sheep, and goats), each using the field in rotation. Twice a month (weekly during harvest season), the village market takes place here, with each farmer displaying wares for sale or trade from the back of a cart. At nighttime, it is simply an empty grassy field. The four buildings around which village life centers—the inn, the grange, the village store, and the church—all face the green.

Area 2. The Bnn: "The One-eyed Cat"

The One-Eyed Cat has stood on this spot for at least a century, since the previous inn burned down. Only the foundations and a slightly damaged sign remained from The Cat and Canary, prompting the name change. Innkeeper Mobley is a flabby, fussy man; if confronted with disaster he erupts in frenzied panic that ironically gives him the same combat bonuses as a berserker (two attacks per round *or* +2 bonus to one attack). Otherwise, he is a 0-level human (THACO 20, 5 hp, Dmg 1d6 [club], Con 16).

Mobley runs the inn by himself, a job that sometimes runs him off his feet. He serves simple food at cheap prices (50% of Player's *Handbook* suggested prices); a private bed with a simple cot here costs only 3 sp per night or 15 sp by the week. The inn has two floors and a basement. The ground floor contains the common room (the center of activity) with its great hearth, tables, chairs, and bar, plus the kitchen, a private meeting room, and Mobley's room all off to the side. The upper floor contains the guest rooms: four on the main floor and one on each wing; these rooms can accommodate up to



four patrons each. The small stone-lined basement is used for food storage and as a beer cellar. Three barrels here hold small beer, the house brew, and “the good stuff,” respectively (costing a copper, 3 cp, or 1 sp per mug, respectively), plus a keg of ale and two dozen bottles of drinkable wine.

Mobley himself has a small stash of money saved up—5 gp, 27 sp, and 10 cp, the gleanings from 20 years’ hard work. This is hidden in his room in an old chamber pot on the closet shelf. More promising are the adventurers’ separate hoards, each hidden in his or her own quarters. Pike and Cole share a room (the one in the west wing), as do Whisper and Mim (the one in the east wing); Nagel has his own room in the middle at the top of the stairs. Pike and Cole have pooled their wealth and hidden it beneath the bed: 47 gp, 92 sp, 6 cp, and four gems (brown and black jaspers worth 50 gp each). Whisper’s wealth (3 pp, 39 gp, 90 sp, and a bag of six tiny moonstone figurines worth 50 gp each) and Mim’s (3 gp and a black pearl worth 500 gp) are hidden in their trunks. Nagel has hidden his wealth in a sack trapped with an unpoisoned needle (just there to make prospective thieves nervous) beneath a loose floorboard: 12 pp, 83 gp, 17 sp, and twelve marbles (agates) worth 10 gp each; anything stolen from the goblins is here as well, along with 10 sp bounty per goblin head the adventurers have brought back from the dungeon. Buried in his horse’s stall in the stables (area 7) is a second stash he keeps private from his adventuring partners: 347 gp and a puzzle box holding a black opal worth 1,000 gp.

The inn is a likely rallying ground for beleaguered villagers; it is also the PCs’ chief target, whether they realize it or not.

Area 3. Village Store/village elder

This two-story stone building houses the village store on the ground level and the residence of the village elder on the top. The store has various agricultural tools and supplies (shovels, hoes, plows, pitchforks) as well as a few common general items (rope, candles, lamp oil, feed sacks). The shopkeeper, Penge, is a retired thief (the villagers only know he “adventured a bit in his younger days”) who has risen to the dignity of village elder. Penge has the town treasury (15 gp, 546 sp, 112 cp) in his keeping, as well as a small stash dating from his time as an

adventurer (his fellows never missed their savings until he was long gone): a silver earring set with a nice little garnet (worth 100 gp), a cheap necklace (10 sp), a moonstone ring (50 gp), a small pouch with seven uncut gems (two dark green alexandrites, a purple amethyst, a blue-green aquamarine, and three yellow-green beryls, each worth 10 gp, ten times that when properly cut), and some coinage (4 pp, 126 gp, and 14 sp). He also possesses a magical item or two, some of which he might loan to the NPC adventurers in the course of the scenario—an arrow of *finding*, a wizard scroll with *phantasmal force*, *web*, and *fireball* on it, and a *ring of jumping* that he uses to get out of a tight spot.

Penge, male human T3: AC 7 (Dex bonus); 10 hp; THACO 19 (17 with missile weapons); #AT 3 or 1; Dmg 1d3/1d3/1d3 (darts) or 1d4 (dagger); SA backstab (+4 attack, X2 damage); SD thief skills, *ring of jumping*; SZ M (5’ 10” tall); Str 9, Dex 17, Con 8, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 13; AL N.

Thief Abilities: PP 50, OL 20, F/RT 35, MS 45, HS 40, DN 15, CW 60.

Area 4. The Grange

This imposing structure, built of native rock, houses a donkey mill on the ground floor (that is, a horizontal millstone powered by a donkey that walks around in a circle) and storage for grain, both milled and unmilled, on the upper floor. Sharp-tongued old Goody Fowler is the undisputed mistress of this place; widely rumored to be a witch by the townspeople, the widow Fowler is a withered old lady of such ferocious determination that any goblin she confronts must make a morale check to stand his ground as she bears down on him, shaking a finger angrily in his direction. Despite this, she is feeble (2 hp) and cannot even walk without her crooked stick. Those who do muster their courage find her no real threat.

Area 5. Village Church

The fourth and final of the stone buildings that make up the town square, this simple church is large enough to hold the entire population at once. Dedicated to an agricultural goddess devoted to fertility and fruitfulness (primarily of crops and animals, but also of people), it is watched over by



the resident priestess, Demitasse. While still young (30), Demi feels protective and maternal toward her fellow villagers, believing that her brief months as an adventurer gave her a knowledge of the outside world and the horrors it holds that threaten the safety of home and family. The recent arrival of adventurers has awakened her long-dormant restlessness and she has taken to flirting with Lucky Nagel, their "scout" (she always did have a soft spot for thieves); she is hard pressed to resist their invitation to join them and resume her adventuring career when they depart (assuming she, and they, live that long).

When the attack comes, given the chance, she rings the church bell to wake her neighbors to their danger. Her instincts are primarily to protect her flock (hence her first spell is *sanctuary*, cast on herself), but if she sees any of "her people" attacked, she responds like a tigress and rushes into the fray, stopping only when that particular group of offenders retreat. Demitasse has no treasure, having given away all her possessions other than her clothes and gear, but the church has six silver candlesticks worth 10 gp each and the poor box usually has 2 or 3 cp in it at any given time.

Area 6. Farmhouse

Haece the *goatherd* lives here in this neat little cottage, with her goats, husband, and eight children. All are well groomed, cheerful, plump, and industrious-tending the goats, caring for the garden, taking care of each other, and generally leading productive, self-satisfied lives. If given warning, they bar the door and huddle inside their home until the goblins go away; otherwise, Haece and Eckel put up the best fight they can (THACO 20, -1 penalty to all rolls, 1d3 damage [bludgeons], 3 hp each) while the children flee into the goat pen and hide there.

Area 7. Farrier

This prosperous-looking house stands before a large horse barn with its overhead loft full of hay. The fenced pasture holds from one to six horses, depending on how many are hired out at any given time. Most (four in all) are typical farm horses, equally willing to carry a rider, pull a plow, or haul a cart. One is a huge good-natured brute, once a

heavy warhorse but now put out to stud in honorable retirement following a partial laming in battle. The sixth is a smart, fast little mare belonging to Lucky Nagel (one of the NPCs adventurers bedeviling the goblins).

Waylind the farrier loves horses and takes good care of both his own and any entrusted to him; they return his affection and always perform their best in his presence. During the attack, Waylind's first thought is of his horses, and he races to the barn to free his charges. Most of the horses are easily panicked and flee at the first sight of fire or blood, but the mayhem stirs memories in the old warhorse, which lashes out with his hooves at any stranger who comes near.

Old Warhorse: AC 8 (lame); MV 12 (partially lame); HD 4+4; hp 16; THACO 17; #AT 2; Dmg 1d8/1d8 (hooves); ML champion (15); Int semi (2); AL N.

Although he pays less attention to them than to the animals, Waylind shares this house with his wife (Merla) and five children; all are shy and shrinking except around horses.

Area 8. Chicken Farm

Gentry, a simpleminded, good-natured, sixtyish bachelor, lives in this small house-scarcely more than a shack-and supports himself by doing chores for more prosperous neighbors (including his brother the village elder). He also keeps chickens, and 2d20 hens and a rooster are scratching in the yard or on the roof anytime of the day; at night, they roost in the hen house (which, while also decrepit, is slightly larger and better maintained than the actual house). Gentry peacefully sleeps through the raid, not waking unless the goblins burn his shack down around him.

Area g. Farmhouse

Considerably more spruce than its neighbors on either side, this farmhouse stands at the edge of well-tilled fields to the east of town. Eblis, the estranged wife of Zander the pig farmer (area 10), lives here with her senile father, Taber, and her six sons (ranging in age from twenty to four). Eblis recently quarreled with her husband, who refused to give up pig farming in order to take over her



father's fields, and came home to live with her sons (who took their mother's side), while her daughters remained behind with their father and the pigs. Much to her annoyance, Eblis is pregnant again with her fourteenth child. A strong-minded woman who takes no **backtalk** from anybody, Eblis orders her younger sons to the storage cellar in a crisis; she and the three eldest defend the house with staves, pitchforks, and similar available weapons. If successful, she sends the sons to aid "that fool Zander, and your sisters, too." Unnoticed in all the excitement, her old father totters off and begins setting fires, adding to the general confusion. Eblis and her oldest sons are all O-level characters (THACO 20, Dmg by weapon, 1d3+1 hp each).

Area 10. Farmhouse

Zander the pig farmer lives here in this large but cheerfully decrepit house with his seven daughters (ages 3-21); 1d12+8 large, healthy pigs live in the sty outside. Zander is a lazy, **likeable** rogue who seldom worries and always seems to breeze his way through each seeming crisis. He recently quarreled with his wife (area 9), who wanted him to abandon his carefree ("shiftless!") ways and take over her father's farm. His daughters, who share his love for pigs, mud, and taking life easy, took his part in the quarrel, much to their mother's annoyance. While easygoing, Zander reacts quickly in a crisis, arming four of his daughters with butcher knives (1d4 damage each) and having the eldest carry the youngest. He then blows a subsonic whistle that causes the pigs to burst their pen and stampe anything unlucky enough to be in their way, goblin or human. Under cover of the chaos, the little family unit moves to aid their kin at area 9 then attempts to join their neighbors in one of the stone buildings bordering the village green. Zander himself is a O-level fighter (THACO 20) with 5 hp (Con 18); his daughters have 1d3+1 hp each.

Area 11. Manse

This simple house beside the church is the home of Demitasse, the local priestess. The place is strangely impersonal, since Demi spends most of her time either over at the church or helping her fellow villagers-she is not just the community's spiritual leader but also their midwife, veterinarian, advisor

as to the best times to sow or reap, and omen-reader. Normally tomboyish, she has been taking more care with her appearance since embarking on a flirtation with one of the NPC adventurers. Note that Demi was, as a teen, part of a four-person band of local youths who became adventurers. Their thief (her boyfriend) was killed in an early mishap and she retired, but the mage-fighter team, Dobbs and Blondie, enjoyed the wandering lifestyle and continued with other partners-they are now powerful (8th and 9th level, respectively) adventurers; if anything unpleasant happens to Demi they eventually hear of it and avenge her.

Demi, human female C2: AC 10 (unarmored) or 5 (chain mail); MV 12; hp 10; THACO 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+1 (flail); SA spells; SD spells; SZ M (5' 9" tall); Str 13, Dex 7, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 12; AL N(G).

Spells (4): 1st-bless, *command*, *cure light wounds*, *sanctuary*.

Area 12. Graveyard

This quiet nook has several tall thin headstones rising from the tall, unkempt grass. Some are very old, tilting and with weather-crumbled inscriptions. Others are fairly recent. Goody Fowler's three husbands are buried here: the well-off older man she married in her youth, the wealthy one she married in her prime, and the young one she married when already long in the tooth. Nothing here threatens the goblins, though remember that they should have no idea what this place is and may be baffled trying to guess its purpose. Some of the townspeople may attempt to hide here if the goblins are firing the town, lying flat in the tall grass behind the tombstones.

Area 13. Dairy

This tidy house and barn are home to **Burgis** the dairymaster and a dozen cows, respectively. **Burgis** is a large, capable woman, a widow whose children have grown up and left the village, except for the two youngest, both teens, who help with the family business. The field behind the house is Maevis the bull's territory, which he defends jealously. The dairy provides milk, cheese, and on occasion meat to the entire community. These folks are noncombatants who attempt to hide or flee when trouble





threatens-the bull is another matter, and wise goblins will keep out of its yard.

Maevis the bull: AC 7, HD 4, hp 15, #AT 2; Dmg 1d6/1d6 (horns), SA charge (gore for 3d4 plus trample for 1d4 more); Int animal (1); AL N.

Area 14. Carruther's Orchard

Gomphus, Bieda, and Sarey Carruthers live in this small house among the slightly neglected fruit trees that make up the orchard. This polygamous (actually, polyandrous) family consists of Sarey, the wife, and Gomphus and Bieda, the husbands, along with their seven children (the eldest only nine, the youngest a toddler). These folk are the only ones in town who do not belong to Demitasse's church, having embraced a splinter group of the faith that encourages group marriages. Gomphus and Bieda are brothers, sons of the previous owner of the land, which they have now put in Sarey's name. These folk are peaceful and keep to themselves more than most, but are still good neighbors and lifetime residents. In times of crisis, they tend to panic and scatter, fleeing in all directions.

Area 15. Porter's Farm

The Porters—two brothers, their sister, their respective spouses, and no less than 28 children—live here on this sprawling, thriving farm, which expands far to the south of town. The Porters are hardworking, godly, and prolific, defending themselves at need and coming to their neighbors' aid if able; consider all six adults as well as the four oldest children 0-level characters with 1d3+1 hp, inflicting 1d4 points of damage with whatever bludgeon or farm implement is readiest at hand.

Area 16. Smith

Tahv Taylis the smith is unusual in that, while very strong of arm, he has withered legs (the result of a childhood illness) and cannot move without crutches. A widower, he lives with his ailing mother and two small children. He should be considered a 0-level fighter with 6 hit points (Str 17, Con 18) and THACO 20 (19 with Strength bonus), inflicting 1d4+2 points of damage with his hammer.

Although an even-tempered man who never starts a fight, he certainly helps defend his home and fellow villagers. Foes who wisely keep their distance must still deal with his skill at throwing horseshoes, of which there are naturally a great many about in his forge; each iron horseshoe that hits inflicts 1d3 points of damage. The smith lives in a small, bare house (fewer things to trip over) attached to his forge and workshop.

Area 17. Loyce the 'Tinker

This is a simple house with a cart shed, horse yard, and well-tended garden. Loyce the Tinker lives here when not out on the road, along with his three daughters (Marst, Hoy, and Dru) and their young children (a dozen so far). Currently Loyce is away on one of his weeks-long trips, accompanied by Hoy. One daughter always goes with him on his rounds, the girls taking turns, as their smiling faces are as big a draw as any of his other merchandise. When home, he loves to put his feet up, play with the kids, catch up on village events, and show off new goods. Aside from adventurers, Loyce is the village's main contact with the outside world and the conduit of much news and gossip; recently he has been spreading the village elder's "Adventurers Wanted" posters far and wide.

Loyce is currently away, so his stats are irrelevant (should the DM wish to draw him in, he's a 2nd-level thief). The children are noncombatants who scream and run, attempting to get away and then hide until the trouble is over. The women, while untrained, attempt to bang intruders over the heads with pots and pans (THACO 20, hp 3 each, Dmg 1d3), biting and kicking if all else fails.

Aftermath

By the time the smoke settles, the player characters should, if victorious, have destroyed the NPC party and their base at the inn. Otherwise, the raids continue until the goblin tribe is either annihilated or driven from their caves. Not to worry; the players, if not their characters, soon have revenge as they trade up for much, much more powerful PCs in the next section of the adventure.



Cast of NPC Adventurers

The NPC adventurers detailed below are relatively new to this life but have been well trained and already have a minor adventure or two behind them. The group initially consists of a female human fighter (Pike), a male human cleric (Cole), a male dwarven fighter (Mim), a male human thief (Lucky Nagel), and a male elven wizard (Whisper).

The NPCs' usual marching order is to have Mim in front, followed by Pike and Cole side by side, with Nagel and Whisper bringing up the rear. Sometimes Nagel scouts ahead, with the others following in single file: Mim, Pike, Cole, and Whisper. The group has no official leader, but in practice Pike and Cole act as partners; he takes the lead in roleplaying situations (such as interacting with townspeople and negotiating) while she calls the shots in combat.

As the adventure progresses, more NPCs may arrive; these can either be drawn from the sample characters detailed below, or the DM can create new ones to fit specific gaps in the NPC party. Of the pregenerated replacement adventurers, Laertes arrives first; Onyx and Andrella Mantyh arrive together (along with Mantyh's butler, who stays behind in town), and the Zambiezi Brothers arrive last. If the entire original NPC party gets wiped out in the first or second raid, these late arrivals coalesce into a new party, perhaps even joined by the village priestess (who wishes to rescue any captives and retrieve Nagel's body for decent and honorable burial, if possible).

Pike, human female F2: AC 4 (chain mail, shield); MV 12; hp 18; THACO 19 (17 with long sword +1 and specialization); #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d8+4 (long sword +1, Str bonus, specialization); SZ M (5' 7" tall); Str 16, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 11, Cha 13; AL N; XI' 2,314 (current total).

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Blindfighting, Modern Language-Dwarven (12), Modern Language—Elven (12).

Special Equipment: magical *lightsword* (shines as brightly as a *light* spell).

Notes: Excitement, action, romance, and killing things—she loves her job!

Cole, human male Cl: AC 5 (scalemail, shield); MV 12; hp 8; THACO 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+1 (mace);

SD spells; SZ M (5' 9" tall); Str 12, Dex 9, Con 13, Int 11, Wis 15, Cha 13; AL LN; XP 1,433 (current total).

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Direction Sense (16), Healing (13), Reading/Writing (12), Religion (15), Weather Sense (14).

Spells (3): 1st-bless, *cure light wounds* (×2).

Special Equipment: holy symbol, torches, flint and steel, candles, incense, prayer beads.

Notes: Cheerful, focused, confident—will never shirk from an unpleasant duty (such as killing goblins) or ask another to do what he would not do himself.

Mim, dwarf male F1: AC 3 (dwarven banded mail, small shield); MV 6; hp 9; THACO 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (battle-ax); SA racial hatred (gains +1 bonus to all attack rolls when fighting goblins); SZ M (4' tall); Str 14, Dex 6, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 4; AL LN; XI' 1,803 (current total).

Special Abilities: infravision (60'), +5 saving throw bonus vs. spells and poisons, detect pits (50%), detect new construction (5-in-6 chance).

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Blindfighting, Direction Sense (9), Endurance (18).

Special Equipment: caltrops.

Notes: So long as he gets to kill goblins, he's happy—treasure is nice too, but it's icing on the cake. Buddies with Whisper the elf.

Lucky Nagel, human male T2: AC 5 (leather, Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 7; THACO 20 (18 with missile weapons); #AT 2 or 1; Dmg 1d4/1d4 (throwing daggers) or 1d4 (dagger); SA backstab (+4 to hit, X2 damage); SD thief skills; SZ M (5' 4" tall); Str 10, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 11, Cha 15; AL CN; XP 2,004 (current total).

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Appraising (14), Riding (14), Swimming (10), Tracking (11), Tumbling (17).

Thief Abilities: PP 20, OL 30, F/RT 35, MS 30, HS 25, DN 15, CW 70, RL 10.

Special Equipment: thieves' tools, rope, one vial flammable oil, twelve knives, one lucky silver piece (much worn).

Notes: Enjoy life, scam the rubes, pocket the treasure—but be careful; you never know when there's a dragon waiting around the corner.

Whisper, elf male W2: AC 10 (no armor); MV 12; hp 4; THACO 20 (-2 penalty to hit and -1 damage



in melee attacks due to low Strength; does not affect missile attacks); #AT 3; Dmg 1d3/1d3/1d3 (darts); SA spells; SD spells; SZ M (5' tall); Str 5, Dex 11, Con 7, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 10; AL CG; XI' 4,120 (current total).

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Ancient History (15), Ancient Languages (16), Astrology (16), Etiquette (10), Musical Instrument-flute (10), Read/Write (17), Spellcraft (14).

Spellbook (2): M-charm person, detect magic, find familiar, friends, light, magic missile*, Nystul's magical aura, read magic, sleep*.

* Indicates memorized spell.

Special Equipment: twenty-one darts, spell components, scroll (*alarm, identify, friends*), familiar (an albino crow).

Notes: Quiet, unobtrusive, observant, dangerous. Fond of Mim the dwarf, whom he considers a pet.

Other NPCs

Laertes, human male Cl: AC 10 (no armor); MV 6 (slow because of age); hp 6; THACO 20 (-2 penalty to attack rolls due to Strength penalty); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6-1 (staff, Str penalty); SD spells; SW feeble with age; SZ M (5' 10" tall); Str 5, Dex 8, Con 9, Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 7; AL LN; XI' none (current total).

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Cobbling (8), Healing (4), Heraldry (13), Herbalism (11), Weather Sense (15).

Spells (2): 1st-bless, command, cure light wounds.

Special Equipment: necklace of prayer beads (four beads left: *bless, cure disease, cure serious wounds, summon deity*).

Notes: Very old (82 years), crusty, and inclined to grumble; has taken up adventuring in his old age as a penance imposed by his church.

Onyx, human female C1 of sun god: AC 5 (chain mail); MV 12; hp 7; THACO 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (morning star); SD spells; SZ M (5' 4");

Str 12, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 15; AL CG; XI' 1,004 (current total).

Special Abilities: cast *light* once per day.

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Astrology (12), Healing (12), Religion (14), Seamstress/Tailor (13), Spellcraft (10).

Spells (3): 1st-bless, cure light wounds (×2).

Special Equipment: holy symbol (a rayed sun), sunburst-headed morning star.

Notes: Devout worshiper of a sun-god, Onyx is devoted to "shining her light into dark places; she agreed to run off adventuring with her friend Andrella pretty much as a lark.

Andrella Mantyh, human female W1: AC 9 (*ring of protection +1*); MV 12; hp 3; THACO 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (staff); SA spells; SD spells; SZ M (5' 2" tall); Str 10, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 15, Wis 10, Cha 17; AL N; XP 1,004 (current total).

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Ancient History (14), Disguise (16), Etiquette (17), Heraldry (15), Read/Write (16), Riding (13), Spellcraft (13).

Spellbook (1): 1st-burning hands, change self, charm person, detect magic, friends, identify, magic missile, phantasmal **force**, read magic, sleep*.

* Indicates memorized spell.

Special Equipment: wand **of** magic missiles (twelve charges).

Notes: Of noble birth, never travels anywhere without her butler; seeks real-world experience to better prepare her for her heritage when she one day ascends to her title.

The Zambiezi Brothers, human males F1 (twins): AC 4 (chainmail, shield); MV 12; hp 10, 10; THACO 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+1 (mace) or 1d6 (club); M (5' 10" tall); Str 15, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 7, Wis 5, Cha 9; AL N; XP 1,800 each (current total).

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Survival (7), Tracking (5).

Notes: Identical twins-dim-witted, tough, and always eager for the next battle.



The Vault Level

The level below the humanoids is a true dungeon, constructed centuries ago by the wizard Blaise to house his "collection" of unusual monsters. A practical man, he decided to force each to guard a treasure as well, thus combining two displays into one. This menagerie has remained ever since, long after the tower above fell into ruin, each creature bound by a powerful *geas* (actually a *wish*) that compels it to defend to the final extremity the particular treasure entrusted to it by the wizard. This high-powered *geas* is similar to the 6th-level wizard spell but much more potent; violating the *wish-geas* causes the character to lose 1 HD or level per turn, dying when the diminishing score reaches zero. The *wish-geas* can only be removed by a double casting of *wish-one wish* to cancel the *geas* and a second to prevent it from returning. The guardians are protected from aging for so long as the *geas* lasts, resuming their normal lives thereafter. By the terms of the *geas*, the creature is freed from the spell if he, she, or it fails the assigned task. So far three creatures have failed, but only one—the doppelganger—has survived slaughter at the hands of the victorious intruders (disguising itself as a fallen member of the NPC party). Gone quite mad from being deprived of humans and demihumans to imitate, it wanders the halls of this dungeon level carrying messages from one inmate to another.

Here PCs get to choose from among various favorite AD&D monster races: PC choices include a beholder, illithid, medusa, cloaker, mimic, doppelganger, hag, and troll, as well as an anti-paladin (a recent arrival) who has recently made herself at home here. Any monster not picked by a player becomes an NPC under the DM's control. The DM should feel free to replace any of these nine guardians with a favorite creature of his or her own-say, replacing the hag or medusa with a *naga* or *lamia* noble—but for the sake of variety try to avoid using creatures that appear elsewhere in this adventure (which rules out most of the more interesting undead). For example, other scenarios focus on demons and devils, constructs, undead, and a dragon, so these would be poor choices for this chapter. Others—such as giants, aerial beasts, and sea monsters—are ruled out by the constraints of the dungeon environment. To make things as interesting as possible, any creature the DM picks

should have some unique ability not accessible to normal player characters.

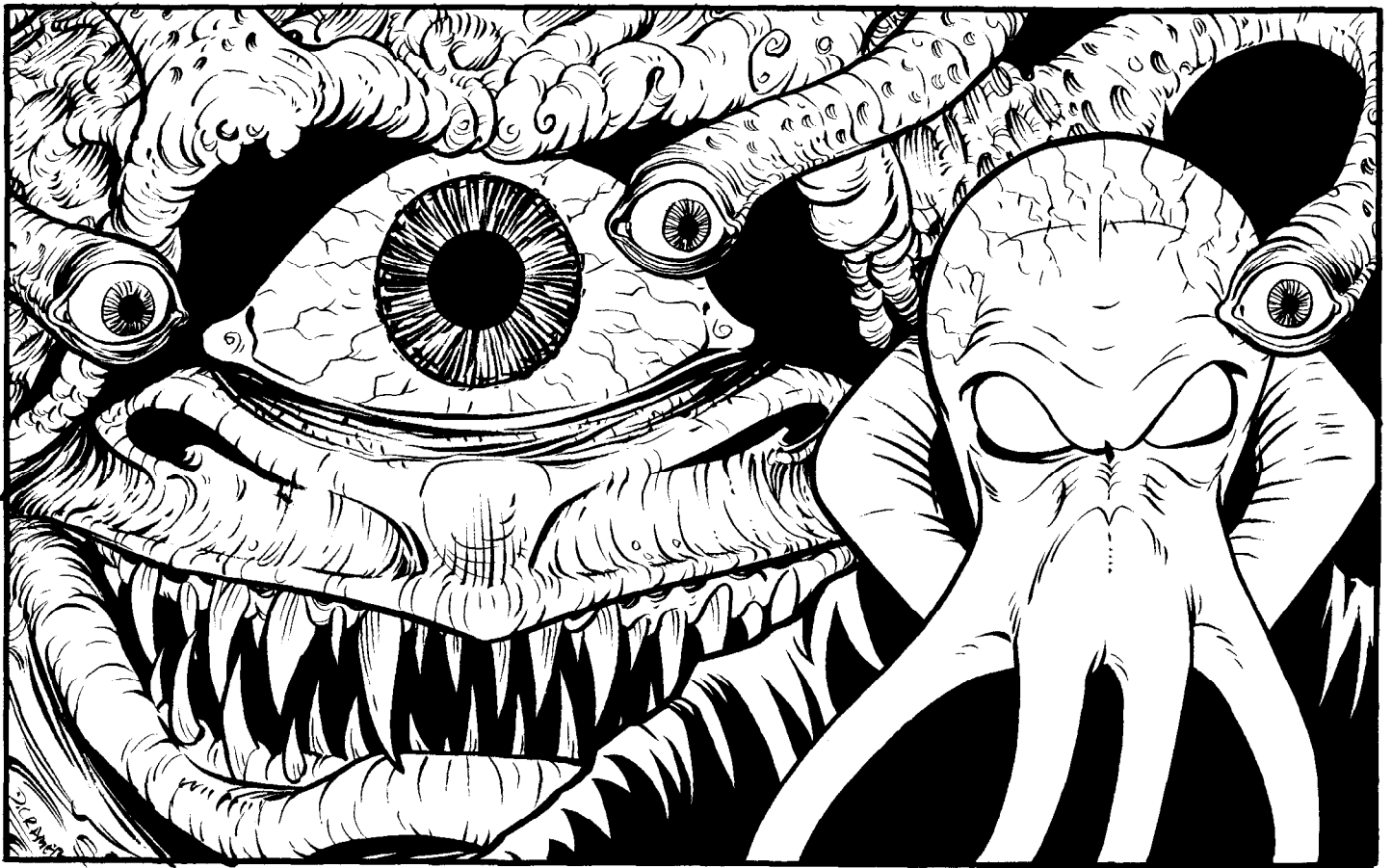
There are a number of different ways for the players to choose which of the monsters to play, but it is probably best to use some sort of reverse "roll call" from the previous scenario; allow the player whose goblins got destroyed the quickest, or who was least able to advance his or her character(s) along the "Hit Die" track to select first. This lets those players who suffered the most the first time around to get something they will really enjoy in this second scenario.

Obviously, some monsters in the list are a lot less suitable than others for player control and are less likely to be picked. For example, there's not a lot of roleplaying to be had in the body of a mimic, so it is doubtful that any of the players will select this monster. On the other hand, a player with an unusual sense of adventure (or humor) may decide on this very monster; the player is likely to manufacture his or her own fun with this beast, but be certain to make room in the story for this character to get some action.

Guardians and Artifacts (apparent and actual):

1. beholder: Barrier Peaks weaponry
2. illithid: fake: magical tomes, manuals, and librams. actual: *Recorder-flute of Ye'Cind*
3. mimic: fake: Iron Flask of Tuerny the Merciless (actually a *flask* of delusion). actual: *teeth of Dahlvar-Nar* (DMG version, not *Book of Artifacts*)
4. formerly, shade: *wand of Orcus* (missing): room now anti-paladin with *sword of darkness*
5. troll: fake: The False Hand. actual: vorpal sword.
6. doppelganger: fake: *ring of Gaxx*. actual: *invulnerable coat* of Arnd (already stolen)
7. medusa: *the dark mirror*
8. hag: *the false orb* ("Orb of Dragonkind").
9. cloakings: either *crystal of the ebon flame* or *jacinth of inestimable beauty* (can't use)

The Vault: hood-things. Inside chest: guardian beast (cat, hellcat, *naga*, necrophidius, volt, penanggalan, vargouille/son of kyuss, froghe-moth, false tarrasque)



Why Is This here?

The wizard who created this dungeon level was a subtle man who rarely did a thing for only a single reason. Thus, while it is true that he enjoyed summoning and binding powerful creatures for his own amusement and as a demonstration of his skill, he also wished them to serve as guards. His artifacts, painstakingly assembled or crafted over a period of many centuries, have already served their various purposes. Today they serve primarily to distract attention from other schemes of his, set in motion long ago, that are slowly ripening. The secret of this dungeon level, then, unknown to the players, is that it is an enormous red herring. Everyone expects a ruined wizard's tower to have lost dungeons beneath it filled with strange monsters and fabulous treasures, so he decided to provide them, sacrificing items he no longer had any use for as bait to keep their eyes turned away from his true catacombs far below, magically shielded from prying eyes.

Rules for Vault-Level PCs

The denizens of this dungeon level are available for player characters. Note that each is a "generic" creature of its type so far as statistics and abilities

go; DMs wishing to incorporate variants from the various **MONSTROUS ARCANA™** sourcebooks, especially I, *Tyrant* (the beholder book) and *The Illithiad* (mind flayers), should feel free, but in that case allow other players to vary or customize their creatures as well. In any case, players will want to individualize their monster characters. The names and backgrounds given here are merely a convenience; players should adopt character names and personal histories of their own choice, while those monsters that remain NPCs can retain their provisional names and personalities. In addition, the hit point values listed here are defaults (except for the beholder); players should roll dice to determine the actual hit points of their PC monsters.

Unlike the humanoid goblins, most of the monsters presented here (except for the anti-paladin) are not easily amenable to HD advancement, or at least not without the DM's direct invention of a workable method. However, to simulate advancement, it is recommended that each time the PC monsters manage to overcome a threat described in one of the scenarios below, they be allowed to take one item from their personal vaults to use against the next invasion. Note that such an item should be chosen by the DM, not the PC. Also, remember that PC monsters can loot the bodies of those they defeat just like PC heroes.

Room Descriptions

The following descriptions give physical features of the actual chambers, plus details on the inhabitant and artifact within each. Refer to the Vault Level Map.

