A Reference Work on the Land of the Undead

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UNDEAD

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By Laurel Nicholson

Includes new magic and monsters.
Features maps and detailed descriptions of the land of the undead — Verdaise.

UNDEAD

UNDEAD

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Interior Art: Jeff Busch, Teanna Byerts, and Gerald O'Malley
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Special Thanks: To Jane Kobilak for her extensive research, and to Don the Grey for his unforgettable experiences in the world of undead.

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Manufactured in the United States.

ISBN: 0-912771-42-9

Mayfair Games Inc. • P.O. Box 48539 • Niles, IL • 60648

737

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction . . . . . p. 4
Map of Western Duur . . . . . p. 5
The Lichlord Council . . . . . p. 6
New Spells . . . . . p. 13
New Magic Items . . . . . p. 15
Ceremonies of Creation . . . . . p. 19
New Monsters . . . . . p. 22
The Land of Verdaise . . . . . p. 31
Region I Map . . . . . p. 34
Region II Map . . . . . p. 36
Region III Map . . . . . p. 40
Ashlaeden Map . . . . . p. 44
The Brooding Dragon — an Adventure . . . . . p. 50
Verdaise Gamemaster's Map . . . . . p. 51
Verdaise Players' Map . . . . . p. 53
Entering the Land Map . . . . . p. 55
Prison Layout Map . . . . . p. 59
Circle of Stones Diagram . . . . . p. 60
Map of Lava Tubes . . . . . p. 64-66
Hoodoo of Riches Map . . . . . p. 68
Closing the Trap Diagram . . . . . p. 71
Random Event Section . . . . . p. 73
Special Non-Player Characters . . . . . p. 77

INTRODUCTION

THE LANDS OF WESTERN DUUR

The region Verdaise is located at the base of the Dvegar Mountains in Western Duur. To the far west is the enormous body of water known as the Sea of Dreams; little is known of the worlds beyond its horizon. East of Verdaise lies the hot and desolate Grimspade Desert. To the north lies the once-great kingdom of Ellundir, which encompasses the deep and mysterious Forest of Evernight and the deadly ice marshes. To the south, the Ash River empties at the center city of Roguestead, which is well known for its lawless profiteers, slave traders, and mercenaries. (See the Western Duur map on the next page.)

THE GREAT CATASTROPHE

The center of the land of Woldham was carved from the side of the great mountain, Ironhead. The highest peak in the Dvegar Range of Western Duur, this huge, broad rock served for generations as a home to the Elgaard Dwarves.

Deep in Ironhead's heart, destruction awaited. A huge lava dome pressed gradually upward through the mountain's center. It grew more powerful every year, expanding slowly with each millenium until one day it exploded.

And the land of Woldham ceased to exist.

The first blast blew the top off of Ironhead and covered the few remaining dwarven lands with smoking ash. The sides of Ironhead collapsed, reducing the mountain by 10,000 feet in less than 30 seconds. A bowl-shaped depression called a *caldera* was all that remained of the mountain. Streams of lava spewed across the steamy floor of the caldera while tremors split the ground with gaping fissures.

For many years there was a dreadful quiet. Then, far off into the distance, the few dwarven survivors heard the beating of drums; the foul dissonance of answering horns joined the dirge.

Under a sullen violet light, hundreds of skeletal undead crawled over the caldera's rim. They advanced in countless numbers with their torn banners and their rusted helms and shields. Marching on over thousands of dwarven corpses, they claimed these blasted lands for their own.

Leading the hideous procession was their leader, the Lichlord Nightbay. His long, bony fingers held the reins of his armor-studded stallion. The cold, grey aura of death surrounded the robed, bejeweled figure. Those mortals who beheld him flung themselves to the ground in despair or fled in terror; none could withstand his gaze. The mantled figure had one normal eye, but his other eye was larger and crystalline with a pupil that pulsated.

Many dwarves who did not perish in what later became known as the Great Catastrophe were taken as prisoners. Chaos ruled; those who were once brave turned fearful and begged for mercy at the skeletal feet of their invaders.

It was said that the Evil god Dierguth had been greatly angered; the use of a lustrous blue mineral known as Rigold threatened to render his undead legions powerless. Determined to thwart the powers of Good, he caused earthquakes so that the land was weakened enough to fall to the final blow — the Great Catastrophe.

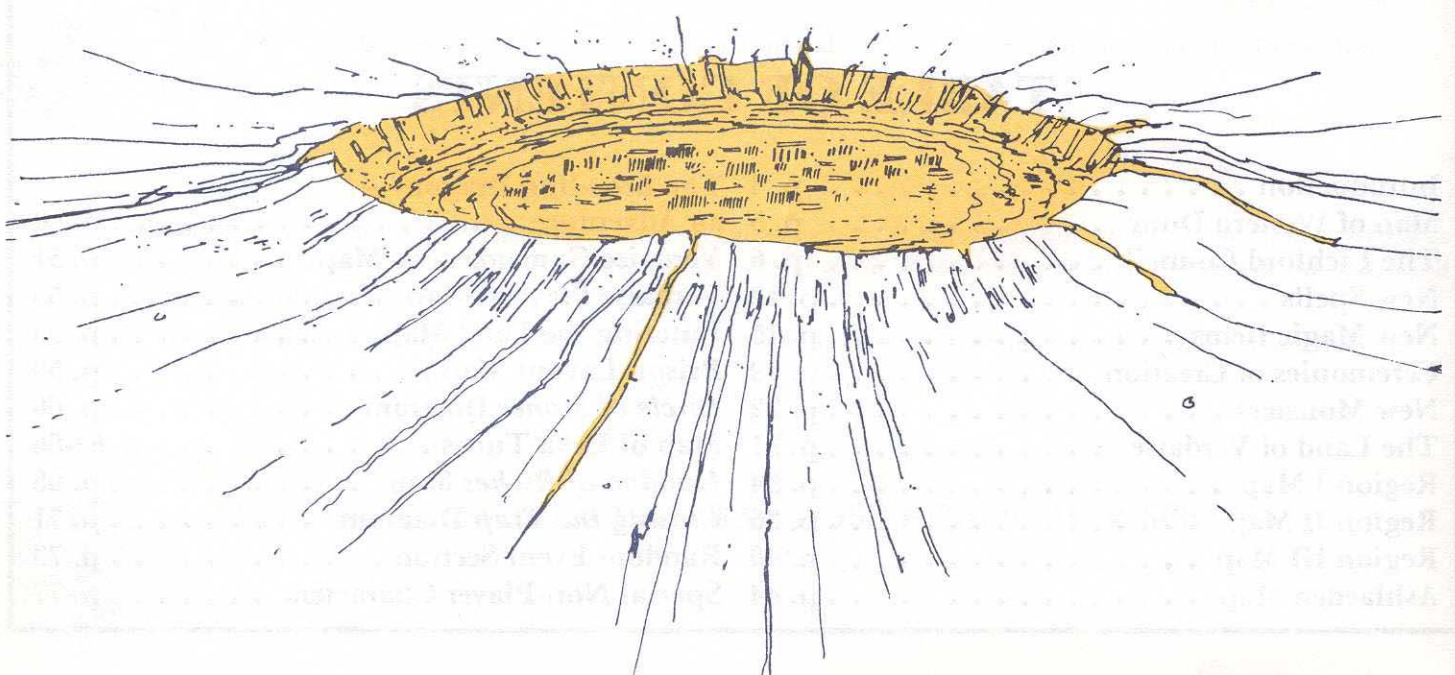
There were also those dwarves who banded together in the belief that resistance would be the key to regaining their cherished freedom. They called themselves *Bzontras*, which is the Elgaard Dwarven word for "freedom-fighters." Rigold, known by the dwarves as the *Bane of the Undead*, served as a protection against the draining powers of undead when it was activated through the proper ceremonies.

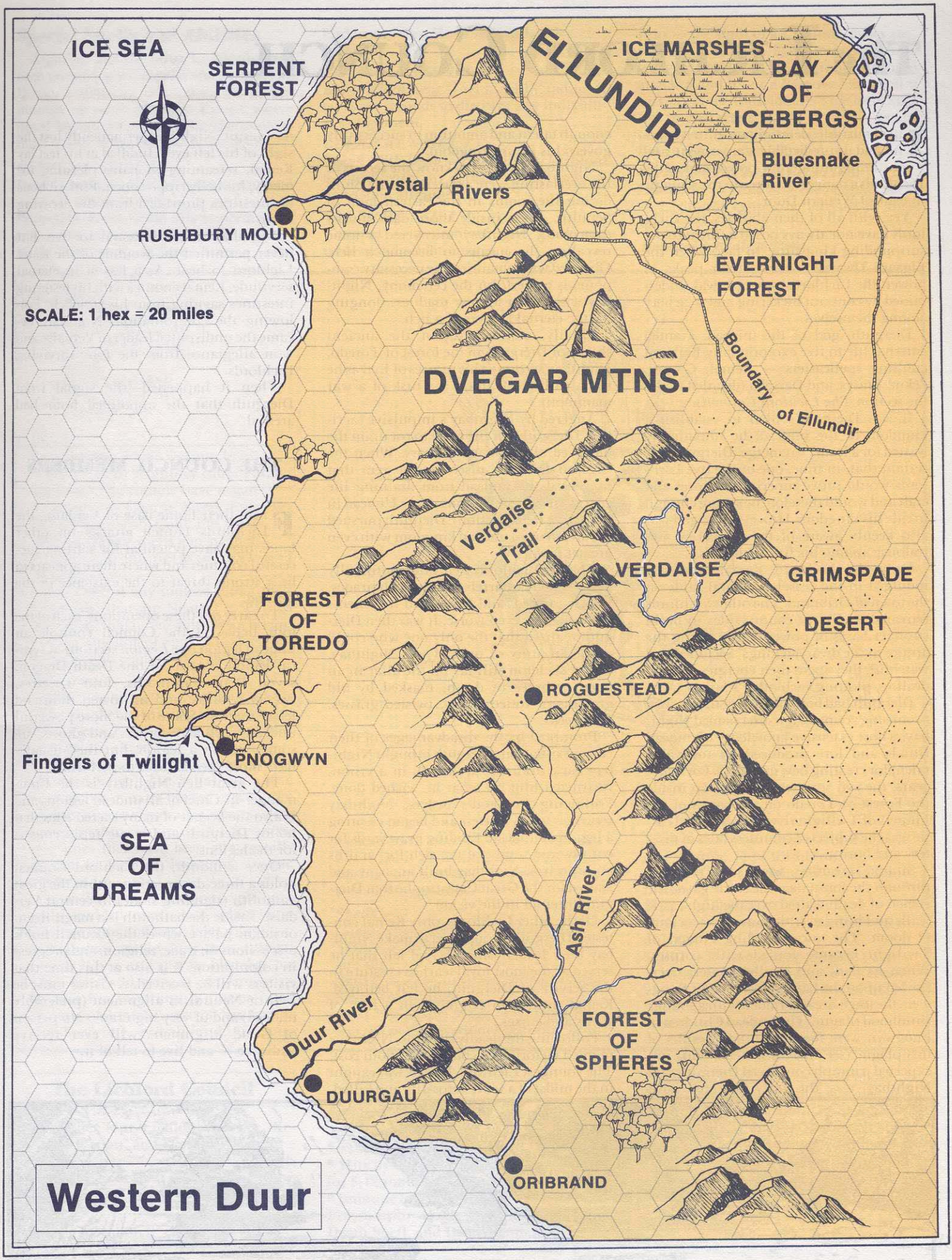
In the years following total destruction Verdaise, as the remains of Woldham was named by the Lichlords, rose from the ashes.

THE FORMATION OF A CALDERA

A *caldera* is similar to a crater, only wider and with steeper sides. Calderas are usually formed when the upper section of a volcano collapses and molten rock and lava pours out through an opening below.

The caldera on which Verdaise was built is approximately 40 miles long by 15 miles wide. It is broken down into three distinctly different regions. The caldera rim wall is approximately 1,000 feet high, though there are places that soar to 3,000 feet and some low spots of less than two to three hundred feet high.




ICE SEA
SERPENT FOREST
ELLUNDIR
ICE MARSHES
BAY OF ICEBERGS
Bluesnake River
Crystal Rivers
RUSHBURY MOUND
EVERNIGHT FOREST
SCALE: 1 hex = 20 miles
DVEGAR MTNS.
Boundary of Ellundir
Verdaise Trail
VERDAISE
GRIMSPADE DESERT
FOREST OF TOREDO
ROGUESTEAD
Fingers of Twilight
PNOGWYN
SEA OF DREAMS
Ash River
Duur River
FOREST OF SPHERES
DUURGAU
ORIBRAND
Western Duur

The LICHLORD COUNCIL

Inexhaustible determination, a vengeful and unpredictable temperment, and a consuming hunger for power makes the Lichlords a dangerous force in the struggle to control Western Duur.

Yet, with all of their abilities, the Lichlords have not always posed a threat to the surrounding kingships. In fact, when the Elgaard Dwarves were at their peaks in power, the Lichlords' strength was undermined by constant bickering and treachery among themselves.

Dierguth, god of the undead, granted enternal life to five exceptionally Evil and cunning spellcasters — Kemal, Garian, Zekur, Frasys, and Darselai (detailed under the section *The Lichlord Council*).

It was Dierguth's plan to establish a kingdom of the undead; he impatiently waited for a leader to emerge. Dierguth was certain that, in time, one of the five Lichlords would prove superior in power and craft and would therefore be strong enough to rule his kingdom. However, the god was also keenly aware of the hypocrisy and jealousy among his five Lichlords.

Only the Lichlord Kemal fearlessly indulged in the ceaseless, brutal raids on the town of Oribrand. The other Lichlords retreated to distant countrysides to build stronger bases of power before facing the armies of the dwarven kings. Secluded and watchful, they spent their energies double-dealing, plotting each other's failures.

Dierguth had been observing the rise of a promising young magic-user named Nightbay, whose extensive knowledge of undead rituals and lore produced an unrivaled talent for creating new monsters. For many years, the evil sorcerer resided deep inside the Forest of Toredo on the banks of the Fingers of Twilight river. His fortified castle was the subject of countless tales of mystery and horror.

Strange creatures were seen roaming through the forest near the castle gates; the stench of death wafted over the high castle walls and hung over the forest like a cloud of doom. The once-sparkling Fingers of Twilight became fouled with corpses. When its dark and swollen waters overflowed upon the banks of the city of Pnogwyn, the town became ridden with a strange childhood plague. The undead Children of Pnogwyn were the unfortunate results of this plague (see *New Monsters*). This unexpected triumph convinced Dierguth that Nightbay was the only sorcerer with enough talent and ambition to successfully govern his future kingdom.

Nightbay's wishes to know the secrets of life everlasting were answered while plundering the tombs in the eastern land of Sepultri. Deep inside those dark musky catacombs, Nightbay uncovered a tome revealing the means to become a lich. Obsessed with obtaining the necessary components to perform the ceremony, Nightbay was driven to near madness, longing for the eternal powers of a lich.

Finally, standing upon the ancient shrine of Dierguth in the forest of Toredo, Nightbay screamed his praises of Evil as he impaled himself upon the tusk of a war mammoth.

Angered by Nightbay's impulsive sacrifice, Dierguth left the body to rot upon the bloodied altar for many years. When the Elgaard Dwarves discovered a gem that prevented the undead from draining life energy (see *Rigold—Bane of the Undead* in the *Magic Items* section), Dierguth pursued his dream of an undead kingdom with even greater fervor.