Note: Unkeyed Rooms

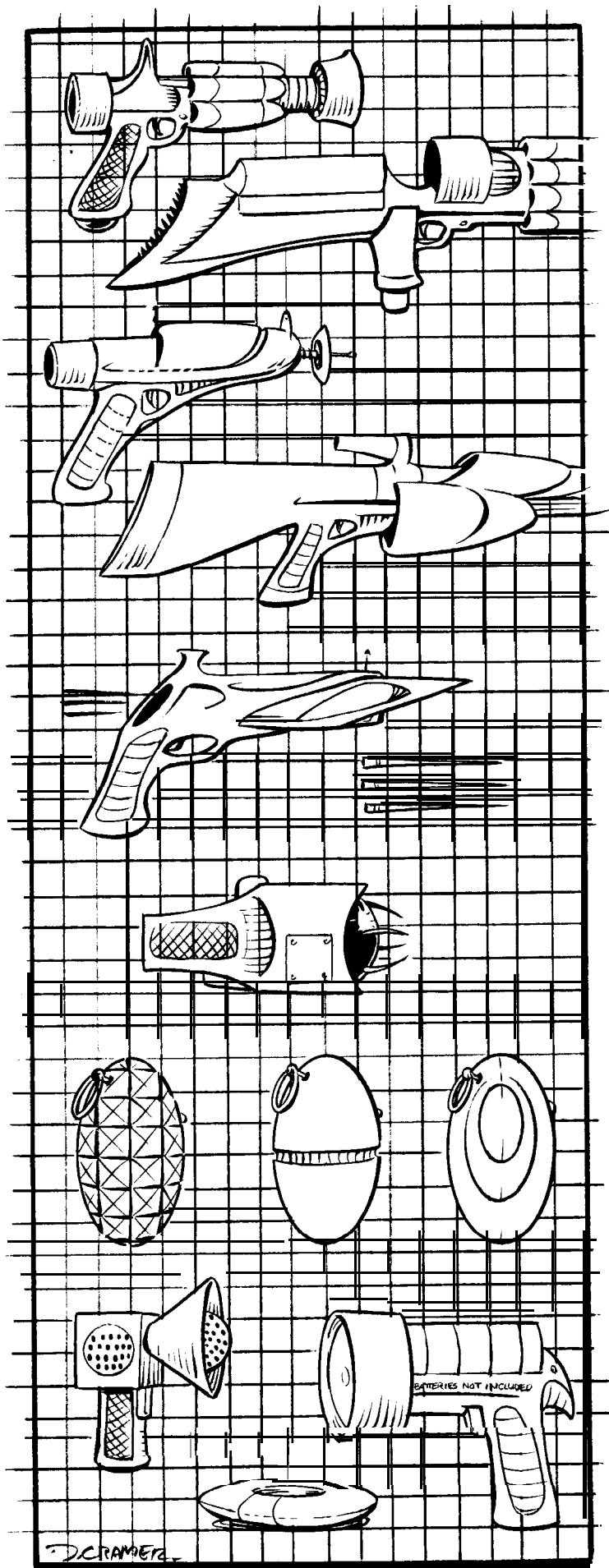
Several unkeyed rooms are shown on the Vault Level Map. These rooms are generally empty; however, they are intended to provide PC monsters extra space to modify their demesne, if desired. Additionally, most of the chambers contain dozens of barrels of water and what's left of several hundred years' worth of magically preserved dried food, though these rations have begun to dwindle dangerously in the last few years.

Room 21. Beholder's Exotic Armory

A spiral stone stair carved into the wall winds down from above (area 20 on the Caves of the Yar-Gock Map), ending in this large, irregular central chamber. The walls are covered with strange items mounted as trophies, jealously guarded by the beholder who lairs here. Detritus of many slain creatures-past meals for the beholder-litters the floor. Xiccapoctuhl delights in the rare incursions from above for the sport they provide. The "artifact" treasures here are actually relics, items salvaged by Master Blaise from the wreck of an alien spaceship that crashed into the Barrier Peaks. The beholder could probably learn to manipulate the weapons via its *telekinesis*, but it has never occurred to Xiccapoctuhl to do so. If it thinks of this idea and overcomes its fear of violating the *geas*, that weapon's attack replaces one *eyestalk* during subsequent combats. Don't forget that the beholder will be nonproficient with the exotic weaponry at first (this penalty is -5, since the weapons are alien and very odd), and may wind up shooting itself instead of its intended target.

Beholder

Xiccapoctuhl is solitary, completely cut off from its own kind. The egg from which it hatched was found by Master Blaise and brought here, making this dungeon the only home it has ever known. This has produced not only a fierce territoriality, as he had hoped, but an unplanned secondary effect: the beholder suffers from intense agoraphobia. As such, it views any intruder from outside with fear and loathing, something to be eliminated as soon as possible. This also reduces any idea it might otherwise have had about escape. Xiccapoctuhl is a thoroughly typical example of its species so far as its powers go except that, instead of *charm person*, its first *eyestalk* has the variant power of *summon creature*. The





creature summoned is never under the beholder's control and either attacks at once or attempts to flee. To determine what has been summoned, roll percentile dice. On a roll of 1 to 50, use the "conjured animals" tables in the back of the *MONSTROUS MANUAL*™ tome (page 377). On a roll of 51 to 90, the effect is the same as the appropriate monster summoning spell (51 to 60 = monster *summoning I*, 61 to 70 = monster *summoning II*, 71 to 80 = monster *summoning III*, and 81 to 90 = monster *summoning IV*). On a roll of 91 to 100, the eye has summoned a human or demihuman. Most of these are hapless 0-level characters, but 1 in 10 is an adventurer of 1st to 10th level (roll 1d10). Of all the dungeon dwellers, the beholder is happiest with its lot, since it knows no other life and gets to have a satisfying hunt for more or less helpless prey on a daily basis (these hunts are the only occasions when it leaves its lair).

Xiccapoctuhl the beholder: AC 0 (body), 2 (eyestalks), or 7 (eyes); MV fly 3 (B); HD 45 hp (30 hp body, 15 hp central eye) plus 1d8+4 per eyestalk; THACO 11; #AT 1 or 1d4; Dmg 2d4 (bite) or 1d4 eyestalks; SA spell-like effects from eyestalks; SD antimagic ray from central eye; SZ L (5'-diameter sphere); Int exceptional (15); AL LE; XP 14,000.

Spell-like effects: eyebeam #1—*summon creature* (see above), eyebeam #2—*charm monster*, eyebeam #3—*sleep*, eyebeam #4—*telekinesis* (250 lbs.), eyebeam #5—*flesh to stone* (90' range), eyebeam #6—*disintegrate* (60' range), eyebeam #7—*fear*, eyebeam #8—*slow*, eyebeam #9—*cause serious wounds* (2d8+1 points, 150' range), eyebeam #10—*death ray* (120' range). Each eyebeam affects only a single target, although multiple eyes can be brought to bear on the same target. Central eye: *antimagic ray* (420' range, negates or suppresses all magic in 90" arc).

Barrier Peaks Weaponry

1. Blaster Pistol. #AT 2, Dmg 5d6, save vs. petrification for half damage (if unarmored) or no damage (if armored, but armor must then make its own save or be destroyed), drains one charge per shot.

2. Blaster Rifle. #AT 1, Dmg varies depending on weapon setting: #1 (black button)—disruption beam disintegrates 6 cubic feet of matter, on successful save vs. petrification target suffers only 5d6 damage plus stunned for 1d4 rounds. #2 (white button)—heat beam, melts targets, save to survive

with only 5d4 damage plus 1d6 points of Strength lost for 1d6 turns (heat exhaustion), metal armor imposes -7 penalty to target's saving throw. #3 (red button)—flash of flame, inflicts 4d6 (failed save) or 2d6 (successful save) points of damage, drains two charges per shot.

3. Laser Pistol. #AT 2, Dmg 2d6+target's AC (negative AC actually reduces damage, Dex modifiers do not apply), failed save vs. petrification indicates 1 in 10 chance the laser hit an extremity: roll 1d8 for hit location, with 1 = head (target killed instantly), 2-3 = arm (disabled), 4-8 = leg (crippled). drains half a charge per shot.

4. Laser Rifle. #AT 2, Dmg 2d10+target's AC, drains one charge per shot, otherwise as laser pistol except suffers -2 attack penalty (this rifle lacks the proper targeting mechanism).

5. Needler. #AT 1 (burst), Dmg 1d6 per needle (Dex modifiers do not apply), two settings: narrow (target hit by 1d4+4 needles) or wide (up to five targets), needle cartridge holds ten shots (ten needles per shot).

6. Paralysis Pistol. #AT 1, Dmg *slowed* for 2d6 rounds (successful save) or paralyzed for 1d3 turns (failed save), drains one charge per shot.

7. Grenade (explosive). Dmg 1d6+4 to all in blast radius (save for half damage), targets stunned for 1d4 rounds and deafened for 1d4 turns, shrapnel inflicts 1d10 damage on all in room.

8. Grenade (poison gas). All air-breathing creatures in range must save vs. poison or die, sickened for 1d6 rounds on successful save.

9. Grenade (sleep gas). All air-breathing creatures in range must save vs. poison or collapse in comatose slumber for 1d4+1 turns, no affect on successful save but gas lingers in the air for 6 rounds.

10. Grenade (incendiary). Dmg 2d6 to all in blast radius (no saving throw), plus 1d6 per round for three rounds (from chemical residue).

11. Universal Translator. No damage, red button acts as receiver and blue button as transmitter, drains one charge per use.

12. Portable Spotlight. No damage, although blinds creatures of darkness, drains one charge per use.

13. Power Disk. Replacement power disk (the only one present in the dungeon) for items #1-4, #6, and #11-12.

Note that all of these items are relatively fragile and certainly irreplaceable; the DM might judge that the



beholder permanently loses 1 HD and one eyestalk (randomly chosen; the eye and stalk wither) for each that is destroyed or exhausted. The creature thus has failed to that degree in its guardianship.

Room 22. Illithid Library

Every available wall space in this chamber is lined with bookcases and shelves, and many more free-standing bookcases crowd the room, turning it into a mini-maze. There are no tables or chairs, merely a lectern (the illithid reads standing up, and also sleeps that way, covered by a handy sheet).

The shelves here do not contain the vanished wizard's spell books, but they do contain vast amounts of arcane lore relating to spellcraft, undead, artifacts, constructs, magic item creation, summonings and bindings, geases, shape-changers, demonology, the Blood War, spell-cloaking, and chess.

One bookcase is actually part of a secret door; when accessed, it reveals a small tunnel that accesses a small cell in area 2 of the goblin warrens. From time to time, the illithid finds it necessary to ascend in search of a goblin brain to break his fast.

One wall contains a whole bookcase that contains special volumes that appear to be the following: a *book of exalted deeds*, a *book of vile darkness*, a *libram of gainful conjuration*, a *libram of ineffable damnation*, a *libram of silver magic*, a *manual of bodily health*, a *manual of gainful exercise*, a *manual of quickness of action*, a *manual of stealthy pilfering*, a *tome of clear thought*, a *tome of leadership and influence*, a *tome of understanding*, and a *vacuous grimoire* (typically disguised as a *manual of golems*). All but one of the twelve beneficial books are traps: They appear normal and have all the usual adverse effects if read by characters of the wrong class, but if read by a character of the correct class then, at the end of the required time, that character loses 1d4 points off the ability or attribute he or she would normally gain for perusing such a work. The false tomes appear normal to every test; only acting on the advice contained therein activates their curse. To increase the confusion, one (and only one) of these beneficial tomes is exactly what it appears to be (DM's choice as to which).

The true treasure here has nothing to do with the books, which are merely a distraction (and, to date, quite an effective one, too). The actual artifact,

carried by the mind flayer upon its person at all times, is a simple recorder-flute which is actually the *recorder of Ye'Cind*. The recorder can play wondrously simple yet haunting tunes on command (the main use the illithid makes of it); the mind flayer has become deafened to every sound but the flute itself, but this is little hindrance since it possesses *ESP* and is well-versed in lip reading and the Underdark silent language—it feels the silence merely improves its concentration.

Mind Flayer

Hlyddhth is a willing captive for now; it is completely cut off from its kind. Rescued by Master Blaise's agents from its prison cell aboard a crashed spaceship that came down in the Barrier Peaks, it was bound to guard the wizard's library, a task it relished for the chance it gave it to read all his books and learn much about this strange world. Most of the other dungeon denizens do not realize it is a relative newcomer, having replaced a previous mind flayer that had sought to suborn its geas and perished in the process. As a result of years of intensive research and reading by this genius-intelligence creature, it should be treated as a sage with extensive knowledge in all the topics contained in books of the library. Alone of the dungeon's inhabitants, Hlyddhth **suspects** that the wizard who created this place is still alive: books sometimes disappear off the shelves without activating its geas, teleported away only to suddenly reappear minutes or weeks later. It will take Hlyddhth several more decades to finish absorbing and cogitating on all the knowledge the library offers, after which it either uses its learning to gain freedom or seeks out the elusive wizard and offers him its service freely in order to join in whatever research Master Blaise is now engaged in (it suspects this to be the interaction of free will and fate). When threatened, the mind flayer often uses *plane shift* to retreat to the Border Ethereal, popping in to *mind blast* opponents and then become ethereal again to evade their counterthrusts; *ESP* improves the accuracy of this gambit by preventing the flayer from appearing where expected. Solitary prey is *charmed* if possible, interrogated at length, and devoured at leisure.

Hlyddhth the illithid: AC 5 (AC 0 when ethereal); MV 12; HD 8+4; hp 36; THACO 11; #AT 4; Dmg 2/2/2/2 + extract brain (tentacles); SA tentacles



extract brain in 1d4 rounds (struggling target) or 1 round (passive target), mind *blast* (stuns all in area of effect, a cone 60' long and up to 20' wide), spell-like powers; SD spell-like powers, infravision; SW deaf (side-effect of artifact guarded); MR 90%; SZ M (6' 6" tall); Int genius (18); AL LE; XP 9,000.

Special *Abilities*: (as 7th-level wizard, usable once per round, 4 penalty to opponents' saving throws): *astral projection*, *charm monster*, *charm person*, *ESP*, *levitate*, *plane shift*, and *suggestion*.

Recorder-flute of Ye'Cind

Special Powers-sounds alarm (shrill note) when anything within 30 feet, including itself, is being stolen. Can play itself on command. Once per day: offers a vision (*projected image*) containing clues on some topic of interest to its possessor. Spell-like Effects-hypnotic *pattern* (thrice per day), *music of the spheres* (five times per day), *emotion* (once per week), *phantasmal killer* (thrice per day), *domination* (once per week), *demand* (once per week).

Room 23. Mimic's Study

This large, rambling room looks to have been the scene of many a battle. It has. The room contains several rather battered-looking articles of furniture in order to give the mimic more items to blend in with (a single chest in an otherwise empty room automatically invites suspicion). Several doors line the walls, all false doors that open only to reveal blank wall beyond (the mimic sometimes adopts door form). When the NPCs first enter the room, it contains the following, any one but the last of which may actually be the mimic in disguise: a low end table (its once-polished top sadly marred with burns and hack and slash marks), a solid chair that looks like a portable throne, a battered desk, a bookcase filled with thick leather volumes, a coat rack and hat rack carved to look like a stunted wizened tree, a sumptuous oriental rug, a small but elegant wooden bed with goose-down mattress and silken sheets, a padlocked trunk at the foot of the bed, and a sturdy iron stand with tripod base and a recessed top that holds a heavy iron flask stoppered with a **turnip-shaped** plug. On closer examination, the cold-iron plug proves to be engraved with all manner of glyphs, sigils, and runes (all relating to entrapment, binding, and confinement). This is the fake artifact, a simulacrum of the *Iron Flask of Tuerny the Merciless*.

Opening the faux flask triggers a sequence of programmed illusions that simulate the emergence of several creatures, one after another, in gaseous form, from the flask. The first to emerge is a crimson mist. While the NPCs are dealing with this, a banshee emerges and wails on the following round. Then an aerial servant emerges and attacks, followed by a vampire. The fifth creature to emerge is an angry efreeti. Finally, an ominous green gas billows forth and begins to form a large mantalike form hovering in the air with two great yellow eyes. This last is not actually a creature at all but a *cloudkill* that grows to fill the entire room (its effects do not go beyond the chamber in which the flask is opened, or a 100-foot diameter hemisphere outside). This augmented *cloudkill* can actually force its way down creatures' throats (4 penalties to all saving throws) and inflicts double damage to high-level creatures that make their saves (2d10 damage per round, not 1d10). Restoppering the bottle halts the procession of fake creatures and other attacks, provided the character who reinserts the plug calls out the proper command word (included in the runic inscriptions).

All this is a simple ruse: the true treasure here is a relic, the very Teeth of Dalhvar-Nar, which are hidden in a pocket inside the mimic. The mimic has no teeth in its natural form and so cannot "replace" them with the saint's relics and access their power. The mimic keeps the teeth deep within, constantly changing their location (thus, the mimic must be killed to retrieve even a few of the teeth, which makes it the specific target of Kazerine the Master Thief, described under scenarios). If inserted into the proper socket, the teeth meld into place and cannot be removed while the owner lives. They have the following powers (all powers are cumulative), but an individual tooth's powers cannot be determined until it is in place.

The Teeth of Dalhvar-Nar

- Tooth #1: possessor gains permanent +1 adjustment to major attribute
- Tooth #2: *cure disease* (by touch)
- Tooth #3: possessor's hair turns white
- Tooth #4: *bless/curse* (by touch)
- Tooth #5: *createfood and water* (once per day)
- Tooth #6: *cure light wounds* (seven times per day, by touch)
- Tooth #7: *detect good or evil*

Tooth #8 (wisdom Tooth): possessor's alignment permanently shifts to Lawful Good
Cumulative effects (teeth #1–#8): *cause serious wounds* (by touch), super-Charisma for characters of Good alignment (lasts 3d4 turns)

Tooth #9: possessor embraces celibacy and loses all interest in sex

Tooth #10: *sanctuary* (automatic, constant effect)

Tooth #11: *speak with dead* (once per day)

Tooth #12: wearer turned undead

Tooth #13: *tongues*

Tooth #14: *cure blindness* (by touch)

Tooth #15: *walk on water*

Tooth #16 (wisdom Tooth): possessor cannot touch or be touched by metal (weapons pass through his or her body as if it wasn't there)

Cumulative effects (teeth #9–#16): possessor loses all interest in worldly possessions, *heal* (once per day, by touch), *legend lore/commune/contact higher plane* (once per week)

Tooth #17: *know alignment* (once per day)

Tooth #18: *light* (seven times per week)

Tooth #19: possessor immune to fear

Tooth #20: possessor immune to disease

Tooth #21: possessor loses 1d4 points of Constitution

Tooth #22: fast (possessor need eat or drink only once every seven days)

Tooth #23: +2 protection (as *ring of protection* +2)

Tooth #24 (wisdom Tooth): dispel illusions on command (twice per day)

cumulative effects (teeth #17–#24): *true seeing* (once per day), possessor loses 5d6 pounds

Tooth #25: *feather fall*

Tooth #26: possessor loses interest in any activity other than furthering the aims of Dalhvar-Nar.

Tooth #27: remove *fear* (by touch)

Tooth #28: remove *curse* (seven times per week, by touch)

Tooth #29: possessor gains body odor of an unwashed holy hermit

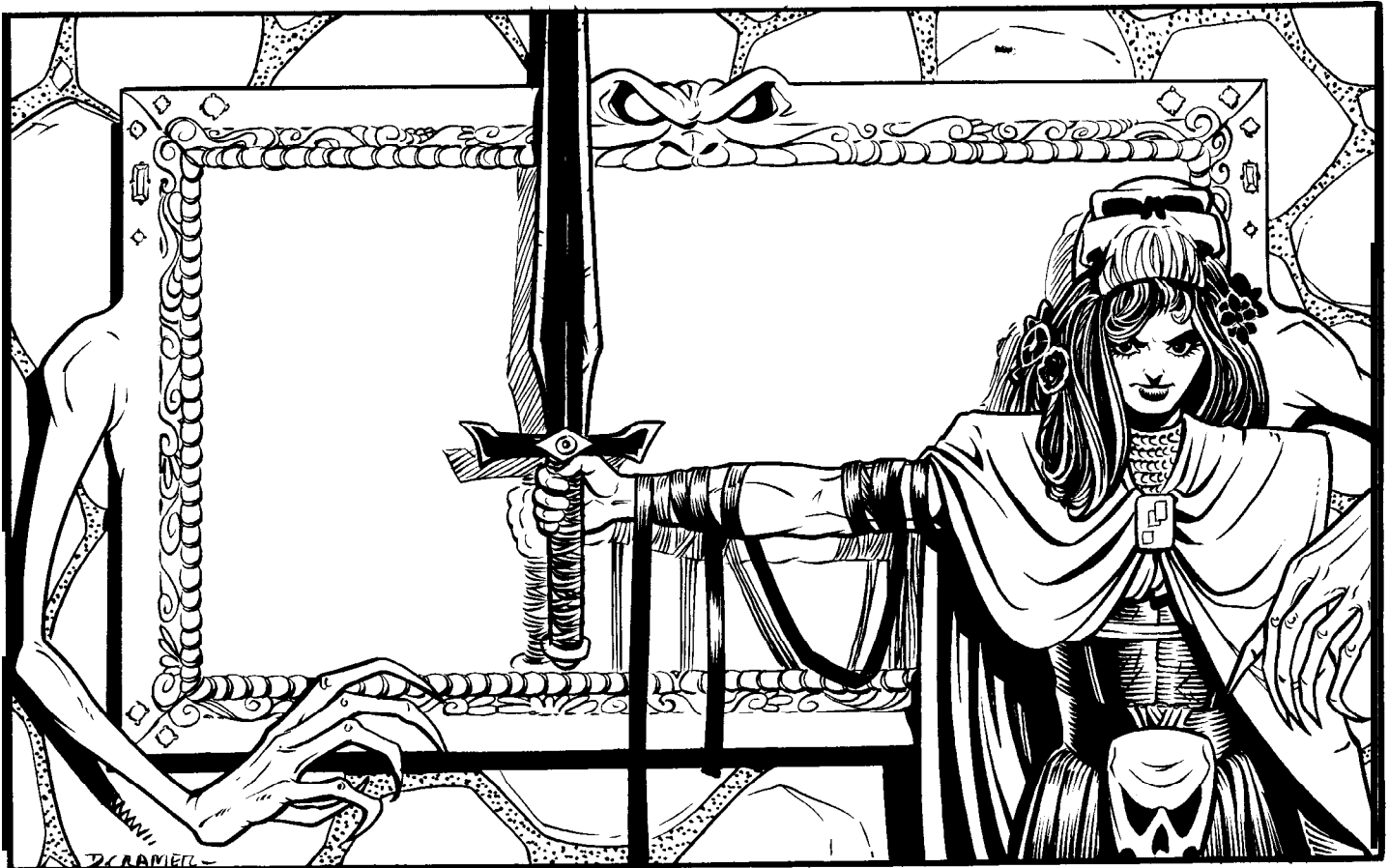
Tooth #30: *levitate* (thrice per day)

Tooth #31: *find traps* (thrice per day)

Tooth #32 (wisdom tooth): ESP (thrice per day)

Cumulative effects (teeth #25–#32): *exorcise* (once per month), *resurrection* (seven times per week), *vision* (once per day), possessor has 5% chance per month (noncumulative) of crumbling to dust and ascending to serve Dalhvar-Nar in person as a proxy, leaving behind only the jumbled teeth.

The DM should note that these powers are not in accord with those reported in the *Book of Artifacts* (TSR#2138) but are closer to those found in the 1st Edition *Dungeon Master's Guide* (TSR#2011). DMs preferring the former should substitute those powers and history for the one given here.





Mimic

The only survivor of a clutch of mimics Master Blaise acquired on which to test a number of magic formulae, this unusually hardy individual drew the wizard's attention by the creative methods it kept employing in attempts to escape. Impressed by its flexibility and imagination, he decided not to destroy it when that series of experiments ended and instead bound it to service as a guardian here. It has performed remarkably well and gamed flexibility of transformation far beyond what most ordinary mimics achieve, molding itself into statues, tessellated floors or mosaics, false walls, realistic simulations of *Evard's* black tentacles, even pseudo-golems, in addition to the traditional false doors and treasure chests. While it has been badly hacked up several times, it has always survived by shamming death and allowing part of its body to dissolve while the rest blends indistinguishably with the floor beneath or nearby wall. In personality, it is rather like a hyperintelligent lab animal, its reflexes honed by years of fiendish torture (as it sees it), its goal survival at any cost. Since it considers escape impossible (the idea has occasionally occurred to it but never been taken seriously), it is primarily reactive, devising new dodges in order to avoid the next peril, whatever it turns out to be.

Box the mimic: AC 7; MV 3; HD 8; hp 42; THACO 13; #AT 1; Dmg 3d4 (pseudopod); SA surprise (4 penalty to opponents' surprise rolls), glue (alcohol or successful Bend Bars/Lift Gates required to break free); SD camouflage (can alter shape, pigmentation, and texture at will), immune to acid, unaffected by molds, green slime, and puddings; SW sunlight (recoils and can take no action except "turn turtle" or flee); SZ L (150 cubic feet, typically a 3' X 6' X 8' block); Int average (10); AL N; XP 1,400.

Room 24. Anti-Paladin's Meditation Room

The current resident of this room is a recent arrival and not one of the *geased* guardians. The original tenant, a shade who had been a great thief in *his* day (until he made the mistake of stealing from Master Blaise and was magically bound and imprisoned here to contemplate his mistakes), was slain long ago and his charge stolen. Now all that remains of the lost artifact is a velvet-lined case on a crystal

stand, still bearing the impression of the skull-headed wand that once rested within (in fact, the very wand of *Orcus*). It has since been reclaimed from those unfortunate looters by its rightful owner, as Master Blaise knew it would be. Surrounding the pedestal are the blackened outlines of several figures indelibly staining the stone floor, all that remains of adventurers blasted to ash when the character who picked up the wand triggered a magical ward. Otherwise the room is empty, except for inky black arras which hang on every wall; these are actually tapestries with the designs picked out in black thread against a black background, making the images virtually impossible to see (they depict scenes from the Plane of Shadows).

The current occupant is under no compulsion to remain here but free to come and go as she pleases. However, since she so narrowly escaped justice in the form of avenging paladins out for her blood, she has no desire to risk a sighting just yet and remains here for several months until the search dies down and she deems it safe to be out and about again. Meanwhile, she mulls over her next move-how to salvage something from the ruins of her last scheme, reestablish a base of operations, and avenge herself on those meddling but deadly paladins. If she can send a few souls to Her Lord Nerull in the meantime, all the better; she may even, if she gets bored, deliberately expose herself to the mirror of *darkness* in room 7 (once she learns of its duplicating powers, of course). After all, what greater gift could she send the Lord of Death than herself? What greater challenge to dedicate to Kelanen the Sword Master than a duel to the death with herself? In any case, Ellis certainly does not leave without attempting to acquire at least one of the artifacts contained herein, although which one depends on which guardian she believes she can overcome and what item looks (a) portable and (b) useful to her future plans.

Since Ellis departed from her last abode in haste, all she has with her are a simple blanket, a few personal items (such as mirror, comb, armor polish, and whetstone), and her gear. She managed to acquire a decent store of food on her way here (the "gift" from a farmer who died suddenly after inviting her into his house), but this will run out in another few weeks and she will have to risk another foray, avoiding the village of Ardeche (assuming it still exists) if at all possible.



A&Paladin

Coming from a family famous for producing champions, she applied to a paladin school attached to a temple of Heironeous when she came of age (15), only to be blackballed by one of the admissions judges (a grizzled knight who'd seen too many horrors befall female companions and had come to believe women should not be trained as warriors). Rejection made her bitter, and she plunged into reckless adventuring paired with intense study of swordcraft, taking Kelanen the Sword Master (a warrior so skilled that he has assumed semidivine status) as her inspiration and unofficial patron. She actually fought Kelanen in his various disguises three times and is extremely proud of the battle scars that resulted. Eventually her willingness to test her skill in battles to the death against any swordsman drew the attention of Nerull, lord of death, who offered her a religious epiphany: a vision promising her all the powers of an anti-paladin if she would devote herself to sending to him prematurely as many good or neutral adventurers as possible. While she still reveres Kelanen, she has devoted herself heart and soul to the worship of Our Lord of Darkness and is proud of how many adventurers she has sent into the Darkness since (just over two hundred by her careful count).

Ellis has no particular fear of death—is not her patron the Lord of Death himself?—but enjoys the good things of life whenever possible. She assumes that after her own death (which she hopes will be in a swordfight), Nerull will transform her into a sword wraith, skeletal warrior, or death knight, depending on his mood at the time and how pleased or displeased he is with her accomplishments, especially her final battle. All the more reason, thinks she, to enjoy the pleasures of the flesh, such as food, wine, music, art, and attractive companions.

The anti-paladin is here because her most recent scheme went rather badly and she needed a temporary refuge. A few months back she murdered and took the place of a noble lady (a distant cousin), then kidnapped the prince of that land and held him captive in her stolen castle. Her plan was to seduce him, stage a false repentance, and then set him free once she was certain he would propose marriage to his former captor (she stocked up on multiple *philters of love* for that very purpose). As princess, she could bide her time

behind the scenes until she produced an heir and could arrange the untimely deaths of her father-in-law the king and her husband the prince, assuming the throne first as regent and then in her own right. Things went well until old foes in the form of a trio of paladins arrived to rescue the prince at just the wrong moment, forcing her to flee with nothing more than her sword and armor—even her special steed, a nightmare, was slain in the retreat. That she killed one of the paladins and maimed a second was small consolation for the complete ruin of all her plans, the death of all her henchmen and retainers, the loss of her warhorse and castle, and the foiling of her scheme. Aware that divinations and scrying do not work properly in this area for some reason, she thought it would make a perfect place to lie low until the time came for her to seek revenge. In the meantime, she seeks to deprive what profit she can from her enforced sojourn here.

Note that Ellis is very attractive, with long blonde hair and pale skin (the result of spending too much ~~time~~ in armor). Her trim, athletic body looks more like a dancer's than a warrior's—if you ignore the sword-scars on her upper left arm, lower right arm (on the inner arm, from wrist to elbow), and above the left eyebrow; all love taps from her bouts with Kelanen. She is equally adept at adopting a disarming “captive maiden” or imprisoned-fellow-adventurer pose, depending on which serves her best at the moment.

Ellis the Ardent, human female AP11 of

Nerull/Kelanen: AC -3 (*plate mail* +2, *shield* +3); MV 12; hp 97; THACO 10 (4 with *unholy avenger*+5 plus Str bonus); #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d8+6 (*unholy reaver*, Str bonus) or 2d4+1 (*morning star*, Str bonus) or 1d4+2 plus poison (*dagger of venom*, Str bonus); SA anti-paladin abilities, poison (*dagger of venom* filled with five doses of Type E poison); SD anti-paladin abilities; SZ M (6' 3" tall); Str 13, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 11, Wis 13, Cha 17; AL CE; XP 10,000.

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Blindfighting, Dancing (13), Etiquette (17), Healing (II), Heraldry (II), Riding (16).

Special Equipment: *unholy avenger* (+5 unholy bastard sword): +5 bonus to all attack rolls, +5 bonus to all damage rolls (+10 to LG foes), 50% MR (5' radius), *dispel* magic (as 11th-level mage, 5' radius), vampiric regeneration (as *ring of vampiric regeneration*).

Special Anti-paladin Abilities: +2 bonus to all saving throws, immune to disease (carrier: inflict disease twice per week), lay on hands (once per day, 22 points), *protection from* good aura (1' radius), backstab as thief (+4 bonus to attack roll, X2 damage), poison use (typically carries 1 vial containing 1d4+1 doses of Type D, another with 5 doses of Type E, and a third with three doses of Type J), control undead (as 9th-level cleric)

Spells (2/1): 1st—*cure light wounds, sanctuary*; 2nd—*hold person*.

Room 25. Troll's Sparring Room

Whurp the troll is undisputed master here, and the smell and organic debris shows it. Once an elegant room with padded walls and polished hardwood floor, ideal for practicing fencing and other swordplay, it has been reduced to a troll hole littered with split bones (from which the marrow has long ago been sucked), shattered armor, cloven shields, swords broken off at the hilt, bits of rotting flesh (which glow with a lovely green putrescence), withered scalps, and decades-old troll offal in the corners. The ever-alert Whurp springs to his feet at the first sign of any intruder, joyfully closing to battle any would-be thief (both for the pleasure of testing his combat skill and for the crunchy morsels that will be left behind afterward).

Whurp has no possessions aside from the vorpal sword ("Sweettooth"), which he never allows out of his sight (and rarely out of reach).

The room has no furnishings other than a black stone pedestal near the back wall, atop which is a small cube of crystal approximately one foot in width. Inside on a velvet pillow rests a withered human hand (the left), blackened and shriveled as if taken from a burned body. The hand radiates evil (a paladin or good-aligned cleric can tell this without even casting a spell) and very, very strong magic (Necromantic). Indeed, to all appearances this is the fabled *hand* of Vecna, one of the most powerful and feared of all artifacts. The crystal cube is impervious to all magic and cannot be cut or smashed by anything short of artifact-level weaponry (thus the *Axe of the Dwarfish Lords* would have it open in no time), with three exceptions: a *sword of sharpness*, a *vorpal sword* (Whurp's would do nicely), and one of the laser weapons in room 1 (being otherworldly, they sidestep its magical protections).

So long as the cube is intact, the hand remains quiescent. If the cube is jostled it stirs, shakes itself, possibly makes a rude gesture, and scuttles back to its original position, walking like a spider on its fingers. If the cube is opened, the hand remains innocently immobile until either threatened or "attached" to a human or demihuman stump. If attacked (say, with the *vorpal sword*), it dodges and springs to the attack. If attached to an NPC's arm in





place of a limb obligingly lopped off in the fight with Whurp, it seems to fuse itself smoothly to the character's limb for 1d10 rounds, then suddenly comes to life and tears itself loose, leaping for the nearest throat and incidentally inflicting 1d10 points of damage on its unfortunate would-be host, who must make a System Shock roll and will need prompt attention to avoid bleeding to death (1d10 points from arterial blood 'loss each round until he or she receives a *cure serious wounds*, *cure critical wounds*, or *heal* or until the spurting stump is tied off with a tourniquet). If any of the NPCs flee, it follows after them until it has killed them all or been destroyed or reimprisoned. Note that, once free, the hand maliciously begins to stalk and attack all the other denizens of the dungeon, beginning with the troll (assuming Whurp is still alive). The hand is quite capable of using weaponry such as a sword or the various Barrier Peaks pistols and grenades but prefers stealth, stalking, and strangulation where possible. Restraining or evading it is difficult but possible (for example, it cannot attack the mind flayer or hag when they go ethereal, and might succumb to the beholder's multiple attacks)-in any case, trying should keep the player characters busy.

Troll

Whurp is an unusual troll in that he prefers to fight with a sword over his natural weaponry of tooth and claw. The reason for this is that he loves to see the effects of the two-handed *vorpal sword* as it lops off parts of his opponents, and to taunt them on their failure to regenerate. He has been known to cut off the arms of foes and then beat them with their own severed limbs (for 1d6+8 points of damage), or to eat their hands before their very eyes. He is especially fond of heads and can dislocate his jaw so as to open his mouth wide enough to engulf a human-sized head and bite it off whole. He is just wily enough to chop off a finger or toe before going into combat and tossing it into a corner; he has completely regenerated from such a discarded fragment on more than one occasion (or, when surprised, by having a hacked-off piece scuttle away to safety while the rest of him attacks and distracts his foes). Whurp loves the all-too-rare combats with intruders and wishes there were more of them; he longs to escape so that he can make his way to some more well-traveled dungeon where he could face combats every week, not once every few years.

Whurp the troll: AC 4; MV 12; HD 6+6; hp 26; THACO 13 (10 with *vorpal sword*); #AT 1 or 3; Dmg 1d10+11 (two-handed *vorpal sword*+3, Str bonus) or 1d4+1/1d4+1/1d8+4 (claw/claw/bite); SA severed limb can continue to attack; SD regeneration (3 hp per round); SW cannot regenerate damage from acid or fire; SZ L (9' tall); Str 20, Int low (7); AL CE; XP 2,000.

"Hand of Vecna"

(fake artifact; actually modified Druj spirit)
AC 4 (size, Dexterity, magical protections); MV crawl 15, jump 15, *levitation*; HD 14; hp 83; THACO 3; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+14 (throttle); SA strangulation (crushes windpipe in 1d4 rounds); SD dodge attacks (as Tumbling proficiency, skill score 18; successful check lowers AC to -8 for that round), regeneration (1d4 points per round); SW may be turned for 1d2 rounds (as Special undead), holy water (1d4 points per vial); MR 90%; SZ S (6" long); ML fearless (20); Str 25 (+7 attack, +14 damage), Dex 18, Int exceptional (16); AL NE; XI 13,000.

4

Room 26. Doppelganger's Dressing Room

Disheveled and dilapidated, this room was once a well-apportioned dressing room. The ruins of wardrobes and armoires still line the walls, although the doors of most hang open and the clothes that hang within have largely fallen into ruin. However, 1 in 10 garments are still intact, and another 2 in 10 could be restored with proper use of *mend* and minor cleaning cantrips. The clothes are of all types and styles, suitable for almost any character from a beggar to a courtier, and cut to fit both sexes. The doppelganger used to use these for effect (being able to doff a hat, kick off your shoes, or take off a coat is hard if you've just made part of your body look like the garment in question). A rather forlorn-looking empty stand placed in the middle of the back wall marks the spot where the *Inulnerable Coat of Arnd* once hung, prior to its being carried off by some adventurers.

The doppelganger had been almost slain by the intruders and only survived because it briefly regained consciousness long enough to shift form into that of an adventurer it had already slain before passing out again. It finally awoke to find its charge gone and the room littered with the bodies of five of the six adventurers. They had a falling-out over



who would get to claim the treasure—due to the obsessive possessiveness this artifact inflicts on all who gaze upon it—and the winner departing with his prize. Since it had fulfilled the terms of its *geas*—fighting to the end of its strength to defend its charge—the doppelganger was not slain when the *Invulnerable* Coat was stolen. It does not realize this, however, and has concluded after much paranoid speculation that the ring it guards must be the true artifact and it has been spared for only so long as it can keep this protected. In fact, the *geas* has ended and Lane is free to go, despite his terror that doing so would activate the *geas* and cause a painful, lingering death. From time to time, he ventures into the outside world but soon scurries back, not daring to believe he is free of the curse.

Doppelganger

Lane the doppelganger is, quite frankly, mad. Deprived of human contact for too long, and having no models to emulate, his mind collapsed. Now, he wanders the dungeon, running errands and

carrying messages between the other guardians, pathetically eager for even such limited contact with other sentients. Lane typically takes the form of whomever he is talking to at the time. Normally this would be merely amusing or annoying, depending on your taste, but the artifact he guards, a magical ring crafted by Master Blaise, is the exact outward form of the fabled *Ring of Gaxx* (an artifact formed of a plain platinum band inscribed with strange letters including the word “Gaxx” on the inside, set with a nine-faceted blue gem that rotates in its setting).

The true artifact has nine powers, a different one of which manifests when the gem is rotated into the correct position; Lane’s ring, which works only for doppelgangers, is a *ring of protection* +5 (for anyone else, it is a *ring of vulnerability* -5 with all the powers of a *ring of delusion*) and has the additional feature of granting him all the special powers of whatever mortal creature he has taken the form of at the time (it can only reproduce native powers, not those due to items held by those creatures). Due to





Lane's instability, he can only hold a form (and its powers) for 1d10 rounds and use each form only once per day. The ring can hold up to nine forms at once; naturally, Lane has set it to reflect each of his fellow guardians, with the one remaining slot currently holding the form of a screaming O-level woman summoned by the beholder who actually made it some 30 feet down the hall from Xiccapoctuhl's room before being *held* and devoured alive by the eye tyrant. He can delete any slot and replace it with a new template, a process that takes 3 rounds (most of Xiccapoctuhl's victims don't last this long), in case a promising adventurer comes along.

Lane is a perfect henchman or lackey type if no player takes him for a PC. He is ingratiating, cringing, and pathetically eager to please; the perfect sycophant.

Lane the doppelganger: AC 0 (*pseudo-ring of Gaxx*); MV 9; HD 4; hp 23; THACO 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d12 (bludgeon); SA surprise (4-in-6 chance); SD *ESP*, imitate other (90% accuracy), immune to *sleep* and *charm*, saving throws as if 10th-level fighter; SW mental instability; SZ M (6' tall); Int very (12); AL N; XP 420+.

Special Equipment: *pseudo-ring of Gaxx*.

Room 27. Medusa's Mirror Room

A vast mirror covers three walls of the room—the back and both side walls—and no spot in the chamber is shielded from its reflection. There is no treasure here aside from the *Dark Mirror*, which cannot be detached from the walls of the chamber.

Medusa

The medusa was another captive who chafed at her confinement, eventually developing mild claustrophobia (medusa are often cut off from others of their kind, but several centuries of isolation is a bit much). She actually tried to leave more than once, but the twin bonds of the *geas* and her psychological addiction to the artifact she guarded drew her back each time.

Lypygia the medusa: AC 5; MV 9; HD 6; hp 31; THACO 15; #AT 2; Dmg 1d4+poison/1d4+poison (throwing knives); SA petrification, poison; SD immune to own gaze (casts no reflection); SW phys-

ical body only exists as temporary mirror-projection, permanently slain if killed within the mirror; SZ M (5' tall); Int very (12); AL LE; XI' 4,000.

The *Dark Mirror*

While relatively low-powered for an artifact, the mirror shares the near-invulnerability associated with other artifacts and relics. It enables its owner to change her form. It does not allow her to imitate any other individual, but it does enhance her appearance, eliminating any imperfection. So great is its power that it can even make a medusa look like a stunningly beautiful, if exotic, human, half-elven, or elven woman. Naturally, Lypygia prefers to appear in this form rather than as the supernatural horror that is her true form; she can voluntarily drop this guise at any time (say, if she were attacked and wished to use her petrifying visage) but cannot resume the comely form thereafter until a full 24 hours have elapsed.

The *Dark Mirror* also has another power which Lypygia only discovered when she was slaughtered by adventurers invading her chamber. To her surprise, she found herself not in some Baatec afterlife but inside the mirror; the bond between the artifact and its guardian caused it to trap her soul. She can manifest a physical body (it appears as if she simply steps out of the mirror, leaving no trace behind), but it fades into intangibility after 24 hours, whereupon her consciousness returns to the mirror and she can make a new body; she can also voluntarily reenter the mirror before the 24 hours are up. If slain outside the mirror, she immediately reappears within the mirror but cannot then make a new body until another 24 hours have passed. None of her projected bodies has any reflection, since in a sense each already is a reflection of her mirror-self.

The mirror's third power is that its guardian can cause any creature reflected in it to be drawn into the mirror, where it is faced by a double of diametrically opposed alignment but with exactly the same powers, who seeks to destroy the original at once. With Lypygia's aid, the double usually succeeds in short order, whereupon the original disappears and the duplicate materializes outside the mirror. The materialized duplicate possesses all the items and memories of the vanished character but is sometimes of the opposite sex and always has a different dominant hand (if the original was right-



handed, the replacement is left-handed, and vice-versa); usually the double immediately departs, intent on wreaking as much mayhem on the unsuspecting world as possible. Lypygia has no control over these reversed characters created by the mirror, although most are grateful for their creation—she might have considerable trouble if, say, the anti-paladin happened to be duplicated. Note that this power of the mirror is automatic when Lypygia is absent but only works when she wills it if she is inside the mirror or even within its chamber.

Any offensive spell directed at the mirror rebounds on the caster and his or her associates. Any attack with a weapon (such as sword, mace, or axe) bounces off, inflicting damage to the wielder equal to either double what the attack would normally do (successful saving throw) or triple damage (failed saving throw). The mirror can only be destroyed from within via a *retributive* strike, and even this only destroys one of the three panels. The *retributive strike* kills everyone in the mirror at the time (including the medusa), with one possible exception: if the percentage dice roll to determine the fate of the wielder of the staff broken to create the *strike* indicates that he or she would have been blasted to another plane, that character becomes trapped in the mirror in the medusa's place, with all the same powers and restrictions.

Any items created within the mirror by its absorption/opposition power vanish along with the defeated duplicate (if the character drawn into the mirror triumphs against his or her double) or replace the originals, which then vanish, with exact copies having all the same powers and properties (if the duplicate wins the battle).

Room 28. hag's Drawing Room

This pleasant chamber looks and is furnished like a drawing room (a chamber to which one withdraws after a meal or gathering). A comfortable stuffed chair, a card table, a globe stand (holding the *False Orb*, unless it is currently in the hag's vacant eye socket), lamps, lidded chamber pot, an end table—bearing a mortar and pestle (for grinding bones), samovar (which provides an endless supply of exceptionally foul tea), a dirty teacup, an unwashed bowl crusted with gruel (the wooden spoon in the bowl is actually a *Murlynd's* spoon), and wooden wainscoting give the place a lived-in look. The hag

can usually be found in the chair, either sleeping (mouth open and snoring horribly) or laying out fortune-telling cards in various patterns. She loves to gull strangers, lulling their suspicions by playing a harmless old woman, a crazed crone who offers to tell their fortunes if they will “cross her palm with silver.” She then either entrances them with the *hypnotic crystal ball* (by telling them to gaze deep, deep within the globe to see what the future holds for them), puts them to sleep and throttles them, or lunges forward with cracked and blackened iron teeth just as she delivers her punch line. If seriously threatened, she either flees or feigns surrender, begging the “nice gentlemen” (or ladies, as the case may be) not to harm “poor old Ydora” and promising to tell them all she knows if they spare her—only to send them to their doom against one of the other dungeon denizens with her lies and half-truths.

The main treasure here is the *False Orb*. Note that the hag has both a grudging admiration and a strong thirst for vengeance against the long-vanished wizard (he did outwit her, after all) and is likely to lose her composure when his name comes up, screeching and ranting until she regains control of herself (“Oops, sorry-heh heh-temper, temper”).

Hag

Ydora sought out Master Blaise in the guise of a comely *tiefling* wizard of great skill who petitioned him to accept her as an apprentice and *bedmate*. She hoped thus to master all his secrets before strangling him and converting his withered soul into larvae, little suspecting that he was immune to such beguilements. Each learned much from the other, but he gained much more than he gave. Together they constructed the *False Orb*, whereupon he turned the tables on her, gifting her with the orb yet imprisoning her here. Deprived of the ability to travel the planes and bound to this one spot, she cannot leave this dungeon level without his permission, which has never been given. While for one who wandered the Grey Wastes at will to be so fettered is irksome, that is nothing compared to the annoyance of having been outsmarted—and by a mortal! By contrast, it is merely irritating that much of the knowledge she seeks has been entrusted to another (the illithid); the mind flayer refuses to allow her access to the books and she has so far feared to attack him, lest it activate her *geas*.



Instead, she has used her hug eye to spy on the illithid and when possible read over its shoulder, thus garnering piecemeal the information she craves (Ydora's hug eye has the added ability of a wizard eye). She enjoys destroying the all-too-infrequent intruders, but prefers to capture the most handsome male in the group when possible for enforced dalliance before she eats him. Ydora knows all the powers of the artifact she guards and never hesitates to use them; the *False Orb* is a particularly potent item in her hands.

Ydora the hag (night hag): AC 0; MV 9; HD 8; hp 40; THACO 13; #AT 1; Dmg 2d6 plus disease (bite); SA cause *disease* (as 3rd-level cleric spell), spell-like powers; SD spell-like powers, immune to *sleep*, charm, fear, fire, and cold magics, immune to weapons of less than +3 bonus; SW one-eyed (left socket empty), silver and cold iron weapons do full damage; SZ M (5' tall); Str 18/00 (+3 attack, +6 damage), Int exceptional (16); AL NE; XP 12,000.

Special Abilities: know alignment (at will), *magic missiles* (four missiles per spell, 5/day), *polymorph self* (at will), *ray of enfeeblement* (3/day), *sleep* (at will, affects one target of up to 12th level or 12 HD).

Special Equipment: charm of *blackness* (become ethereal at will, gain +2 bonus to all saving throws, immunity to disease), *hug eye*, *false Orb of Dragonkind*.

False Orb of Dragonkind

The *False Orb of Dragonkind* in its inactive state is a huge crystal globe some three feet across, mounted in a golden half-frame. In this form it is opaque but glows slightly, with vague swirls hinting at some fire buried deep within. Anyone gazing into it other than its creators (Master Blaise and the hag) causes it to slowly become more transparent; the glow slowly increases, with the effect identical with that of a *hypnotic crystal ball*. If lifted from its stand (a feat that requires at least 18/51 Strength), it shrinks to the size of a normal crystal ball (about seven inches in diameter).

Upon utterance of the command word (known only to Master Blaise and Ydora), the orb shrinks to the size of an eyeball and can be plopped into any empty socket. In this form, the *False Orb's* powers are fully active, allowing the hag access to all the special spells she would gain were she part of an active *covey-curse*, *polymorph other*, *animate dead*,

dream, *control weather*, *veil*, *forcecage*, *vision*, and *mind blank* (each once per day). Furthermore, it enables her to shift form and adopt the appearance and powers of any of the other three hag types: an *annis*, *greenhag*, or *sea hag*. Should she lose the *False Orb* while in one of these assumed forms, she is locked in that form until she can regain the precious item.

Room 29. Cloakers' Candle Room

An abandoned lab, this place is filled with work tables covered with all manner of derelict equipment: alembics, retorts, beakers, pestles, mortars, tubes of chemicals and components, and copper tubing. It is an alchemist's dream, now all dust-covered and crusted with dehydrated substances. Candles sit on every available surface, hundreds of them, in all colors and sizes (a few are even free-standing on 3-foot-high wrought-iron tripods). Dribbled wax beads are thick on the floor, making it very uneven and hazardous for walking. The candles are lit, creating myriad weird shadows on every wall. A spell cast long ago replenishes the candles, so when one gutters out, a new one appears in its place within 2d6 turns and self-ignites; any extinguished wick relights itself in 1d10 rounds.

None of the components, compounds, or equipment left here is still usable; Master Blaise abandoned it because it had become too old and brittle but sentimentally decided not to throw it out. The cloakers who lurk here slide to and fro, silent save when they moan.

The artifact the cloakers guard sits on the floor in the middle of the room atop a low stone pillar of dull gray stone carved to resemble a half-burned candle, muffled in dusty cobwebs. Shaped like a petrified flame, it catches gleams of candlelight deep within its heart, throwing back the glow of the candle flames: the *Crystal of the Ebon Flame*. The cloakers cannot access its powers, being too alien in mind and spirit, but sometimes they join in a weird silent dance around it, accompanied by the moans of one or two of their number who keep vigil even at such moments. Any of them would die to keep its beauty from being taken from them, were they not doubly bound by gratitude to the wizard for giving them a refuge (when their homeland was destroyed) as well as a purpose (the *geas*).



The cloakers know that they guard the true door to the inner chamber, but since the wizard imprisoned creatures they greatly fear as The Vault's interior guardians, they instinctively prefer to die than fail in their duty.

Cloakers

The cloakers are perhaps the most unusual guardians in this place. They rarely communicate with the other guardians (and then only in crude pantomime) and seem intent on keeping anyone from opening the vault they guard. They no longer remember what is within the vault—that memory has apparently been magically erased—but they know the very thought of its being opened fills them with dread and panic. The cloakers share a group mind; each can see and feel everything that befalls any of the others. Rescued by Master Blaise when their Underdark colony was wiped out by adventurers, they view their cell as a refuge, not a prison, but find the presence of the vault an almost intolerable burden. They make perfect guardians, since they cannot use the artifact they guard and are desperate to keep others away from the vault and indeed this whole room.

Cloakers (10): AC 3 (body) or 1 (tail); MV crawl 1, fly 15 (D); HD 6; hp 27 each; THACO 15; #AT 1 or 2; Dmg enfolds victim or 1d6/1d6 (tail lash); SA subsonic moan, automatically bites enfolded victim for damage equal to 1d4+unadjusted AC of target each round, *shadow shifting*; SD cannot be surprised, divide damage from outside attacks between cloaker and enfolded victim (50% each), *shadow shifting*; SW *light* (when targeted at a specific cloaker, blinds it and prevents it from using its *shadow shifting* power), tail lash can only affect unenfolded targets; SZ L (8' cloakspan); Int exceptional (16); AL CN; XI 1,400 each.

Special Abilities: *subsonic* moans (one moan per round, cloaker's choice): 1st intensity (80' range)—causes unease and numbs the mind of listeners (-2 penalty to attack and damage rolls), victim slips into trance after six continuous rounds (unable to attack or defend so long as moaning continues); 2nd intensity—acts of *fear spell* (30' range, listeners must save vs. spell or flee in terror for 2 rounds); 3rd intensity—causes nausea and weakness (cone 30' long and 20' wide at apex, save vs. poison or be unable to act for 1d4+1 rounds); 4th intensity—hold

person (30' range, affects only one target at a time, duration 5 rounds); *Shadow shifting*: cloaker can manipulate shadows to obscure opponent's vision (cloaker's AC improves to 1) or creates 1d4+2 duplicates from shadows (identical in effect to a *mirror image*).

Crystal of the Ebon Flame

Minor Benign Powers: Possessor gains the ability to cast *chromatic orb* (each color orb once per week), *burning hands*, *faerie fire*, and *light*.

Major Benign Powers: Possessor gains ability to cast *fireball* (12 HD, thrice per day) and *fire shield* (twice per day).

Minor Malevolent Power: Yearning for item means possessor can never allow it out of his or her sight for long (save vs. breath weapon each hour or be forced to return to its side).

Major Malevolent Power: On being claimed by a new owner, the crystal drains the power from all his or her other magic items at the rate of one per day, starting with the most powerful (another artifact is only deactivated for 1 day).

Prime Powers: Possessor gains total immunity to fire and heat.

Side Effect: All intelligent creatures who see the glorious crystal must save vs. spell or be filled with greed, coveting the item for themselves, attempting to slay its current/former owner in order to take it for themselves.

The crystal is invulnerable to all forms of damage any mortal might inflict on it.

Room 30: The Vault

This chamber is accessible via room 29 (the cloaker room). The inside of the chamber is masked by a special *continual darkness* that can only be pierced by light created either by one of the artifacts or pseudo-artifacts found on this level or by the casting of a *limited wish* spell. Inside this darkness lurk creatures either created by the crossbreeding of mind flayers with cloakers or, more likely, summoned by the wizard out of some nightmare dimension. These hood-things drop down over their opponents' heads and engulf them, devouring the brains and taking control of the bodies that remain. If the sealed door is opened, they initially lie in wait for the outsiders to enter their quiet darkness and be ambushed; any attempt to close



the door (which opens into the room and thus can only be reached by stepping into the room and groping for it) or otherwise seal the room again causes all but five of them to come boiling out and swarm over anyone and anything they can find, only returning to their lair when all other life forms in the dungeon level have been extinguished. The hood-things are vulnerable to many weapons and forms of attack (such as most spells, fire, and cold), but they scuttle about with astonishing speed and, once attached, share any damage inflicted on them with their host.

Hood-Things (30): AC 4; MV 21 (slither or flow); HD 4+2; 21 hp each; THACO 17; #AT 1; Dmg special; SA engulfs head (filaments crumble/dissolve skull in 1d4 rounds, whereupon it devours victim's brain and seizes control of the body), control body (can access all innate special abilities of victim); SD immune to weapons of less than +3 bonus (mundane weapons simply pass through the thing, inflicting full damage to anyone underneath), all damage from more potent weapons and magic shared equally by hood-thing and victim; SW *light* spell (1d10 damage, repels creature for 1d4 rounds); SZ S (3' tall); ML fearless (20); Int N/A (alien); AL NE; XP 1,400 each.

Once the hood-things have been somehow dealt with, the inner chamber can finally be explored. It turns out to be entirely featureless except for a great block of black marble just slightly skewed off the exact center. The marble block is 3 feet long, 3 feet wide, and 2½ feet high. It has no secret door or inscription, but sounds hollow if tapped or rapped on and radiates protective magic (Abjuration) very strongly. It is a relatively simple matter to smash through the inch-thick stone walls; whatever is within cannot be seen until the block is completely smashed, as blinding light (from a *continua2* light spell cast on the interior) shines forth through every crack, creating eerie "sunbeam" effects in the chamber air (already thick with dust motes stirred up by the characters' entry). Even if the character(s) attacking the block stop pounding on it, it continues to crack and break apart like an egg hatching, to reveal a simple ebony chest with a large (15-pound) black cat sitting atop it, watching the character(s) unblinkingly.

This guardian beast is the dungeon level's final guardian. It does not molest anyone who does not disturb the chest but attacks with its vorpal claws if anyone interferes with it or its charge in any way. It has nine lives, and only by destroying it nine times can an intruder take the item it guards. Each time the guardian beast is slain, it collapses and the body morphs into another form that springs to the attack the next round. Thus, when the cat (form I) is slain, it appears as if its ghost suddenly looms up over the body (form II, the hellcat). When the hellcat is dispersed, its spine falls to the ground and forms the naga. The fallen naga's skin peels away, revealing the necrophidius. In turn, the necrophidius's head suddenly swells into the volt. The slain volt's head shimmers and becomes a penanggalan, the volt-body changing into dangling intestines and other trailing organs. The defeated penanggalan bulges with dozens of spontaneously generated maggots, becoming the vargouille, infested with the yellow worms of a Son of Kyuss. This loathsome thing, when destroyed, collapses into a boiling mass of protoplasm that swells into a froghemoth ("huge and weird"). Finally, the fallen froghemoth lies quiet for a round, then begins to heave as the ninth and final form tears its way out of the bloated corpse: the false tarrasque (identical to the true tarrasque in every way except that this magical imitation is only one-fifth the size).

The Guardian Beast (multiple forms).

Note that, in all of its forms, the guardian beast has ML fearless (20), Int exceptional (16), and AL LN. Note also that not all of these forms correspond exactly to the standard abilities of actual creatures of that type, having been enhanced or altered by the Master Blaise.

Form I, cat: AC 5; MV 18, climb 15, leap 15; HD 2; hp 16; THACO 18 (bite) or 13 (vorpal claws); #AT 3; Dmg 1d2+5/1d2+5/1d3 (claw/claw/bite); SA vorpal claws (penetrate any armor; item saving throws apply), rear claws (automatically rake for 1d2+5/1d2+5 if both forepaw attacks hit on same target); SD immune to all spells and to weapons of less than +3 magical bonus; SZ S (2' long); XI' 420.

Form II, hellcat: AC 6; MV 15; HD 7+2; hp 34; THACO 13; #AT 3; Dmg 1d4+1/1d4+1/2d6 (claw/



claw/bite); SA can attack ethereal targets; SD visible only in darkness (appears only as glowing outline), immune to all mind-controlling magics (sleep, charm, *hold*), magical weapons only do base damage, immune to special powers and abilities of magical weapons (such as the severing power of a vorpal weapon); SW holy water (1d8 points per vial), bless (1d8 points per casting); MR 20%; SZ L (6' tall); XP 5,000.

Special Ability: telepathy (to LE creatures only, range 90 feet).

Form III, naga: AC 3; MV 15; HD 12; hp 62; THACO 9; #AT 2; Dmg 1d6/2d4 (bite/constriction); SA spit poison (30' range, save vs. poison or die instantly, no damage on successful save); SD spells; SZ L (20' long); XP 7,000.

Spells: protection from good and evil, light; hold person, heat metal; prayer; free action.

Form IV, necrophidius: AC 2; MV 9; HD 4; hp 21; THACO 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+paralysis (bite); SA bite causes paralysis for 1d4 turns (save vs. spell, not vs. paralyzation or vs. poison, to resist), *dance of death* (all who see it must save vs. spell or be mesmerized, unable to attack or defend themselves for as long as the necrophidius dances); SD totally silent, immune to poison and all mind-affecting magics (*sleep, charm, hold*), cannot be turned; SZ L (9' long); XP 420.

Form V, volt: AC 3; MV levitation 6 (D); HD 4+2; hp 15; THACO 17; #AT 2; Dmg 1d4/2d6 (bite/tail lash—electrical damage); SA once attached, automatically sucks blood (1d4) and strikes with tail (2d6) each round (no attack rolls needed); SD immune to electricity; SZ S (head 1' across, tail 3' long); XI' 420.

Form VI, penanggalan: AC 0; MV fly 12 (D); HD 8; hp 44; THACO 13; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+special (bite)/1d4 (acid dripping from intestines); SA the initial sight of a penanggalan is so horrible that the viewer must save vs. spell or suffer the effects of *feebly blind* (those who make their saves are merely stunned for 3d4 rounds), hypnotic gaze (save vs. spell at -3 penalty or follow the penanggalan's every command), bite drains 1d6 hp worth of blood each round plus 1d4 points of Strength and 1d4 points of Constitution (*cure* spells cannot restore the lost

points; they *only* return if the victim receives *dispel evil*, otherwise he or she continues to waste away—once the curse is dispelled, the lost ability points return at the rate of 1 per every three days); SD immune to all mind-influencing magics, half damage from spells and all nonsilver weapons; SW silver weapons inflict full damage; SZ S (2' tall); XI' 7,000.

Form VII, vargouille Son of Kyuss: AC 8; MV fly 12 (B); HD 3+3; hp 24; THACO 15; #AT 2; Dmg 1d4 (bite); SA kyuss-worm, bite damage is permanent on a failed save vs. poison, *fear* (30' sphere-save vs. magic or flee in terror), touch has 25% chance of causing disease (leprosy-fatal in 1d6 months, permanently lose 2 points of Charisma per month, negates all *cure wounds* spells, wounds heal at one-tenth normal rate, negated only by *cure disease*); SD regenerates 2 hp per round, immune to mind-affecting magics (*sleep, charm, hold*); SW may be turned (as Special undead), hates light (blinded by daylight or *con tinual light*), regeneration may be halted (by fire, acid, lightning, holy water, or contact with holy symbols); SZ S (3' wingspan); XI' 6,000.

Kyuss-worm: Once per round, a fat green worm leaps from the undead vargouille and attempts to burrow into the flesh of the nearest victim (normal attack roll to determine success). The worm reaches the brain in 1d4 rounds, transforming the victim into a Son of Kyuss (AC 10, HD 4) with all the fear, regeneration, and disease-causing powers of the original. While on the skin the worm may be killed by contact with silver, cold-iron, or blessed objects; during the 1d4 rounds it is burrowing it can be destroyed by *cure disease* or *remove curse*.

If the attacking vargouille receives enough damage to reduce it to -10 hp, it explodes, showering the fat yellow maggot-worms everywhere (some 1d4 will land on each person in the room at the time).

Form VIII, froghemoth: AC 2 (tentacles) or 4 (body) or 6 (tongue); MV 2, swim 4, hop 8; HD 16; hp 102 (body) plus 1d4+18 per tentacle; THACO 5; #AT 1 (10'-long barbed tongue, Str 18/00) or 4 (tentacles); Dmg 5d10 (bite) or 1d4+4/1d4+4/1d4+4/1d4+4 (tentacles); SA swallow whole (on natural attack roll of 19 or 20, 4d4 damage per round, victim passes out after 2 rounds, totally digested at -10



hp), frenzy (if tongue is severed, tentacles inflict $\times 2$ damage— $2d4+8$ each—for $1d4+1$ rounds); SD immune to normal fires, half damage from large or magical fires, electrical attacks cause only 1 point of damage per die; SW electrical attacks *slow* the froghemoth for 1 round); SZ H (18' long, 10' wide); XP 14,000.

Form IX, false tarrasque: AC -3; MV 15; HD 14; hp 120; THACO 7; #AT 6; Dmg $1d12/1d12/2d12/5d10/1d10/1d10$ (claw/claw/tail lash/bite/gore/gore); SA charge (+2 to attack rolls), bite acts as *sword of sharpness* (bites off and swallows head or limb on attack roll of 18+), terror aura (creatures of less than 3 HD are frozen in place, those of 3 to 7 HD or levels flee in panic, those of 7+ HD may save vs. paralyzation to resist this effect); SD immune to psionics, carapace is immune to nonmagical weapons, to heat and fire, and to lightning *bolts*, cone of *cold*, and magic missiles (1 in 6 chance of its carapace reflecting such spells back at their casters); SZ L (10' long); XP 15,000.

Adventurers that can defeat or slay this multiple monster deserve the treasure that lies in the unlocked and untrapped chest: a facsimile of the fabled *Mace of St. Cuthbert* (abandoned by the legendary hero when he ascended to godhood and switched to his trademark cudgel). A sophisticated variant of *Nystul's* magical *aura* causes it to strongly radiate magic and to appear to have all the properties of a +5 Lawful Good *mace of disruption*. However, the false mace can be picked up and wielded by characters of any alignment—an unsubtle hint that this is not the real thing. Even casual investigation reveals that the handle is hollow (Intelligence checks allow the characters to remember legends that the actual relics of the saint-bits of his bones-are said to be encased within the weapon).

Anyone impious as to look within finds a scroll that bears two very complex spells: ruin of *colourless fire* and *invoked devastation*. Each of these is a 9th-level wizard spell that PC and NPC spellcasters have only one-third the normal chance to learn (if the campaign uses *true dweomers*, or 10th-level spells, as introduced in *High Level Campaigns* [TSR#2156], then these spells fit into that category, being more potent than most 9th-level magics).

The first is an Evocation (*colourless fire*), and the

second is an Invocation (*invoked devastation*). Both are of exceptional potency, capable of devastating an area totally, stripping it of all life and leaving only a wasteland or desert in its place. Both spells are Master Blaise's re-creations of the effects that destroyed the old Suel and Baklunish homelands centuries ago, creating the Sea of Dust; somewhat more limited in power than the originals (luckily), they affect an area with a diameter of 1 mile per level of the caster. The "material" component of both spells is the life-force of the caster, making them akin to a *retributive strike* that inflicts one HD of damage per level of the wizard. Naturally, these spells represent dangerous knowledge, and all sorts of people will go to great lengths to get their hands on them—either to attempt to destroy the scroll or to employ it themselves.

Room 31. Down

Spiral stairs lead down into room 32 of the bottom-most level; see the "Lichland Map."

Scenarios: Intruders

This subsection contains five miniscenarios for use with The Vault Level. However, should the foes presented here prove too much for PC monsters before all the scenarios are exhausted, it is still possible to utilize the remaining scenarios, applying them to the Lichland section.