The five Lichlords were now continually beset by petty quarrels and childish tirades. Poorly armed and equipped regiments made matters even worse. It was then Dierguth realized that the only one who could create an army of undead was Nightbay, whose skeleton still lay on the altar in an open embrace of death, masked by old growths of rotted leaves, twisted grasses, and weeds.

Prompted by the disadvantages of their current situation, Dierguth brought Nightbay back from the dead and, in a vision, instructed him on what he wished done. Following his god's orders, Nightbay returned to his fortress and began creating a legion of undead. Raiding graveyards for corpses and tombs of the rich for wraiths and spectres, Nightbay built an army and waited for the Great Catastrophe that Dierguth foretold in the vision.

Of the other Lichlords, only Kemal contested Dierguth's command to make Nightbay their leader. Since Kemal felt that he served as the most loyal fearless creature in the service of Dierguth, he felt betrayed. Kemal turned on Nightbay in a fury of spells and curses.

Following the deadly struggle, Nightbay reigned victorious — but not without cost. The youngest Lichlord, Frasys, was caught in the midst of a spell's crossfire and killed. As a result, Nightbay permanently lost the sight of his left eye. Huddled at his feet lay Kemal, screaming in pain, pleading for mercy, his belly ripped open. Pink ribbons of intestines protruded from the decaying flesh.

Nightbay allowed Kemal to live, but never permitted the wounds of the lesser Lichlord to heal. As a lesson in eternal servitude, Kemal endures with his festering intestines sagging from his stomach. Following the confrontation, Nightbay became the undisputed leader of Verdaise and won allegiance from the four surviving Lichlords.

Then it happened—the signal from Dierguth that the appointed hour had arrived.

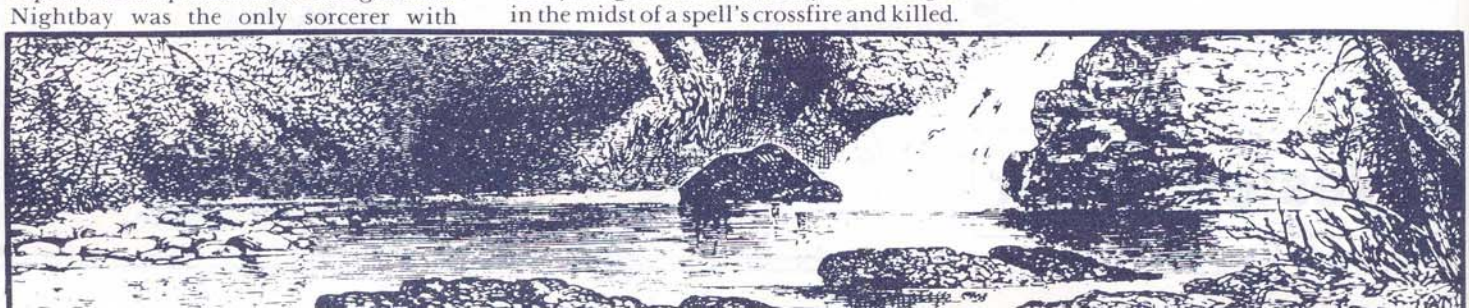
THE COUNCIL MEMBERS

From their home base of Verdaise, the Lichlords launch attacks on other lands that have potential for starting successful colonies and where there appears to be a strong threat to the existence of the undead.

To carry out these operations, each of the four liches of the Council controls an undead legion (see *Legion* section). A typical legion consists of one Death Dragon, seven War Mammoths, four spectres, twenty wraiths, and up to ten thousand lesser undead. Some of the more powerful undead, such as vampires and ghosts, are sometimes in a legion, but they usually have more special tasks to perform.

The great lich Nightbay is the Commander-in-Chief of all undead legions and is also the keeper of many sacred rites that honor Dierguth and create replacements for the legions.

Once a month, the Lichlord Council holds a three-day meeting within the great batholith (standing stone) in central Verdaise. Inside the batholith is a magnificent obsidian palace where the Council holds discussions on trade, religion, and progress in colonization. It is also at this time that visitors will be received. A visitor must be Evil or Neutral in alignment (preferably undead) and of very high rank. No person of Good alignment will ever receive audience — and live to tell of it.



Special Spells and Abilities

Nightbay and the other Lichlords have been granted special spells and abilities by Dierguth that can be used an unlimited number of times per day. Except where noted below, these spells are the same as those found in the standard rule books.

CLERICAL SKILL 1

Detect Magic — the item must be touched — works automatically.

Protection From Good this is permanent and only works for the Lichlord.

Resist Cold — no cold may harm a Lichlord in any way. However, walls of ice, etc., will work.

CLERICAL SKILL 2

Know Alignment — within a 15′ radius. It takes six seconds to discover any individual's alignment.

CLERICAL SKILL 3

Speak With Dead — this allows a Lichlord to speak with any deceased humanoids of non-Good alignment.

CLERICAL SKILL 4

Tongues — a Lichlord may speak and understand all languages.

Fear — the sight of a Lichlord causes anyone not saving vs. Spell to be overcome with fear and flee for 2-7 rounds (unless attacked and hit or a Remove Fear spell is cast upon the individual). This only applies to characters Skill 5 or above, as any character below Skill 5 will automatically flee in fear; no save allowed.

OTHER SPECIAL ABILITIES:

Immunity to Hold and Feeblemind Spells — Lichlords cannot be affected by these spells.

Immunity to all poisons.

Nightbay
ST: 14, *IT:* 18, *IN:* 16,
DX: 11, *SM:* 11, *AP:* 8
AC: 0, *HTK:* 19D8
MV: 6″
AL: Lawful/Evil
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-10
THACO: 7

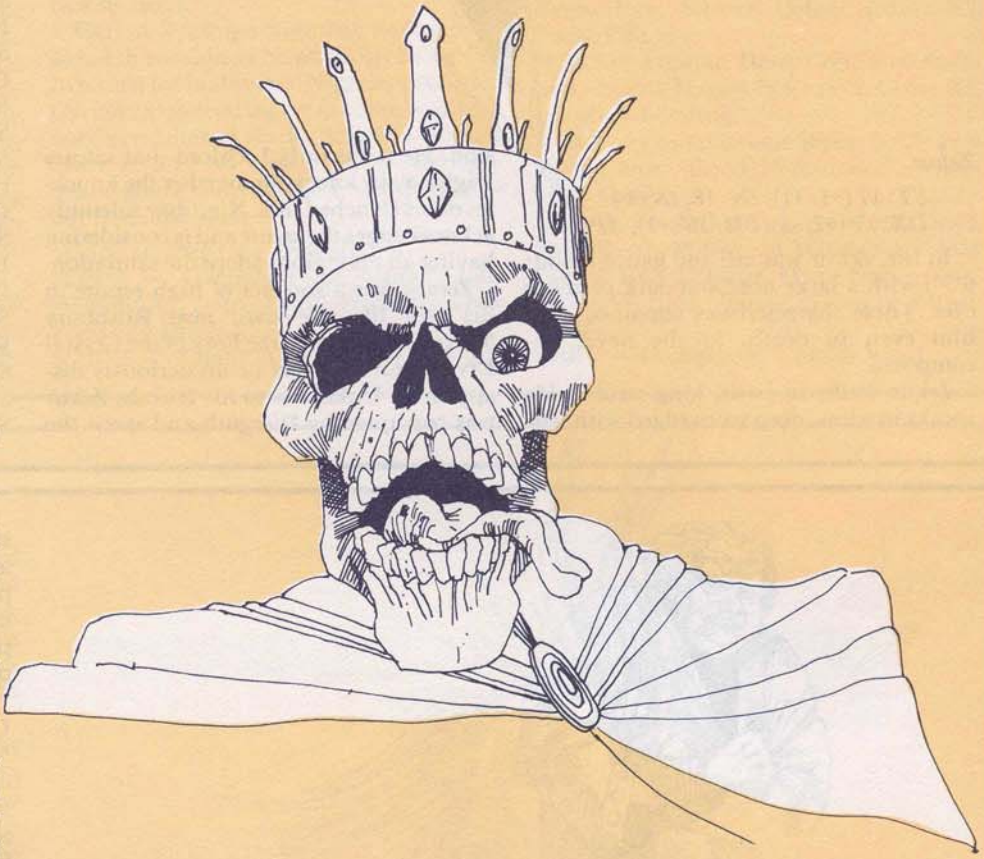
Special:
* +1 or better magic weapon to hit.
* Melee hits by Nightbay cause Paralyzation for 3-12 rounds (save negates).
* Immune to Charm, Sleep, Enfeeblement, Polymorph, Cold, Electricity, Insanity or Death spells and symbols.
* Has special abilities as per *Spells and Abilities* above.
* May control any undead (other than Lichlords) that are Neutral or Evil in alignment that he encounters for an unlimited amount of time. He does not need to be in contact with the undead

Description:
Tall (6′5″) and stately, Nightbay towers over the other Lichlords. He walks with a brisk gait, his back erect and one arm crossing his chest.

One eye was lost in a battle with the Lichlord Kemal, but it has since been replaced by a many-faceted crystal that enables him to view various parts of the kingdom through similar kindred crystals, ones that have been strategically placed in central locations around Verdaise.

Nightbay is most often seen wearing a jewel-studded crown and adorned in flowing satin and silk violet robes.

Nightbay speaks in a low, gutteral growl. When angered, he clenches his bony fists and scrapes his fingertips against his metacarpuls (lower hand bones). Although most of his face is fleshless, one eyeball and his long tongue have never decayed. Nightbay has a habit of licking his rotted teeth during conversational pauses, emitting soft sucking sounds.



Spells —
(Magic-user except where indicated):
Skill 1 — Burning Hands, Magic Missile ×2;
Skill 2 — ESP, Levitate, Mirror Image, Scare, Invisibility:
Skill 3 — Dispel Magic, Fly, Hold Person, Slow, Suggestion, Lightning Bolt;
Skill 4 — Mist From the Grave (Clerical), Torture, Fear, Ice Storm, Dig, Polymorph Other, Polymorph Self, Confusion;
Skill 5 — Shroud, Teleport X2;
Skill 6 — Entomb, Death Spell, Repulsion;
Skill 7 — Decompose ×2 (clerical), Power Word Stun, Reverse Gravity, Vanish;
Skill 8 — Mind Blank, Power Word Blind X2;
Skill 9 — Power Word Kill.

The Lichlord Council

The other four Lichlords—Zekur, Kemal, Garian, and Darselai—share the following common statistics, although each has different spell casting abilities.

AC: 0, *HTK:* 17D8
MV: 6″
AL: Lawful/Evil
AT: 1, *DM:* 1D10
THACO: 7

Special (in addition to those in Special Spells and Abilities):
* +1 or better weapon to hit.
* Hits by the Lichlord cause Paralyzation for 3-12 rounds (save negates).
* Immune to Charm, Sleep, Enfeeblement, Polymorph, Cold, Electricity, Insanity, Death Spell, and Death Symbols.
* Has special abilities as given above.
* Characters under Skill 5 will flee in fear upon sight of a Lichlord; no save allowed.
* May control any undead of Neutral or Evil alignment (other than another Lichlord) encountered for an unlimited amount of time.

Zekur

ST: 17 (+1, +1), *IN:* 18, *IN:* 14
DX: 17 (+2, -3), *SM:* 15 (+1), *AP:* 10

In life, Zekur was tall and gaunt (about 6'3") with a large nose and dark piercing eyes. These characteristics remained with him even in death, for he never decomposed.

Zekur walks in swift, long strides. He speaks in a low, deep voice edged with tension. He is the only Lichlord that salutes Nightbay by knocking together the knuckles of his clenched fists. Nightbay solemnly acknowledges the salute and is considering having all his legions adopt the salutation.

Zemur was a sorcerer of high repute in his past life. He lived near Rushbury Mound in a tower at the Fork of the Crystal Rivers until one day he mysteriously disappeared. Unknown to his friends, Zekur was corrupted by Dierguth and spent the next several years laboriously preparing for his eventual sacrifice.

Currently, Zekur is in charge of the undead legion that is attempting to colonize the land of Motoothra, across the Sea of Dreams.

Sensitive to any light, he is always covered in dark wool robes with a violet hood. Fearing Nightbay, he is loyal but cautious. His excellent military mind and command of the legion makes him a valuable ally to Nightbay.

Spells (magic-user except where indicated):
Skill 1 — Burning Hands, Charm Person, Feather Fall, Magic Missile, Shield;
Skill 2 — Darkness 15-foot radius, Fool's Gold, Invisibility, Mirror Image, Scare;
Skill 3 — Fireball, Haste, Lightning Bolt, Slow, Suggestion;
Skill 4 — Dig, Wall of Ice, Fumble, Torture, Mist From the Grave (clerical), Plant Growth, Dimension Door;
Skill 5 — Become Non-Corporeal, Wall of Iron, Teleport X2, Hold Monster, Contact Other Plane;
Skill 6 — Death Spell, Project Image, Repulsion;
Skill 7 — Limited Wish, Phase Door, Statue;
Skill 8 — Maze, Mind Blank.

Kemal

ST: 12, *IT:* 18, *IN:* 10
DX: 7, *SM:* 11, *AP:* 8

In life, Kemal was short (about 5'5") and stout and was fair-skinned with reddish hair. He remained an outcast for most of his miserable lifetime. The townfolk laughed at his obesity despite his reputation for being an Evil sorcerer with a vengeful disposition.

It's not known when Kemal first came to Western Duur but his deeds are well documented. He terrorized the town of Oribrand with his hunger for living flesh.

Because of an unsuccessful coup, Kemal lost in his attempt to displace Nightbay as ruler of Verdaise. He is destined to wander through undeath with his entrails protruding from his decaying body (he knows no spells to cure himself; also Nightbay is magically keeping him in this condition). The wounds continually fester, so a foul stench surrounds him at all times and alerts anyone up to 30 feet away that he is approaching. In constant pain, Kemal often moans and speaks in gasps with long pauses. He wears black robes of satin that partially conceal his dissipating body.

Though Kemal is the weakest of the Lichlords, he is the most covetous of Nightbay's position. The memory of his defeat by Nightbay keeps him from attempting further treachery but it is no secret that he would like to see Nightbay fail in his post and be disgraced before the eyes of Dierguth. If it weren't for his unsurpassed abilities to establish colonies in the south through fear, Nightbay would have eliminated him long ago.

Spells (magic-user spells except where indicated):
Skill 1 — Jump, Shocking Grasp, Magic Missile
Skill 2 — Detect Invisibility, Invisibility, Scare, Web, Pyrotechnics
Skill 3 — Suggestion, Haste, Phantasmal Force, Fireball, Hold Person;
Skill 4 — Torture X2, Dig, Minor Globe of Invulnerability, Polymorph Other, Confusion, Ice Storm
Skill 5 — Enhanced Animate Dead (clerical), Stone Shape, Cone of Cold, Cloud Kill, Airy Water
Skill 6 — Spirit Wrack, Move Earth, Disintegrate
Skill 7 — Simulacrum, Vanish, Decompose (clerical)
Skill 8 — Glassteel, Trap the Soul.

Garian

ST: 10, *IT:* 18, *IN:* 13
DX: 8, *SM:* 12, *AP:* 12

Garian had been an extremely skillful cleric for a number of years during his past life and had participated in a variety of noble deeds. However, he was captured by the Cecrops (see *New Monsters*) near the Misty Waters of Gloom, where he was repeatedly tortured until his weary mind could no longer distinguish between Good and Evil. Torture left its mark on Garian, who was rendered crippled and bent.