As Master Blaise knew so long ago, a lost treasure in a forgotten dungeon is sure to attract attention sooner or later. In the course of this scenario (which can easily cover months or even years; the DM should be deliberately vague about the passage of "down time"), the following intruders may, at the DM's discretion, appear to enliven the guardian PCs' existence (or shorten it). The outsiders have different motives and tactics to match: the xorn are simple marauders, the drow ruthless and well-organized, the paladins single-minded and direct, the master thieves subtle and devious. The final adventure hook hinges on the player realization that while their characters are each bound to protect his, her, or its own artifact, the *geas* does not prevent them from attacking one another, destroying their fellow guardians, and stealing the treasures they guard. Some of these scenarios, then, are suitable for a group of players good at working

together against a common threat; others are the natural result of groups that play their evil monster PCs as selfish and greedy.

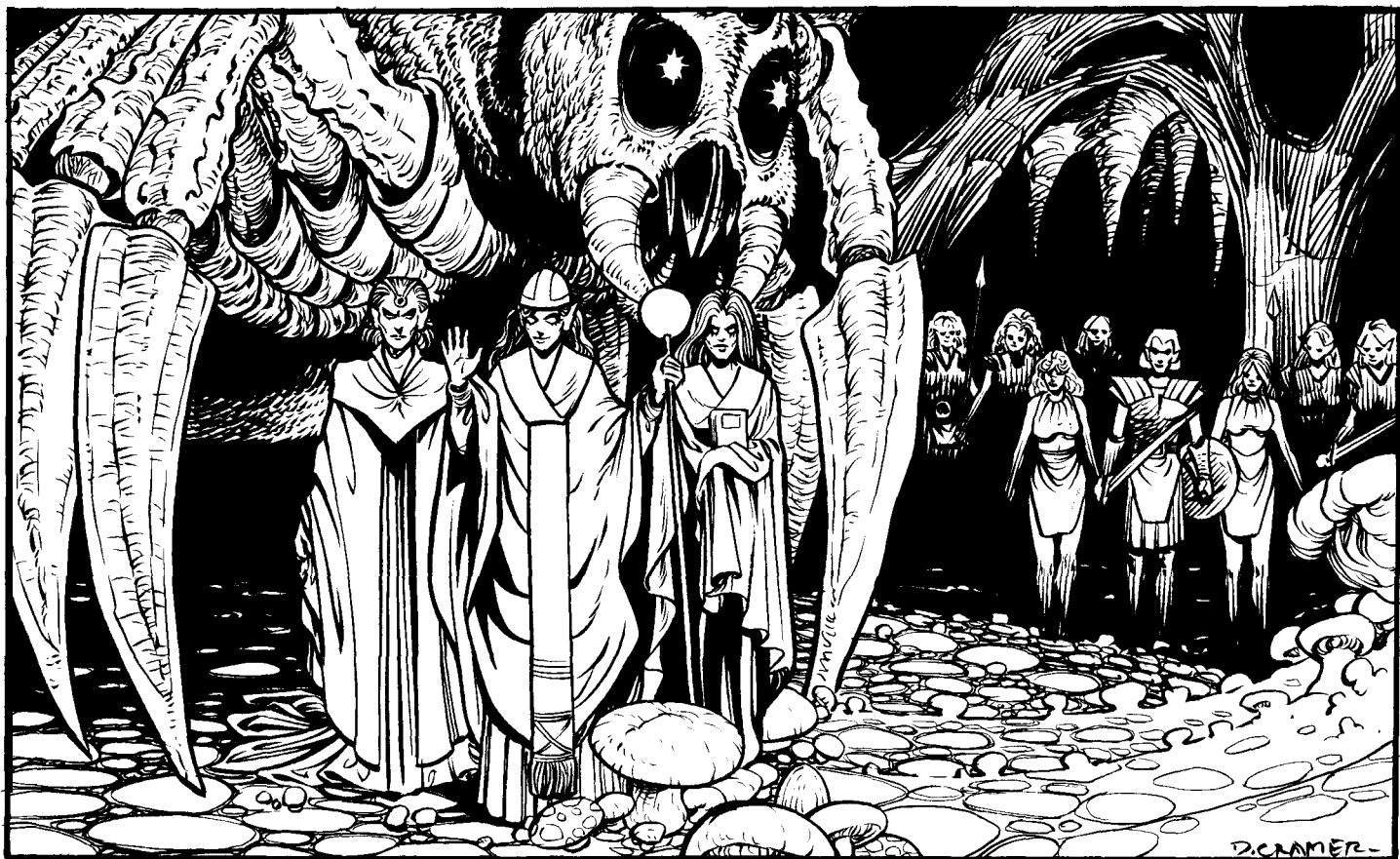
Intruders from Above

As noted in the first part of this adventure ("Goblintown"), this dungeon level can be accessed at three points from the goblin caves: the spiral stairs behind the secret door (area 20 on the Caves of the Yar-Gock Map), the open well shaft (area 9), and the secret trapdoor in the jail cell (area 2). At some point during the goblin adventure, either the player character goblins or their adventurer adversaries may deliberately or accidentally descend by one of these methods into the lower level. Most such intruders meet a nasty death in very short order, slain by the beholder, troll, or whatever other guardian they happen to stumble across first. Only the mind flayer, antipaladin, or doppelganger is likely to try to capture them alive—the first to charm and educate ("season") them a little, the second to pump them for information and practice her wiles on them, the third out of desperation for outside contact. Play out the various encounters, remembering that any intruder must be very persuasive to survive beyond the first few seconds of contact with any of the denizens of this level.

One fun option the DM might want to try is to assign both sides to the players—the goblin(s) or adventurers to one group of players and the guardian monster to another. In fact, this might make a good segue from the previous adventure to this one—a player who's already lost his or her character(s) to the NPC adventurers might enjoy handing them their heads on a plate. If the intruders are PC goblins, make sure the player with the guardian is someone who's willing to roast the intruders if they don't give it a really, really good reason not to (a player who's deeply into role-playing or who's also a part-time DM would be a good choice). Don't be afraid to intervene if, in your judgment, the guardian PC is giving the player characters too many breaks or being too patient with them. Remember that, except for Ellis, any of the monster PCs found here are unable to venture far from the dungeon, and even she is deeply concerned with keeping a low profile.

Xorn

Like earthquakes, xorn are a normal hazard in any dungeon—given enough time, an underground installation experiences one or the other, if not both. The DM has two choices regarding the xorn infestation when it occurs. The first is to treat this as a normal group of xorn attracted by the jewel casing





of one or more of the artifacts or pseudo-artifacts stored here: the doppelganger's ring, hag's orb, and cloak's *crystal of ebon flame*. The DM can extend this by ruling that the xorn also express interest in jewels set in the pommels of the troll's *vorpal sword* or the anti-paladin's unholy *sword*, in the binding of some of the tomes in the illithid's library, and in the crystal cage imprisoning the *false hand*.

The second, more insidious, option is to assume that these xorn are actually enhanced xaren (see the *MONSTROUS MANUAL* tome) that have been magically altered by some foe of Master Blaise (you don't become a high-level wizard with an artifact and monster collection without making some enemies). In this case, instead of precious metals and minerals, they are attracted by the smell of magic—the more powerful the better. They may not be able to digest artifacts or even pseudo-artifacts, but they can certainly swallow them and carry them away in their gullets, possibly disgorging them later at the behest of the wily wizard or enchantress who sent them. Allowing their charges to be borne away in this fashion would certainly trigger the malign effects of the player characters' *geases*, giving them an excellent motive to attempt to stop these marauders.

In any case, the xorn appear in triple the usual numbers, although not all of these necessarily emerge from the surrounding rock and show themselves at first. Whether they swarm over a specific target or scatter and attempt several targets at once depends on the DM, but remember that these monsters act more on instinct than planning, drawn by their insatiable hunger. Often, they show great cunning in using their phase-through-rock power to strike suddenly from cover. They are capable of understanding a threat or striking a bargain but do not simply "go away" without at least token appeasement, instead feigning a retreat only to return when the guardians' guard is down.

Xorns (3d4): AC -2; MV 9, burrow 9; HD 7+7; hp 44 each; THACO 13; #AT 4; Dmg 1d3/1d3/1d3/6d4 (claw/claw/claw/bite); SA ambush; SD hide in stone, immune to fire and cold (normal or magical), resistant to electricity (half damage on failed save, none on successful saving throw), half damage from edged weapons; SW full damage from blunt and piercing weapons, move *earth* (*stuns xorn* for 1

round and flings it back 30 ft), stone *to flesh* or *rock* to *mud* (lowers its AC from -2 to AC 8 for 1 round), *passwall* (1d10+10 damage), *phase door* (instantly slain if phasing through rock at the time); SZ M (5' tall); ML champion (17); Int average (B-10); AL N; XI' 4,000 each.

Special Abilities: phase through stone (-5 penalty to opponent's surprise roll). Xaren special ability: can attempt to bite magical weapons as if attacking AC -2 (if successful, weapon must make item saving throw vs. crushing blow or be destroyed).

The Drow Embassy

This group of drow, led by a high priestess of Lolth, have been drawn by a vision from the demon goddess. They either seek a specific artifact—the *hand of Vecna*, *crystal of ebon flame*, and *wand of Orcus* are all good possibilities—or intend to clean out the entire dungeon level and plunder all its magics. If the former, it is probably best, from a story point of view, if the artifact they target is one guarded by a player character rather than an NPC guardian. If the latter, it's best if they begin by wiping out an NPC, giving the player character guardians minimal warning that danger threatens. Note that this group, assembled especially for this mission (hence the presence of Lolth's handmaidens—the yochi—and a retriever), is entirely under the control of the Evil High Priestess—the lesser drow fear to disobey any order from one who in this mission is a direct representative of the goddess. Thus, even if ordered to undertake some suicidal action, on a successful morale check, they obey (of course, should the mission fail, she can expect to be assassinated by one of her underlings). Ardulae is accompanied by an assistant (Molvayas) for additional clerical support, as well as her longtime bodyguard and lover (Hyluan) and five lesser warriors (all of whom chafe at being outranked by a male, even one so skilled as Ardulae's champion). The wizard Malagar Vrinn and his two yochi companions, the sisters Quave and Qulae, round out the party with considerable magical firepower, not to mention cunning. The retriever, loaned to Ardulae for this mission, answers only to the high priestess, the yochi, or the junior priestess (in that order); should these be slain or incapacitated it follows its own course, preying on the remaining drow as happily as any other creature it should happen to meet.



Drow Powers

All drow share the following special powers and weaknesses: *dancing lights*, *darkness*, *detect magic*, *faeriefire*, *know alignment*, *levitate* (each once per day). In addition, the priestesses can cast *clairvoyance*, *detect lie*, *dispel magic*, and *suggestion* (also each once per day). All dark elves can move absolutely silently and, thanks to their *drowish cloaks of elvenkind*, are 75% undetectable in darkness. All have exceptionally keen elven senses—120-foot infravision, detect secret doors as elves, detect stonework and slope as dwarves, rarely surprised (only 1 in 10 chance). All gain +2 bonuses to all saving throws from all forms of magical attack, in addition to their magic resistance (which varies according to level but is always at least 50%). All know drow silent hand language as well as Drow (a dialect of Elven), standard Elven (in somewhat archaic form), Common (ibid), Underdark Common, and Gnomish (Svirfneblin); the priestesses, yochi, and retriever also speak a demonic Arachnid tongue.

Drow Weaknesses

Besides the chaos and infighting that result from worshiping a spider demon as your goddess, the drow's weakness is light. They suffer -2 attack and Dexterity penalties when in bright light (the equivalent of a *light* or *continual light* spell), and spells targeted at foes standing in light grant the targets a +2 bonus to their saving throws. Finally, drow attacking into areas filled with light suffer another -1 penalty to both attacks and grant their foes another +1 saving-throw bonus, for a total penalty of -3 and bonus of +3. Naturally, therefore, drow avoid being caught in such situations whenever they can.

Ardulae, drow female C14 of Lolth: AC -7 (*drow chain mail* +4, *drow buckler* +4, Dexterity); MV 12; hp 67; THACO 12 (8 with *mace* +4, 7 with *greater tentacle rod*); #AT 1 or 6; Dmg 1d6+5 (*mace* +4) or 1d6/1d6/1d6/1d6/1d6/1d6 plus special (*greater tentacle rod [amber]*); SA if three of the *greater tentacle rod*'s arms strike the same target in a round then victim is *numbed* (4 to all attack rolls for three rounds), if all six strike then he or she is *soul-burned* (target bursts into flame for 1 round, suffering 4d4 damage, 1d6 of which is permanent-his or her possessions must make item saving throws vs.

magical fire), spells; SD spells; MR 78%; SZ M (5' tall); Str 12, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 14, Wis 18, Cha 19; AL CE; XI' 9,000.

Special Abilities: SA- *domination* (elven targets do not gain their standard charm resistance, all males suffer 4 penalty to saving throws to resist), *command undead* (as 12th-level cleric); SD-immune to spider venom, *dispel magic* (thrice per day), *true seeing* (duration: 28 rounds).

Spells (8/8/7/6/3/2/1): 1st—*bless*, *cause fear*, *command*, *cure light wounds* (×2), *darkness*, *invisibility to undead*, *sanctuary*; 2nd—*aid*, *augury*, *heat metal*, *hold person*, *obscurement*, *silence 15' radius*, *spiritual hammer (spider-mace)*, *withdraw*; 3rd—*continual darkness*, *locate object*, *meld into stone*, *prayer*, *speak with dead*, *summon spiders* (X2) (drow version of *summon insects*); 4th—*cure serious wounds*, *divination*, *free action*, *spell immunity-fireball*, *spell immunity-lightning bolt*, *spell immunity-magic missile*; 5th—*commune*, *flame strike*, *rock to mud*; 6th—*blade barrier*, *heal*; 7th—*holy word* (affects all targets who are not CE).

Special Equipment: *ring of arachnid control* (62 charges), *greater tentacle rod [amber]* with control ring-note that the tentacle rod attacks anyone who picks it up unless he or she is wearing the proper control ring (of carved ruby set with amber, worth 20,000 gp).

Notes: Ardulae is sensuous, ambitious, and confident, completely in control of every situation-or so she believes. Truly devout, and an exceptionally dangerous opponent who does not hesitate to sacrifice her minions to achieve her goals-although she will not waste precious resources wantonly.

Molvayas, drow female C9 of Lolth: AC -2 (*drow chain mail* +3, *drow buckler* +3); MV 12; hp 48; THACO 16 (13 with *spider-fail*); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4 (*spider-flail* +3) or special (*spider wand*); SA *spider wand*, spells; SD spells; MR 68%; SZ M (5' 1" tall); Str 15, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 16, Cha 15; AL CE; XP 4,000.

Spells (6/6/3/2/1): 1st—*bless*, *cure light wounds* (X4), *darkness*; 2nd—*aid* (×2), *heat metal* (×2), *hold person*, *spiritual hammer (spider-mace)*; 3rd—*create food and water*, *continual darkness*, *prayer*; 4th—*cure serious wound* (×2); 5th—*dispel good*.

Special Equipment: *spider wand*; each round, the *spider wand* may do one of the following: (1) project a *web of entanglement* (identical effect to a *rope of entanglement* but lasts only 3 rounds; cost: 1 charge)



or (2) strike opponent in combat (attack roll required)-foe must save vs. poison or die in 1d2 rounds. The wand currently has 16 charges left.

Notes: Molvayas is devoted to Lolth's service, worships Ardulae only slightly less than the goddess herself, and is madly jealous of anyone Ardulae favors--especially Hyluan. Should the High Priestess be slain, she wildly attacks the killer, following her idol into death rather than living on in bereavement.

Xtr Hyluan, drow male F10: AC -6 (*drow chain mail* +3, *drow buckler* +3, Dex bonus) or better (*silver sword* +4, *defender*); MV 12; hp 76; THACO 11 (5 with *silver sword*, specialization, and racial bonus, 4 with *darts of homing* +3, Dex bonus, racial bonus); #AT 2 (sword specialization) or 3 (darts); Dmg 1d8+6 (*silver sword* +4 *defender*, specialization bonus) or 1d6+3/1d6+3/1d6+3 plus poison (*darts of homing*); SA drow sleep poison (save vs. poison at -4 penalty or fall asleep for 2d4 hours); SD can shift *silver sword's* bonus into attack and damage or into improving Armor Class; MR 70%; SZ M (5' 2" tall); Str 15, Dex 19, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 16; AL CE; XP 5,000.

Special Equipment: *bracers of blinding strike* (+1 to initiative rolls, thrice per day allows him to double his attacks for a round, from two sword-strikes to four), *silver sword* +4, *defender* (double damage vs. lycanthropes), twelve *darts of homing*.

Notes: Hyluan is unusually honorable for a drow-which isn't saying much. He's completely loyal to Ardulae out of pure self-interest, knowing that only her protection shields him from a nasty death at the hands of jealous underlings. He's a master of his art and is unwilling to depart without provoking a one-on-one duel with both the anti-paladin and the troll, once he becomes aware of their existence-these duels are as fair as can be expected between chaotic evil opponents (dirty tricks are part of the challenge, but it should be a real test of swordcraft).

Vironia, Irruit, Filfaere, Baltana, and Shyltama, drow females F5: AC 0 (*drow chain mail* +2, *drow buckler* +2); MV 12; hp 37, 36, 31, 28, 26; THACO 16 (12 with *short sword* +2, Str bonus and racial bonus); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+3 (*drow short sword* +2, Str bonus) or 1d3 plus poison (hand crossbows); SA drow sleep poison (save vs. poison at 4 penalty or col-

lapse for 2d4 hours); MR 60%; SZ M (4' 10" to 5' 2"); Str 17, Int very (11-12); AL CE; XP 1,400 each.

Notes: These drow are elite warriors proud to have been selected because of their skill, devotion, and viciousness, for this special mission. It galls them to be subordinate to a mere male, but they endure it because he can kill them all five-to-one without half trying. They steer clear of the wizard, who inspires them with superstitious fear, as much as possible. For the yochi, they feel sheer awe, surreptitiously observing these handmaidens of their goddess at all times and imitating their mannerisms as much as they dare.

Malagar Vrinn, drow male M11: AC -3 (*bracers of defense* AC 2, *ring of protection* +5); MV 12; hp 32; THACO 17 (15 with *dagger of venom*); #AT 1; Dmg 4d6 (demon staff, magical healing cannot restore this damage, which heals only at the rate of 1 hp per day) or 1d4+2 plus poison (*dagger of venom*) or by spell; SA demon staff, spells, poison (Type F: save or die); SD spells, yochi bodyguards; SW physically frail; MR 72%; SZ M (6' tall but very thin); Str 8, Dex 12, Con 8, Int 19, Wis 15, Cha 4; AL CE; XI 6,000.

Spellbook (4/4/4/3/3): 1st-*identify**, *magic missile***, 2nd-*ESP**, *knock***, *wizard lock**, 3rd-*fireball**, *haste**, *lightning bolt**, *slow**, 4th-*dimension door**, *Evard's black tentacles**, *polymorph other**, 5th-*cone of cold**, *domination**, *hold monster**.

* Indicates memorized spell.

Special Equipment: *staff of the abyss: fear* (by touch, save vs. spell at -6 penalty to resist), *summon fiend* (one yochi, who serves the wielder to the best of her ability for 1 day before returning to the Demonweb; once per day), transform self into tanar'ri (*vrock*, *hezrou*, or *babau*-see "Demons Unbound" for a variety of demonic statistics, but without ability to gate in other demons-once per day for 5 rounds, healing 1d6× 10% of all damage suffered upon transformation and again upon resuming drow form), *slippers of spider climbing*; *ring of spell-storing* (four spells: *cloudkill*, *teleport*, *monster summoning III* [spiders]; *Lolth's faithful spider* [drow variant of *Mordenkainen's faithful hound*]).

Notes: Ancient even for a drow (he is well over 1,000 years old), Malagar is emaciated and exceedingly tall for an elf. Brittle in appearance-his hands tremble constantly and he has sudden little twitches-he is in fact tough as an old tree root and



very, very dangerous, both for his magical powers and his cunning. As befits a powerful and experienced wizard, he is cautious to preserve his person (his fellow drow whisper that he never enters a room without spotting/knowing three ways to leave it) but glories in unleashing magical death on his enemies.

Quave and Qulae, Yochi virago (2): AC -10 (blessing of *Lolth*); MV 12 (in human or yochi form) or web 6 (as spider); HD 6+6; hp 34, 36; THACO 15 (13 with Strength bonus), #AT 1 (spider form) or 2 (drow form) or 8 (yochi form); Dmg 1d8+poison (bite [in spider form]) or 1d6+8/1d3+poison (*drow* short sword +4, Str bonus/hand crossbow plus poisoned bolt [in drow form]) or 1d4+4 x8 (pseudopods plus Str bonus [yochi form]); SA poison (Type F: save or die), gaseous form, tanar'ri powers, spell-like powers; SD gaseous form, immune to weapons of less than +2 bonus, immune to poison, gas, nonmagical fire, and electricity, halfdamage from cold or magical fire, tanar'ri powers, spell-like powers; SW gaseous form, cold iron weapons cause normal damage; MR 50%; SZ M (drow, human, or yochi form) or L (giant black spider); ML champion (16); Str 18/81 (+2 attack, +4 damage), Dex 13, Con 18, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 19 (drow or human form) or -5 (yochi form); AL CE; XI' 11,000 each.

Tanar'ri Powers: charm person, darkness 15' radius, infravision, limited telepathy (can communicate with any intelligent being), spider climb, stone shape, teleport without error, web.

Special Abilities: domination, mindlink, probe, attraction, contact, ESP, invisibility, phobia amplification, psychic impersonation.

These twin yochi are specially favored by Lolth, allowing them to keep their natural Armor Class no matter what form they assume (most yochi are AC 10 in elven or spider form). If seriously threatened, they assume gaseous form (which has the same effect on any air-breathing creature as a stinking cloud roughly 10 feet tall and 5 feet in diameter). In this form, they have no physical attack but can use their innate tanar'ri abilities and spell-like powers. Their gaseous form makes them immune to all physical damage except from magical cold, magical fire, and magic missiles. However, it also makes them vulnerable to two special attacks: gust of

wind inflicts 6d6 points of damage against the yochi in gaseous form and wind walk slays one utterly (no saving throw, no MR check).

Xxm the Retriever: AC -2; MV 18 (innate spider climb ability); HD 10+10; hp 90; THACO 9; #AT 4; Dmg 3d6/3d6/3d6/3d6 (cleaver forelimbs); SA eye beams, fear (all of less than 4th level or 4 HD must save vs. spell or flee for 2d6 rounds upon viewing a retriever), mandibles (any target struck by at least two cleaver attacks in the same round will be restrained by mandibles [Str 21]); SD regeneration (2 hp per round); SW damage from magical weapons does not regenerate; SZ H (12' tall but with spidery limbs); ML fanatic (18); Int low (7); AL CE; XI' 15,000.

Eye Powers: eye #1-fireball (12d6 damage, 90' range, 5' blast radius, save vs. breath weapon for half damage); eye #2-cold ray (12d4+12 damage, 90' range, affects one target, save vs. breath weapon for half damage); eye #3-lightning bolt (12d6 damage, 60' long and 5' wide, save vs. breath weapon for half damage); eye #4—flesh to stone (90' range, affects one target, slowed for 3d6+2 rounds on successful save vs. petrification). The retriever can fire any two eyes a round but it takes 6 rounds to recharge each, once fired.

The Do-Gooders

This band of powerful lawful good adventurers has a specific mission: to track down and destroy the anti-paladin Ellis, who eluded them once before. The band includes Sir Aethelstan, a 15th-level paladin; Lady Caliba, a 9th-level paladin; Jezlo of Delveshire, a 7th-level ranger; Melays Glorioso, a 12th-level wizard; and Lord Saeral, a 7th-level cleric.

The "Do-Gooders" may accept the anti-paladin's surrender if one is offered, disarming and binding her in order to take her back for trial and execution at the monastery presented in Section 3 ("Lichland"). They are equally likely to hold her trial here and now, the senior paladin acting as judge and his assistant as executioner. Note that if Ellis the anti-paladin is being played as an NPC (if no player chose her as his or her character), then she does *not* surrender, preferring to go down fighting to the bitter end; as befits both her patrons (Nerull and Kelanen).

Sir Aethelstan's companions are true crusaders: merciless toward evil foes, just and honorable in all their dealings, and utterly convinced that they are



in the right and that the gods are on their side. This makes them very dangerous, with no incentive to compromise. They are also experienced adventurers, veterans of many a dangerous mission before, who work together with frightening efficiency. If given the chance, they can piecemeal destroy most if not all of the guardians here unless the player characters work together to defeat the common foe, drawing on all their native abilities and magical weaponry. Note that the paladins, alone of all potential intruders, are not tempted by plunder, although if they become aware of them they seek to destroy especially evil artifacts (such as the Hand of Vecna or *Wand of Orcus*) or rescue hallowed ones (such as the *Mace of Cuthbert*).

If any or all of these NPCs survive their trek into the dungeon, they reinforce the priests of the Monastery in the third section (see "Lichland").

Sir Aethelstan, human male Pa115: AC -6 (full plate +4, shield +2); MV 12; hp 130; THACO 6 (1 with long sword +2, girdle of stone giant strength); #AT 2; Dmg 1d8+10 (long sword +2, girdle of stone giant strength); SA priest spells, paladin abilities; SZ M (5' 10" tall); Str 15 (20); Dex 13; Con 14; Int 12; Wis 14; Cha 17; AL LG; XP 10,000.

Special Abilities: SA—turn undead as 13th-level cleric, *detect evil intent*; SD—+2 to saves, immune to disease, *cure disease* 1/day, *lay on hands* (cure 30 hp) 1/day; aura of *protection vs. evil*.

Special Equipment: ring of featherfall.

Spells: (7/3/2/1/1): 1st—*cure light wounds* (X3), *bleed* (X2), *command*, *endure heat*; 2nd—*hold person*, *chant*, *slow poison*; 3rd—*negative plane protection*, *glyph of warding*; 4th—*free action*; 5th—*cure critical wounds*.

Lady Caliba, human female Pa19: AC 4 (full plate +3, shield +1); MV 12; hp 90; THACO 12 (9 with Str and flail +2); #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d6+4 (flail +2, Str bonus); SA cast priest spells, paladin abilities; SZ M (6' 1" tall); Str 17; Dex 10; Con 15; Int 13; Wis 15; Cha 17; AL LG; XI' 4,000.

Special Abilities: SA—turn undead as 7th-level cleric, *detect evil intent*; SD—+2 to saves, immune to disease, *cure disease* 1/day, *lay on hands* (cure 18 hp) 1/day; aura of *protection vs. evil*.

Special Equipment: three *potions of superheroism*, ring of *free action*,

Spells: (1): 1st—*cure light wounds*.

Jezlo of Delveshire, human female R7: AC -1 (Dex bonus and studded leather +3); MV 12; hp 57; THACO 14 (10 with long sword +3 and short sword +3, Str bonus); #AT 5/2; Dmg 1d8+5/1d6+5 (Str, long sword +3 and short sword +3); SA fight two-handed with no penalty, Tracking (18), Move Silently (60%) and Hide in Shadows (59%) in natural surroundings (chances halved in city or dungeon settings), +4 to hit vs. racial enemy: abominations (such as mind flayers and beholders), *animal friendship*; SZ M (5' 4" tall); Str 17, Dex 18, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 9; AL NE; XI' 650.

Special Equipment: "Balthur," long sword +3, "Sulthalidor," short sword +3, studded leather armor +3.

Melays Glorioso, human female M12: AC 2 (cloak of protection +4, armor spell); MV 12; hp 27; THACO 15 (staff +2, of power); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+2 (staff +2, of power); SA spells; SZ M (5' 8" tall); Str 9; Dex 10; Con 10; Int 17; Wis 14, Cha 11; AL NG; XP 5,000.

Special Equipment: cloak of protection +4, staff of power, wand of fire, 5 potions of healing, ring of mind shielding (also works against mind blast), ring of fire resistance.

Spellbook (4/4/4/4/4/1): 1st—armor*, magic missile*, identify**, 2nd—mirror image*, rope trick*, scare*, wizard lock*, 3rd—dispel magic*, fireball**, water breathing*, 4th—charm monster*, dimension door*, ice storm, Leomund's secure shelter*, 5th—cone of cold*, magic jar*, passwall*, teleport*; 6th—contingency*.

* Indicates memorized spell.

Lord Saeral, human male P7: AC -2 (plate mail +2, shield, Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 38; THACO 16 (14 with mace +2); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+3 (mace +2); SA spells, turn undead at 7th level; SZ M (6' 1" tall); Str 13; Dex 15; Con 10; Int 14; Wis 17; Cha 10; AL LG; XI' 2,000.

Special Equipment: ring of blinking, ring of sustenance, scroll of protection vs. undead.

Spells (5/5/4/2): 1st—*command*, *cure light wounds* (X3), *detect evil*; 2nd—*aid*, *augury*, *barkskin*, *hold person*, *know alignment*; 3rd—*cure deafness*, *hold animal*, *prayer*, *remove curse*; 4th—*cure serious wounds*, *neutralize poison*.



The Master Thieves

The master thieves' approach is utterly unlike every other intrusion to date: limited, discreet, surgical. The thieves include Kazerine, Nuth, and Tonkers. Unfortunately for the thieves, all except Kazerine are working with imperfect knowledge of the true situation.

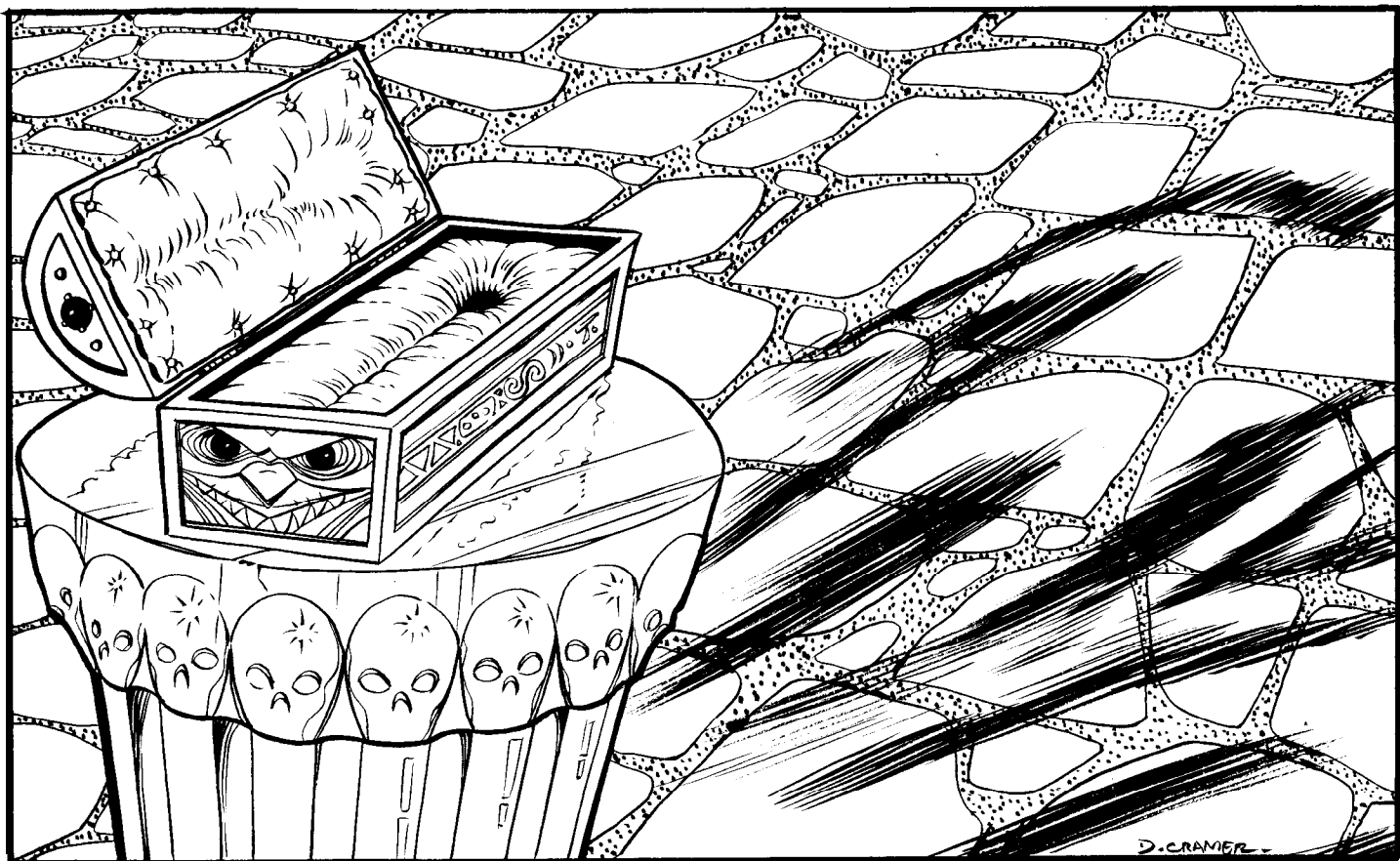
The thieves each identify a single target artifact and bend all their efforts toward that one goal, although this is not evident to the guardian monsters. The reason for this is that they are masters of deception and misdirection. The PCs become aware that a thief (Tonkers) has dared to sneak in an attempt to steal an artifact. In fact, this is merely a ruse—he's an expendable apprentice who, unknown to his unfortunate self, is distracting attention from his master (Nuth)'s simultaneous attempt to steal another artifact. Meanwhile, the third and truly superlative arch-thief, Kazerine, has slipped in and is attempting to make off with a third artifact, the true prize. Tonkers is little threat, Nuth a credible slip-

pery character who's hard to detect or pin down, but Kazerine is almost impossible to catch—if stymied, she simply withdraws to try again another day.

Should the paladins of the previous scenario come upon any of the thieves, the paladins may assume the thieves to be in the employ of the monsters-encountering both the thief and paladin bands is possible if the DM finds that the introduction of a third factor becomes necessary (if the paladins are handily defeating the PC monsters, Kazerine might take the opportunity for a backstab and the subsequent looting of the senior paladin).

The DM decides which artifact each thief attempts to steal (except for Kazerine, whose goal is to steal a few *Teeth of Dalhoar-Nar* from the mimic's study). Once Tonkers is detected, Nuth goes into action 4 rounds later, attempting to use the diversion to go after his true goal. Just 4 rounds after that, Kazerine makes her move.

Tonkers, human male T9: AC 1 (*bracers of AC 4, Dex bonus*); MV 12; hp 38; THACO 14/16 (*short*





sword +2, dagger +2 offhand attack); #AT 2 (with offhand dagger attack); Dmg 1d6+2/1d4+2 (short sword +2/dagger +2); SA backstab $\times 4$, thief abilities; SZ M (6' 1" tall); Str 12; Dex 17; Con 11; Int 7; Wis 8; Cha 13; AL N; XP 1,400.

Special Equipment: ring of swimming.

Thief Abilities: PP 27; OL 38; F/RT 53; MS 77; HS 86; DN 47; CW 73; RL 70.

Nuth, human male T20: AC 0 (bracers of AC 4, Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 130; THACO 11/13 (9/12 with short sword+3/ dagger +1 offhand attack) or 11 (6 with short bow +2 and Dex bonus); #AT 2 (with offhand dagger attack or short bow); Dmg 1d6+3/1d4+1 (short sword +3/dagger +1) or 1d8 (short bow with sheaf arrows); SA backstab $\times 5$, thief abilities; SZ M (6' 1" tall); Str 12; Dex 19; Con 11; Int 7; Wis 8; Cha 13; AL NE; XP 9,000.

Special Equipment: ring of swimming, cloak of elvenkind.

Thief Abilities: PP 95; OL 95; F/RT 95; MS 95; HS 95; DN 95; CW 95; RL 95; RS 75.

Kazerine, human female T30: AC -6 (bracers of AC 0, ring of protection +1, Dex bonus); MV 12; hp 50; THACO 11/13 (8/11 with short sword +4 (of sharpness)/dagger +3 (of poison) offhand attack) or 11 (2 with short bow +4 and Dex bonus); #AT 2 (with offhand dagger attack or short bow); Dmg 1d6+4/1d4+3 (short sword +4/dagger +3) or 1d8 (short bow); SA backstab $\times 5$, thief abilities; SZ M (6' 1" tall); Str 14; Dex 22; Con 16; Int 13; Wis 14; Cha 14; AL N; XI' 19,000.

Special Equipment: ring of invisibility, cloak of elvenkind, amulet of nondetection.

Thief Abilities: PP 95; OL 95 (125)*; F/RT 95 (125)*; MS 95; HS 95; DN 95; CW 95 (116)*; RL 95; BS $\times 5$, RS 100 (spell scrolls 1st-3rd), 75 (all other levels).

* Natural rolls of 96% or higher are failures; however, subtract any penalties associated with using the skill from scores in parentheses.

*High Level Abilities**:* Detect Magic: 45; Detect Illusion 55; Escape Bonds 50; Evasion 65, Fall/ Jump 55, Featherfoot 60.

** High level abilities are adapted from skills presented in *DM's Option: High Level Campaigns*. Those skills work as follows, though each ability must be consciously triggered and rolled for success as other thief skills:

Detect Magic. Spot magical emanations on areas or items in line of sight up to 60 feet away

Detect Illusion. See through visible illusions in line of sight up to 90 feet away.

Escape Bonds. A successful check indicates escape from ropes, leather thongs, manacles, chains, and even strait jackets or similar bonds.

Evasion. On successful save vs. area of effect spells such as breath weapons, fireball, lightning bolt, and similar spells, the thief suffers no damage.

Fall/jump. Safely break a fall if within 11 feet of a vertical surface for falls up to 210 feet. On successful check, subtract 210 feet from longer falls before applying damage.

Featherfoot. With feather-light footfalls, the thief can move over even a liquid surface for up to 120 feet at a rate of 18. A failed check indicates the thief sinks while only halfway across the desired distance.



Lichland

Blaise lingers yet in the bottommost level of the dungeon. Obsessed with the accumulation of power eternal, Blaise extended his life unnaturally through foul necromancy, becoming a lich. As a lich, whole new avenues of control and magic became available to him, and so he surrounded himself with masterful creations and summoned allies, all of them undead. In addition to his foul necromantic experiments, Blaise began to pursue demonology. Unfortunately for the lich, his grasp of demons and demonology is not quite up to snuff.

While Blaise is bedeviled with demon-related problems, the nearby monastery decides to have done with the dungeon and all its lurking undead and escaping demons. Unless Blaise can mount a strike force to do away with the crusade's organizers, the undead and demons, as well as all the creatures inhabiting the upper levels, are eventually swept away by wave after wave of evil-purging adventuring parties.

The bottommost level is a twisting labyrinth of catacombs, blind mine shafts, tombs, summoning chambers, and wizardly laboratories. The PC monsters on this level aid Blaise because of mutual understanding and alliance (except for the bound demon). If Blaise falls, their own lairs are compromised and laid bare. Player character choices include a bound demon, a vampire cleric, a ghost wizard, a minor death, a wraith scion, a death knight, and an undead thief (if Kazerine was successful in acquiring some of the *Teeth of Dalhoar-Nar*, specifically tooth #12). The DM should feel free to replace any of these choices with a favorite undead monster, if desired.

Rules for Lichland PCs

The denizens of this dungeon level are available for player characters. Note that each is a "generic" creature of its type so far as stats and abilities go; DMs wishing to incorporate additional variations should feel free, but should then be sure to allow all players to vary or customize their creatures as well. Players may wish to individualize their monster characters. Monster PC names and backgrounds are provided as a convenience, but players can adopt character names and personal histories of their own choice.

Simulating undead advancement is not necessary within the context of this adventure, since this is the last section. However, should DMs wish to continue playing a monster-oriented game after the conclusion of *Reverse Dungeon*, advancement options are possible. Of course, remember that PC monsters can loot the bodies of those they defeat just like traditional PC heroes. More interestingly, the DM can model monster HD advancement (and subsequent improvements in hit points, THACO, and saves) by mapping current PC monster HD to level, and then using the Wizard Experience Levels table in the Player's Handbook to track experience gained by the monster in the same way a regular PC gains experience and advances levels. In the monster's case, the HD improves.

For purposes of this adventure, allow undead and demons to "heal" damage at the same rate as normal PCs (1-3 hp/day). Additionally, *cause wounds* spells of all types actually heal undead the same number of hit points they wound a living creature.

Room Descriptions

The following descriptions give physical features of the actual chambers, plus details not already covered under the PC descriptions. Refer to the Lichland Map for the following keyed areas.

For the past few years, Blaise has communicated with the other undead under his control through his messenger Tothomes, and so the PC monsters haven't actually seen their master for quite some time, but time flies when you're undead. See room 50 for more details on this situation.

Unkeyed Rooms

Some unkeyed rooms are shown on the Lichland Map. These rooms are generally empty; however, they are intended to provide PC monsters extra space to modify their demesne, should they so desire.

Unkeyed rooms also present an opportunity for PC monsters to set up traps. The undead PCs have access to high-level magic and extensive labor resources (low-level undead) with which they can accomplish some creative endeavors. Truly enterprising PCs may even rework part of the dungeon, sponsoring new construction and masonry

Room 32. Lichland Main Entry

A narrow spiral staircase ascends through solid rock connecting this room with room 31 above.

Room 33. Hellspike Grotto Access

This natural cavern is empty except for a large iron door in the southeast corner. The door is heavily engraved with sigils and other arcane signs. Runes in several languages, including Common, warn away intruders. Additionally, the doors are *wizard locked* at the 14th level of ability, and trapped with a *glyph of warding* (opening causes 14d4 hp of cold damage on anyone touching the door).

The iron door blocks access to a stairwell leading to a wide cavern immediately below Lichland. Blaise called the cavern the Hellspike Grotto, and it is where he summoned and bound demons and devils. When adventurers based in the monastery arrive on their initial scouting mission (see "Crusades"), they burst the protections on this door leading into the Hellspike Grotto, which eventually stirs up no end of trouble (see "Demons Unbound").

Room 34. Catacombs

The corridor is uneven, mortared with roughly hewn stone blocks. Alcoves break the walls into a series of dim cavities. Relief carving between the cavities reveals a demonic undead creature, with ram's horns and skeletal wings.

Each cavity shown on the map, both square and rounded, contain ten skeletons when the adventure begins. This represents one hundred seventy skeletons available for the PC monsters to use in their foul designs. Keep track of their number as the adventure proceeds.

Skeletons (170): AC 7; MV 12; HD 1; hp 6; THACO 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 or 1d8 (claw or long sword); SD turned as wights while in catacombs, slashing and piercing weapons do half damage, immune to *sleep*, charm, *hold*, *fear*, poison, paralysis, death magic, and cold-based attacks; SZ M (6' tall); Int non- (0); ML fearless (19); AL N; XP 65.

Room 35. Demonhome

The bound demon, Blackhelm, has claimed this chamber as his own. The chamber's earthen floor is constantly saturated with blood and other foul demonic ichors and has thus become a muddy expanse. Blackhelm has utilized the skeletons of the associated catacombs (keyed to room 34) to create macabre decorations on the walls and on the ceiling, as well as animate mud and bone sculptures. Should the player playing Blackhelm think of it, skeletons coated in the ichorous mud can poison living foes who fail their saving throw for 20 hp of poison damage. A mud-coated skeleton is good for three successful strikes before the mud wears off.





When sleep claims Blackhelm, he normally throws himself on the muddy floor wherever the clutter allows. Besides bones and mud, Blackhelm keeps a locked iron chest submerged below the mud, containing a few of the demon's treasures: twenty-three **abyssal** gems each worth 300 gp, a bone figurine depicting a spider goddess worth 1,000 gp to draw or other Lolth worshipers, and five *potions of extra healing*.

To a living creature, the mud is a mild poison and requires a saving throw vs. poison for every other round spent in contact with it, inflicting 1 hp of damage on a failed save. The mud could be gathered and used as the raw ingredient of a trap, especially if used as an application poison (save or suffer 20 hp of damage, 1d4 if successful) or used to fill the bottom of a pit trap.

Bound Demon

Representing one of Blaise's few successes in demon binding (summoning is easy), the demon called Blackhelm now serves Blaise's needs. Apparently, Blackhelm's previous location was a place so horrible (Blackhelm calls it "the Wormscape") that even a demon is glad to be shut of it and so serves willingly (for now). Its true name (*uulguthug*) remains secret. Still, Blackhelm spends most of its time patrolling the corridors, although it does undertake special missions for the **lich** from time to time.

Blackhelm, greater tanar'ri: AC -3; MV 15;

HD 8+14; hp 58; **THACO** 13 (8 with 19 Str and *short sword* +2); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 +9 (19 Str and *short sword* +2); SZ M (7' tall); Int genius (17); ML champion (15); AL CE; XI' 13,000.

Notes: Blackhelm is a greater tanar'ri of the babau type. The red, corpselike demon gains its name through the fixture of a cursed ebony helm that remains permanently bound to the creature's head (the single horn most demons of this type sport has apparently been filed off), coming off only when the creature is slain. The helm stifles the demon's ability to *gate* in other demons of its type, use *fly*, and *dispel magic*. Even without these abilities, Blackhelm can still use *fear*, *heat metal*, *levitate*, and *polymorph self*, in addition to possessing the powers that all demons share. Additionally, Blackhelm is immune to nonmagical weapons and can use any weapon it finds (with 19 Strength, inflicting a +7 damage bonus).

Special Abilities: All babaus are coated in a red, jellylike slime that halves damage from all slashing and piercing weapons, as well as having a 20% chance per hit of corroding a metal weapon. Affected normal weapons must save vs. acid or corrode into uselessness, while magical weapons lose one "plus" per failed save. Finally, this slime burns exposed flesh for 1d6 points of acid damage per round of contact. All tanar'ri (demons) have the spell-like powers of *darkness 15' radius* and *infravision*. Tanar'ri resist various attack forms as follows:

Attack	Damage
Acid	full
Cold	half
Electricity	none
Fire (magical)	half
Fire (normal)	none
Gas	half
Poison	none
Silver	none

Room 36. Park Chapel

Shay Straylight, the vampiric cleric, spends much of her time here in the dark chapel, although she leaves the entire dungeon every few nights, in mist form, to hunt the surface for blood. Normally, she brings her drained victims back into the dungeon to nurture the ghouls in room 37.

The cold of the grave lives in this high, echoing chamber. Loose earth covers the floor, though necromantic sigils are usually traced in the soil. Twenty-foot-high balconies bracket the chapel, from which the rustle of bone on bone is audible. Three walls each hold a cracked altar. Black candles burn on each altar, though only the northern altar has a leering face carved on its front.

This chapel is dedicated to Nerull and, due to its magical enchantments, undead inhabitants can't be turned while they remain in this chamber. Twelve skeletons with **longbows** made of bone stand watch on the balconies (four to a balcony; each balcony hangs 20 feet over an altar). The skeletons here answer to Shay, and are not counted among the skeletons noted in room 34.

If a candle is snuffed, a shadow is summoned, which attacks the defiler (six candles total). The leering face on the northern altar *polymorphs* a living creature who touches it into a ghoul if a saving throw



vs. death magic is failed. The ghoul automatically attacks former companions first, if there are any

A secret compartment within the northern altar contains a silver chalice (worth 100 gp) that holds a draught of *potion of superheroism*, a *robe of protection +1*, and a black opal worth 300 gp. Shay is aware of these items and can use them to bolster her own or another's power if necessary.

The eastern altar also contains a secret space that serves as Shay's coffin—the space is only accessible through tiny holes drilled into the altar, which are easy enough for Shay to navigate in gaseous form.

Vampire Cleric

As a devout servant of Nerull, Shay Straylight received her finest reward when a sick sacrament transformed her into vampire. However, as part of the price for life eternal, she agreed to minister to and aid one of Nerull's servants: the lich Blaise.

Shay spends much of her time performing unholy rites for the glorification of Nerull, in the process of which she creates a few ghouls and other undead for the lich to experiment on and to beef up his interior security. Now that Blaise's demonic summoning has begun to go awry and demons begin to break free of their confinement, additional ghouls have become a necessity. Also, Blaise often calls on her to cast *positive plane protection* on special undead minions in order to render them immune to turning while the spell lasts. On the other hand, Shay has plans to create a few lesser vampire servants under her own command, and takes the opportunity to do so should any living NPC adventurers find themselves at her mercy

Shay Straylight, human female P10 of Nerull

(vampire): AC 1; MV 12, fly 18 (C); HD 8+3; hp 52; THACO 11 (9 with mace and Str bonus); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+4 plus 2 life levels drained (transferred through special mace if victim fails save vs. death magic); SA vampiric abilities, spells; SW turnable, repelled by garlic, mirrors, and forcefully presented holy symbols, suffers 1d6+1 points of damage when splashed with holy water or struck by holy symbol; SZ M (6' tall); Str 18/75; Dex 16; Con 13; Int 13; Wis 17; Cha 12; AL CE; XI' 10,000.

Special Abilities: *charm gaze* (-2 penalty on victim's saving throw), energy drain (2 levels with each successful attack), *summon* 10d10 rats or bats, Strength 18/76. Note that while wielding her *mace*

+3, the weapon allows itself to be a conduit to Shay Straylight's level-draining abilities; foes must save vs. death magic on each hit to avoid losing two life energy levels; SD-regeneration (3 hp/round), immune to nonmagical weapons, immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, poison, paralysis, and death magic, half damage from cold or electricity, assume *gaseous form*, *shapechange* (to bat), *spider climb*, automatically assumes *gaseous form* if reduced to 0 hit points.

Special Equipment: *special mace* (transfers level drain if victim fails save vs. death).

Spells (5/5/3/2/1): 1st—*curse*, *cause light wounds* (×3), *detect good*; 2nd—*hold person* (×2), *know alignment*, *silence 15' radius* (×2); 3rd—*dispel magic*, *positive plane protection* (X2); 4th—*cause serious wounds*, *poison* (reverse of *neutralize poison*); 5th—*cause critical wounds*.

Room 37. Ghoul Run

Nerull's children play and gambol in this earthen room lighted by sick, yellowish lanterns. Otherwise known as ghouls, the undead here feast on carrion provided by Shay. All in all, this is an utterly ghastly room, filled with dead and decomposing animals and humanoids in various stages of being eaten. Additionally, there are twenty-two ghouls in the chamber, which are available to the PC monsters as labor.

Ghouls (22): AC 6; MV 9; HD 2; hp 8; THACO 19; #AT 3; Dmg 1d3/1d3/1d6 (claw/claw/bite); SA paralyzation; SD immune to cold-based attacks, *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, and other mind-affecting spells; SW *protection from evil* keeps ghouls at bay, turnable; SZ M (6' tall); ML fearless (20); AL N; XP 175.

Special Abilities: a ghoul's touch inflicts paralysis on humans and demihumans (excluding elves) unless a saving throw vs. paralyzation is successful, lasting 1d6+2 rounds; any human or demihuman (except elves) killed by a ghoul becomes a ghoul in 3 days unless the body is *blessed*.

Room 38. Lab

Antioch Lom, the ghostly wizard, has renewed his interest in magic since his return to the world as a spirit. Thus, he keeps a fairly respectable wizardly lab amid the general squalor of the rest of the level. Because of his ethereal nature, Antioch often calls

upon the services of 1d4 skeletons (see room 34) as lab technicians.

Wall shelves are stuffed with recondite spell components and necromantic salts, while the main floor holds several tables covered with alembics, beakers, burners, crucibles, and a variety of other more arcane pieces of equipment. Unusual specimens of foreign plant and animal material compete with magical diagrams for space in unlikely nooks and crannies. When play begins, the lab holds 1d6 magical potions and is 20% likely to contain 1d4 minor magical items. These are items retrieved from previous fallen NPC adventurers, brought here for study. Roll in the *DMG* to determine types; roll again if an item is so powerful that the word minor can't be used to describe it.

Ghost Wizard

Antioch Lorn knew Blaise hundreds of years ago when both were beginning their wizardly careers. In fact, Antioch and Blaise were classmates in a now defunct college of wizardry. Blaise and Antioch later lost touch, and both went on to become credible wizards. However, whereas Antioch's adventuring career was cut short by a trip into a dragon's den several hundred years ago, Blaise continued to grow more powerful. Over time, the lich's memory recalled his old classmate, Antioch, and after the fulfillment of a year-long ritual, Blaise called his former classmate to serve him

as a ghostly spirit. Though **he** retained his wizardly skill, Antioch the ghost was unhappy with his reanimation and remains embittered toward all who yet live, hungering to draw the living into the cold embrace of death. He also holds close a burning resentment toward Blaise and, if given the proper opening, may yet choose to take his vengeance.

Antioch Lorn, human male M8 (ghost): AC 0; MV 9; HD 10; hp 56; THACO 11; #AT 1; Dmg age 1d4×10 years; SA see Notes; SD See below; SW turnable; SZ M (6' tall); ML average (12); Int high (14); AL N; XP 10,000.

Special Abilities; Ghosts exist on the Border Ethereal, but can materialize to take physical actions or cast spells. Ghosts can be seen by corporeal creatures across the border if the ghost so chooses; however, the mere sight of one (at the ghost's option) causes any humanoid being to age 10 years and flee in panic for 2d6 turns unless a saving throw vs. spell is successful. Foes above 6th level with ties to a power (priests) are immune to this effect, and all creatures above 8th level or HD get a +2 bonus to this saving throw. Any creature within 180 feet of a ghost is subject to a *magic jar* attack, if the ghost so chooses. Particularly violent ghosts can partially phase into the adjacent corporeal plane in order to physically attack corporeal victims or cast spells—the touch of a ghost ages those it hits by 1d4×10 years. A fully ethereal





ghost

cannot be attacked by corporeal spells or any other corporeal attack. If the ghost chooses to **semimaterialize**, it becomes vulnerable (AC 0 vs. corporeal beings) to silver (half damage) and magical (full damage) weapons. Foes upon the ethereal can attack ghosts normally.

Spells Memorized (4/3/3/2): 1st—*sleep*, *magic missile* (X2), *shield*; 2nd—*mirror image*, *knock*, *web*; 3rd—*fireball*, *lightning bolt*, *slow*; 4th—*Evard's black tentacles*, *polymorph other*; 5th—*cone of cold*.

Room 39. Crypt

Water, murky and vile, drowns the floor of this sunken crypt. Slime and mold covers the walls and ceiling. A few sarcophagi and mausoleum tops break the water's surface here and there.

The water is 3 feet deep. All movement (wading) through water is at half speed for living creatures. NPC adventurers suffer -1 penalties to all physical maneuvers and THACO rolls here.

As might be suspected, the scum-laden water is really swimming with animate dead, forty-six zombies to be exact. The zombies are available to the PC monsters for their projects; otherwise they do a good job of defending this chamber from unauthorized entry. They also raise the alarm by pounding on the mausoleum wall (room 40) and so alert the wraith scion resident there, if the wraith is inside.

Zombies (46): AC 8; MV 6; HD 2; hp 12 (average); THACO 19; #AT 1 or 1; Dmg 1d8 (pummeling undead blow); SD turned as wights while in crypt, immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, *fear*, *poison*, *paralysis*, *death magic*, and *cold-based attacks*; SZ M (6' tall); Int non- (0); ML fearless (20); AL N; XI' 65.

Room 40. Mausoleum

The wraith scion Nthalturin claims this large mausoleum for himself. Because the floor is raised, it is quite dry, if a bit humid, within the mausoleum.

However, being a mostly insubstantial spirit, very little in the material world has much interest for Nthalturin, so this chamber is mostly empty.

However, a continuous *darkness* spell occults the chamber, allowing Nthalturin to brood alone about the magic ring he wants so desperately to retrieve. Sadly, it is almost assured that the ring Nthalturin

seeks is lost to an age long past, and so the wraith scion broods all the more, alone and inconsolable.

Despite his black mood, Nthalturin remains in the lich's service, still half hopeful that the lich will eventually locate the ring. In that time, he has accumulated a small retinue of three normal wraiths, created from past victims.

Wraith Scion

Nthalturin was a creature of darkness long before Blaise descended into lichdom. In an age lost to history, Nthalturin found a magical ring and claimed it for his own. Unfortunately, the ring was tied to dark powers, and Nthalturin was slowly corrupted, eventually transformed into a shadowy wraith. Though the ring was stolen long ago, Nthalturin's wraith manifestation has slowly grown stronger in the intervening centuries. Now, few wraiths in all creation can compare with the wraith scion's raw undead might.

A power in and of himself, Nthalturin has thrown his lot in with the lich Blaise. Though it remains a dim hope, Blaise has made a promise to Nthalturin to eventually find and return the special magical ring responsible for the wraith's current undead state.

Nthalturin, Wraith Scion: AC -2; MV 16; HD 15+3; hp 72; THACO 6 (4 with *longsword* +2); #AT 2; Dmg 1d8+2 and level drain (*longsword* +2); SA energy drain, cause *fear*, *dismal breath*; SD immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, *mind-affecting spells*, *cold*, *fire*, and *electricity*; SW **turnable** (as Special); SZ M (6' 1" tall); ML average (12); Int high (14); AL LE; XI' 8,000.

Special Abilities: SA-drain 1 life energy level from a foe on a successful attack (even through its magical *longsword*), cause *fear* vs. foes of less than 4+1 HD if it chooses, *dismal breath* (inky jet of mist in a 40-foot-diameter cloud 2/day; all living creatures within the area of effect must save vs. *death magic* for 8d6 points of negative energy damage); SD-regenerate 1 hp/round, can only be hit by +2 or better weapons.

Special Equipment: *longsword* +2 (forged of pale moonsteel, allowing the wraith to grasp it).

Room 41. Embalming Chamber

Shelves bolted to the walls contain cobweb-coated embalming supplies, including a healthy supply of

bitumen. The room still smells of acrid chemicals, despite the fact it hasn't been used recently. Three long stone tables each contain a selection of empty canopic jars, just in case.

Blaise once used this room extensively, but in the last few years he hasn't come around (here or anywhere else in the dungeon, as a matter of fact).

Room 42. Darkenwell

The Darkenwell is one of the lich's creations. The deep alcove is tiled in colorful mosaics. A five-foot-wide shaft drops 10 feet to a surface of midnight-black liquid. The liquid is magically potent and exceptionally dangerous. Thus, most of Blaise's minions leave it well enough alone, for the most part.

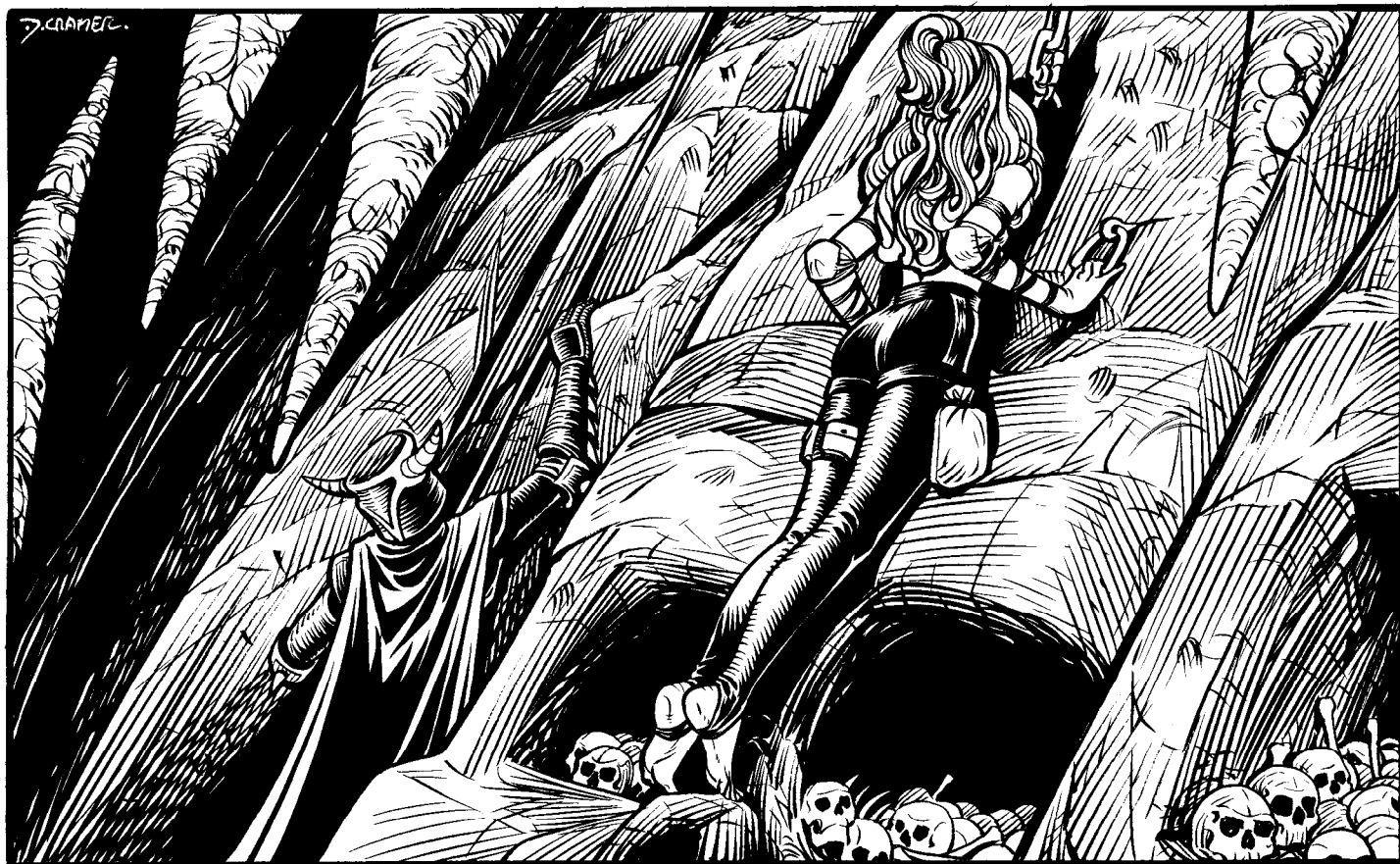
Animate or living creatures of any type that come into contact with or drink the dark liquid are affected as noted below (roll 1d20). Sometimes, vials of the liquid are gathered and stored for later use (roll for effect when vial is shattered, imbibed, or otherwise used).

- 14 No effect
- 5-6 Heals 1d8 hp damage for living or undead
- 7 Increases (or decreases) Strength to 18/00 (+3/+6) for 1 hour
- 8 Allows levitation at will for 1 hour
- 9 Renews cast spells if a spellcaster (no effect otherwise)
- 10 Imbiber's size is reduced by 50%

- 11 Skin color (or outer integument) changes to a deep purple
- 12 Imbiber suddenly exhales fire, inflicting 3d6 damage on all within 5 feet (save for half damage); drinker suffers none
- 13 Poison; save or suffer 3d10 hp damage immediately, unless undead
- 14 Polymorphs imbiber (unless a save is made) into a frog, a bat, or a nonpoisonous snake
- 15 Polymorphs imbiber (unless a save is made) into puddle of green slime
- 16 Petrifies imbiber (unless a save is made)
- 17 Slows imbiber until he receives a *remove curse* or *dispel magic*
- 18 Imbiber affected by *reverse gravity* until she receives a *remove curse* or *dispel magic*
- 19 Gender of imbiber is switched (if imbiber is alive and fails a save)
- 20 Imbiber explodes (unless a save vs. spell is made), killing imbiber (even if undead) and inflicting 4d6 damage on all others in the room

Room 43. Torture Chamber

Brave adventurers who make it into this level (and are not killed outright) are often brought here. The chamber contains a variety of contraptions designed to restrain human-sized creatures and so allow the associated embrace of a variety of infernal rigs with the restrained victim. Every one is a





top-of-the-line piece of torture equipment. One of the devices near the center of the chamber is occupied by a poor dwarf fighter who got separated from his party in the upper level. If not otherwise dealt with by PC monsters, NPC adventurers free him if they reach this room (he's a 10th-level fighter). If the death knight is not played by a PC, he can be found here 25% of the time, lovingly keeping the equipment in good working order.

Room 44. Knight's Chamber

Justin Yearwood, the death knight, claims this chamber. Ghostly funeral dirges often resound here, emanating from the single sarcophagus in the room's center. Though unnecessary, Justin likes to recline within the sarcophagus and play an enchanted wind instrument (enchanted to play despite a lack of breath by its player). Justin stole the instrument, called a bonethriven, from the mind flayer in the Vault Level. The bonethriven resembles bagpipes gone horrifyingly wrong; however, the death knight can play a decent dirge.

Death Knight

Even though Justin Yearwood knows he's a horrifying corruption of his former paladinhood, cursed by the gods for betraying his code of good, he's fairly cheerful. Of course, because his face is a blackened skull, he's always grinning, so it's difficult to be sure. Still, his two burning eye sockets are often redly lit with terrible glee, and his deep, chilling laughter echoes across the bottommost level in tolling notes of mirth on a regular basis. Justin is always most amused when employed in the torture chamber.

Justin came into Blaise's fold a few hundred years back when, as a paladin, he descended into the vault level. Blasted by the magics of the guardian creatures, Justin left his living compatriots in the grasp of a hungry mind flayer, knowing full well what grisly fate awaited them. For his cowardice, he was cursed and so returned to the point where he was afflicted. But Justin kind of likes it.

Justin Yearwood, human male Death Knight:

AC 0 (full plate); MV 12; HD 9; hp 90; THACO 11 (5 with *two-handed sword* +3, Str bonus); #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d10+9 (*two-handed sword* +3, Str bonus); SA continualfear in 5' radius, 18/00 Strength, casts all spells at 20th level of ability, at will casts *defect*

magic, *defect invisibility*, and *wall of ice*, twice per day casts *dispel magic*, once per day casts *power word kill*, *symbol pain*, *fireball* (20d6), has power over undead as 6th-level evil priest; SD cannot be turned, immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, mind-affecting spells, and cold; SW destroyed by *holy word* if knight fails its saving throw; MR 75% (if 11% or lower is rolled, spell reflected back on caster); SZ M (6'8" tall); ML fanatic (17); Int genius (17); AL CE; XI' 6,000.

Special Equipment: two handed sword +3, six scrolls of *cure critical wounds*.

45. Soul Stripper

Unholy symbols of various evil faiths are incised in the walls. No dirt, filth, mold, or other defilement debases this chamber. A single sarcophagus, carved of white marble, appears intact, nestled into the concavity of the north wall. The sarcophagus is open, and as far as a sarcophagus can ever be, inviting.