After his release, Garian wandered the countryside, not remembering who he was or where he lived. He stumbled upon a book of invocations (to Dierguth) and began worshipping the mighty god in hopes of life everlasting. This gave his life meaning once again and Dierguth acknowledged his reverence by granting him spells that would surpass his earlier great skills. Soon, Garian was granted entry into the Lichlord Council.

In undeath, Garian retains his tell-tale limp and broken posture. He wears the same loose-fitting rags as he did in life, barely covering his skeletal body. He speaks in a stutter.

Garian worships Nightbay with almost as much passion as he worships Dierguth. In return for his loyalty, Nightbay awarded Garian an undead legion to colonize the far northern lands of the Ice Marshes. Garian often returns to confer with Nightbay about plans and strategies, which Nightbay finds flattering.

Spells (all spells are clerical):
Skill 1 — Command X2, Cause Light Wounds X2, Detect Good, Darkness, Foul Food and Drink X2;
Skill 2 — Chant X2, Hold Person X2, Resist Fire, Silence 15-foot radius X2, Snake Charm;
Skill 3 — Animate Dead, Continual Darkness, Dispel Magic, Prayer X2, Curse X2, Glyph of Warding;
Skill 4 — Cause Serious Wounds X3, Protection from Good 10-foot radius, Mist From Grave;
Skill 5 — Enhanced Animate Dead, Shroud, Cause Critical Wounds X2; Slay Living, Insect Plague, Flame Strike;
Skill 6 — Blade Barrier, Word of Recall, Harm;
Skill 7 — Decompose, Unholy Word.

Darselai

ST: 13, *IT:* 18, *IN:* 14
DX: 11, *SM:* 12, *AP:* 15

Darselai was the lover of the famed magic user, Protograth. Beautiful and intelligent, she found herself becoming increasing intrigued by Protograth's spells and potions. She became angry when Protograth laughed at her for yearning to learn the ways of his magic.

In her anger, Darselai crept into the laboratory late at night when Protograth slept. For years she studied his books and experiments in secret. She also went on mysterious adventures to improve her skills while Protograth believed she went on religious pilgrimages. This continued until the fateful night when Protograth found her in the laboratory. A fight ensued and Darselai successfully Polymorphed the wizard permanently into a toad, which she now keeps as a pet.

Darselai continued her studies in the lab, becoming quite a renowned sorcerer in her own right. In the winter of the twentieth year, she found a book in the far corner of the attic that spoke on the glories of Dierguth. The great power of evil and eternal undeath attracted her more than fortune ever could. She made a death pact with Dierguth and became a Lichlord of the highest order.

Due to her cunning, Nightbay gave her command of an undead legion and responsiblity for eradicating the dwarven freedom fighters known as the Bzontras from Verdaise.

Her favorite torture is to slice the skin of victims with the sharp edges of volcanic rocks, allowing the blood to flow onto each one, until a Rigold gem is discovered. She then crushes the gem, laughing in a high-pitched giggle. Her name is never spoken among the dwarves, who refer to her only as the Unholy Mistress of Sorrow.

Darselai speaks with great flourish, her arms waving in the air every time she makes a point. She wears long blood-red robes of silk with a shawl of braided dwarven hair that drapes over one shoulder. Decorating her throat is a necklace of shrunken eyeballs, interspersed with gold-dipped teeth from fallen Bzontras.

Spells (magic-user except where indicated):
Skill 1 — Torture ×3, Spider Climb, Burning Hands;
Skill 2 — Continual Darkness, Stinking Cloud, Scare, Shatter, Levitate;
Skill 3 — Dispel Magic, Lightening Bolt, Gust of Wind, Fly, Slow;
Skill 4 — Dig, Curse, Polymorph Other, Fumble, Confusion
Skill 5 — Enhanced Animate Dead (clerical), Distance Distortion, Cone of Cold, Teleport ×2;
Skill 6 — Repulsion, Invisible Stalker, Death Spell, Phase Door, Reverse Gravity, Statue;
Skill 7 — Polymorph Any Object, Symbol.

The UNDEAD LEGIONS

From the beginning, the undead Legions were an important part of Nightbay's plans for conquest. The Legions were created from thousands and thousands of undead gathered from around the world. In many cases, Nightbay's agents would buy whole villages of people from an unscruplous chieftain, kill them all, then ship the bodies to Nightbay.

Once the first legion was created it was easier to gather bodies. After every battle, Nightbay and his agents were careful to gather up all the fresh bodies.

But the Legions could not have been born without the help of Diergurth. He has bestowed a significant portion of his personal power upon the Legions and he is physically affected if large numbers of these undead are killed. For every 100 undead warriors killed, Diergruth will sustain 1 HTK of damage and will be distracted with the pain for 1D4 melee rounds. This damage lasts for the duration of the battle. If over 20 HTK of damage is taken, Diergruth will manifest himself in the area in which there are the most undead casualties just long enough to let loose a 20D6 lightning bolt. This attack is always successful.

GM NOTE: No statistics are given for Dierguth because he will only attack with the lightening bolt; he also cannot be attacked directly (weapons, spells, etc.) since he will manifest himself in spirit form.

There are many legions now; they constantly move through the main gate of the caldera to attack and occupy the lands around them.

A TYPICAL LEGION

Legions primarily consist of skeletons; sometimes zombies and ghouls are included as irregular forces but, although they are Neutral, they are still not as dependable as skeletons. Skeletons are totally obedient; they will do exactly as they are told, no more, no less. The skeletons will follow the directives of their commanders. These skeletons have been ordered by Nightbay, their creator, to 'report' to wherever he is if their commanders are killed. Nightbay will then dispatch the skeletons to new units.

Each legion contains 4,000 warriors. They are divided into *cohorts* of 500 skeletons and undead each. Each cohort is divided into a *camp* of 100 skeletons/undead each. The eight cohorts of the legion all have special functions. Five cohorts are designed for speed and power. Two cohorts have special equipment to build roads, bridges, and siege equipment. The eighth cohort is a headquarter/supply unit. This unit guards prisoners; it also has other undead available for different uses.

Each camp of 100 skeletons is divided into even smaller raiding parties of 20 to 30. A cohort usually has 4 camps on the line with one camp left about a mile behind as a reserve.

An average undead warrior carries a spear and a dagger. Sometimes the first line of spearmen will have shields. Other groups, usually one camp per cohort, are armed with swords, shields, and even armor. Another such camp will be armed with bows, with 40 arrows per bow. These two camps also have daggers. Some skeletons, especially those created on the battlefield, will carry a special weapon that they carried in life and with which they were buried or died.

The undead legions were great successes and swept other armies before them time and time again. There are some practical reasons for this catastrophe. Unlike a regular army, an undead legion doesn't need to rest, sleep, or eat. It doesn't need campfires or songs. It doesn't worry about families at home or the fate of the crops. It can march in heavy rains, snowstorms, and broiling sun. While most armies march about 10 to 15 miles a day, an undead legion can easily march 50 to 60 miles. A legion can fight for as long as the weapons hold out. In fact, it is usually the weapons that an individual warrior carries that give out before he does.

With this great advantage, undead armies are extremely deadly. In battle after battle they have marched around the enemy and caught him in the flank or rear. Strategically, they can easily shatter the long fragile supply lines that feed and support armies. Especially in the mountainous terrain they inhabit, the loss of an important village or pass can mean destruction for an army of mortals.

The undead legions are led by the best fighters and generals of the past. Nightbay has dealt with numerous underworlds to find those who were the best fighters and leaders during their lifetime. Some of these commanders are only skeletons themselves but Nightbay has restored their intellects. Others have been turned into wights or wraiths. Usually there is one wraith commander for every 100 warriors. Some units have more direction and have been given one wraith, wight, or spectre for every 50 warriors.

All undead undergo training and instruction to the limits of their abilities. In the case of skeletons, this means being able to march, drill, and fight. To produce more powerful undead, the generals that Nightbay has brought from the dead instruct them. Some of the more promising students are even given their appearances of life back and are enrolled in great military schools in the West and East.

SKELETON RANKING

Skeletons are divided by size and ability into different ranks as shown below. Skeletons of different ranks intermingle in the line, but the commanders of the army often arm them differently and keep the best fighters in special elite groups.

FIRST RANK: These are weak and damaged skeletons. They can be missing body parts. Usually they are in the front line of any assault as cannon fodder. About 50% of a legion is First Rank skeletons.

First Rank Skeleton
AC: 8, *HTK:* 1D8
MV: 12"
AL: Neutral
IT: Non-
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-6 (spear)
THAC0: 20

SECOND RANK: These skeletons usually go into the Archer Skeleton camps because they are just strong enough to pull a bow. Archer Skeletons never use crossbows or slings. They have been seen working siege engines. About 25% of a legion is Archer Skeletons.

Second Rank (Archer) Skeleton
AC: 8, *HTK:* 1D8+3
MV: 12"
AL: Neutral
IT: Non-
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-6
THAC0: 17
Weapons: Bow with 40 arrows.

THIRD RANK: These skeletons are good veteran fighters. They can be used as spearmen, often giving the extra punch that breaks an enemy line. They have often been used as guards and garrison troops. About 20% of the Third Rank Skeletons have been given an intellect by Nightbay.

There are many leading groups of First and Second Rank Skeletons into battle. About 20% of a legion is Third Rank Skeletons.

Third Rank Skeleton
AC: 7, *HTK:* 1D8+4
MV: 12"
AL: Neutral
IT: Non-/Low (see above)
AT: 1, *Dm:* 1-8 (sword) or 1-6 (spear)
THAC0: 17
Weapons: broad sword, spear

FOURTH RANK: These troops are the elite of the legion. They are heavily armored and well-equiped. They are placed in special "break-through" units which roll over any opposition. While skeletons are usually mindless automatons, these troops even exhibit a sense of *espirit de corps* and will often help a fellow Fourth Ranker who might be in trouble. They are also used as personal guards in headquar-

ter units and for special missions. Some also direct troops in the field. Fourth Rank Skeletons can usually talk (75%), but they prefer not to. 5% of the legion are Fourth Rank troops.

Fourth Rank Skeleton
AC: 4, *HTK:* 2D8
MV: 9″
AL: Neutral
IT: Low
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-8 (sword), 1-6 (spear)
THAC0: 14
Weapons: Broad sword, spear

COMMANDERS: Usually the command group consists of one wight, wraith, or spectre for each 100 skeletons. There are usually from 40 to 50 higher level undead in all. Mummies are unsuited for the long marches and harsh conditions on the campaign and other undead like vampires and ghouls are hard to train and do not obey orders.

Wight
AC: 5, *HTK:* 4D8+3
MV: 12″
AL: Lawful/Evil
IT: Average
AT: 1, *DM: 1-4 plus Skill level drain*
THAC0: 15

Wraiths
AC: 4, HTK: 5D81+3
MV: 12″/24″
AL: Lawful/Evil
IT: Very
THAC0: 15
Special: Can only be hit with silver weapons (for half damage) or magical weapons (full damage).

Spectres
AC: 2, *HTK:* 7D8+3
MV: 15″/30″
AL: Lawful/Evil
IT: High
THAC0: 13
Special: Unaffected by Sleep, Charm, Hold, and Cold-based spells; +1 or better magic weapon needed to hit.

TACTICS

The undead legions are powerful forces on the battlefield. Many of their opponents are unnerved by the large numbers of absolutely silent undead. Some units have broken and run before the skeletons even reached their line.

The standard tactic practiced by all legions is the wedge. Their military philosophy states that to break the enemy's line is the most important objective in a battle. This way, the bits and pieces can be destroyed one at a time.

Therefore, the legions form up one to two thousand skeletons in a triangular formation and send it smashing towards a line. The rest of the legion protects the flanks and rear of the wedge. The formation presents a front bristling with spears, while archers in the back row and on the flanks pepper the enemy line.

In the wedge, the first few forces are made of First Rank Skeletons with Third and even Fourth Rank Skeletons holding the center. These act as a stiffener to give the wedge extra push.

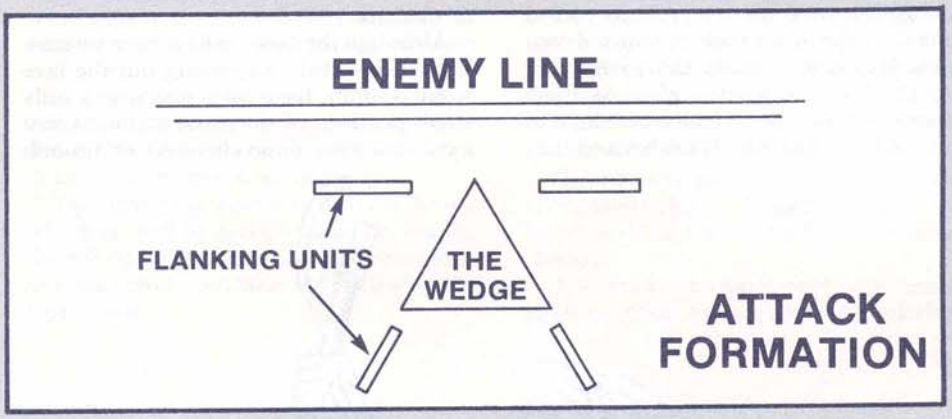
Once the line is broken, the order is given to turn right or left; the whole wedge turns with machine-like precision.

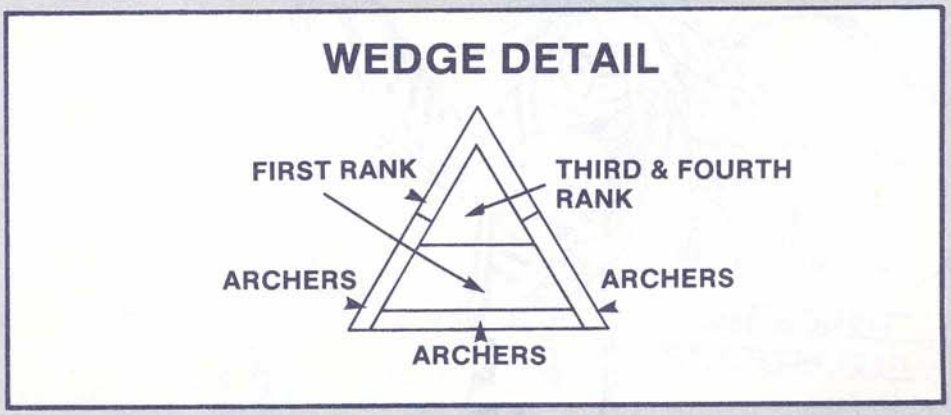
Few armies have been able to stop the wedge from breaking their line. One way the wedge has been fought is with masses of cavalry. The undead fear horses and will avoid them. The cavalry will rush up to the wedge, attack with throwing weapons, then retreat. The wedge moves too slowly to follow.

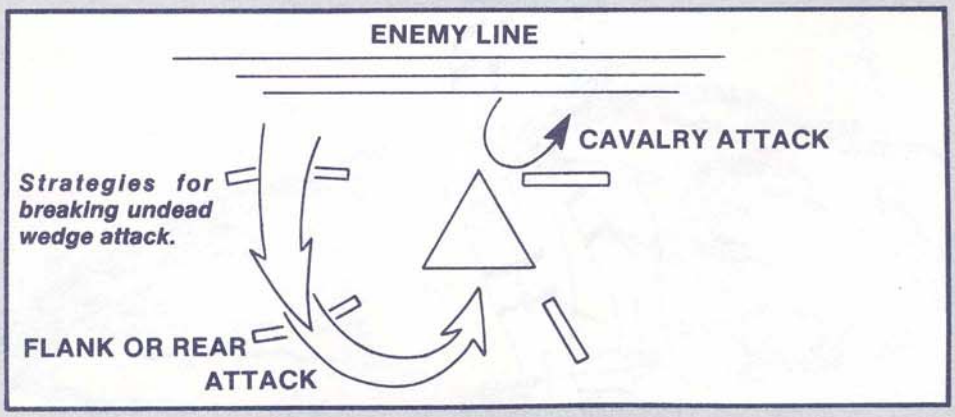
Another successful but risky tactic is to smash through the flanking forces and take the wedge from behind.