Should any living creature, in some fit of insanity (or through force), lie down within the sarcophagus, the unholy symbols blaze red. In that moment, the spirit of the victim is stripped and sent directly to an infernal realm, despite previous alignment, while the body rises as a mindless zombie, the servant of the first higher-order undead (such as a PC) that it meets.

46. Let the Greedy Beware

A tapestry hangs on the south wall, depicting a scene filled with large, horned, red-skinned humanoids in the foreground and brass towers in the background, suggesting a massive city set within an inferno. A pedestal in the chamber's center contains a gem that appears to literally vibrate with untapped power.

Of course, it's all a trap. Should any overeager tomb raider attempt to grasp the gem, he or she is immediately (no save) *teleported* into the special sarcophagus in room 45. The undead PCs should all be aware of this, though NPC adventurers certainly are not.

On the other hand, the tapestry is a work of art and would fetch close to 10,000 gp in the proper market, it being a Piaranti original (an artist well known and respected in many different infernal demiplanes and halfworlds).



47. Possibly Occupied

If Kazerine the 30th-level thief makes the undead transition, she uses this secret chamber as her base of operations. With any time to make arrangements, she soon decorates the chamber in a most **non-**undeadlike fashion with a bed, a table, comfortable chairs, and several curio cabinets to display her latest thefts. In time, she fills the curio cabinets with many amazing and valuable items as she leaves the dungeon every so often to pursue her profession, but to begin with, the cabinets are bare.

Undead Thief

If Kazerine, described in the Vault Level, successfully steals some of the Teeth of *Dalhver Nar*, she immediately implants the first into her mouth.

Unfortunately for her, the one she chooses (#12) instantly transforms her into an undead creature with the same hit points, intelligence, and abilities as previously, but with a few new vulnerabilities and strengths. Additionally, her new state draws her into the bottommost level controlled by Blaise, where she hopes to learn more about her new undead state.

To the eye, she looks much as she did before, though pale and bloodless. Damage doesn't heal (unless magically healed by a *cause wounds* spell), and she may begin to look more and more undead as her new career unfolds.

Undead Kazerine uses the same statistic block presented in the Vault Level, with these modifications: SA does not age; SD immune to *sleep*, *charm*, *hold*, mind-affecting spells, and cold; SW turns as Special, takes 2d4 hit points from vial of holy water.

Additionally Kazerine retains 1 other *Tooth* (but returns the others at Blaise's request).

48. Game Room

Mourn the minor death claims this chamber and has thus redecorated it to suit his passion. This room is given over to games. Most visible is the giant black and white floor tiles that form a chessboard in the western 20-by-20 foot section of the room. Roughly carved chess pieces are poised upon the tiles, usually in mid-game. Shelves fill all the walls of the room, as well as three small wooden tables. The shelves are filled with dice, board, and card games, mostly created and fashioned by Mourn from materials found or brought to the dun-

geon. Other games have obviously been brought from off-plane, if their strange language, colors, and concepts are any indication.

If Mourn remains an NPC, he may offer captured adventurers a chance to play him in a game of chess for their lives, if the DM feels up to a game.

Minor Death

This manifestation of the grim reaper (complete with cloak and sickle) gained autonomy when a skull card from the *deck of many things* was pulled from the deck by an unfortunate adventurer who was simultaneously killed by a stray arrow bolt from a companion. The undead manifestation found itself unable to complete its ordained mission and so lingered. In time, Blaise drew the minor death into his fold of undead servants, giving it a name and a purpose.

Now, Mourn the minor death is a valuable servant to the lich, though when not acting on Blaise's behalf, it spends its undead hours playing card games and chess with one of its "doubles."

Mourn the Minor Death: AC 4; MV 16;

HD 4+1; hp 33; THACO never misses; #AT 2; Dmg 2d8 (sickle); SD immune to sleep, *charm*, *hold*, mind-affecting spells, cold, fire, and electricity; SW tumbable (as Special); SZ M (6' 3" tall); ML average (12); Int high (14); AL LE; XI' 8,000.

Special Abilities: SA-Mourn always strikes first every round and he *never* misses. Mourn's chosen foe must fight Mourn alone. Should others aid the minor death's foe, Mourn splits off identical minor deaths under his control, one to each new foe! Mourn can split off up to ten additional minor deaths in this fashion per day, both from "himself" or from a copy that gets double-teamed. Mourn survives the combat if any single copy survives, though all additional copies dissipate. Mourn can attempt to manually split off a double when he is not initially threatened up to ten times per day if he can roll an 11 or higher on a d20. Manual copies last for 2d4 turns before dissipating. While active, manual copies count toward Mourn's ten-copy limit.

Special Equipment: six scrolls of *cause critical wounds*, *ivory gouts* (shaped just like chesspieces). Note that doubles do not get copies of the *ivory gouts*.



4 y. Big Moosh

The walls are covered in vague, ancient bloodstains. Skid marks striate the floor in parallel lines. Bits of powdered bone lie here and there, and a few flattened shields, swords, and armor lie about, rusting. Nothing of value lies among the powdered, crushed, and flattened equipment.

The obvious clues do not lie; the walls of this room close in and crush hapless victims who enter. When two or more animate creatures enter the chamber, a reinforced steel portcullis slams down over each exit, the doors lock, and the walls slam together, crushing victims for 10d10 points of damage over the course of 1 round before retracting. Creatures moving through the room one at a time are safe.

Room 50. Mouth of Blaise

Blaise hasn't directly communicated with a PC monster for several years—he has apparently appointed his confidant, Tothomes, as his messenger. **Tothomes** resides in this ornate chamber.

Decorative columns support a high hall illuminated by dim lamps, one to a column. Each column is carved in the likeness of a stylistically elongated skull. The walls and floor of the hall are relief sculpted, showing leering faces, horns, bones, and even a few tentacles.

Tothomes is a shrouded, cloaked figure (an undead wizard with flesh golem statistics), normally standing at the very center of the hall, in the confluence of the sick lamplight. He speaks to the PCs with Blaise's authority but, at the same time, does not willingly allow the PCs to access the southern door, which leads to the lich's inner sanctum. In fact, Blaise's waning interest in the concerns of the prime plane (see room 53) have left **Tothomes** in charge of the dungeon, though no PC or NPC undead realizes this at the beginning of the adventure. **Tothomes** continues to perpetrate the charade as long as possible, even going so far as to physically attack any that try to brush past him to personally see Blaise.

The southern door is locked (**Tothomes** has the key), *wizard locked* (at 14th level), and is treated with heavy elements (as are all the walls of Blaise's inner sanctum) that repulse *teleportation* and ethereal penetration attempts.

Tothomes, male human W12 (flesh golem):

AC 6 (*bracers of AC 6*); MV 8; HD 9; hp 40; THACO 11 (6 with *staff +2* and Str bonus); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+9 (*staff +2* and Str bonus); SA spells; SD immune to nonmagical weapons, immune to all spells save the following: fire-and-cold based spells slow a flesh golem for 2d6 rounds, electrical spells heal a flesh golem 1 hit point per damage die; SZ L (8' tall); ML fearless (19); Int genius (18); AL NE; XI' 4,000.

Spells Memorized (4/4/4/4/1): 1st—magic missile (×3), shield; 2nd—mirror image, rope trick, knock, levitate; 3rd—fireball, lightning bolt (×2), slow; 4th—Evard's black tentacles, wind wall, polymorph other, stonewall; 5th—cone of cold (×2), cloudkill, true seeing; 6th—death spell.

Special Equipment: ring of spell storing (monster summoning III [×5]), twelve scrolls of cure critical wounds.

Room 51. Lich Lab

Parchment wallpaper covers every square foot of stone. Humanoid anatomical diagrams of exceptional quality are inscribed on every available parchment surface. Standard and necromantic reagents are contained in small vials, which in turn are thickly crowded on work benches. Illumination here is provided by dangling skulls, lit from within by foul ghoul light.

Blaise once spent much of his time here, researching the whys and wherefores of undeath. Most of his successes, including his transformation to lichdom, were discovered here. PCs and NPCs who have several months of downtime and at least three levels of wizard or cleric might find this necromantic lab a wonderful place to do research; however, most good-aligned adventurers are more likely to simply burn it.

A thorough search of the room brings to light several unwholesome chemicals and undead cockroaches, but also scraps of magic, including: *scroll of protection vs. undead*, *scroll of curse*, *scroll of animate dead*, *scroll of protection from negative energy*, and six vials of *necrotic resin* (smearing it on living flesh in sufficient quantity animates that flesh as undead tissue—unless a living creature makes a saving throw vs. death magic, it is killed, while the portion of its flesh to which the resin was applied remains animate. One vial contains enough resin to cover about one-sixth of a man-sized target—1 leg, 1 arm, the head, or the torso).



Room 52. Demonology

This chamber's north wall is hidden behind a floor-to-ceiling bookcase stuffed with all manner of books dealing with demonology. The eastern wall is similarly hidden by an overflowing scroll rack filled with similar treatises. In front of the scroll rack is a broad wooden desk, which is empty of all except dust these days. The southern extent of the room contains an elaborate pentagram carved into the floor, which Blaise once gained much use out of during his demonology phase.

A search of the desk reveals some rather distressing information. Apparently, Blaise made some major errors when dealing with infernal powers. Assembling the evidence of paper scraps in the desk indicates that the sealed cavern immediately below the artificial level of the dungeon is called the Hellspike Grotto (Blaise's name for it). Apparently, the Hellspike Grotto is littered with several items called Demonseeds. The Demonseeds were part of a bargain Blaise struck with a particularly crafty demon in return for its aid. At the time, the Demonseeds were no larger than a marble; however, Blaise soon realized that the seeds were growing. When the Demonseeds proved impossible to destroy or even transport out of the dungeon, Blaise sealed them into the cavernous level below and hoped that, if left alone, the problem would simply go away. However, Blaise's own notes indicate that he fears that, even without outside stimulus, the Demonseeds will continue to grow in the darkness and, if disturbed, may precipitate a demonic plague, certain to overrun both the dungeon and the surrounding lands.

A search of the books and scrolls reveal a few enchanted items: an *iron flask*, a scroll of *protection* from *demons*, a scroll of *banishment*, a scroll of *sequester*, a scroll of *binding*, a scroll of *imprisonment*, and "Vunulcrech," which is a *dagger* +2, +5 (and X3 damage) vs. *demonic and devilish foes*.

Room 53. The Lich

Once, this chamber was opulently decorated and furnished, appropriate for a wizard whose power stretched down through the centuries. Now, the chamber is in disarray and is obviously long untended. The fine furnishings are rotted and

degraded, and treasures spill from broken vaults. Of the mighty lich, Blaise, not much remains except for a skull and attached skeletal spine.

The fact is, Blaise is more demilich than lich. PC monsters who fight their way past the advisor Tothomes find an uncaring skull whose spirit roams realms far from the physical plane. If PCs hoped to get advice or help from the lich or permission to loot the Vault Level above, those goals are frustrated. Still, some treasure lies in the chamber, and if the PC monsters are not too greedy, they may take a few items to bolster their strength. If the PC monsters stay in the room for more than 5 rounds, or if they take more than two magical items, contingent magic automatically animates Blaise's remains as a demilich, which unthinkingly attacks the invaders, despite their former affiliation with the lich, if any.

Among the treasure, Blaise keeps some powerful magical items vs. undead appropriated from past unsuccessful adventurers, and if NPC adventurers get in here and successfully loot, the PC undead's plight becomes more difficult. The anti-undead treasure that remains in this chamber includes: a *mace of disruption*, a *rod of smiting*, an *amulet versus undead*, and twenty-four *arrows of slaying undead*. Other magical treasure includes: a *sheet of smallness*, a *rug of welcome*, a *robe of stars*, *pipes of the sewers*, and a *portable hole* (which contains a *horn of fog* amid several years of accumulated trash). Monetary treasure includes: forty-two cut gemstones of various types (each worth 150 gp); a two-foot statue carved from a single diamond depicting a fair maiden (3,000 gp value); and gold and coins of other denominations worth a total of 10,000 gp.

Blaise, Demilich remains: AC -3; MV fly 12 (A); HD 12; hp 42; THACO nil; SA drain soul of selected victim who fails save vs. death G/day (refractory period of 3 rounds between each soul drain), howl as *death* spell 2/day, *curse* 1/day; SD immune to almost everything; SZ S (1' diameter); ML fearless (20); Int supra-genius (20); AL CE; XP 15,000.

Notes: The demilich can only be harmed in the following ways: A *forget* spell causes it to hover in place for 1 round before resuming its agenda. Each *shatter* spell inflicts 3d6 points of damage. A *dispel evil* spell inflicts 1d4+4 points of damage. A *power word, kill* cast from either the Astral or Ethereal Plane would destroy it; unfortunately, it is impossible to reach either plane from here. A *vorpal* weapon, a weapon of *sharpness*, or any +5 weapon inflicts





damage on the skull. A paladin with at least a +4 weapon, or a weapon of *sharpness* or *vorpal* weapon can also harm the skull normally. A *holy word* inflicts 5d6 points of damage. Any character with a magical weapon of at least +4, or a *mace of disruption*, can inflict one point of damage with each hit.

54. The hellspike Grotto

Magic better left uncast saturates this massive 40-foot-high cavern, building potential as the years trickle past. The unholy energy is clearly visible as shining red veins of light that course and flow through the rock floor, walls, and ceiling. Barely heard whispers, cries, and incantations bedevil the listener the moment the first step into this unhealthy chamber is taken.

The most significant feature here is 30-foot-diameter crystal spheres scattered here and there about the chamber. The spheres slowly pulse with sick light; each pulse of the spheres automatically conscripts all natural and magical light sources to pulse with the same beat. These are the Demonseeds, grown from the size of marbles to their current bloated manifestations. Some, but not all, of the Demonseeds are visible from the foot of the stairway.

Inscribed into the rock at the foot of the stairway is Blaise's final warning to all who would disturb this dumping ground of infernal magic gone wrong: "Disturb not the seeds, lest reality shudder on its timeless gyre." On the first step of the stairs leading up is an unfamiliar glyph. If demons begin to appear in this cavern, the glyph glows bright green and keeps all the demons bound in this level, initially. However, as the glyph's magic slowly wears out, demons begin to break free of the cavern into the upper dungeon levels at a rate of 1d4/day. Unless the demon threat is taken care of, the glyph totally gives up the ghost 18 days after the seeds are first disturbed.

If any of the Demonseeds are disturbed, a "chain reaction" soon disturbs all of them, unless the reaction is dampened by PC monsters. If a chain reaction is not ameliorated, but rather left to fester in darkness, this level's demon population grows by 1d4 demons of every type noted below, every day.

Demonseeds

The Demonseeds are a nefarious gift given to Blaise by abyssal powers. With the power of the seeds, Blaise hoped to raise a demonic army; however, as

with most deals made with fiends, the gifts did not come without a price. While Blaise enjoyed some small success with summoning and binding demons, the true nature of the Demonseeds soon ruled out continued usage. Thus, the lich sealed them away and tried to forget about them.

There are a total of eight seeds spanning three different colors. All the seeds are about 30 feet in diameter, having grown from marble size to their current monstrous dimensions over three centuries (each year, if left undisturbed, the seeds grow 0-1 inch in diameter). Each seed pulses steadily, alternating between dark-as-night black and the seed's specific color as noted below. The seeds appear to be composed of crystal.

It is frightfully easy to disturb a **Demonseed**. The bioelectrical charge resident in the skin of any living creature disturbs a Demonseed, but the touch of an inert or undead object does not, in and of itself, cause a disturbance. However, Demonseeds are eggshell thin, and a strong poke or prod (that inflicts even 1 hp of damage) also disturbs a seed.

When a seed is disturbed, it explosively shatters! The explosion inflicts 4d6 hit points of shrapnel damage against all animate creatures within 40 feet (even to creatures immune to normal weapons). Worse, the explosion creates a magical, one-way gate from the Abyss. The initial explosion pulls through a demon of the indicated type, which is then also free to use its standard gating ability to summon other demons. Worse, the remaining circular shards of the Demonseed have a 33% chance to summon a demon of its associated type every 24 hours. Newly summoned demons note the lay of the land quickly and 3 rounds later attempt to "disturb" every other Demonseed that hasn't already been shattered (this is the chain reaction noted above).

The summoned demons remain in this chamber until slain or until they can make it past the blocking glyph located on the first step of the stairs (the glyph also presents magical escape). Previously summoned demons protect each abyssal gate to the death, at least while they are trapped in the cavern.

Disrupting a gate permanently requires a successful *dispel magic* cast from within the center of the gate against a 16th-level effect. However, each time a non-demon enters the area of the gate, another demon, of the type associated with the individual gate, is pulled through from the Abyss to contest the casting.



55. Blue Demonseeds

Three Demonseeds are keyed to this entry. Each 30-foot-diameter blue Demonseed, under initial conditions, pulses between dark-as-night black and sapphire blue. The pulses are steady and possess the rhythm of a slow heart beat.

If disturbed, the remnant circular shard-gate summons a molydeus and continues to call a molydeus every 24 hours (33% chance of success) until the gate is closed down. A molydeus is a red-skinned humanoid possessing two heads; one head is that of a snarling wolfhound while the other is a long prehensile snake's head. The 12-foot-tall creature grasps a mighty twin-bladed battle-axe in its crimson grip.

Molydeus : AC -5; MV 15; HD 12; hp 75; THACO 4 (ax +5); #AT 3; Dmg 2d6/1d6/2d10+5 (hound head/snake head/*vorpal axe of dancing* +5); SD cold iron or magical items to hit, never surprised; MR 90%; SZ H (12' tall); ML fearless (19); Int exceptional (15); AL CE; XP 21,000.

Special Abilities: A molydeus can simultaneously attack with both heads (the snake-head's bite transforms victims who fail a saving throw vs. poison into a manes in 1d6 turns) and, while in the demon's hand, its ax +5 acts as a *vorpal* and *dancing* weapon. In addition to the powers all tanar'ri share (see Blackhelm), the molydeus has the following abilities as a 12th-level caster: *affect normal fires*, *animate object*, *blindness*, *charm person or mammal*, *command*, *Evard's black tentacles*, *fear*, *improved invisibility*, *know alignment*, *lightning bolt (7/day)*, *polymorph other*, *sleep*, *suggestion*, *true seeing* (always active), and *vampiric touch*. Every 24 hours, it can attempt (33% chance of success) to *gate* in another molydeus. When a molydeus dies, its ax disappears. The ax does not vanish if taken from a living molydeus.

56. Red Demonseeds

Three Demonseeds are keyed to this entry. Each 30-foot-diameter red Demonseed, under initial conditions, pulses between dark-as-night black and blood red. The pulses are steady and possess the rhythm of a slow heart beat.

If disturbed, the remnant circular shard-gate summons a hezrou and continues to call a hezrou

every 24 hours (33% chance of success) until the gate is closed down. A hezrou appears as a large toad-like creature that stands upright. Blunt, powerful teeth fill its mouth and spines adorn its back.

Hezrou: AC -6; MV 12; HD 9; hp 45; THACO 11; #AT 3; Dmg 1d6/1d6/4d4 (claw/claw/bite); SA *bearhug*, *stench*; SD immune to weapons of less than +2 magical bonus, half damage from *nonmagical* attacks, never surprised; SZ L (7' tall); ML fanatic (17); Int average (9); AL CE; XI 7,000.

Special Abilities: The dank skin of the hezrou emits such a foul reek that any creature within 10 feet must save vs. paralyzation or fall to the ground in extreme nausea. Those who make successful saving throws still make all attack and initiative rolls with a -2 penalty. In addition to the powers all tanar'ri share (see Blackhelm's stats), hezrou have the following spell-like powers at 9th level: *animate object*, *blink*, *duo-dimension (3/day)*, *produce flame*, *protection from normal missiles*, *summon insects*, *unholy word*, and *wall of fire*. Every 24 hours, it can attempt (33% chance of success) to *gate* in another Hezrou.

57. Purple Pemonseeds

Two Demonseeds are keyed to this entry. Each 30-foot-diameter purple Demonseed, under initial conditions, pulses between dark-as-night black and neon purple. The pulses are steady and possess the rhythm of a slow heartbeat.

If disturbed, the remnant circular shard-gate summons two vrock and continues to call one vrock every 24 hours (33% chance of success) until the gate is closed down. A vrock resembles nothing so much as a cross between a human and a diseased vulture.

Vrock: AC -5; MV 12, fly 18 (C); HD 8; hp 48; THACO 13; #AT 5; Dmg 1d4/1d4/1d8/1d8/1d6 (rake/rake/claw/claw/bite); SA spores, screech; SD never surprised, immune to weapons of less than +2 enchantment; SZ L (8' tall); ML fanatic (17); Int high (13); AL CE; XI 19,000.

Special Abilities: Vrocks can eject stinging spores from small glands secreted about their bodies, inflicting 1d8 hit points on all opponents within feet. Spores that inflicted damage in the previous round begin to grow and sprout, inflicting an

additional 1d2 points of damage per round for a total of 10 rounds; at that time the victim is covered with thick, vinelike growths. The spores can be killed by *bless*, neutralize poison, or similar spells, or by the application of holy water. Slow poison also stops the growth. Vrocks can screech once per battle, stunning for 1 round all within 30 feet who fail a Constitution check. Vrocks additionally possess the following special abilities (aside from the abilities which all tanar'ri share; see Blackhelm's stats) as 10th-level casters: *detect invisibility*, *detect magic*, *dispel magic*, *mass charm*, *mirror image*, and *telekinesis*. Every 24 hours, it can attempt (33% chance of success) to *gate* in another vrock.

Scenarios: Down with Undead!

The adventures in this section begin when the DM deems appropriate, based on the success or failure of the NPC adventurers in the last section.

Due in part to the reports of the NPC adventurers of the two previous sections, but also because of the culmination of several disparate threads of research, old map discovery, and divination, the bottommost artificial level of the dungeon has been identified by a nearby monastery as being filled with powerful undead and demons. If there is anything a good-aligned administration can't stand, it is the thought of free-roaming dead and infernal fiends occupying a location even remotely nearby

(not to mention abominations, or even a simple goblin tribe bold enough to wipe out a farming village). Thus, the monastery begins to sponsor wave after wave of higher-level adventurers to clean out the bottom level of the nearby dungeon ("Crusades"). Unfortunately, the actions of the good-intentioned NPCs disturbs one of the very threats they'd hoped to contain ("Demons Unbound"), forcing the PC monsters to attempt forcible housecleaning before they are themselves overwhelmed. In the end, the continuing waves of powerful NPC adventuring parties force PC monsters to strike back ("A Daring Plan").

Note on play: The nature of the following scenarios allows the DM to initiate all three plots concurrently, if desired. In fact, only by initiating "A Daring Plan" can the PCs truly hope to end the threat of the continuing "Crusades." Likewise, the wandering demons of "Demons Unbound" may not initially seem like too significant a problem, and so may be allowed to fester while the PCs deal with seemingly more pressing concerns.

Crusades

The gig is up. Adventurers of good alignment from near and far are drawn to Lichland, determined to erase the evil buried there (the PC monsters) and do a bit of looting in the process. Though the PC monsters may not realize it initially, the NPC





adventurers are actively recruited by the nearby monastery, and thus waves of powerful adventures continue to throw their not-inconsiderable might against the dungeon doors.

Running Crusades

The crusades begin with the penetration of the first adventuring party to the bottommost level of room 32 (Lichland Map). If the PCs had the opportunity to place guards, wards, or other warning devices elsewhere in the dungeon, the interaction with the first crusading NPC party could occur earlier.

Initially, every crusade is led by Lord Father Frayson, a fighter/cleric of great renown. Additionally, the wizard Savina Broseus joins the initial NPC party, and subsequent parties if she survives. The remaining members of each crusading party are selected from a set of generic NPC stats, representing the ever-renewing pool of good-aligned adventurers mustering in the nearby monastery (see "Cast of Undead Slayers"). Additionally, any NPC adventurers listed in the previous two sections that survived may also be available to fill out the ranks of a crusading party, even if as a hireling. The paladins of the previous section, if living, are particularly happy to join the undead slayers.

Because of the Lord Father's dedicated use of the *word of recall* spell, he should be available to lead subsequent dungeon runs with a new crew of adventurers, should the previous group be overrun by PC monsters. If Savina survives, she may or may not join additional forays into the dungeon, at the DM's option. If she does not reenter the dungeon, she is available as a foe in the final scenario.

If a particular NPC group is killed or beaten back (suffers 50% or more casualties), the next group tries their luck at the dungeon 2d4 days later. If the Lord Father survived, he once again leads, while the rest of the party is filled out with previous survivors and new NPCs drawn from the list below of unnamed NPCs (or as *resurrected* by Lord Father Frayson's *rod of resurrection*). Note that the same unnamed entries will be utilized many times in this fashion, but each time representing a new NPC adventurer.

Special Note: One of the very first things the heroic NPC adventurers do is to cross to room 33, burst the seal, and disturb a Demonseed. Though they kill the first demon appearing, the NPCs leave the cavern in favor of the Lichland level and begin to concentrate

on "clearing out the dungeon" in a methodical manner. Unless and until all the PC undead are killed or driven off, the NPC adventurers do not deal with the multiplying demon problem below.

Cast of Undead Slayers

Each initial party consists of a leader and four additional members. A particular party may make more than one foray into a dungeon; however, when the party loses three or more of its members, it disbands and a new NPC party must be mustered at the monastery.

Named NPCs

Do not reuse these entries. If the PC players manage to kill off the Lord Father, despite his eager use of *word of recall* (which sends him back to the monastery), another leader must be found, but from among the unnamed PCs, and of less ability than the lamented Lord Father.

Lord Father Frayson, human male F13/C12: AC -4 (*full plate* +2, *shield* +2); MV 12; hp 100; THACO 8 (3 with *long sword* +4, *Str* bonus); #AT 2; Dmg 1d8+5 (*long sword* +4, *Str* bonus); SA spells, turn undead; MR 25% (*long sword* +4); SZ M (5' 11" tall), Str 17, Dex 10, Con 16, Int 15, Wis 18, Cha 15; AL LG; XP 14,000.

Special Equipment: "Uslainte" *long sword* +4 (grants wielder 25% MR, allows wielder to cast *word of recall* at 20th level of ability 1/day), *rod of resurrection* (fourteen charges), six vials holy water.

Spells (8/7/6/4/2/2): 1st—*command*, *cure light wounds* (X2), *protection from evil*, *bless* (X2), *remove fear*, *sanctuary*; 2nd—*hold person* (X 2), *know alignment*, *messenger*, *silence 15' radius*, *withdraw*, *wyvern watch*; 3rd—*call lightning*; *cure blindness*, *remove curse*, *remove disease*, *stone shape*, *glyph of warding*; 4th—*cure serious wounds* (X2); *neutralize poison*; *spell immunity*; 5th—*flame strike* (X2); 6th—*heal* (X2).

Savina Broseus, human female M16: AC -2; MV 12; hp 51; THACO 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (staff); SA spells; SZ M (6' 1" tall); Str 13, Dex 18, Con 16, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 9; AL LG; XI 6,000.

Special Equipment: *ring of shooting stars* (twelve charges), *bracers* of AC 2, *wand of lightning* (twenty-one charges)

Spells Memorized (5/5/5/5/3/2/1): 1st—*change self*, *comprehend languages*, *magic missile* (X2), *shield*; 2nd—



invisibility, Melf's acid arrow, ray of enfeeblement, summon swarm, wizard lock; 3rd—*dispel magic, fly, lightning bolt* (×2), *sepia snake sigil*; 4th—*fire trap, dimension door, ice storm, minor globe of invulnerability, stone-skin*; 5th—*cone of cold, Mordenkainen's faithful hound, shadow door, teleport, transmute rock to mud*; 6th—*chain lightning, death spell, disintegrate*; 7th—*finger of death, prismatic spray*; 8th—*monster summoning IV*.

Unnamed NPCs

Reuse these as necessary to fill out multiple NPC adventuring parties, choosing randomly if desired. The DM may change specific magical items and ability scores to differentiate new NPCs using the same statistics as just-slain NPC adventurers. The DM may also throw other NPCs of his or her own devising against the PC monsters, including the players' regular or previous adventuring characters if feeling particularly mischievous.

Human Pa113: AC -2 (*full plate +1, shield +1*); MV 12; hp 113; THACO 8 (5 with *long sword +2, Str bonus*); #AT 2; Dmg 1d8+3 (*long sword +2, Str bonus*); SA priest spells, paladin abilities; SZ M (5' 5" tall); Str 17, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 15; Cha 17; AL LG; XI' 8,000.

Special Abilities: SA-turn undead as 11th-level cleric, *detect evil intent*; SD-+2 to saves, immune to disease, *cure disease* 1/day, *lay on hands* (cure 26 hp) 1/day; aura of *protection vs. evil*.

Special Equipment: brooch of shielding.

Spells: (5/2/2/1): 1st—*command* (×3), *cure light wounds* (×3), *remove fear*; 2nd—*charm person or mammal, spiritual hammer*; 3rd—*cure serious wounds, negative plane protection*; 4th—*free action*.

Human C10: AC 1 (*plate mail, shield +1*); MV 12; hp 47; THACO 13 (*frail +1*); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+2 (*flail +1*); SA spells, turn undead; SZ M (6' tall); Str 12, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 16, Wis 17, Cha 13; AL N; XI' 5,000.

Special Equipment: ring of lie detection (functions 3/day as *detect lie* spell cast at 9th level).

Spells: (6/6/4/3/2): 1st—*cure light wounds* (×3), *detect evil, detect magic, sanctua y*; 2nd—*detect charm; hold person* (×3), *know alignment* (×2); 3rd—*dispel magic* (×2), *feign death, locate object*; 4th—*cure serious wounds* (×2), *neutralize poison*; 5th—*flame strike* (×2).

Human Pa18: AC 0 (*plate mail +2*); MV 12; hp 80; THACO 13 (10 with *two-handed sword +3*); #AT 3/2;

Dmg 1d10+4 (*two-handed sword +3, Str bonus*); SA paladin abilities; SZ M (6' tall); Str 16; Dex 9; Con 10; Int 13; Wis 17; Cha 17; AL NG; XP 3,000.

Special Abilities: SA-turn undead as 6th-level cleric, *detect evil intent*; SD-+2 to saves, immune to disease, *cure disease* 1/day, *lay on hands* (cure 16 hp) 1/day; aura of *protection vs. evil*.

Special Equipment: two potions of extra-healing.

Human P7: AC 2 (*chainmail, shield, Dex bonus*); MV 12; hp 38; THACO 16 (14 with *mace +2*); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+3 (*mace +2*); SA spells, turn undead as 5th-level cleric (penalty for specialty priest); SZ M (6' tall); Str 12, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 13, Wis 17, Cha 12; AL LG; XP 2,000.

Special Equipment: ring of blinking, scroll of insect plague penned at 16th level.

Spells: (5/5/4/2): 1st—*command* (×2), *cure light wounds* (×2), *detect evil*; 2nd—*aid, augu y, barkskin, hold person, spiritual hammer*; 3rd—*cure deafness, hold animal, prayer, remove curse*; 4th—*cure serious wounds, neutralize poison*.

Dwarf F7: AC 3 (*chainmail, Dex bonus*); MV 9; hp 57; THACO 14 (9 with *Str bonus, battle-ax +3, specialization*); #AT 2; Dmg 1d8+6 (*battle-ax +3, Str bonus, specialization*); SA dwarven racial bonuses; SZ M (4' tall); Str 17, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 9; AL CC; XI' 650.

Special Equipment: necklace of adaptation.

Deep gnome T7: AC 0 (*leather armor, Dex bonus, ring of protection +4*); MV 9; hp 36; THACO 17/17 (13/14 with *short sword +4/dagger +3* off-hand attack); #AT 1/1; Dmg 1d6+4/1d4+3 (*short sword +4/dagger +3* off-hand attack); SA thief abilities, infravision, cast *blur, blindness, change self* 1/day; MR 20%; SZ S (3' 6" tall); Str 14, Dex 18, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 11, Cha 9; AL NG; XI' 975.

Thief Abilities: PP 26, DN 46, CW 56, HS 71, MS 71.

Demons Unbound

If adventurers are good for anything, it is poking their noses into arcane hazards best left sealed away. To the mind of the adventurer, the mystery of "What could possibly be behind a door so assiduously guarded" is something that cannot be left for the imagination. The mystery must be expunged, and the loot, if any, retrieved.



As noted under "Crusades," the initial action taken by the first adventuring party led by Lord Father Frayson is to burst the seals on the stairs leading into the Hellspike Grotto, and there precipitate a demonic cascade. Ignorance also being a primary attribute of many adventurers, Frayson and his cronies leave the Hellspike Grotto level after killing the first demon, failing to understand what they've really done-see the Hellspike Grotto (rooms 54-57) for more background of the demonic cascade.

Even though the first demon hatched from the disturbed Demonseed is slain, it is statistically probable that another demon (a vrock) is summoned 3 days later (96% chance of appearing [4% chance of not appearing=33% x 33% x 33%]). If the PC monsters do nothing to stem the tide of hatching demons, it could get very crowded with demons in a relatively short time. Though it may be possible, at the DM's option, to ally with a few of the summoned demons, the demonic horde in general cares not for the PC monsters, and would just as soon plow them under in their bid for supremacy in this realm.

Regardless of the number of multiplying demons inside the Hellspike Grotto, the glyph at the foot of the stairs (room 54) restricts a full-scale demonic exodus into Lichland; however, the glyph's failing magic still allows 1d4 demons to pass into the upper dungeon per 24 hours. Thus, demons begin to wander Lichland in small numbers, even as the events of "Crusades," and possibly even "A Daring Plan," continue to play out!

While active, the glyph doesn't restrict the movement of any other creature, living or animate (although Blackhelm could have trouble leaving, once he enters). After 18 days, the glyph burns out completely, allowing all accumulated demons to overrun the upper levels of the dungeon and spill out into the world above, if they haven't previously been dealt with. Furthermore, the Demonseeds continue to hatch new demons unless deactivated.

The DM can roll each 24-hour period for every summoning chance (33%). Or, the easiest way to populate the area is to simply decide by fiat how many demons appear on a given day. A table is provided below, showing possible numbers of demons appearing, if left unmolested (loosely based on actual statistical probabilities). Note that every 24 hours, 1d4 of the demons below escape into the upper dungeon, and thus may be killed by

PCs-this is not taken into account by the table, but if demons are killed on a regular basis beginning from the first few days of summoning/gating, the numbers do not grow so dramatically.

Demonic Cascade

Days	Vrock	Hezrou	Molydeus
3	1	1	1
6	3	3	3
9	7	7	7
12	15	15	15
15	31	31	31
18*	63	63	63

*Protective glyph gives out, demons can leave Hellspike Grotto as they desire, but the Demonseeds continue to summon demons unless deactivated.

The demonic threat ends when every one of the Demonseeds is rendered inactive.

Special Note: This threat offers an interesting opportunity for the PC monsters, who may try to engineer a brief alliance with powerful NPC adventurers more worried about hell on earth than a few pesky undead. In fact, it could well be the case that only a brief alliance between adventuring NPCs and the PC monsters has any hope of cleaning out these demons. At the very least, a few NPC adventurers should be available to keep the starting numbers of demons low so that they do not begin to geometrically multiply too quickly!

A Daring Plan

Waves of do-gooder clerics, paladins, and assorted adventurers relentlessly assault the PC monsters. NPC adventurers are not shy about their origins, and if given the opportunity, spill the beans: "Even if we fail, others will take up where we left off, until your evil is no more! Even now, powerful clerics from across the land heed the call of the Monastery, pledging themselves to exposing your evil nest!"

Oops, what's this about a monastery?

Clever PC monsters eventually deduce that until the monastery, or those who control it, are taken out, the assaults continue. Refer to the Overland Map to see the monastery's position relative to the dungeon.

Under forced questioning, NPC adventurers reveal the following additional information, useful for PCs planning their first assault on the clerical stronghold.

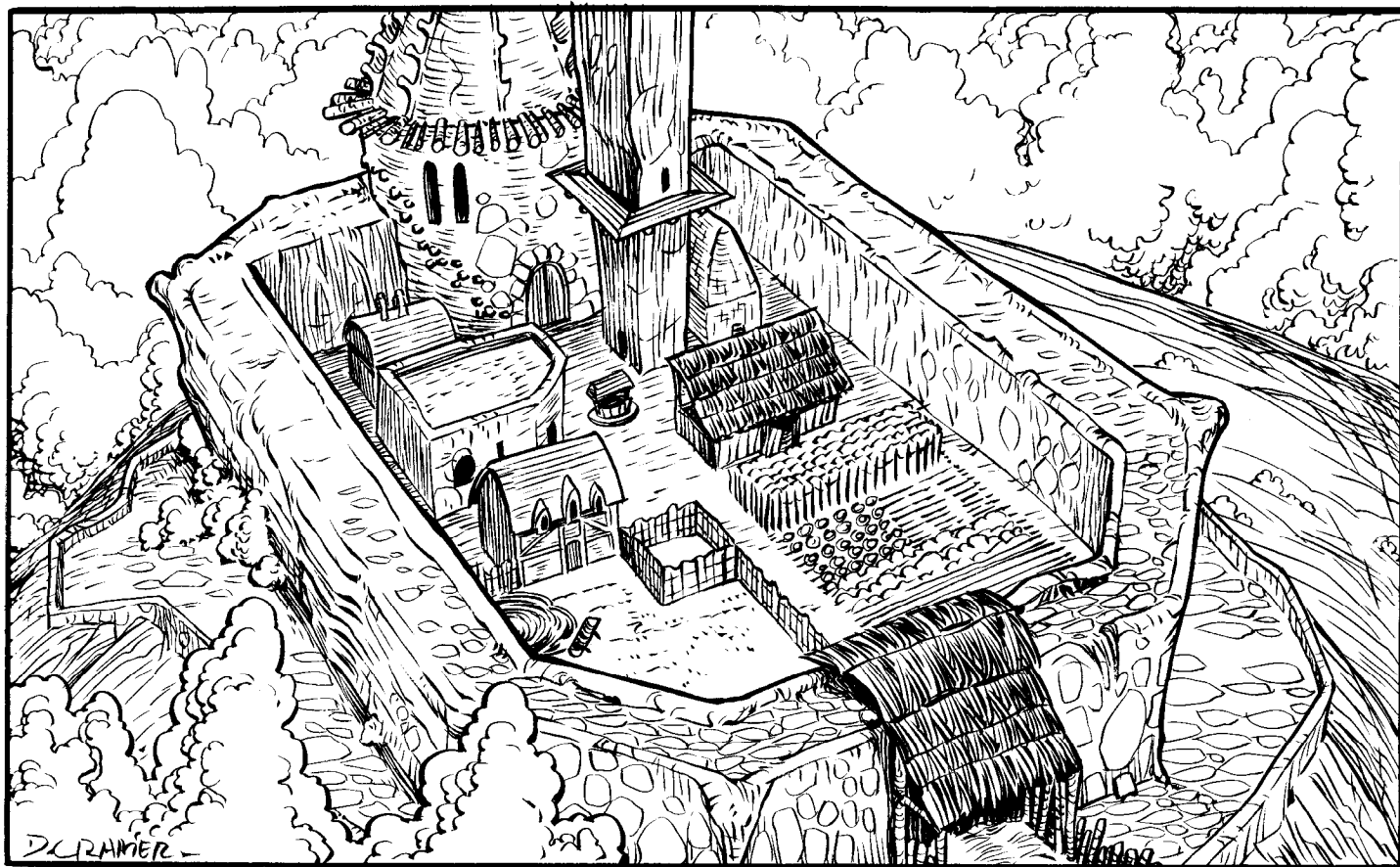
- “Mother Superior Marithena leads the monastery. She is very popular, and it is to her call that adventurers flock.”
- “Mother Superior Marithena is very powerful. She has never been defeated by evil. Why, it is by her hand that the Dragon of Shades was sent howling back into the ether. Is was she who turned the demon-devil Cathazar, even while her companions were turned to salt pillars. And, when the Dargshaad’s evil lieutenant, Kahabros, threatened to return to the world, it was Mother Superior Marithena’s prayers that turned it back to its own shadowy halfworld.”
- “The Monastery is well guarded, especially against such as you. Clerics of all ability levels reside there, and all would like nothing better than to bring their holy power to bear against your unspeakable evil.”
- “Ow, leave off, will you? That hurts!”
- “If Mother Superior Marithena were to be taken out, the crusades would cease, without her iron will to continuously assemble and send them forth. Lord Father Frayson is her greatest champion, and he, along with all others in the monastery, would probably defend her to the death.”
- “Urk!”

Assault on the Monastery

It is clear that the monastery must be assailed if the PC monsters don’t want to relocate to a less hostile location (certainly an option, but one that goes beyond the scope of this product). Due to their undead nature and generally conspicuous appearance, it is probably best that any strike team approach the monastery by cover of night.

The land separating the dungeon and the monastery is composed mostly of grassland, dotted by the occasional small farm and pasturage. If desired, the DM may refer to the Goblintown scenario, “Turnabout Is Fair Play: Raiding the Village,” where the surrounding area is detailed, including wandering monsters and weather.

, **Reinforcements.** Depending on the success of the goblins during the Goblintown scenarios, the remaining tribe may prove useful to the PC undead. Using the goblins to create a diversion, as an advance force, or as simple cannon-fodder are all tactics the players could devise. In such an instance, the DM needs to keep track of the total number of remaining goblins and assign simple probabilities for a particular plan’s success. For example, if the PC monsters decide they want to use the goblins as a distraction, they might send a large force to assault the main entrance of the monastery. Meanwhile, the PC monsters might try to sneak in from another direction. The DM might assign this strategy a 70% chance to succeed, in its





initial stage, or, he might delve into the mechanics further, and apply a 40% chance for every guard to see or hear the PC monsters' attempt to sneak in. It is up to the particular tastes of the DM.

Unfortunately, using the abominations listed in the Vault Level is more problematic, since to do so would release them from their individual magical compulsions, after which they would probably just leave.

Monastery General Defenses

The monastery is built, in some ways, like a miniature fortress. Because of its relative position on the "frontier," its defenses have been called into use on more than one occasion. The outer walls rise some 30 feet and are topped with **crenellated** battlements. Because of the PC monsters' general nature, they are negatively affected by the fact that the entire monastery sits on consecrated ground.

Consecrated Ground

The entry onto consecrated ground by undead who do not already "belong" (undead created within the confines of the consecrated ground) can cause spiritual pain and worse. Because the **monastery** is built on consecrated ground, undead PCs face the following restrictions and penalties when attempting to enter and while on (or even 60 feet above or below) the monastery grounds:

- Undead must make a successful saving throw vs. spell to "phase shift." Phase shifting includes a ghost's ability to change state, a vampire's ability to turn to mist and back, and any undead or infernal being's attempt to use *polymorph* or *shape* change spells of any kind. On a failed attempt, the undead may not make another attempt to shift phase for 10 rounds.
- Undead and demons who are normally not **turnable** turn as Special while on consecrated ground. All other undead turn normally; however, clerics that fail their first chance to turn an undead on consecrated ground can try again on the same undead 2 rounds later.

The battlements are normally guarded by one man-at-arms per side (four **3rd-level** warriors total) who are specially trained to be on the lookout for aerial assault. Should a general alert be called, three sentries are posted to each wall, day and night (a total of twelve **3rd-level** warriors armed with

longswords and longbows). When a real threat manifests (signaled by the bell tower, **M16**), twelve additional men-at-arms within the walls of the monastery are mobilized **3d4** rounds later to deal with any invading force (see **M4**); any remaining warriors are available as reinforcements. The Mother Superior and six acolyte priests (see **M24** and **M19**) also directly respond to a serious assault.

Weaknesses. The monastery holds a service every third day, at dawn, where most of the priests, a subset of the off-duty men-at-arms, and pious travelers meet in the basilica (**M21**) for a half-hour service led by the Mother Superior. During this time, there is only a 15% chance that any individual noted below remains in his or her normal **routine**—instead, they can be found in the basilica attending the service.

An attack utilizing trickery and sneakiness has the best chance of succeeding. The DM should keep in mind that undead are particularly susceptible to turning, and the clerics and priests assembled in the temple are not shy about using this power.

M1. Main Entrance

The main entrance consists of outer double doors forged of iron within a 20-foot-wide by 15-foot-high opening. During **nonalert** status, the doors stand open from an hour after dawn to an hour before dusk, although two monastery guards (6th-level warriors) stand just inside the arched opening during this period. At night and during alert status, the valves are closed. When closed, the valves are barred from the inside with steel rods. At great cost, a distant college of wizardry enchanted the iron doors such that they are immune to **non-magical** physical attacks (magical spell attacks inflict 1 hit point per die of damage, while enchanted weapons inflict a number equal to the "+" to hit with each swing; it takes 400 points of damage to breach the doors).

The stone face above the main entrance is engraved with a *glyph of warding* that inflicts **14d4** points of disruption damage on any who attempt to open or pass the doors without the implied or specific permission of the Mother Superior, or the guards on duty. Thus, it is an important duty for the guards to stop and question before inviting all who would attempt entry, for the safety of legitimate supplicants or travelers wishing to stay at the inn.



The Courtyard. This wide space is enclosed but open to the sky. The courtyard is unflagged. The courtyard contains gardens (M5), the stable and barn (M7 and M8), the inn (M12), and other buildings keyed on the map. During the day, 1d4 randomly selected priests, men-at-arms, or mustering adventurers can be found walking across the courtyard at any given time.

M2. War Cache

The doors to these two chambers are locked iron and possess a *glyph of warding* above the portal that inflicts 10d4 points of disruption damage on anyone entering the chamber without express permission of the Mother Superior. Inside, shelves are racked with spears, swords, and arrows for use by the men-at-arms stationed in M4, should the monastery come under siege. Additional sets of splint mail armor are also stored here, as well as repair facilities for both armor and weapons.

M3. Battlement Access

Steps spiral between the ground and the battlements above the monastery. Small steel-reinforced doors block off access between the stairwell and the battlements proper. The doors are normally locked and protected with a *glyph of warding* that inflicts 10d4 points of disruption damage against those with evil intentions toward the monastery. Iron braziers bolted into the stone walls are constantly kept alight to provide sufficient light.

Normally, one 3rd-level warrior mans each of the cardinal directions (four total), being especially certain to keep an eye out for aerial assault—see M4 for standard man-at-arms statistics. Each sentry carries a horn that, when sounded with the proper call, alerts the monastery that an attack is imminent (the bell tower soon takes up such a warning). Other horn notes indicate visitors at the gate or other interesting, but not necessarily threatening, events.

M4. Men-at-Arms

Men-at-arms are hired by the monastery to help protect the structure against potential attacks by bandits and other dangers associated with a location on the frontier. Each of these barracks chambers can hold up to twenty men-at-arms, but the current strength of the monastery is such that only ten warriors bunk in each chamber. In addition to ten two-tier bunk beds, each barracks also contains facilities

for washing, cleaning, and various toiletry needs. Each warrior is also provided a small chest with a lock for personal belongings. During the day, four men-at-arms are normally found here, and at night, eight (two from each chamber) are on battlement watch.

Of the twenty chests in each chamber, only ten are in use, but all are locked. Each used chest contains clothes, mementos, souvenirs, and accumulated pay: 1d6×50 gp.

Men-at-Arms, F3 (20): AC 3 (splint mail, shield); MV 12; hp 20 each; THACO 18 (17 with longsword, specialization); #AT 3/2 or 2; Dmg 1d8+2 (longsword, specialization) or 1d6/1d6 (long bow); SZ M (6' tall); ML average (10); Int average (9); AL NG; XI' 120.

M5. Garden

The monastery grows much of its own food. The gardens are lush with all manner of foodstuffs because they are professionally tended by Hugh the gardener, a 5th-level priest with a green thumb. At any given time, sufficient ripe vegetables and legumes can be found in the garden to feed a group of thirty people for one month.

During the day, Hugh is always found applying his horticultural mastery in the garden, but at night he retires to M6.

Hugh the Gardener, human male C5: AC 10; MV 12; hp 30; THACO 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+1 (flail); SA spells, turn undead; SZ M (5' 6" tall); Str 11, Dex 12, Con 8, Int 11, Wis 17, Cha 9; AL N; XI' 270.

Spells (5/5/2): 1st—*cure light wounds (X3), entangle (x 2)*; 2nd—*barkskin; goodberry, hold person (x 3)*; 3rd—*summon insects, free.*

M6. Garden Warehouse

Besides serving as a simple residence for Hugh, this open building contains composting bins, gardening tools, bags, and a large workbench for processing vegetables. Much of the fruits of the garden are sent on to the inn, which prepares food for the monastery residents as well as travelers enjoying the hospitality of the monastery. The upper shelves store dried vegetables of all types, serving as overflow storage from the supply rooms of M11.



M7. Pen

Cows, a few horses, chickens, geese, and a dozen pigs all share the same pen. Because of expert care from their handler, Jarond (see M8), the animals all get on agreeably. Except during particularly inclement weather, the animals mostly remain in the pen. In the event of an attack by undead, the animals bolt if possible, all except for a particularly ornery 600-lb. sow named Diva. Diva is fearless (she isn't driven off by *fear* effects) and due to her size and ferocity, she is quite dangerous (5 HD!) and not afraid to take on undead, though she is smart enough to avoid attacking undead by herself, preferring to wait for reinforcements.

Diva, 600-lb sow: AC 4; MV 12; HD 5; hp 30; THACO 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+1 (bite); SA can hit creatures normally hit only by +1 weapons; SD unaffected by *fear*; SZ M (6' long); ML fearless (20); Int animal (1); AL N; XI' 270.

M8. Barn

Hay and extra feed are stored in this rather average barn. Travelers staying at the inn can stable their mounts in here, if any. Jarond is the resident animal keeper, but his relative lack of ability at anything but animal husbandry makes him fairly useless in a battle, save as a messenger runner and beast handler.

Jarond, human male F1: AC 8 (leather); MV 12; hp 10; THACO 20; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d6 (club); SA Animal Handling; SZ M (5'11"); Str 13; Dex 8; Con 10; Int 7; Wis 12; Cha 9; AL NG; XI' 65.

M9. Latrine

The monastery keeps all its in-ground facilities clean, even during siege.

M10. Functionary Cells

Though all priest cells within the monastery are simple affairs, a few priests who have taken on additional administrative and trade responsibilities rate larger private chambers. Thus, the three 7th-level priests who reside in the three chambers keyed to each of these three rooms enjoy larger domiciles than their companions in M19.

Each chamber contains a cot, a desk (filled with trade, allocation, and other secular papers), a chest, and a priest sleeping or working, depending on the

time of day. The priests are available as reinforcements, unless previously dealt with, during any attack. They do not automatically make up the front rank of the monastery defense, waiting until things become desperate.

The chests contain modest personal belongings, as well as 2d4×50 gp each.

F. Seward, M. Alicia, F. Woller, P7 (3): AC 10 (4 if prepared-chainmail + shield); MV 12; hp 35, 34, 33; THACO 16 (15 with *mace* +1); #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+1 (*mace* +1); SA spells, turn undead; SZ M (6' tall); ML champion (16); Int average (9); AL LG; XI' 2,000 each.

Spells (5/5/4/2): 1st—*command* (×2), **cure light wounds** (×2), *detect evil*; 2nd—*augury*; *hold person* (×3), *know alignment*; 3rd—*dispel magic*, *feign death*, *magical vestment*, *remove curse*; 4th—*cure serious wounds*, *neutralize poison*.

M11. Supplies and Storage

These chambers are usually locked, though priests can obtain the key easily enough. Each storage chamber has a supply of cloth, coal, oil, torches, twine, chalk, lime, and other common items. Additionally, each storage chamber contains a locked chest filled with vellum, parchment, and tools for binding parchment into books. Finally, the rooms are bursting with dried and cured foodstuffs, as well as extra water.

M12. Inn at the Monastery

Offered as a "good work," the inn at the monastery allows weary travelers a meal and a room for a nominal fee. The largest room of the inn is the common room and is tended by the priest-innkeeper, Father Kovalis.

Except in the dead of night, this room normally contains 1d4+1 mustering NPC adventurers who have responded to the monastery's call. The NPC adventurers spend their time in the common room of the inn assembling themselves into workable parties during the afternoon and late night and sleep during late morning to early afternoon in the nearby rooms (M14). Each day, there is a 20% chance that an additional 1d2 adventurers show up. Refer to "Crusades: Cast of Undead Slayers" to generate random adventurers quickly.

The adventurers here are available as reinforcements for the defense of the monastery, if not previously dealt with; however, they do not initially respond to sounds of trouble.



Father Kovalis, human male Cl: AC 10 (5 if prepared-scalemail + shield); MV 12; hp 8; THACO 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+1 (mace); SA spells, turn undead; SZ M (5' 9" tall); Str 12, Dex 9, Con 13, Int 11, Wis 15, Cha 13; AL LN; XP 120.

Spells (3): 1st-bless, *cure light wounds* (X2).

M13. Inn Kitchen and Pantry

Father Kovalis doesn't sleep much and thus keeps the kitchen and back pantry clean and well-stocked. When his time is scarce, he grabs an acolyte priest from M19 to help him out both in the kitchen and serving in the outer common room.

M14. Inn Rooms

These rooms are simple but clean. All the rooms can be had for only 1 silver a night. See M12 for information on occupations of random adventurers.

One room is reserved for Savina Broseus (see "Cast of Undead Slayers"), even while she is off dungeoneering. Depending on events portrayed by the DM, she could return to her room suddenly via *teleportation* at an inopportune time for the PC monsters.

M15. Well

This is a massive stone well that provides more than adequate water for the monastery's needs.

M16. Bell Tower

The bell tower is situated inside the walls, but the upper portion of the 40-foot tower is easily visible outside the monastery. The tower is composed of rough stone blocks. A broad stone stairwell circles the interior of the tower, rising all the way to the belfry. The belfry contains two huge iron bells. The bells are tended by one of the acolytes (M19) on a rotating basis. The bells are rung at first light, twilight, to announce a service, and to warn of an attack.

M17. Library

The monastery boasts a small library filled with holy tomes and scrolls on oak shelves and scroll cases. The collection contains many titles, treatises, and works on secular and religious topics. Numerous (2d6) scrolls containing random priest spells reside in a locked chest; these scrolls are used for instructional purposes.

Day or night, acolytes (see M19) can be found in the library perusing tomes of secular and religious

lore. By day, 2d4 acolytes are here at any given time, while at night, 1d2 acolytes are here, burning the midnight oil.

M18. Laundry and Bath

Facilities for cleaning both clothing and monastery priests, men-at-arms, and travelers are located in this building. At any given time, day or night, 1d4-1 random people can be found here, though they evacuate during a general alarm.

M19. Acolyte Priest Cells

A total of eleven cells provide each of the twenty-two acolyte priests a bed, a small desk, and a meditation mat. Each desk normally has an abridged copy of *The Good Book of Peace* lying open atop it.

Acolytes live in the cells while they remain members of the monastery; however, a few can expect to move to larger quarters if they succeed the current monastery leadership, while others may take to the road for missionary work.

At any given time, 1d4+10 of the acolytes can be found in their cells; the rest are scattered about the monastery engaged in tasks. Six of the acolytes immediately respond to any alarm, while the rest remain available for reinforcements unless dealt with by invading PC monsters.

Acolyte Priests, C3 (22): AC 10 (3 if prepared—splint mail, shield); MV 12; hp 18; THACO 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6+1 (mace); SA spells, turn undead; SZ M (6' tall); AL LG; XI' 175.

Spells (3/2): 1st-bless, *command*, *cure light wounds*; 2nd—*spiritual hammer*, *enthrall*.

M20. Private Chambers

These chambers are given to monastery members who have taken a vow of silence. Thus, each room allows a single acolyte the privacy to be alone with his or her thoughts. Currently, the cells are empty.

The greatest secret of the monastery is the secret passage to the exterior located in one of the private chambers. No living member of the monastery knows of its existence, and only pure luck could ever reveal it.

M21. Basilica

This imposing structure is built into the walls of the monastery proper; however, while the monastery walls are rough stone, the Basilica's circular walls



are dressed marble. The domelike top and single spire are visible outside the monastery from above the walls. It is in this building that services are held every third day, that acolytes and priests daily pay their respect to their gods, and that the Mother Superior, the reliquary, and the offices of the church are housed.

The main entrance is guarded by a *glyph of warding*, the power of which extends to the interior of the entire basilica. Inscribed upon the door at the 20th level of ability, if affects any evil being who *teleports*, *dimension doors* or otherwise enters the room through magical transportation (entering from the Ethereal or Astral Planes also falls into this category). Unless a saving throw vs. spell is successful, it inflicts 14d4 points of disruption damage on offenders.

M22. Narthex

This wide portico is stunningly appointed with marble tiles and alabaster pillars. A wondrous painting of godly glory adorns the entire roof, while white candles burn in hundreds of wall sconces. A feeling of peace normally dominates the chamber.

The narthex is used for informal gatherings, and it also happens to be the location Lord Father **Frayson** seeks should he require the use of his *word of recall* spell. Normally, 1d2 acolyte priests are found here, day or night, kneeling at the prayer benches. In the event of an attack, the narthex becomes the command post from where Mother Superior Marithena orders the forces of the monastery to its defense.

M23. Offices

The three offices keyed to this entry are each devoted to church business and are administered by the Mother Superior, the Lord Father, and on a rotating basis, Father Woller, Mother Alicia, and Father Seward (M10). As such, each room is tastefully appointed with a desk, several chairs for visitors, and small bits of statuary and art that contain strong religious overtones. Each office also holds a shelf filled with books and scrolls on religious texts.

If not previously encountered, each one of the named individuals is 30% likely to be found here during daylight hours.

M24. Mother and Father's Chamber

More than the spiritual leaders of the monastery, the Mother Superior and Lord Father are joined in sacred marriage. They share this private chamber.

The chamber contains a canopied bed, dresser, armoire, a desk, and a bookshelf. The bookshelf holds travelogues, explorer's reports, and rare traveler's guides to the surrounding lands and those more distant. The desktop is littered with a few papers relating to the mission work; however, several reports of the dungeon inhabited by the PC monsters are also laid out on the desk. In addition to general reports of evil, PC monsters may be disturbed to find that each of their own names and monster types is noted in the reports, as well as half-complete maps of the Lichland dungeon level.

During the day, Mother Superior Marithena is here 70% of the time, writing invitations to ever more adventurers to join her on her crusade. Of course, during times of crisis, she can be found with her priests, defending the monastery against evil with all her formidable powers. Should she ever feel really threatened, she uses her *ring of farspeaking* to contact **Frayson**, if he yet lives. Upon receiving such a summons, **Frayson** returns to the monastery via *word of recall* to M22.

Tactics: Whenever confronting evil directly, the Mother Superior always makes certain that she has at least 1d4 acolytes and 2d4 men-at-arms in her entourage. She attempts to stay behind the action, dealing devastating damage to the enemy while healing her own forces. If necessary, she calls on greater reinforcements, even Lord Father **Frayson** if necessary. If possible, she may retreat into M27 so that the earth elementals stationed there can add immediate reinforcement. If forced to the final extremity, she uses *word of recall* to escape to M26 to plot a new plan to repel evil attackers.

Mother Superior Marithena, human female

C20: AC -3 (*bracers of AC 0, ring of protection +3*); MV 12; hp 80; THACO 8 (5 with *mace +3*); #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+4 (*mace +3, of disruption*); SA spells, turn undead; SZ M (6' tall); Str 13, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 16, Wis 18, Cha 14; AL LG; XP 9,000.

Special Equipment: *mace +3, of disruption, two scrolls of heal, four potions of extra-healing, ring of farspeaking* (allows telepathic contact for 10 minutes with any 1 target 1/day within 20 miles).

Spells (11/11/11/10/7/5/2): 1st—*bles* (X2), *command* (X3), *cure light wounds* (X3), *detect evil, detect magic, sanctua y*; 2nd—*barkskin, detect charm; enthrall, hold person* (X3), *know alignment* (X2), *spiritual*



hammer (×3), ; 3rd—*dispel magic* (×3), *feign death*, *locate object*, *call lightning* (×2), *create food and water*, *negative plane protection*, *glyph of warding*; 4th—*abjure*, *cure serious wounds* (X2), *detect lie*, *free action*, *protection from evil*, *protection from lightning*, *reflecting pool*, *neutralize poison*; 5th—*flamestrike* (×3), *cure critical wounds*, *dispel evil*, *raise dead*, *true seeing*; 6th—*word of recall* (to M26), *heal*, *forbiddance*, *conjure fire elemental*, *aerial servant*; 7th—*res tora tion*, *holy word*.

M25. Private Chapel

This simple chapel serves as a site for small ceremonies of just a few people. The walls are lined with candle sconces that are kept constantly lit. Simple benches line the floor, facing a stone altar. A large chalice always sits on the altar, filled with holy water. A secret compartment inside the altar contains *two holy wafers* that grant the imbiber *protection from evil* for 10 hours after being eaten.

M26. Holy Font

This door can be locked from inside. When locked, the chamber is rendered impenetrable to physical or magical entry or exit, by the blessing of the gods.

The chamber is tiled in subdued **redstone** and contains a small circular font. Anyone of good alignment who drinks from the font and then spends 1 turn meditating before the font is spiritually energized. Moreover, good-aligned priests can choose to memorize spells immediately after mediation if they haven't already done so in the last 24 hours.

M27. Earthly Guardians

This chamber is locked and contains permanent guardians summoned and bound by the Mother Superior: two earth elementals. The elementals attempt to prevent the entry into the reliquary (M28) of anyone other than a priest of the monastery. The elementals cannot leave this room without breaking their binding.

Earth elementals (2): AC 2; MV 6; HD 16; hp 128 each; THACO 5; #AT 1; Dmg 4d8 (fist); SA move through solid earth or stone, can demolish reinforced doors in 1 round and level a small cottage in 1d4 rounds; SD +2 or better weapon to hit; SW airborne or waterborne creatures take -2 hp per damage die inflicted upon them by the earth elemental; SZ M (6' tall); ML fanatic (17); Int low (6); AL N; XP 10,000 each.

M28. Reliquary

This chamber is locked and sealed against magical entry. A *glyph of warding* over the entrance inflicts 14d4 points of disruption damage on evil creatures that attempt to force the door.

Inside, the treasures of the monastery are kept in simple wooden chests. Each chest holds 400 gp, and there are twenty chests in all (8,000 gp). In addition to the chests, eight small sacks hold loose gemstones of various types; there are 500 gp worth of gems to each sack (4,000 gp). Finally, true relics of the monastery are also stored here, including a feather of a celestial that casts *cure critical wounds* 1/day on bearer, a leather slipper from a holy prophet that affords a *divination* spell 1/day to those who rub it, a golden chalice that pours forth 1 *potion of healing* 1/day, and a picture of a woman transfigured by light that affects the first viewer who gazes at it as a *potion of superheroism*, 1/day.

M29. Sacristy

The sacristy houses sacred vessels and vestments used by priests conducting services. The oaken door to the sacristy is rarely locked, but it is protected by a *glyph of warding* cast at the 16th level of ability (16d4 points of damage). The glyph is triggered by the entry of anyone who is not a priest of the monastery.

Besides a small font of normal water, several cabinets hold a total of three gold goblets (each worth 200 gp), four gold platters (each worth 60 gp), and 1d4 blocks of incense (each worth 100 gp). Additionally, a closet holds a variety of ecclesiastical garb in every size, including albs, surplices, cassocks, copes, and even a mitre or two.

M30. Nave

The basilica's domed heights create a peaceful gulf of space above the pews and altar. The altar stands upon a low dais near the southern wall. Hanging censers constantly burn, filling the chamber with sweet, contemplative odors. The altar contains a basin filled with one pint of holy water. An aspergillum (holy water sprinkler) rests nearby.

The altar is the focus of the holy energy in the monastery, and the priests make protecting it one of their highest priorities (the altar can suffer up to 300 points of regular damage before collapsing into rubble). Thus, it is possible that any final conflict could occur in this wide room.



Conclusions

Total victory for the heroes involves successfully fighting off or defeating the threats noted in each of the scenarios. In some cases, the PC monsters can claim victory merely by dealing with the instigators—such as the 1st-level adventuring party staying in the inn at Ardeche and Mother Superior Marithena of the monastery—and leaving the surrounding communities alone. In other cases, such as the demonic cascade, each and every threat (or Demonseed) must be dealt with to assure success.

If the PC monsters are victorious, they've secured their dungeon against investigation and looting by NPC adventurers for many a long year. With the power of the monastery broken, the continuing call for heroes to fight against the depredations of evil is silenced. Heroes already en route to the monastery find the structure abandoned (or at least leaderless) and leave.

Ongoing Adventures

Because of the peculiar nature of this adventure, it could well prove difficult for a continuation of play using the monster PCs presented herein. Since monsters, especially undead, are static by nature, an adventuring career is probably not too likely. However, if a DM is intrigued by the idea of monster PCs, and players are up for it, the DM could use any of the three sections presented in *Reverse Dungeon* to begin a campaign. In order to make a go of a prolonged monster campaign, the DM must give careful thought to monster advancement in a fashion that doesn't overpower the monsters too quickly and, just as important, doesn't overpower one PC monster too much in relation to the others. Previously, it was suggested that the DM could adapt an experience-point track for the monsters like regular PC classes use (use the Wizard Experience Levels table). If this option is utilized, it is probably best to pick a level for all the monsters to begin at, despite HD or power

differences. This ensures that all the monsters advance concurrently. When PC monsters advance, the DM must carefully decide what the monsters get. It is fine to simply hand out an extra die of hit points, increase their THACO by 1, and call it good; however, the DM could also subtly enhance a monster power—or give a completely new power—after careful consideration.

The following list presents a few ideas for continuing a monster-based campaign.

Goblin PCs

- War with a nearby goblin tribe intent on adding the PC goblins' warrens to their own.
- If the dungeon falls, attempt to relocate to a new warren safe from the dangers of more powerful monsters and dangerous adventurers.

Abomination PCs

- Fight the undead below for release from their gem!
- Journey into the danger-filled Underdark in search of the mind flayer's lost community.

Undead

- Dig deeper, creating new dungeons, in search of a fabled lost city of elder creatures far below.
- Dealing with the Demonseeds and resultant demons may require a trip to an infernal plane to make a deal with a demon lord.