With the help of these tactics, along with the intimidating effect that these undead have on their opponents, the legions are in the process of expanding their territories beyond the caldera. The land might have to brace itself for another round of destruction if the Lichlord's plans are fulfilled.

UNDEAD LEGION TACTICAL SETUPS







DWARVEN BZONTRAS

WHO THEY ARE

The select group of dwarven freedom fighters, seeking to reclaim their land, are called "Bzontras," which in the dwarven tongue means "freedom-fighters". Led by the dwarf, Ernathri the Wild, this band of 200 or so skilled dwarven fighters have refused to give up their land to the undead in hopes that Woldham and its stone tree can be restored to life and beauty.

WHERE THEY LIVE

In the years following the volcanic eruption, the outer layers of lava cooled faster than the inside rock. Streams of concealed lava continued to flow, emptying into the Lake of Molten Fire. As these streams retreated, they created hundreds of miles of underground lava tubes and tunnels. It is within this maze of tunnels that the Bzontras hide; the hollow basalt passages provide an excellent means of movement for raiding and escape. The Bzontras move their camp constantly and set up traps, such as 2-foot deep puddles of holy water, in the lava tunnels to deter undead and other Evil beings. They also have several concealed doors connecting the tunnels.

Entrances into these lava tunnels are nearly impossible to detect, for the landscape of the terrain is covered with layers of ash and pumice and the jagged basalt formations that litter the land are split by thousands of fissures and splintered crevices. The lava tunnels the undead locate are almost always discovered through chance or mishap.

Although the dwarves have been increasingly successful in scouting out the lava tunnels, they have also discovered only small portions of the many channels that exist. Some of these channels or tunnels interconnect; most do not. So it is the Bzontra's goal to build new passageways that join the myriad of tunnels and build a vast underground network known only to themselves.

The tunnels reflect darkness; as the lava dries, it turns into glassy obsidian. Varying significantly in size, the tunnels can shrink to two feet and then widen into large caverns ten feet high.

FIGHTING TACTICS

The Bzontras use guerilla tactics, often riding trained Rompos (see *New Monsters*) across the ashen land of Verdaise. This way they are able to strike small groups of undead quickly and viciously. They also try to assassinate leaders of the undead legions and the foul traders with whom the undead deal. The ultimate goal is to send Nightbay and the Lichlords back to the grave permanently.

In battle, the Bzontras are a sight to behold — naked and covered head to toe with wax from Beinder's candles and various warpaints (see *Magic Items*). Those who have seen them say they sometimes resemble the undead. This is especially true when moonlight reflects off the wax, making them resemble the frantic Moonscourge (see *New Monsters*).

The Bzontras' most feared enemy is the Lichlord Darselai who is known to the dwarves as the Mistress of Sorrow. She is reputed to torture dwarves for the sheer pleasure of watching them writhe in agony. It is said that Bzontras give no information voluntarily or under torture, so Darselai displays the dwarven corpses as examples to others who may dare question her authority and power.

FOOD AND SUPPLIES

Food for the Bzontras is supplied by brave adventurers who carry in supplies from outside the land or who kill fresh game that varies in availability from time to time. Sometimes the Bzontras attack the supply house in Ashlaeden, but that has become increasingly difficult due to the hiring of armed guards to protect the food. Bzontras drink the water squeezed from the black cactus, which is boiled, or collect the condensation that accumulates on various plants above the ground.

SYMBOL OF FREEDOM

New Bzontra recruits are always welcome and the symbol of the Bzontras —the Bzontra lasher — is one of the highest honors a Bzontra dwarf could hope to receive in battle.

NEW SPELLS

DECOMPOSE

Skill 7 clerical spell
Range: Touch
Duration: Permanent
Area of Effect: One person
Components: V, M
Time to Cast: 1 round
Saving Throw: Negates

Successfully casting a Decompose spell will cause the victim to start itching for one round. During the next round, the victim's skin will break into open sores, oozing pus for 1D4 HTK of damage. The third round, the skin will actively decompose and begin to fall from the body in chunks, causing 4-16 HTK of damage for this round and every round thereafter. A save vs. Spell is allowed when the spell is initially cast.

The victim will have a -4 on his attack rolls for the first two rounds that the spell is in effect. After that, he will be unable to attack at all until he is cured.

To counteract the effects, a Cure Disease spell or two Dispel Magic spells must be cast — or the victim's sores must be bathed in one vial of holy water for every 5 HTK of damage taken. These treatments halt further decomposition. However, only a Cure Wounds spell, potion, etc. or rest will regain lost HTK and fully restore the skin.

The material component for this spell is an ounce of zombie flesh shavings.

MIST FROM THE GRAVE

Skill 4 clerical spell
Range: 12″
Duration: 1 minute per Skill level
Area of Effect: 120-foot radius
Components: V, S, M
Time to Cast: 12 seconds
Saving Throw: None

When this spell is cast, a thick fog rises to a height of 20 feet above the cemetery ground (or any damp, marshy land). No character within the spell's area of effect will be able to see more than five feet in any direction without some magical means of doing so. If a strong light source is being used, nothing at all will be seen because the light will reflect off of the mist. Examples of light sources that would not be reflected are glowing swords, torch light, or a cool-colored light. Of course, if there is no light source or magical means of seeing, nothing can be seen.

Wind will not blow the mist away because it constantly rises from the earth for the spell's duration.

Undead are not affected by this mist and can see through it easily.

If the spell is not cast in a graveyard, it requires a splinter from a wooden coffin as a material component.

TORTURE

Skill 4 magic-user spell
Range: 25 feet + 5 feet per Skill level
Duration: 1 round per every 2 Skill levels
Area of Effect: 1 person
Components: V, S, M
Time to Cast: 1 segment
Saving Throw: Special

By using this spell, the caster can physically cause wounds of torture. This spell only works on one man-sized or smaller humanoid per casting.

Each round the victim takes 1D8 HTK of damage, half damage if the character saves vs. Spells. If the victim fails to save, the quick, sharp and unexpected pains will make it necessary for him to save vs. his SM. If he fails *this* save, the victim has a -5 to hit and damage. The save vs. SM must be made every round that the spell is in effect. Any time a character takes over half his HTK in cumulative damage while the spell is in effect, he will offer to surrender or attempt to flee if surrender is not accepted.

The material component is a knife, which is used to make a small cut on the thumb tip of the caster. Concentration is not required to continue the spell after the first round.

SHROUD

Skill 5 magic-user spell
Range: Touch
Duration: 1 round per Skill level
Area of Effect: 1 person
Components: V, S, M
Time to Cast: 5 rounds
Saving Throw: None

When the spell is cast, a shroud of darkness envelopes the caster (or the recipient). The Shrouded character will become invisible whenever in a darkened area. The Shroud confers the same Hide in Shadows percentage that a thief of the same Skill level as the caster would have.

However, a Shrouded character can be detected when walking in front of a solid object such as furniture or a tree because the object is blocked from view. Also, the Shroud spell will not serve its purpose in daylight or under conditions of a Continual Light, although a Shroud spell can be used to *dispel* a Continual Light spell.

Shrouded persons do not become visible if engaged in battle. In melee, they are -4 to be hit and have a +4 to all of their saving throws.

The material component of a Shroud spell is a 2-foot-square piece of black cloth.

BECOME NON-CORPOREAL, (Reversible)

Skill 5 magic-user spell
Range: Touch
Duration: Two rounds per Skill level of caster
Area of Effect: creature touched
Components: V, S, M
Time to Cast: 5 Rounds
Saving Throw: none

When this spell is cast, the character touched may become a non-corporeal entity.

In a non-corporeal state, the affected character's base AC is 6; the AC is then adjusted for the armor worn.

The non-corporeal character can only be hit with silvered or magical weapons. In addition, he may float through the air as though flying at a base movement rate of 18" and may seep through cracks in walls and under doors. (Personal items are unaffected by the spell.)

The material component is a tiny lit candle that must burn all the way down. As it burns out, the black smoke must be inhaled by the caster.

The reverse of the spell changes a non-corporeal living creature back into its previous state. The undead victim will still have whatever powers he had in its non-corporeal state. If the victim is an undead, the spell will cause the victim's spirit to become skeletal and to have the same AC and movement as a skeleton. It can be hit by normal weapons (1/2 damage from edged weapons) and there is a 10% chance that on the first hit taken, the skeleton will crumble to dust.

A saving throw negates the spell (when using the reverse spell). The material component for the reverse spell is an ounce of bone dust.

ENTOMB

Skill 6 magic-user spell
Range: 60 feet
Duration: Permanent
Area of Effect: One man-sized or smaller humanoid
Components: V, S, M
Time to Cast: 6 segments
Saving Throw: Special

When an Entomb spell is cast, one humanoid will be buried alive at the location that he or she occupies. The victim will be gripped by an unseen force and dragged underneath the ground, the dirt churning upwards to allow passage of the body. He will automatically sustain 1D6 HTK of damage from being dragged through the ground. In two rounds, the victim will be buried on an angle — the head being covered by two feet.

A saving throw is allowed. If successful, the victim will only be buried up to his waist. However, if the victim is not pulled out of the ground before another Entomb is cast on him, he will be automatically buried alive the next round; this time no save applies.

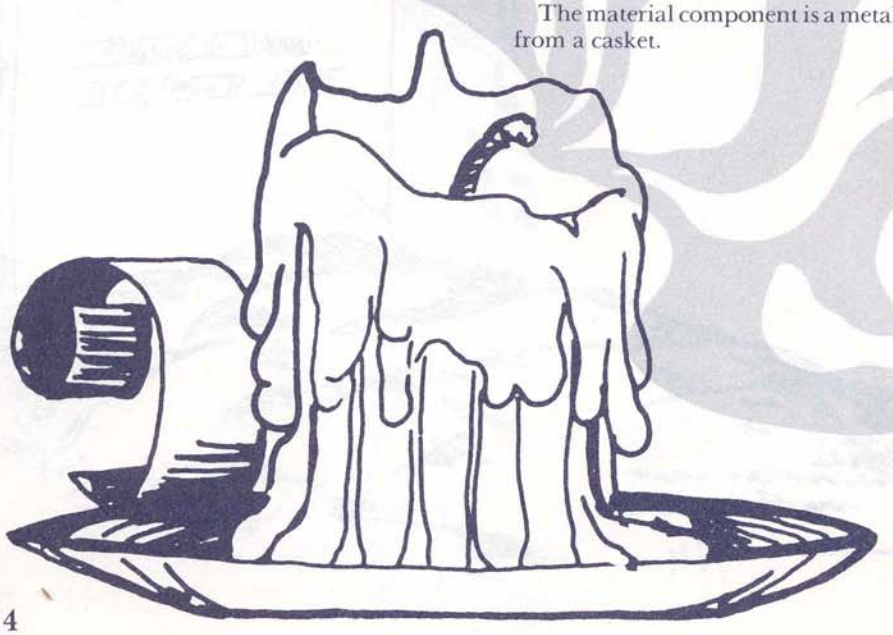
There will be enough air for the victim to survive for two rounds as the dirt is tightly packed. During this time he may only cast spells that have verbal components. For the next two rounds the victim must save. vs. his SM or become unconscious. On the next three rounds a save vs. SM must be made or the victim will die.

The victim will have no room to move underground. Without magic, he will be unable to fight or escape without help.

A combined ST of at least 44 is required to pull a character out before he is buried alive.

The spell will only work when the intended victim is standing on soil or any grassy area. However, a Skill 13 or better spell caster may bury a character alive in solid stone, following the same rules; the only difference is that the victim sustains 1D10 HTK of damage from being dragged through the stone.

The material component is a metal hinge from a casket.



ENHANCED ANIMATE DEAD

Skill 5 clerical spell
Range: 30 feet
Duration: Permanent
Area of Effect: 20-foot diameter circle
Components: V, S, M
Time to Cast: 1 round
Saving Throw: Special

The casting of this spell causes any dead humanoid to animate within the area of effect. The dead does not have to be within sight and may be in a crypt or grave. In such a case, the grave will be unearthed and crypt doors thrown open — even doors Wizard Locked by a spell caster of Skill 12 or lower will open. However, walls will not be broken.

As with the original Animate Dead spell, undead that already exist may be controlled with this spell.

The spell caster can animate and control 3D8 HTK of undead times his Skill level. For example, a Skill 4 spell caster may control 6 zombies, which are 2D8 HTK each.

Intelligent undead are allowed a save vs. Spells to negate control. Those undead with above average intelligence who save will be extremely hostile. A spell caster of Good alignment cannot use this spell.

The material components for this spell are a skull and a brass key.

NEW MAGIC ITEMS

BRAIN DUST

* *Characters within 10 feet of the released dust must save vs. IT on a D20 or be affected.*
* *Affected character's minds will be linked to Nightbay's so that the lich can read his every thought.*
* *Will work until all traces are thoroughly scrubbed off of the character's body.*

Brain Dust is a greyish dust that was created by Nightbay. As the use of Rigold became more widespread, Nightbay needed a means to insure his power over the living.

The Brain Dust was made from combining the pulverized bones of Nightbay's enemies (those that he did not feel were worth turning into undead) with obsidian powder. After enchanting the resulting substance, Nightbay covered his undead warriors with the Brain Dust before they went into battle against living beings.

Brain Dust is stored in glass vials that hold enough dust to cover five undead warriors in each one. The nature of the Brain Dust can be detected magically.

The Dust is dispersed into the air whenever an undead being that is covered with the dust is struck by any weapon. The dust will turn into a foul-smelling red gel upon contact with holy water.

Plain water will wash Brain Dust off with no effects; to counteract the effects of the Dust, the Bzontras bathe immediately after each battle.

VALUE: 5,000 gp/vial

DEATH HORN

* *Its sound will summon up to 30 skeletons and zombies from within a 500-foot radius; these will appear in 1D8 rounds.*
* *If the summoner is Neutral the undead will be controllable for 5D4 rounds. If the summoner is Evil the undead can be controlled for one day. Any Good character using the horn will take 2D8 HTK of damage.*
* *When the horn is played using a reed made of dwarven skin, the skin of all living beings within a 500-foot radius will begin to decompose (see below for damage).*
* *The horn may be used by any character class.*

The ***Death Horn*** is an ivory reed instrument made from the hollowed tusk of an immature mammoth. The keys of the horn are made from pieces of fingerbone taken from dead shire-folks. The reed is made from dried sugar cane.

Playing the horn produces foul sounds similar to the screams and moans of tortured beings. This sound will summon up to 30 skeletons and zombies, if within a 500-foot radius. The undead will appear in 1D8 rounds, depending on how far away they are from the horn player.

If the summoner is Neutral, the undead will be controllable for 5D4 rounds. If the summoner is Evil, the undead can be controlled for one day. A Good character using the horn takes 2-16 HTK of damage.