Wrapping It Up

The best idea of all is another turnabout. Return your PCs to their standard hero characters, and match them up against their just victorious monster characters. With their new empathic link with these monsters in particular, the PC heroes are sure to be absolutely terrified of this particular threat. They, more than anyone else, know the true powers and capabilities of free thinking and powerful undead, which will stop at nothing to stamp out adventurers the likes of the PC heroes.



Appendix: Playing the Bad Guys

When kids play cops and robbers (or, in the old days, cowboys and Indians), there are always some who wanted to play the robbers (and Indians). That's what *Reverse Dungeon* is all about. Players who have toed the line, behaved themselves in the face of temptation, and generally restrained their baser impulses in the interests of roleplaying a virtuous character finally have a chance to cut loose.

There are, however, several different ways to approach this change of pace. Below is a discussion of the different methods by which this can be accomplished, depending on the playing style of the gaming group and the DM.

Bad, or Just Plain Evil?

One of the most important-and trickiest-decisions your group has to face at the beginning of the adventure is how bad they want the bad guys to be. Just because goblins have a racial predisposition toward chaotic evil doesn't mean that every goblin has that alignment. After all, a halfling village's residents may be predominantly lawful good but have a few sneaks, slackers, and rotters-/bad apples." Even within a humanoid tribe that is predominantly chaotic evil, there may be some individuals who are chaotic neutral or neutral evil. A few exceptional individuals (read: "misfits") may even be good or lawful. Such characters ("good apples?") often find themselves victimized by their fellows for not fitting in and, like their demihuman bad-apple counterparts, either learn to camouflage their deviant impulses or are killed or driven out, after which most quickly perish. This adventure is written from the expectation that most players will be playing evil characters, but a DM uncomfortable with this idea can easily accommodate neutral characters through judicious adjustment of the scenarios.

Even among evil characters, there can still be a lot of room so far as roleplaying goes. Are they evil with a capital "E" or are they merely misunderstood ("We're not evil, we're just drawn that way")? One fun way to play this adventure is to portray the goblins, undead, and other monsters

as just people-traditional foes of the elves, dwarves, and humans, yes, but not evil as such. There's plenty of precedent for this relativistic philosophy within the game-after all, the good guys often commit acts that would be looked at askance in any court of law. Indeed, in a typical adventure, the "heroes" are more likely to kill helpless foes than the "villains" are; it's become one of the cliches of fantasy fiction that the villains are more likely to take prisoners than the heroes. The same is true of many fantasy games, especially among groups with DMs reluctant to kill the players' characters. The bad guys may staunch a hero's wounds and hold him or her for ransom (thus giving said hero a chance to escape, foil their plans, and kill them for their pains), whereas the average adventurer group simply kills its foes, occasionally conveniently failing to hear offers of surrender.

For these reasons, then, it's easy to come up with humanoid characters who hate humans, elves, and dwarves but don't commit heinous acts of mayhem just for the fun of it. To re-create the mind-set of this model, think of humanoids as native peoples living hunter-gatherer existences on the fringes of the human-elf-dwarf civilized world. A state of undeclared war going back beyond memory exists between the two sides, and the accumulated bitterness of centuries means many atrocities have been committed on either side. Each group considers the other "evil," and acts considered to be murder if committed against members of one's own race are thought perfectly acceptable if directed against the other, whether it be an orc raid on a village or an adventuring party's cleansing of an orcnest in the mountains. The greatest advantage of this approach is that it requires the minimum mental regearing on the players' part; a simple adjustment of outlook, and they should be able to step right into their new roles and play them with empathy. The chief disadvantage with this approach is that it may prove too like their regular game to satisfy players and DMs who really want something different.

Bad to the Bone

All rationalizations aside, sometimes the best villains are evil in an absolute, abstract sense. They're not evil because they had a rotten childhood;



they're villains because they enjoy villainy. It's what they do, and they're good at it. In the real world, none of our fellow humans are purely evil or purely good, but in a fantasy game it is possible for a character or creature to embody abstract evil. For example, it's difficult to argue that demons and devils, such as those offered as player characters, are just misunderstood and have hearts of gold beneath those troubled exteriors. For players who want to go all the way and play evil characters who are villains for the sheer sake of being villains, here are a few tips on making a party composed entirely of evil characters work.

First, evil isn't necessarily stupid. Moral worth and intelligence are two unrelated traits. Thus, evil creatures and characters can work together just as well as good characters. It should be no more difficult to maintain party cohesion with a group that includes lawful evil, neutral evil, and chaotic evil characters than a typical adventurer mix of lawful good, neutral good, and chaotic good, with perhaps a few neutrals thrown in. Certainly evil characters will attempt to manipulate events to their personal advantage—a phenomenon not unknown among good-aligned parties—but not to the extent of sabotaging their own chances of survival. Backstabbing is all well and good, but if it weakens the group's ability to cope with the crisis posed by the adventurer incursions, an evil PC should defer the pleasure to a better time.

Two, villains are people, too. Even bad guys have feelings, emotions, and loyalties. This means it's just as possible to play a well-rounded character who happens to be evil as one who happens to be neutral or good. An evil character or creature can be a loving parent (witness Grendel's mom), faithful spouse, loyal friend, or devoted servant. This does not diminish their villainy in any way; it simply reflects the way in which people compartmentalize their lives and behave in different ways toward different groups, brutalizing those they consider beneath them but treating their peers with respect and affection. Thus, the various members of a goblin tribe may feel a certain camaraderie, especially when faced with a threat by

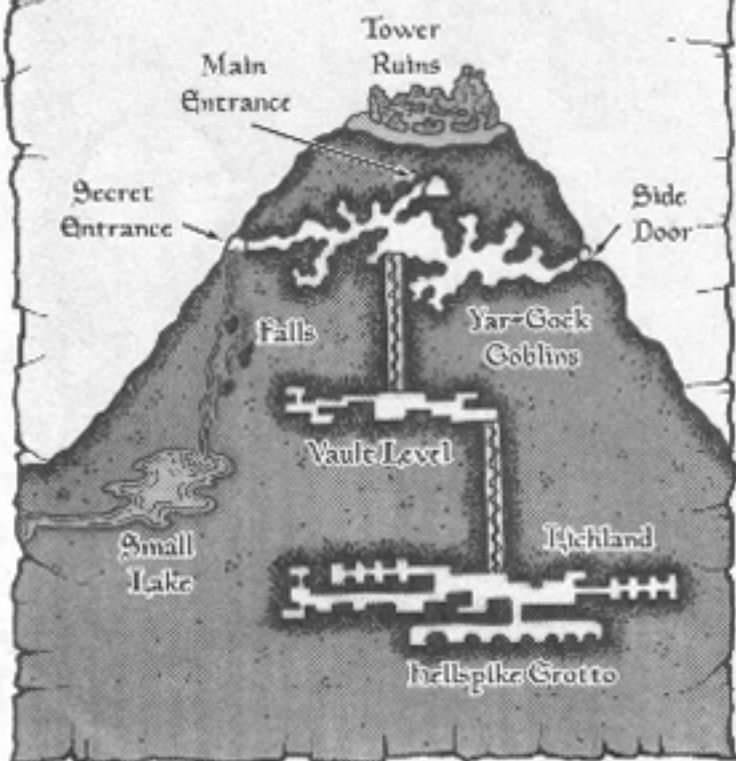
outsiders, yet feel no qualms about skewering halflings. Even monsters who lack intelligence or emotion (such as the constructs and undead) prefer to work with those who aid them or coexist favorably with them. To put a more selfish spin on it, benefiting by the efforts of others is something all but the most psychotic of evil characters should be able to appreciate.

how Far Is Too Far?

A word of warning: Some players may feel uncomfortable with playing evil characters, or with the lengths to which some of their fellow evil PCs played by other gamers in the same group will go. The point of the game is for everyone to have fun, so if someone's uneasy about things that are happening at the table, then it's up to the DM to fix the problem. Knowing when to pull back can save you and your players a lot of grief. Set aside a bit of time at the end of each session to get some feedback from the group as a whole. Talk to the individual players one-on-one so that someone who's uncomfortable bringing up a reservation before his or her fellow gamers has a chance to let you know if there's a problem. A too-sensitive player may have to drop out, or the DM may have to ask a too-boisterous gamer to rein in some particular aspect of his or her character before the group as a whole can strike the right balance. Few things are more surprising than what does and does not offend other people, so keep a sharp eye out and an open ear to ensure that everyone has fun and doesn't take the game too seriously.

Remember; this isn't a deep psychological exercise or an examination into the practical applications of the doctrine of Original Sin. It's not a gross-out contest. It's giving an actor a black hat and letting him chew scenery for a while before going back to his next starring role. Encourage your players to enjoy themselves in the best pulp-fiction B-movie tradition. The shoe is on the other foot now. Time to give those smug, goody-goody heroes the comeuppance they so richly deserve. . . .

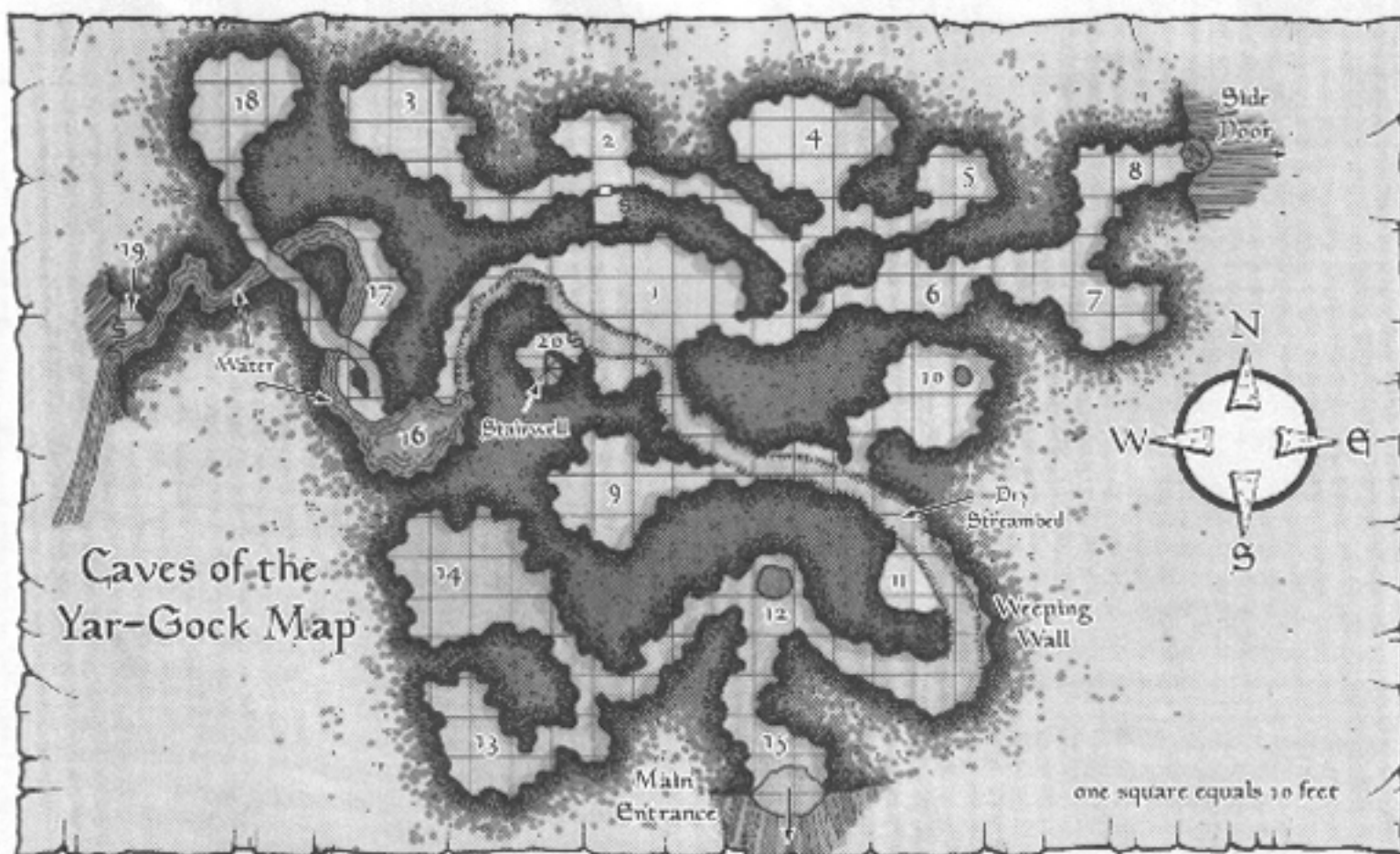
Reverse Dungeon Cross-section Map Not To Scale



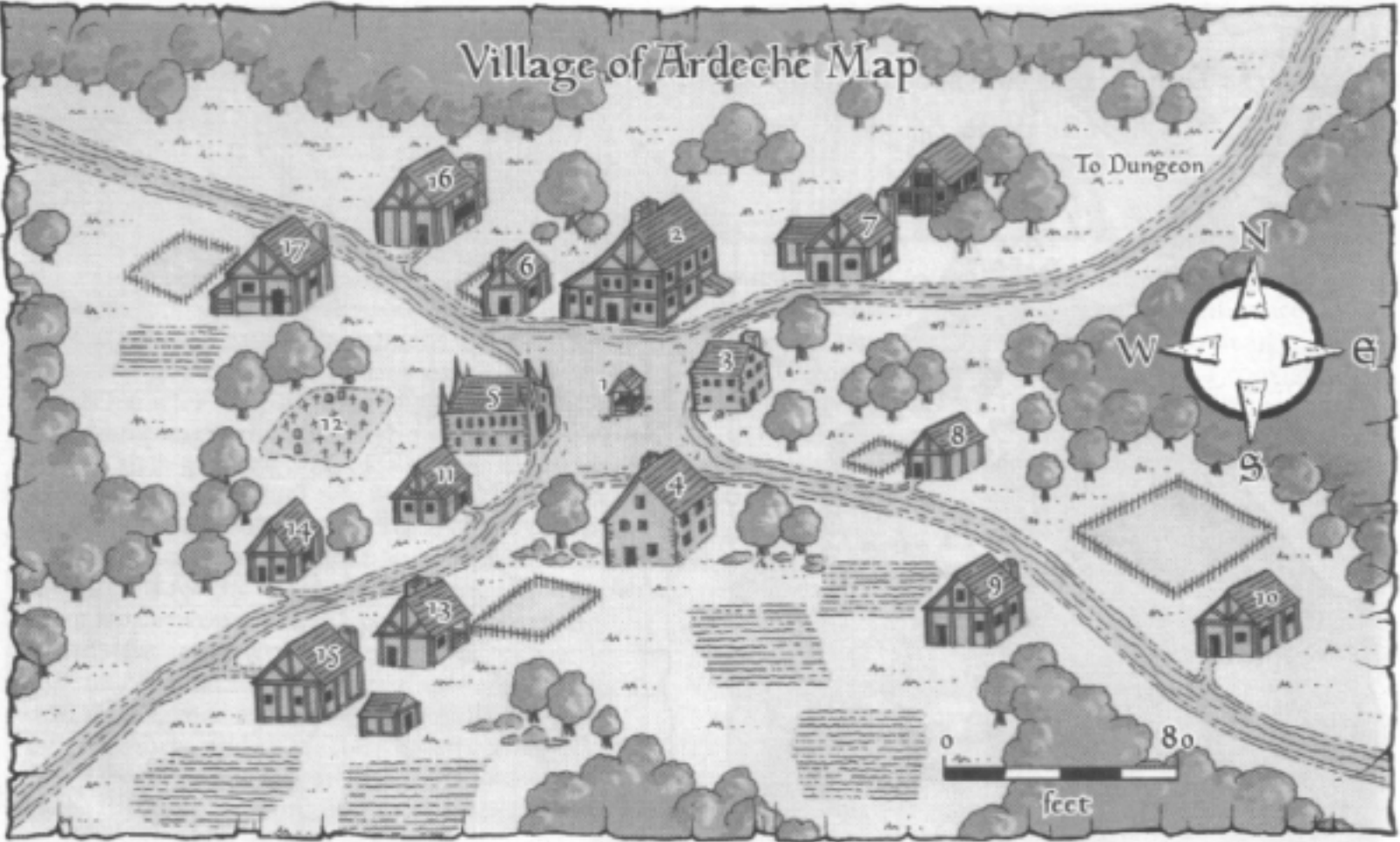
Overland Map



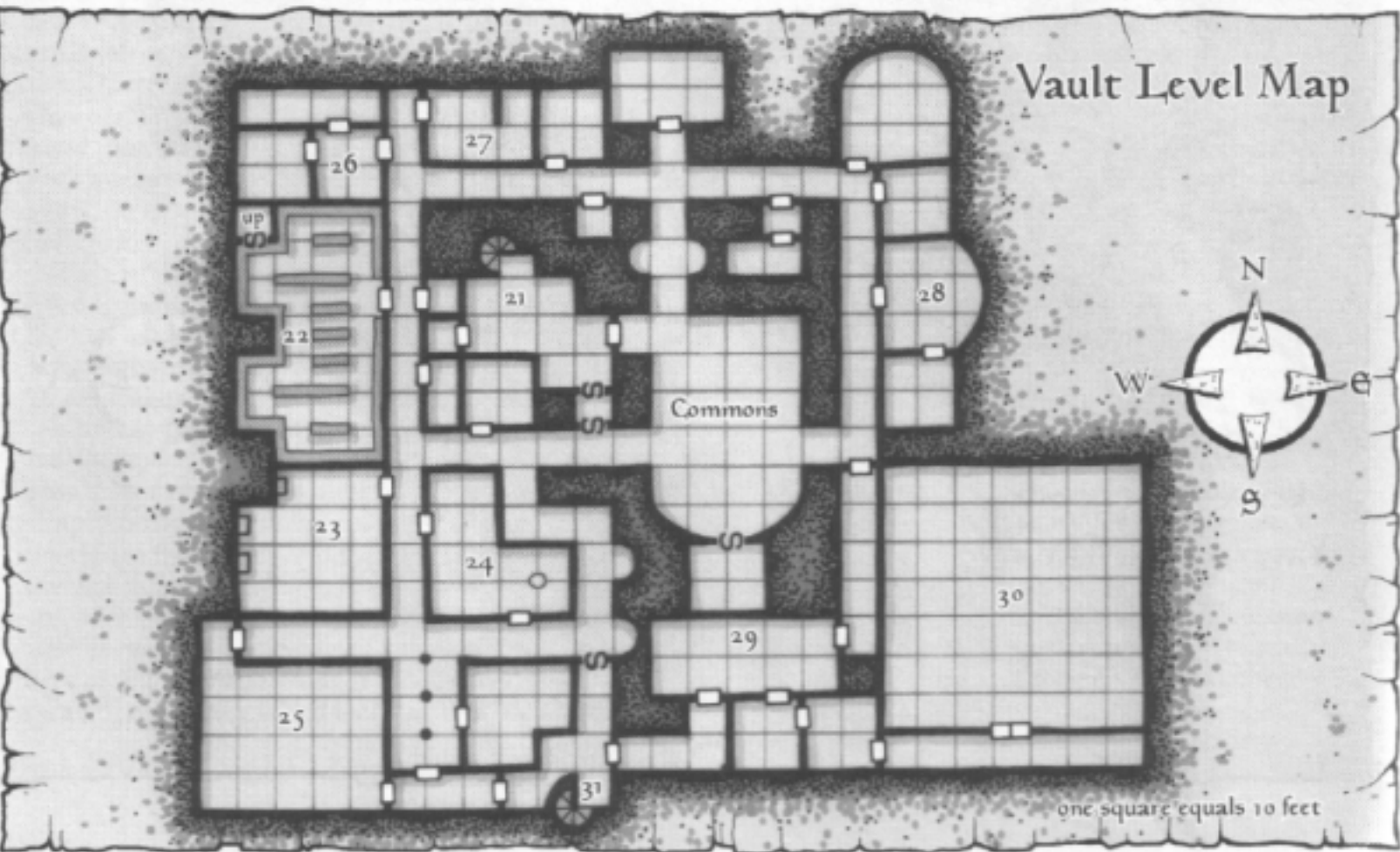
Caves of the Yar-Gock Map



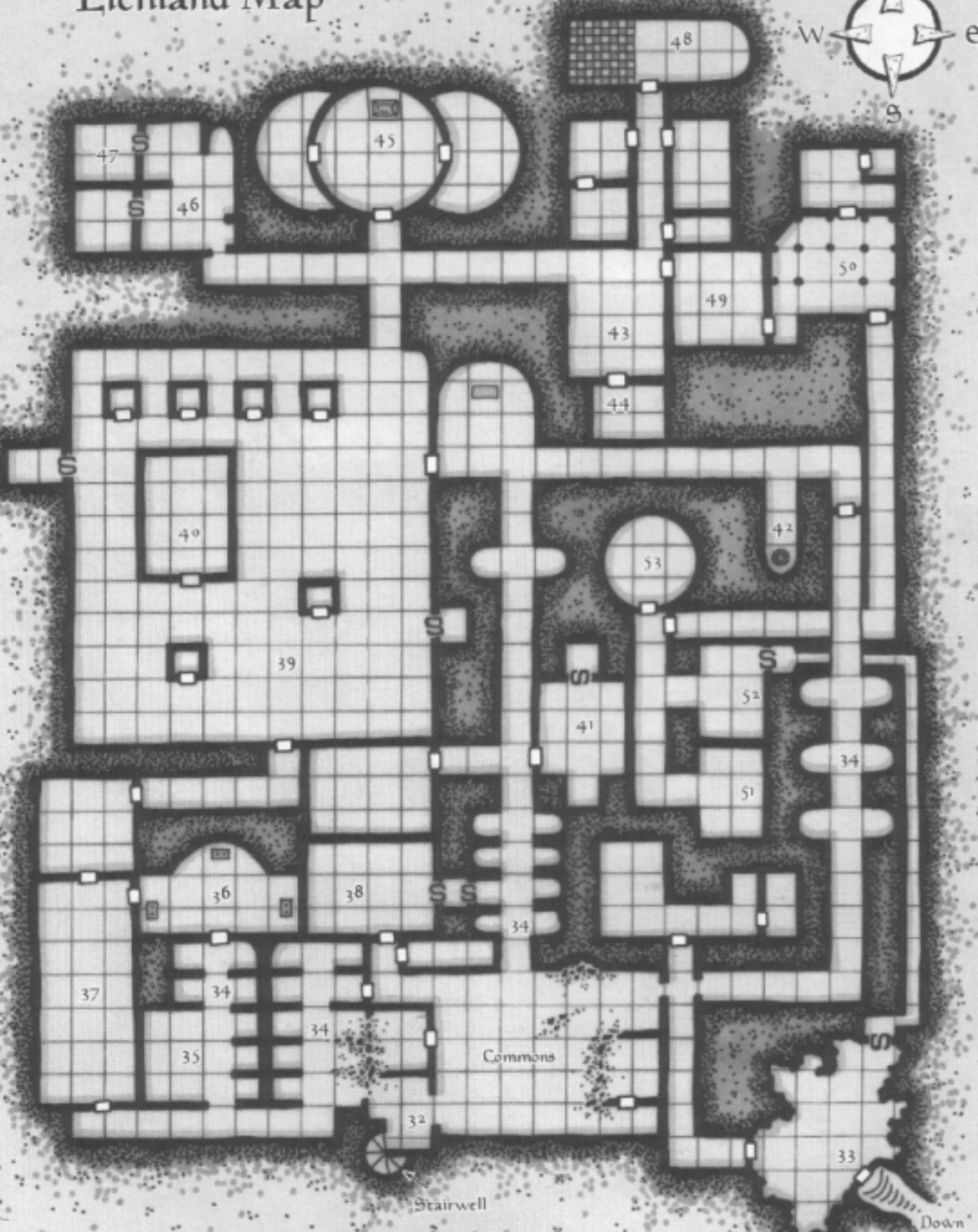
Village of Ardeche Map



Vault Level Map

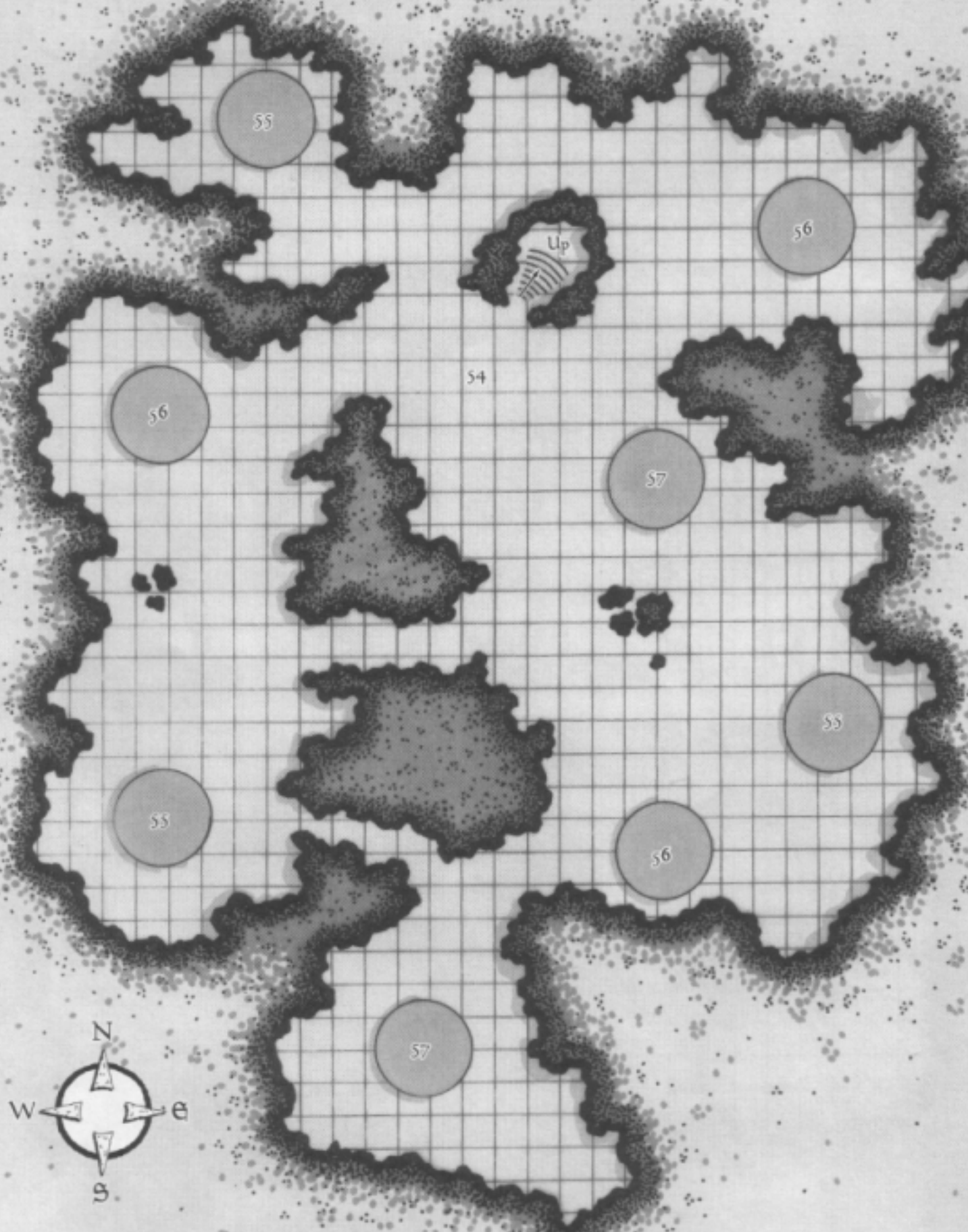


Lichland Map



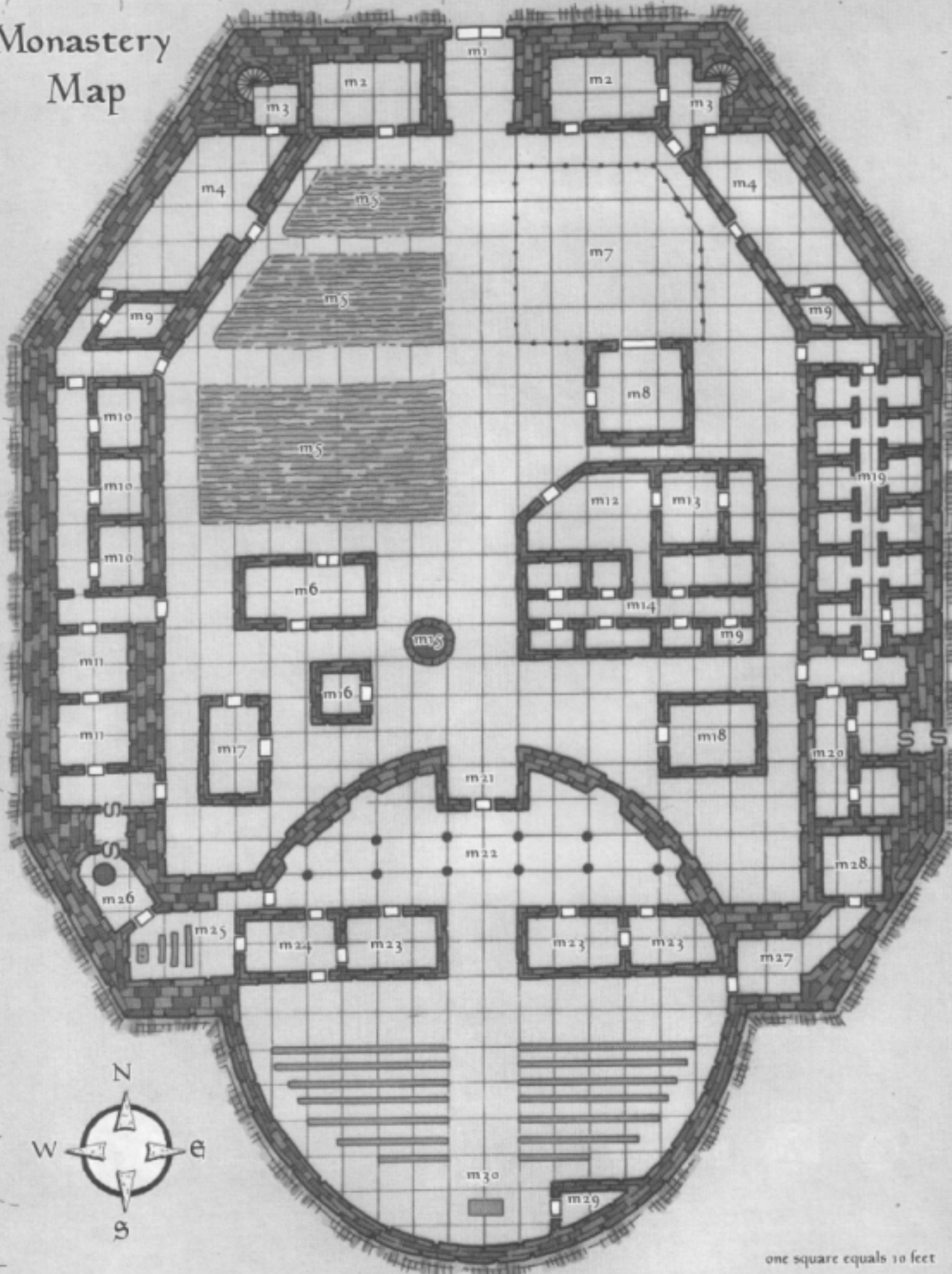
one square equals 10 feet

The hellspike Grotto Map



one square equals 10 feet

Monastery Map



one square equals 10 feet

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons

Adventure

Reverse Dungeon

John D. Rateliff and Bruce R. Cordell

See how the other half lives!

Herpuhlh the goblin heard a knock-knock-knocking in the upper corridor—those nosy explorers have found the secret entrance to the goblin den! Herpuhlh must hurry to warn the tribe. If the invaders cut him off at the pass, there will be no means of stopping their mad advance into the lair!

Welcome to *Reverse Dungeon*, the adventure where everything is backward! Instead of playing bold heroes who venture into dens of evil, the players take the roles of the monsters, determined to stop adventurers from invading their homes. Instead of always being the good guys, the players get a chance to be the bad guys.

Reverse Dungeon contains three linked minicampaigns in which the players represent:

- Goblins whose warrens are under siege from a band of heroes seeking fame and fortune;
- Guardian abominations whose vaults are attacked from several directions at once; and
- Ancient undead that must defend the silence of their tomb against crusading clerics intent on destroying them.

Enter the *Reverse Dungeon*—and find out how it feels to be on the receiving end of a hero's blade.

U.S., CANADA, ASIA,
PACIFIC, & LATIN AMERICA
Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
P.O. Box 707
Renton WA 98057-0707
+1-800-324-6496



EUROPEAN HEADQUARTERS
Wizards of the Coast, Belgium
P.B. 2031
2600 Berchem
Belgium
+32-70-23-32-77

Visit our website at www.wizards.com

ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS and the Wizards of the Coast logo are registered trademarks owned by Wizards of the Coast, Inc. ©2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc. All rights reserved. Made in the U.S.A.

ISBN 0-7869-1392-4



9 780786 913923

U.S. \$17.95



CAN \$26.95

EAN