Another function of the horn is to cause the decomposition of living beings within a 500-foot radius. When played with a special reed made of dwarven skin, the horn causes the skin of all living creatures to suddenly decompose (except for the horn's user). Each round that the instrument is heard inflicts 1-6 HTK of damage as the skin begins to dry and flake. After a total of 15 HTK of damage, damage will double as the skin splits into large sores and long strips of flesh fall from the body.

With this reed, the death horn sound travels a shorter radius of 60 feet. Covering the ears does not stop the HTK of damage because the damage is caused by sound vibrations hitting the body. No save is allowed, although magic resistance will work.

Anyone killed by a Death Horn becomes a zombie in three rounds.

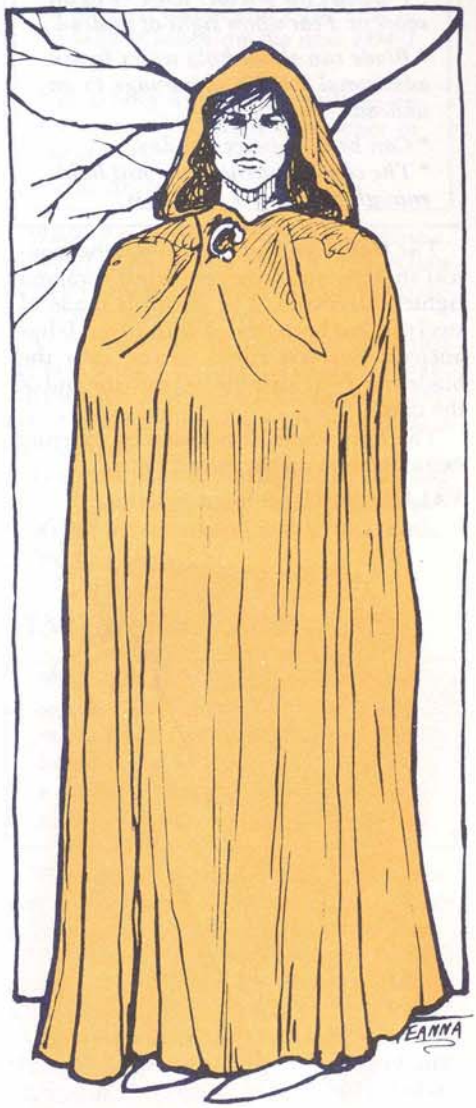
VALUE: 10,000 gp

SCROLL OF FATIGUE

* *The magic-user or cleric reading it will be able to read magical writing between lines on the scroll.*
* *Causes the reader to become fatigued before completely reading the scroll.*
* *After the scroll is read, the reader will be unable to do anything but move at one-half his or her normal movement rate for two hours. No save is allowed.*

The ***Scroll of Fatigue*** appears to be a normal magical scroll to any magic-user or cleric who can read it. But, if a Detect Invisibility spell is cast upon it, the reader will be able to see other magical writings between the lines of the scroll. These writings, while invisible to the naked eye, are perceived subconsciously and will cause the reader to become fatigued before completely reading the scroll.

VALUE: 500 gp



CAPE OF TURNING

* *Provides wearer of Good or Neutral alignment with the abilities of a Skill 7 cleric to turn undead.*
* *If a character of Evil alignment wears the cape, its magical properties immediately vanish and the inner lining turns to dust.*

At first glance, the ***Cape of Turning*** appears quite ordinary. It is made of wool, is void of decoration, and has a small nondescript clasp at the neck. However, the inner lining is a shimmering purple.

The cape provides its wearer with the abilities of a Skill 7 cleric for purposes of turning undead. There is no limit on the amount of times it can be used; however, the cape does not provide its wearer with any clerical spell casting abilities.

VALUE: 15,000 gp

HOLY SWORD OF GRISWOLD

* *+4 against all undead.*
* *Provides the wielder with +4 to all saves vs. Fear upon sight of undead.*
* *Blade can shoot holy water for an additional 2 HTK of damage to an undead.*
* *Can be used twice per day.*
* *The compartment in the hilt holds enough holy water for 4 uses.*

*The **Holy Sword of Griswold*** is the magical shortsword of the renowned dwarven fighter, Griswold. The sword is made of steel that has been treated with silver. It has ancient dwarven runes carved into the blade and a star sapphire set into the end of the tang.

The holy water is released by exerting extra pressure on the sword's grip.

VALUE: 20,000 gp

CRYSTAL TO SUMMON ECTOPLASMICS

* *User of crystal can summon an Ectoplasmic within 1-12 rounds.*
* *Any character may use the crystal. However, an Evil character only has a 2% chance of summoning an Ectoplasmic.*

The ***Crystal to Summon Ectoplasmics*** is a rare and magnificently cut crystal that hums due to the bombardment of energy particles bouncing from facet to facet inside the crystal.

A character must hum at the same frequency as the crystal until an Ectoplasmic appears (within 1-12 rounds). Once the Ectoplasmic appears, the character can stop humming and converse with the helpful undead. A character using the crystal cannot control the Ectoplasmic, he can only converse with it (see *New Monsters*).

VALUE: 8,000 gp

CHAINS OF MANIFESTATION

* *Any non-corporeal undead that passes into a circle formed from the chains will change to material form, become Armor Class 8, and will be affected by normal weapons.*
* *Will achieve the above effects if used as a weapon against non-corporeal undead by wrapping the chain around the undead.*

The ***Chains of Manifestation*** are six-inch diameter stone balls of polished obsidian that are linked together on a heavy silver chain. The obsidian stones are about three feet apart on the chain, forming bands of varying length. At the top of each obsidian ball is a small hole. This hole is filled with salt crystals that must be blessed by a Good cleric of at least Skill 15 (or a Skill 8 dwarven cleric). Then, the chamber is sealed with wax.

The chains are used primarily as protection against non-corporeal undead such as wraiths, spectres, etc. Weary travelers in distant and unfamiliar lands often place the chain in a circle upon the ground before sleeping.

If a non-corporeal undead passes over the chain into the circle, the wax seals on the obsidian stones will crack and the salt will burst forth, clearly illuminating the body of the undead intruder. As it becomes visible, the spirit will change to a material form and its Armor Class will drop to that of a zombie's (AC 8). Also, it will be affected by normal weapons. The monster retains all its other abilities. For example, a wraith will still drain Skill levels if it makes a successful hit, but it will have an Armor Class of 8 and have a solid body.

The Chains of Manifestation may also be used as an attack weapon if it can be wrapped around an undead. The attacking character must *first* roll less than his DX on 1D20. He must then also make a "to hit" roll, as with a weapon attack, in order to wrap the chain around the undead. This has the same effect as above (reducing the creature's Armor Class to 8).

The Chains of Manifestation can affect as many undead as there are salt-filled obsidian stones, and the undead do not get saving throws. However, the Chains of Manifestation will not deter undead creatures from attacking anyone within the circle. Nor does the chain have any effect upon undead that normally have a material form such as a vampire.

VALUE: 100 gp/foot

CANDLES OF BEINDER

* *Any character applying the wax of one Candle of Beinder to himself will have an Armor Class of 2 for two hours after the wax is applied.*
* *Can only be used by fighter characters.*

Candles of Beinder are made of beeswax. These candles are three inches in diameter and 18 inches long.

In an effort to develop a brighter burning candle, the dwarven alchemist Beinder developed a plan to combine beeswax with bits of magnesium and sap of the sacred tree of stone (the stones that can be changed to Rigold are said to originate from this tree). While the magnesium helped the candle burn brighter, it also helped it to burn faster and caused the wax to shoot from the candle.

By accident, the hot wax sprayed onto Beinder's arms. Surprise overshadowed any pain. The old alchemist noticed that although the wax remained warm, it did not harden immediately. In fact, it was very viscous, even while extremely hot, and it did not roll off his arms. When it finally started to harden, the wax was almost impossible to remove and when the outer layer was cut, it was quickly filled in by the liquid beneath. This gave Beinder the idea that it might be usable as armor.

The candles are found packed in coffers; there are usually 20 candles in a coffer.

The wax from one candle takes three rounds to apply. As the wax is scalding hot, a successful save vs. SM must be made. Anyone not making the roll will take 1D6 HTK of damage. The wax will only last for two hours before it completely hardens and cracks, becoming useless.

Because the wax is so hot, it has some unique advantages. For example, if a character is wearing Beinder's wax armor and is hit by an undead whose cold touch drains Skill levels, the heat of the wax will negate the Skill-draining touch. (Of course, the monster will still do normal HTK of damage with its hand, if applicable.) This wax will only stop Skill level drains once, for the cold touch will harden the wax and cause it to crack immediately, losing all powers. Any other cold-based attacks will work in the same manner.

VALUE: 800 gp/per candle

PONTIFICUS' MAGICAL IVORY TUSKS

Arm of Chance
** Arm points in the direction of using character's intended goal.*

Arm of Misfortune
** When a question is asked, the arm will shoot out 2-5 strings of flesh. When these strings hit the ground each one will grow into a full-size flesh-eating wight in 2 rounds.*

Statue of Control
** When cast into a silver chalice of water, it forms a ghostly image of an old, bent man.*

** Allows owner to control 1-4 undead within a 10-foot radius for 4 rounds. Intelligent undead save vs. Spells at +4 to their roll to negate the effect.*

Statue of Empathy
** When this one-foot high statue is cast into a silver chalice of water, an image of a child covered with scars forms and engulfs the owner of the statue in a thin violet mist for 2-7 rounds. No save is allowed.*

** Anyone looking at the statue's user must save vs. Spells or feel unrelenting pity and sorrow for 2-7 rounds.*

** Undead cannot harm the statue's user as long as he or she is covered in the mist.*

These items were carved from a pair of tusks and were taken from a mammoth of unusual size during the annual hunt of King Pontificus. Each tusk was originally 11 feet long and weighed 225 pounds. At the king's instructions, each of the tusks was carved into two wind instruments, the ***Arm of Chance*** and the ***Arm of Misfortune***, and two small wizard statues, the ***Statue of Control*** and the ***Statue of Empathy***. These items were then sent to the royal mage to be enchanted.

ARM OF CHANCE

One of the instruments is a two-foot long conical tube with one tear-shaped hole in the large end. When swung and beaten into a tree or wooden post, it emits a low-pitched howl followed by a thump. This noise makes the ground rumble. Dirt from the ground is then sucked into a circular vacuum surrounding the tree or post. From out of the ground rises an arm that is half-covered with rotting flesh.

The arm functions much like an Augury spell; it points in the direction that leads to a specific goal that the adventurer requests. The difference is that the arm will not indicate whether Evil or Good will result by following that path. The arm works twice a day and is 75% accurate. It will work within 5 miles of the party's goal.

VALUE: 5,000 gp

ARM OF MISFORTUNE

This instrument is exactly the same as the one above except that when the question is asked, the arm will shoot 2-5 strings of flesh, which will form into wights.

Wights
AC: 5, *HTK:* 4D8+3
MV: 12"
IT: Average
AL: Lawful/Evil
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-4 plus HTK drain
THACO: 15
Special: Immune to Sleep, Charm, Hold, Paralyzation, and cold-based spells; only affected by magic or silver weapons; drains one Skill level per hit.

VALUE: 8,000 gp

STATUE OF CONTROL

When cast into a silver chalice of water, this small wizard statue forms a ghostly image of an old, bent man that slowly rises in a veil of mist. The statue allows its owner to control 1-4 undead within a 10-foot radius for 4 rounds. (Intelligent undead are allowed a save at +4 to their roll. A successful save negates the effect.)

VALUE: 5,000 gp

STATUE OF EMPATHY

The child that forms over the chalice of water stares through empty eye sockets. It will immediately float towards the owner of the statue, engulfing him or her in the thin violet mist for 2-7 rounds (no save allowed).

Anyone (friend or foe) staring at the owner will see only the image of the child, and must save vs. Spell or feel unrelenting pity and sorrow for 2-7 rounds. Those failing their save will go to great lengths to protect the owner covered in the violet mist, even risking their own lives in battle. In addition, undead will not touch or in any way harm the owner for as long as he or she is covered in the violet mist.

VALUE: 6,000 gp

STAFF OF EARTH FIRE

** Any character within 40 feet of the wielder must save vs. Staffs or be hit by lava. 3-18 HTK of damage is done on the first round and 1-10 HTK of damage is taken on the next 1D4×1 rounds.*

** Brushing off the lava will do an additional 3-12 HTK of damage to the victim.*

** Has 20 charges.*

Made of twisted greenish-colored basalt, the ***Staff of Earth Fire*** spews a viscous lava from its concave tip when the proper command words are spoken.

A successful save vs. Staffs will mean that the lava missed hitting the character making the save. The staff will do normal damage (1-6 HTK) if the wielder uses it as a normal staff.

The staff may be recharged by dipping the tip into any basaltic lava flow and speaking the command words backwards.

VALUE: 2,000 gp

FINGERS OF XENADAR

** Sword is +3 against paladins, +2 against any being of Good alignment, and +1 against any non-Good being.*

** Causes 1D6 HTK of damage to any Good character who picks it up.*

The ***Fingers of Xenadar*** is a magical bastard sword with an unusual grip made from the skin of a female paladin's hand.

The sword's grip was made by the Evil magic-user Xenadar. Frustrated by his inability to win the attentions of a female paladin he was obsessed with, he slew her. He then made the skin from her hand into a grip for the sword, Fingers of Xenadar. He had the blade forged by dwarven slaves.

VALUE: 5,500 gp

WAR PAINT

** This paint has different abilities depending on the color (see below).*

War Paints are made by the Bzontra dwarves using sap from the trees of the Evernight Forest as the magical ingredient. The sap is mixed with crushed nettle seeds and is dyed either red, green, yellow, blue, violet, orange, or black. After the paints are made, the proper enchantments are administered by a Skill 8 or higher cleric.

The paints are stored in stone jars that hold 3 applications.

Any time a paint's properties are activated, the color fades and loses its magic. In certain circumstances, the properties are not activated by the wearer (i.e. if a character runs through fire wearing red paint, the magic within the paint will automatically activate and the character will be unable to save the magic for defense against an offensive spell encountered later. See below for a more in-depth description of each color's properties.)

VALUE: 3,000 gp per jar.

BZONTRA LASHER

** Functions as a grappling hook. The chance of successfully grappling a target with this item is 75%.*
** Causes 1-6 HTK of damage as a normal weapon.*
** On a roll of 18-20 on 1D20 the fangs will strike the target. Victim must save vs. Poison or die immediately (no effect on undead). A successful save means that the victim's SM drops 3 points and he will have a -2 to all "to hit" rolls; this lasts for 3-12 rounds.*

The ***Bzontra Lasher*** is a fierce whip woven from the coarse hairs of a dwarven beard. The lasher serves as an excellent weapon as well as the symbol of all the dwarven freedom fighters, the Bzontras.

Each warrior who deems himself worthy of becoming a Bzontra must undergo the wrenching ritual of plucking out his entire beard, except for two strips of beard at the jowls, within a 48-hour period. Using these hairs, the dwarf must weave his own lasher.

Next, he must enter the undead kingdom of Verdaise to seek out and kill the deadly fire snake that lives in the bitter, ash-laden terrain. Carefully, the snake's poisonous fangs must be removed. Then, after plucking the hair from the rest of his beard, the dwarf must weave the deadly snake's fangs onto the lasher's tip. Only a beardless dwarf, carrying his own lasher, will be allowed to enter the Bzontras' camp.

The lasher works similarly to a grappling hook and curls snugly around a tree limb or other narrow perch within a 5-foot reach of the dwarve's outstretched arm. The fangs function as the hook, and the coarse texture of the whip aids in gripping.

The fangs are poisonous for 8 hits — this includes each time the fangs pierce an opponent or are used as a grappling hook. After 8 hits or uses, the venom is gone and the dwarf must replace the fangs with fresh ones. However, the curved teeth still serve as a powerful grappling hook long after the venom is exhausted.

VALUE: 1,000 gp.

WAR PAINT COLORS AND THEIR EFFECTS

RED

Offers protection from heat. Enables the wearer to save vs. Magical Fire or intense heat attacks at +3 to the die roll for 6 rounds. Normal fire or heat have no effect upon the wearer.

GREEN

Allows the wearer to move twice as fast and leap up to 30 feet horizontally and 15 feet vertically for 6 rounds. Also doubles the number of attacks allowed per round for 6 melee rounds. This paint works at will for the wearer.

YELLOW

Gives a +4 advantage to one save vs. Poison against any inhaled substance. Effects last for 6 rounds.

BLUE

Provides total immunity to a Fear or Confusion type of attack. Also adds +4 to a save vs. Paralyzation. Effects last for 6 rounds.

VIOLET

Adds +2 to hit and damage on all attacks for 6 successive rounds. It begins to work when the wearer wills it to.

ORANGE

For 6 successive rounds, all attacks against the wearer are at -2 to the die roll and -2 to damage (1 being the minimum HTK of damage taken). This paint begins working when willed to do so by the wearer.

BLACK

The first hit by the character wearing this paint will do triple damage. It begins to work when the wearer wills it to.

MASK OF THE DEAD

- *These trap the donor's life force before the donor enters the life beyond.*
- *Each mask holds as many Skill levels as the donor possessed.*
- *Can be used to restore as many Skill levels as are contained in the mask to its possesor*
- *(See the **Ceremonies of Creation** section for more details.)*

A ***Mask of the Dead*** is a wax impression taken from the face of a person just before death; the mask traps that person's life force. When placed upon the face of a character who has lost a Skill level, that Skill level will be restored immediately.

The class of the character must be the same as that of the donor. If not, nothing will happen to the character, but one of the mask's Skill levels will be drained.

The alignment of a mask depends on that of the donor. Although the mask will still function regardless of the user's alignment, 4-16 HTK of damage will be suffered (no save) by an Evil character using a Good mask or vice-versa. Neutral persons may use any mask and characters of any alignment may use a Neutral mask.

Any time that an Evil mask is used by a Good character, that character must save vs. his SM or two of his Skill levels will be absorbed into the mask. He will also sustain 1-4 HTK of damage for every Skill level that was originally in the mask.

RIGOLD— BANE OF THE UNDEAD

Rigold is a magical rock that, under certain conditions, transforms itself into a lustrous blue gemstone. The gemstone protects its bearer from the Skill-draining effects of undead monsters. The rock is found only in the Verdaise caldera and is not distinguishable from any of the other particles of volcanic debris that litter the area.

There are only two ways to identify Rigold. The first was accidentally discovered by Tyzen Rigold, a dwarven miner. The miner fell upon a pile of mining debris, cutting his flesh deeply. While tending to his cuts, he noticed that a piece of rock covered with his blood began to smoke as though acid had been poured upon it. When the smoke lifted, the once worthless rock was transformed into a tiny blue gem.

No gem cutter could identify the stone, yet its worth was considered by dwarven jewelers to be equal to that of the finest diamond. Obsessed with the gem, Rigold began to imagine that it was magical, although it gave off no magic dweomer. Rigold had the gem set into a ring of gold and paid the cleric Azur to pray for a divine revelation to discover the gem's magic.

After weeks of prayer and offerings, the secret of the gemstone was revealed to Azur, along with the rituals that could be used for discovery and activation of its powers. The gem was then named Rigold after its discoverer. Thus began the end of the province that the dwarves called Woldham.

The gem's power grants its possessor immunity to the Skill-draining effects of any undead. Instead of losing a Skill level, the holder takes double damage from every hit from an undead. If more than three hits are taken in one day, the gem's owner additionally loses an additional 1D8 SM points; he becomes unconscious at zero SM points.

Regardless of how many times the gem changes hands during the day, only three hits by Skill-draining undead can be taken within a 24 hour period without the current possessor losing 1D8 SM points on the fourth successful hit (in addition to taking double damage).

Lost SM points may be regained with one hour of rest for every SM point that is lost.

Though Rigold can still be found in Verdaise, the rituals for harmless discovery and activation were lost with the death of Azur. Some rings that were made by the dwarves are still in existence. It is widely known that the gem Rigold can be discovered by cutting oneself with the rock and allowing blood to cover it; anyone doing this will lose 1 HTK per rock tested (HTKs can be regained by one hour of rest per HTK lost). It is rumored that Azur did write down the secret rituals onto two scrolls, although these scrolls have remained lost since his death.

There is a 1% chance of finding the gem Rigold for every 40 igneous rocks tested by the above method. In other words, individual characters or the party must take a total of 40 HTK for each 1% chance of finding the gem.

VALUE: 5,000 gp ounce

CEREMONIES of CREATION

GM NOTE: Along with their stastics, the beings mentioned here are described in full detail in the *New Monsters* section.

To create a War Mammoth, an Evil magic user or cleric of at least Skill 13 must capture a live mammoth with tusks that are at least eight feet long. The mammoth is then taken to the place of sacrifice and chained so that it will not fall to the ground once it is dead.

The beast is then washed in unholy water. Afterwards, magical war paints are applied along the contours of its body, with the bright colors up high and darker colors near its feet (see *Magic Items*). When this is complete, the beast is ready to be sacrificed.

The sacrifice is begun by starving the mammoth until it is nearly dead. The trunk must then be chopped off with one clean swing of an Evil two-handed sword. Because of the beast's weakened condition, the severing of its trunk will cause the mammoth to die from shock.

Afterwards the mammoth is left until all of its skin has rotted away from the bones. It is then dressed in bright tapestries that are fitted with bells and cymbals. The tusks are inlaid with gold.

Once this is completed, the magic-user or cleric fits the mammoth with an artificial leather trunk that is studded with sapphires worth at least 20,000 gp. The creator then releases the mammoth from the chains while a tune is played on an ivory flute. If the mammoth does not fall to the ground, it indicates that Dierguth, the god of Evil, has accepted the sacrifice and rewarded the magic-user or cleric with a War Mammoth.

To create a Death Dragon an Evil magic user or cleric must first acquire or subdue an Evil dragon. While the dragon is still living, its brain must be removed during the night of the new moon. Then the brain must be placed in a glistening, crystal container and set in the center of a reversed pentagram (tip downwards).

It is imperative that the dragon's brain be kept alive. To do this, the creator must "feed" the brain once a week with a paste made of the blood and crushed bone from a dragon of the same color. The "feeding" is done by spreading ½ pound of this paste on the top of the brain, using a bony scale from the dead dragon.

The remainder of the dragon must be drained of blood and buried at the tip of the downward point on the pentagram. Each day for five days a mixture of unholy water, dragon blood, and lime must be poured on the downward point of the pentagram where the dragon is buried. On midnight of the fifth day, the dragon will rise from the ground and take to the air.

The Death Dragon will then do the bidding of its creator for as long as he or she (or one of the creator's servants) pours one pint of dragon blood on each point of the pentagram daily. If the magic-user or cleric runs out of blood from the original dragon, blood may be substituted from a dragon of the same type and color. Also, if the weekly brain "feeding" is missed, the brain will starve and the Death Dragon will perish simultaneously.

The brain, if attacked, is automatically hit unless a 1 is rolled. It can take 25 HTK of damage before it and the Death Dragon die. Only physical damage will harm the brain, for it is totally resistant to spells and device attacks. The Death Dragon may not fly unless the brain has all 25 HTK.

To make a Mask of the Dead, the donor must be on the brink of death and a proper ritual must be performed to appease the donor's god for the loss of a soul.

The wax must be beeswax scented with cinnamon. Before the mask is formed, the wax must be heated over a golden, coal-fired brazier. In the brazier, placed upright in a circle, should be one horn studded with four 5,000-gp black sapphires for each Skill level of the donor.

The horns of unicorns must be used for Evil masks and those of gargoyles for Good masks. The horns of basilisks must be used for Neutral Masks.

Once heated, the wax is placed over the face of the expiring donor. As the donor's god is appeased, the life force flows into the mask, causing the red wax to change to shades of swirling gray. Within four rounds the donor will die.

For an Evil or Neutral donor, there is a 10% chance that the donor's god will find the ritual unacceptable even though the ritual was performed properly. For a Good donor there is a 10% chance of this occurring only if an Evil or Neutral mask is being created. If the correct horn is used for a Good donor, then the donor's god will always find the ritual acceptable. If the donor is Good or Neutral and the ritual is deemed unacceptable by the donor's god, the god will take the donor's soul after the failed attempt to make the mask. The donor cannot be raised if this occurs.

If the donor is Evil, instead of the life force being transfused into the mask, blood will spurt from the donor's hemorrhaging face. At the same time, the body temperature will sharply rise, causing the mask to meld with the face and any clothing worn to burn and stick to the melted flesh. The donor now becomes a Flame Zombie (see *Monster* section), both fiery and cold — condemned to wander in unlife.

RITUALS OF RIGOLD

If the Ritual of Discovery is used, the chance of finding Rigold is 2% per 6 turns searching (not cumulative). Once the Rigold gem is found, no other can be discovered until another ritual is performed. (For more information on Rigold, see *Rigold—Bane of the Undead* in the *New Magic* section.)

AZUR'S SCROLL

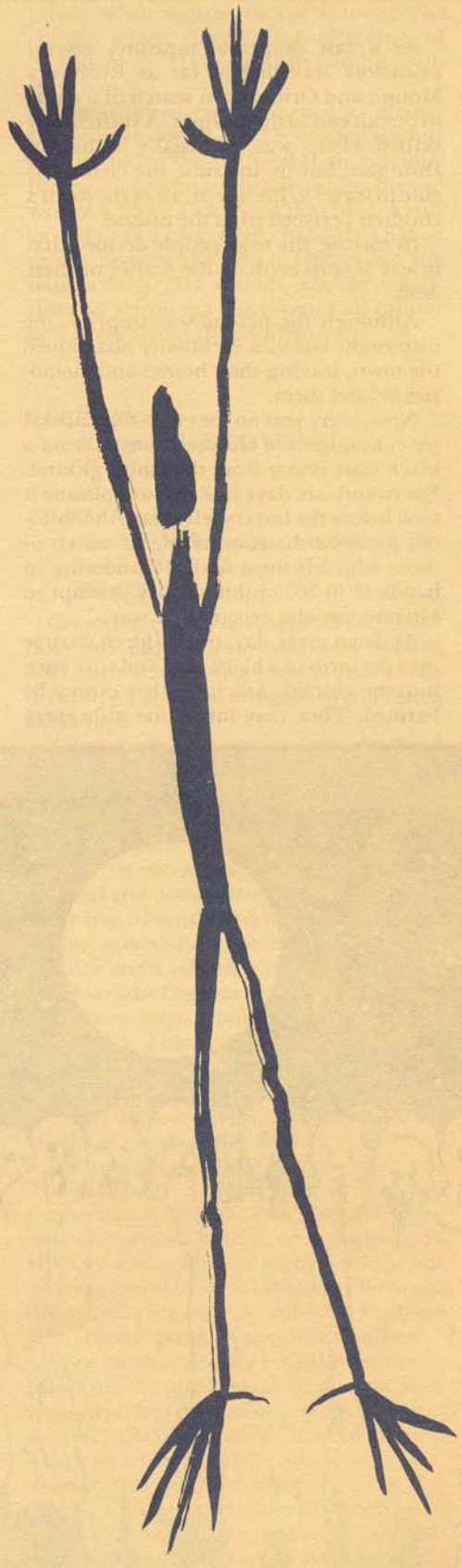
To Discover Rigold, kneel in prayer before the gods for two hours in a dark chamber with your eyes trained on a lamp of blue glass. After prayer, your eyes must be rubbed with the oil of pressed garlic that has been blessed by a Good cleric of no less than Skill 13. A paste must then be prepared of crushed blueberry, a slivered sapphire worth at least 2,000 gp, and half a vial of holy water mixed with half a vial of flour.

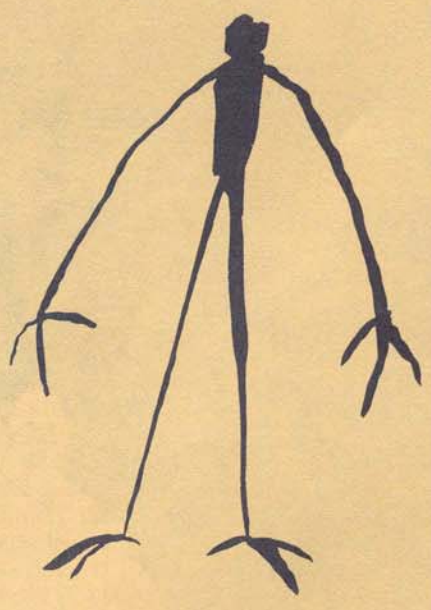
Apply the paste as a shadow to the eyes. When a rock containing Rigold is sighted, the eyes will begin to well up with tears. Rigold will show itself as the volcanic rock becomes transparent, revealing a small blue gemstone inside to the seeker. The gem will not have actually formed and must still be created from the volcanic rock using special means.

To change the rock to Rigold, blood from a fresh wound must bathe the entire rock. Only then will the stone turn to Rigold.

To Activate Rigold, denunciation and ridicule of Dierguth must be rigorously practiced for at least six hours non-stop. It is known that Dierguth senses this through the Rigold gem. His wrath heats the gem until its impurities are forced to the far edge of the stone.

After the defiling of Dierguth is complete, the gem must be placed in a bowl containing not less than two pints of holy water. The holy water destroys the impurities and the gem is freed for its possessor.





To Create a Blood Spirit, the Evil magic user or cleric must take a teaspoonful of blood from a humanoid who has been dead for no more than one hour and put it in a vial made from the person's skin. While the blood is in the vial, the magic-user or cleric prays to his Evil god, who then transfers the spirit of the being into the blood.

When the magic user or cleric desires, he pours the blood into a small ruby-studded golden chalice containing a drop of unholy water. A blood-red humanoid-shaped mist rises from the chalice. The Blood Spirit then seeks out a living body to inhabit and attacks until it kills its victim or is killed. (See *New Monsters* for details.)

A lesser form of Blood Spirit is made when the blood in the vial is poured into a topaz-studded golden chalice and is mixed with three drops of unholy water. This mixture is then poured into a bottle of paint that has been made from the root of the Black Cactus (see *Flora and Fauna*). After the paint dries, it releases the Blood Spirit whenever a humanoid body moves within five feet of it.

The most powerful Blood Spirit is made with the blood of a sacrificial victim. When this blood is mixed in the ruby-studded chalice, it forms a Blood Spirit that may attack the magic user or cleric. The magic user or cleric must control the Spirit as a magic user controls an elemental. This Blood Spirit is never used as a paint.

NEW MONSTERS

CHILDREN OF PNOGWYN

AC: 9, *HTK:* 1D8
MV: 9
AL: Lawful/Evil
IT: low
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-4
THACO: 19
Special: Immune to Sleep, Charm, Hold and Cold-based spells.
Spells: Skill 3 (magic-user) — Gust of Wind (while in mist form. See below.)

The Children of Pnogwyn are the sons and daughters of the adults of the city of Pnogwyn who became infected with a strange childhood plague. At this time there were no clerics in Pnogwyn that could cure the children, so the disease spread rapidly.

Many adults soon became ill as well. Persons who were striken with the disease were then moved to a separate building, where they were handed food and other necessities through a window. Those children who were too young to understand felt afraid and abandoned as they fell to the disease one by one.

As a last desperate measure, several townsfolk travelled as far as Rushbury Mound and Oribrand in search of a cleric to put an end to their plight. A sufficiently skilled cleric was eventually found in Duurgau, but by the time the cleric was able to travel to Pnogwyn, all of the town's children perished from the disease.

In sorrow, the townpeople decided that it was best to cremate the bodies of their dead.

Although the plague was stopped, the distraught families eventually abandoned the town, leaving their homes and memories behind them.

Now, every year on the eve of that funeral pyre, hundreds of children emerge from a black mist rising from the damp ground. For twenty-six days (the amount of time it took before the last cry fell silent) the children terrorize the countryside in search of those who left them to die. Wandering in bands of 10-100 children, they attempt to kill anyone who gets in their way.

At dawn every day, the children change into the form of a black mist and sink back into the ground. As a mist, they cannot be harmed. They may move one mile every hour to a new location if they desire. While in this form they can use the Gust of Wind spell (see standard rule book). Once the sun disappears behind the horizon, the mists begin to gather and the children once again stalk the lands. In their wake are the odor of rotting flesh and grey stains of ash upon the grasses.

The Children of Pnogwyn attack with their fists and nails, doing 1-4 HTK of damage. They attack without fear and fight until destroyed. Any time a character is hit by one, there is a 5% chance of becoming infected with a strange strain of the plague. (Once infected, an adventurer takes 1-4 HTK of damage each turn until healed with a Cure Disease spell.) For some reason, the plague continues to thrive on the bodies of the children, even when they are in their non-corporeal state.

Children of Pnogwyn can be turned as ghouls only when they are in packs of twenty or less. Even then, they may never be controlled. A successful hit with one vial of holy water will kill one of them immediately. A Cure Disease spell will also work, but on one at a time.

HOODOO MEN

AC: 8, *HTK:* 4D8
MV: 12″
AL: Neutral
IT: Low
AT: 1, *DM:* by weapon (see below)
THACO: 15
Special: see below

Found mainly in badlands, Hoodoo Men are the skeletons of miners who died defending their claims or while prospecting. They get their name because many of them are found near earth chimneys or similar pillars such as volcanic dikes and plugs that have been uncovered by erosion. Hoodoo Men continue to protect their claims, even in death, and some still prospect for minerals.

Although they are skeletons, Hoodoo men have minds of their own and do not need to be controlled in order to animate. Their brains are still active, but they are not very intelligent.

Hoodoo Men attack by using a variety of weapons, including these favorites: pick axes, causing 1-6 HTK of damage (but always have the last initiative in combat); hammers, causing 2-5 HTK of damage; shovels, causing 1-4 HTK of damage; and large rocks, causing 2-8 HTK of damage.

These skeletons are very agile and therefore have some of the abilities of a Skill 5 thief (Hide in Shadows: 31%; Climb Walls: 90%; Move Silently: 40%). Invisible characters can be sensed by Hoodoo Men and will always be attacked first (the Hoodoo Men will imagine them to be claim jumpers).

Edged weapons do ½ damage against Hoodoo Men while holy water does 2-8 HTK of damage. They may only be hit by silver or magic weapons, with silver weapons doing double damage. Clerics can turn Hoodoo Men as ghasts unless the Hoodoo Men are not in their natural mining habitat. In this case, they are treated as normal skeletons.

OFFSPRING OF NIGHTBAY

AC: 6, *HTK:* 1D8+2
MV: 9″
AL: Lawful/Evil
IT: Very
AT: 2, *DM:* 1-12
THACO: 18
Special: Sleep, Charm, Hold and other mind-affecting spells have no effect.

The Offspring of Nightbay are cunning undead children, usually between the ages of six and fifteen, who are especially favored by the Lichlords. They always participate in Nightbay's communion so that they may maintain the appearance of human children.

In this form, they serve as spies for the Lichlords. When living beings are spotted, the children seek them out, pretending to have escaped the clutches of Nightbay. Waiting for their victims to sleep (or at the first sign of vulnerability), the children attack to kill.

The children attack bare-handed with a ST of 18(00), causing 1-12 HTK of damage. As they draw strength from within, their eyes glow red and the flesh that was bestowed upon them in Nightbay's communion begins to scintillate with an irridescent gleam while moans escape through the child's pores. These Evil offspring of Nightbay do 1D10 damage per hit with their hands.

The children can be turned as ghasts. Holy water does 2-8 HTK of damage but when it burns the artificial flesh, noxious fumes are produced that nauseate anyone within a 10-foot radius of the child. A roll vs. SM at three less than character's SM or under negates the effect. Otherwise, the nausea lasts 2D4 rounds, during which time no action may be taken. Evil cannot be detected from the children.

CECROPS

AC: Special, *HTK:* 6D8
MV: 9″/18″
AL: Lawful/Evil
IT: Average
AT: 1, *DM:* Weapon or mouth (2-16); Blood spit (5-20)
THACO: 13

Cecrops are an Evil humanoid race, half-man and half-dragon, who were named after their frightening resemblance to the mythological Blood Dragons of old called Saekroups.

These strange creatures have the head and wings of an immature red dragon but the rest of their bodies are humanoid.

Cecrops prefer an extremely dry climate and are chiefly found in desert regions. Similar to the red dragon, they are hot-blooded and not adversely affected by heat. They live in sand huts, hidden within the rolling waves of the bleak desert dunes.

Since most of the desert animals are small and the Cecrops are large (up to 9 feet tall), they have trouble getting enough fresh meat. This lack of food has kept the desert tribes small and forced their brethren to live in less remote areas where trade and food are more plentiful. The favorite food of all Cecrops is dwarf flesh.

Cecrops use a variety of large weapons. Their favorite weapon is a two-handed sword, which they wield one-handed. They will only attack with their mouths (2-16 HTK of damage) if their opponent is not wearing metal or studded armor. While in the air, Cecrops always attack with their jaws, regardless of an opponent's armor.

Cecrops sometimes wear helms or breast plates (AC 6); their leaders may even have specially fitted plate mail over their wings. Armored Cecrops cannot fly. Cecrops have tough skin that is equal to an AC 7.

Once each day in place of a regular attack, Cecrops can cause themselves to hemorrhage internally and spit extremely hot blood at a range of 15 feet. The heat damage from the blood is 5-20 HTK; a save vs. Breath Weapon halves the damage. the Cecrops' blood coagulates rapidly, so they take no damage from this form of attack. Also, all hits scored against them are -1 to damage because of their rapid blood coagulation (so damage of 0 HTK is possible).

Any fire attacks against Cecrops do only half the appropriate damage.

FEAR SPIDER

AC: 8, *HTK:* None
MV: 12″
AL: Neutral
IT: Low
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-4 + poison
THACO: Automatic
Special: see below

The Fear Spider is a dark orange spider about the size of a discus. Its habitat is usually a rocky desert, where it normally feeds on snakes, birds, and small mammals. It is also known to attack larger creatures, including humanoids.

The spiders live in colonies, building gigantic webs that protect their lairs. They drag their victims into their webs for food. The webs have hundreds of large, sack-like objects all about them. These sacks look like eggcases. Instead, they contain saliva that is very acidic and volatile. As soon as the sack is touched with a jab with a weapon, it will burst apart causing 2-8 HTK of damage to any intruders in a ten-foot radius.

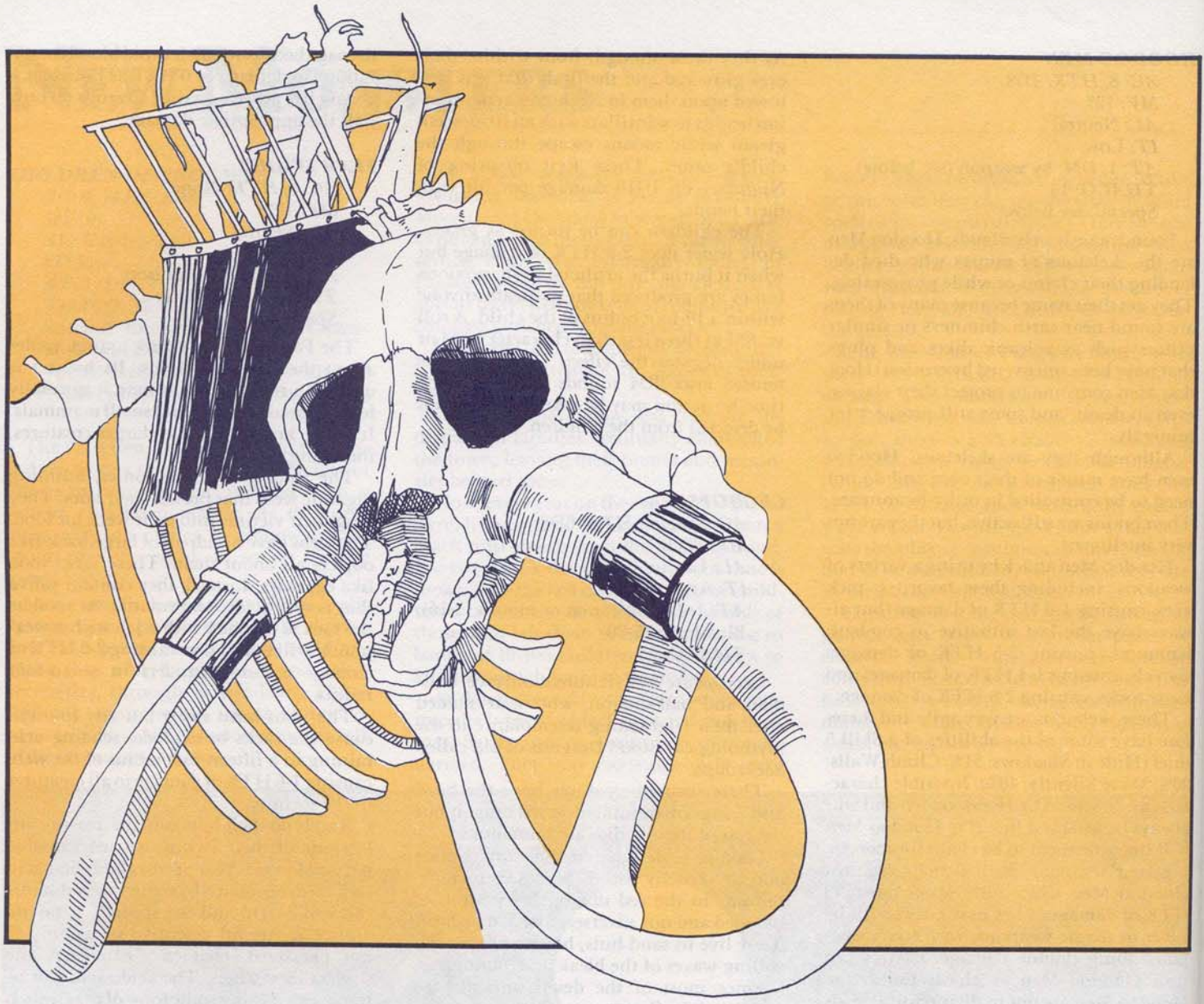
The webs burn easily but any fire will cause the sacks to explode, sending acid raining in a fifteen-foot radius of the web, causing 1-6 HTK of damage to all creatures in the vicinity.

Rarely do their lairs contain treasure unless one of their victims carried valuable personal items. Fear Spiders and their acid sacks are considered by some to be valuable; the sack's acid and the spider's paralytic ability are useful defensive safeguards. If not paralyzed, characters can carry the spiders in satchels. The acid sacks can be transported using some form of magic such as Telekenesis, Levitation, etc.

The Fear Spider has a strong putrid smell similar to a ghast that paralyzes anyone who fails to save vs. Paralyzation. The odor is too strong for any safeguards to be effective and the paralyzation lasts for one turn.

Only after a character is paralyzed will the spider begin to climb its prey's body, slowly moving towards the head. As it climbs, it imprisons the character in a sticky web. It takes two rounds to reach the head of a shire-folk, dwarf, or gnome and three rounds to reach the head of a human, elf or half-elf if it is not removed from the character. Once it reaches the head of a victim and it still has not been removed it will automatically bite, doing 1-4 HTK of damage. If no action is taken, the victim will die in six turns.

Persons trying to brush a Fear Spider off a paralyzed friend will find it a difficult task. The web is very sticky and holds the spider securely. The spider will perish from any successful hit. It will burst, inflicting 2-8 HTK of damage to its webbed victim from the acid in its abdomen.



WAR MAMMOTH

AC: -2 with armor, 0 without armor
HTK: 14D8
MV: 9″/12″ (running speed)
AL: Evil
IT: Low
AT: 1, *DM:* 2-12 (tusks), 2-12 (feet); feet do double damage to opponent not standing upright.
THACO: 10
Special: Magic resistance 50%; immune to Sleep, Charm, Hold, and cold-based spells.

Although these fearsome mammoths appear to be nearly invincible, they do have several weaknesses. Their tusks are quite sensitive. Any attack against the tusks should be treated as an attack against Armor Class -4 but all successful hits to the tusks do double damage. If one of the mammoth's front legs is roped, there is a 50% chance that the mammoth will fall and take 2-8 HTK of damage.

The mighty War Mammoth is created by an Evil cleric or magic-user of at least Skill 13 in a special ritual to the Evil god Dierguth. The sacrifice is a favorite of the god, who is very fond of this creature and grants it special abilities.

The War Mammoth is usually between twelve feet and fourteen feet tall. Its tusks can be up to nine feet long and weigh 10D20 pounds (valued at 10 gold pieces per pound).

In battle, it is sometimes armored with iron plates about the head, leather skirts about its flanks, and a howdah (wooden fort) fastened to its back. In the howdah are archers, a mahout (trainer), and sometimes a ruler or a general.

If War Paint is used on a mammoth, it is usually in bright colors that begin at the top of the body, gradually changing to darker hues at the feet.

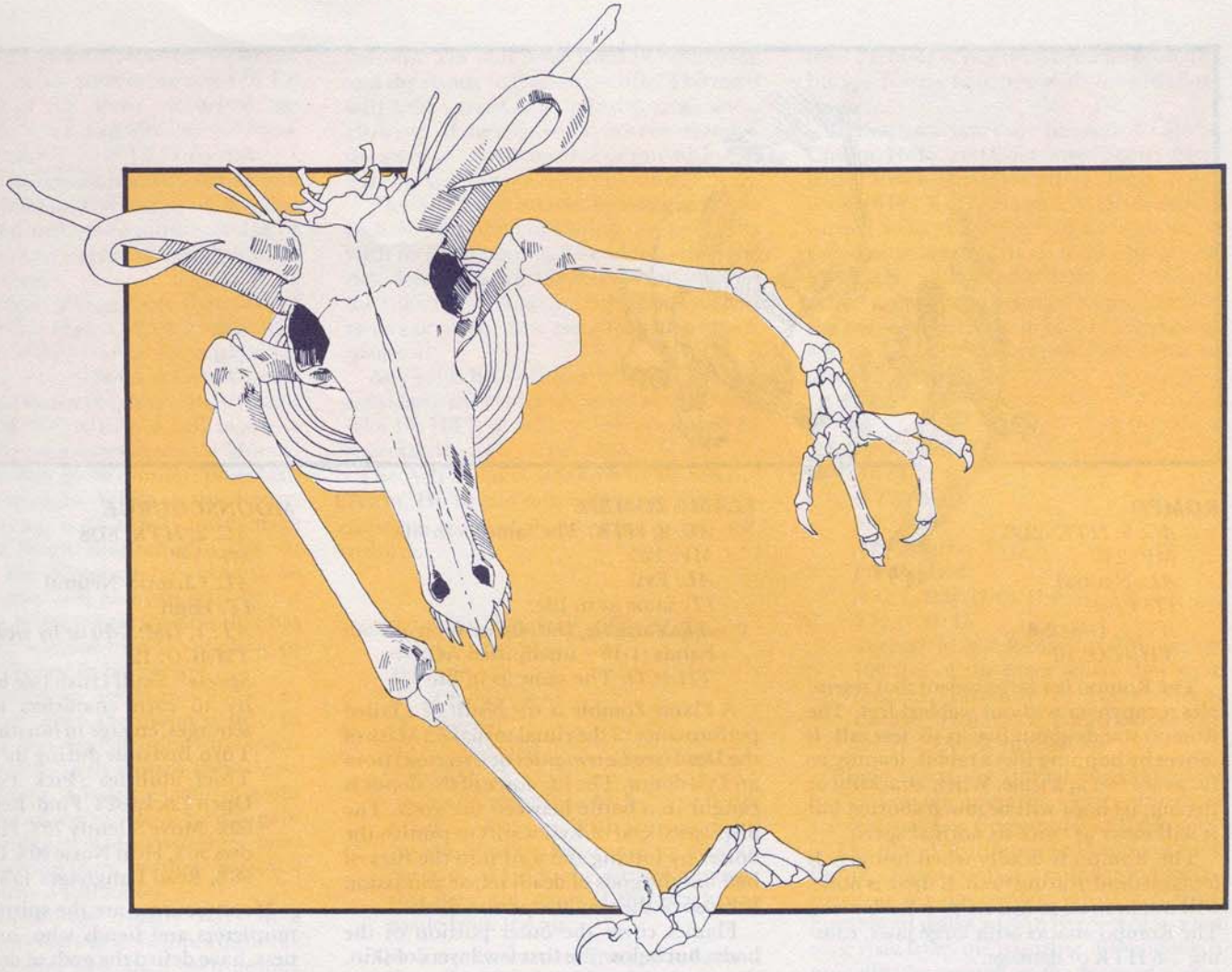
When the War Mammoth attacks with its tusks, any roll of 19 or better on 1D20 means that the hit impales its opponent, causing double damage. In the following round, the mammoth will throw the character off its tusks for an additional 4-24 HTK of damage. If the opponent is not standing up and the mammoth attacks with a stomp, a successful hit will also cause double (4-24) damage.

War Mammoths are always controlled by their creators — an Evil cleric or magic-user. However, their mahouts may also control a mammoth by carrying an ivory wand that has been washed in the beast's sacrifical blood. When the mahout is killed, the creature has no direction and will attempt to kill whatever or whoever is nearest until another mahout, cleric or magic-user gains control or until the mammoth is killed.

The beasts are fairly slow moving and do not normally trot or run. However, a War Mammoth will run when its trainer is killed. They can also move through molten lava if they are painted with magical War Paints (see *Magic Items*).

When live mammoths or elephants encounter the War Mammoth, they will start to mourn the dead animal by making loud trumpeting moans. If they are being led by other humanoids, the living beasts will not obey any commands of their mahouts until the War Mammoth disappears from sight.

War Mammoths are as difficult to turn as ghosts and, when turned, they will not move away from the cleric. Instead, they will just stop and lie down.



DEATH DRAGON

AC: -2, *HTK:* 22D8
MV: 12"/24"
AL: Neutral
IT: Non-
AT: Varies
DM: (claws) 1-12 +2, (horns) 4-24, (bite) 4-32, (wings) 6-60
THACO: 8
Special: Need +2 or better weapon to hit; magic resistance 20%.

The Death Dragon is a powerful skeletal dragon created by a magic user or cleric through a special ritual. Its length is 60 feet from head to tail and it has a wing span of 70 feet. Instead of membrane wings, it has wings made of ice, from one to one-half inches thick.

As long as the creator performs the required rituals, the dragon can move or fly ceaselessly; its creator need not concentrate to control it. However, if the daily rituals are not performed, the Death Dragon will perish.

A Death Dragon never needs to sleep or eat, but it must satisfy a hunger to kill,for the act of killing is its only link to earlier life. As payment for not destroying villages and towns, the Death Dragon demands that victims be brought to him. Although the dragon has no use for treasure, many villagers place monetary offerings within or nearby its lair in hopes of appeasing the dragon.

Depending on where a battle takes place, the Death Dragon will use different modes of attack. When both combatants are in the air, the Death Dragon will use its horns to gore its opponent for 4D6 HTK of damage. When both opponents are on the ground, the Death Dragon will use its claws and will either bite or use its horns for three attacks each round. The claws do 1D12 HTK of damage each, its bite does 4D8 HTK of damage, and its horns do 2D12 HTK of damage.

When the Death Dragon is fighting multiple foes on the ground, its favorite tactic is to try to grab an opponent with its claws and fly to a safe spot to finish the kill. "To hit" rolls of 18-20 on 1D20 means that the chosen character must save vs. his ST or become caught in the dragon's grasp. If the character causes at least 30 HTK of damage while the dragon is carrying him in the air, it will choose to release the character. The appropriate falling damage (1D6 HTK × 10') is applied.

Three times a day while in the air the dragon may choose to flap its wings with such great force that they send down huge, razor-sharp shards of ice that cause 6-60 HTK of damage to anyone within an area twenty feet in diameter from the area directly below the Death Dragon. A save vs. Paralyzation is allowed and, if the save is successful, only half damage is taken. After each time that it shakes the ice from its wings, the Death Dragon must land within one round and remain on the ground for ten rounds because its wings are too thin too fly. If it tries to fly at this time it will fall to the ground and sustain 1D6 HTK of falling damage per 10 feet fallen.

Only +2 or better magic weapons will affect a Death Dragon and edged weapons do half damage.

All flying creatures that see a Death Dragon must save vs. Spells at -2 or fly away in fear for 2D4 rounds. Other live dragons seeing this monster save at -4.

If the Death Dragon takes more than 25 HTK of heat damage while in the air, its wings will begin to melt and it will be forced to land. More than 40 HTK of heat damage will send it plummeting to the ground, suffering additional falling damage. In both cases of heat damage, the Death Dragon must spend 1D20 rounds on the ground before flying again.

No one except a magic-user or cleric can ride or control the Death Dragon. Clerics can turn the Death Dragon as a vampire.

Once the dragon brain used in the conjuration ritual is destroyed, the Death Dragon will immediately perish and its bones will turn to dust.

ROMPO

AC: 5, *HTK:* 2D8
MV: 24″
AL: Neutral
IT: Low
AT: 1, *DM:* 2-8
THACO: 16

The Rompo is a large rodent that resembles a capybara without webbed feet. The Rompo stands about five to six feet tall. It moves by hopping like a rabbit, leaping as far as six feet at a time. When attacking or fleeing, its hops will be much shorter, but it will move at twice its normal speed.

The Rompo is deadly when hungry. It feeds on dead, rotting flesh. If there is none, will not hesitate to kill its own fresh meat. The Rompo attacks with large jaws, causing 2-8 HTK of damage.

If captured, Rompos can be trained as mounts (in fact, the dwarven Bzontras ride trained Rompos almost exclusively). Training takes about four days. Riders can weigh no more than 180 pounds.

Rompos travel in small herds of up to a dozen. Any time that a herd is sighted, dead flesh will not be far away.

ECTOPLASMICS

AC: 0, *HTK:* 10D8
MV: 18″ (float)
AL: Lawful/Good
IT: High
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-10
THACO: 14

These are the spirits of dead paladins. They are usually found in graveyards, Good chapels, and crypts. They can heal wounds of any character that they do not detect as Evil (1-4 HTK, twice per day).

Ectoplasmics may give information and/or directions and will sometimes appear if a Good character is being overcome by Evil (30% chance). If an Ectoplasmic appears during a battle with the undead, the Evil entities will always stop their attack on the characters and turn to attack the Ectoplasmics.

Evil clerics may turn Ectoplasmics with the same roll that turns a spectre, but they cannot control them.

Ectoplasmics are immune to Sleep, Charm, Hold, and cold-based spells. Unholy water has no effect on Ectoplasmics.

FLAME ZOMBIE

AC: 2, *HTK:* The same as in life.
MV: 12″
AL: Evil
IT: same as in life.
AT: Variable, *DM:* By weapon or both hands (1-10 + unadjusted AC)
THACO: The same as in life

A Flame Zombie is the result of a failed performance of the ritual to make a Mask of the Dead (see *Ceremonies of Creation*) from an Evil donor. The life-force of the donor is caught in a battle between the gods. The displeased god of Evil wants to punish the donor by forcing the soul into the fires of hell but the gods of death refuse admission because of the way the person died.

Flames cover the outer portion of the body, but below the first few layers of skin, the monster is cold as ice. The intensity of the flames cover the outer layer of flesh in third degree burns. Pieces of charred clothing or armor may be fused to the body and the Zombie's face will have a waxy look as the mask that killed the donor will have melded with the skin.

The Flame Zombie attacks by the same methods it used as a living being. If the zombie was a magic-user, it will need books to cast spells (the books will not burn). If it was a priest, no spells will be given to it by any god.

While it may attack with a weapon, it can also attack with its bare hands. These attacks do 1-10 HTK of heat damage plus the unadjusted Armor Class of the defender. For example, plate mail adds two HTK; no-armor adds ten HTK. Magical armor is treated as whatever type of armor it is without the bonuses.

No fire or cold-based attacks will harm the Flame Zombie. Neither normal nor magical water will put out its flames. However, holy water causes 2-8 HTK of damage. If three or more successful attacks are made with holy water in the same round, the flames will be doused for one round at which time the Flame Zombie will be unable to attack with its hands. Sleep and Charm spells have no effect, but other mind-affecting spells such as Hold Monster will work.

Clerics may turn the Flame Zombie with the same roll that will turn a ghost.

MOONSCOURGE

AC: 2, *HTK:* 8D8
MV: 12″
AL: Chaotic/Neutral
IT: High
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-10 or by weapon
THACO: 12
Special: Skull crush (see below); ability to turn characters into Moonscourges, engage in lunatic frenzy, and Turn Invisible during the day. Skill 9 Thief abilities (Pick Pockets 70%, Open Locks 62%, Find/Remove Traps 60%, Move Silently 70%, Hide in Shadows 56%, Hear Noise 30%, Climb Walls 98%, Read Languages 45%).

Moonscourges are the spirits of lunatic murderers and fiends who, in their madness, have defied the gods of death. Unwilling to control them, the gods cast them back upon the land to continue their chaotic sprees of murder.

A Moonscourge frequently returns to the area where it committed crimes during life — usually a large city with many dark narrow streets and seedy districts. As the town crier tells of hideous murders, authorities are baffled by the accounts of witnesses who clearly describe the same villains who were publicly executed only weeks before.

By the light of day, this creature is rarely seen, for as the moon fades in the morning sun, so does the figure of the Moonscourge. In daylight it turns invisible and has no strength or form. While invisible, the Moonscourge ceaselessly searches for new victims for its moonlight slayings. Usually its victims are wealthy people. However, Moonscourges will sometimes murder vagrants and animals just to satisfy their hungers to kill.

Under the light of the moon, the Moonscourge will attack its intended victim with either weapons or its bare hands. When it attacks with bare hands, it attempts to crush the victim's skull. (If the victim is wearing a helmet, the Moonscourge will try to tear it off. A successful "to hit" roll will accomplish this.) In the next round, the Moonscourge must make another successful "to hit" roll in order to grab the victim in a headlock, its bony palms positioned to crush the skull. To break this headlock the victim must break loose —

there is a base chance of 30% that the victim will be successful, plus or minus 10% for each point of ST above or below the Moonscourge's. If the victim does not break free he will take 1D10 HTK of damage.

A Moonscourge is extremely strong and will always have a ST of at least 16. It is also very agile and will have a minimum DX of 15. The Moonscourge has thieving abilities of a Skill 9 thief.

Any character taking more than 70% of their total HTK from a Moonscourge will turn into a homicidal maniac within 1-4 days with no save allowed. A Cure Disease spell will negate the insanity until the next attack. On nights with a full moon, a lunatic frenzy sometimes besets the Moonscourge, who may go on murder sprees lasting the entire night. While in this frenzy, the Moonscourge is +2 "to hit" and damage and gains a Magic Resistance of 25%. At this time, the Moonscourge cannot be turned or controlled and can only be hit with a +1 or better magic weapon that has been blessed, wielded by a Good cleric or paladin, or dipped in holy water.

Moonscourges are sometimes known to band together when the moon is full. In these hordes, they descend upon unsuspecting villages and utterly destroy them, leaving no survivors. A favorite tactic of high-Skill Evil clerics and magic-users is to gain control of a number of Moonscourges, bind them, and release them on their personal enemies during a full moon.

The Moonscourge usually stays in a room at a seedy inn but sometimes the more materialistic ones have their own homes, hideouts, or even strongholds. These select few have a lust for wealth and the finer things in undeath.

Moonscourges are turned as ghosts. Holy water does 2-8 HTKs of damage. They are immune to Sleep, Charm, Hold and Cold-based spells and all mind-affecting spells.

ASH STEED

AC: -2, *HTK:* 1D8
MV: 24"
AL: Neutral
IT: None
AT: 1, *DM:* 4-24
THACO: 16

An Ash Steed is a magical horse that is created by releasing a gas from steam vents that hiss around the mouth of an active volcano. The creating magic-user can accomplish this by locating a steam vent and covering the vent for at least eight rounds with any object weighing at least 30 pounds. When the weight is released, the compressed gas begins to swirl, kicking up the pumice and ash into a dizzying vortex. The spinning winds suck in more ash from the surrounding area until a great churning cloud forms into a horse. (Up to four horses can be created from one steam vent, each requiring a minimum of eight rounds of compressed gas.)

As the ash clouds are growing, a Stone Shape spell must be cast upon the winds. After three rounds, a solid black steed of volcanic ash will form from the grayness, and the winds will falter and die. The steed will bear whatever its creator commands. However, if the creator has not commanded the steed to carry someone or something, it will resist attempts to be mounted.

The Ash Steed attacks by rearing up on its hind legs, then stomping its opponents with its front hooves. Therefore, when the Ash Steed attacks, the only weapons that the rider may use are pole weapons such as spears or staffs. The rider may also attack magically.

Any solid hit will immediately turn the steed back into volcanic ash. Any rider will take 1-6 HTK of falling damage unless he successfully rolls vs. his SM.

The Ash Steed is immune to all Sleep, Charm, Hold, and mind-affecting spells. Because it is magical, the steed has no lair nor treasure.

IONIC DISCARNATE (The "Zapper")

AC: 1, *HTK:* 5D8
MV: 12"/18"
AL: Chaotic/Evil
IT: Average
AT: 2, *DM:* 108
THACO: 15
Special: Can only be hit by +2 or better magical weapons. With any successful hit the attacker must save vs. Rod or sustain 1-4 HTK of electrical damage; this does not apply if the attack was made from the air.

The Ionic Discarnate is a spirit formed by the combination of at least six Evil spirits. The spirits are often of low-Skill adventurers or non-player characters who were not very powerful during their lives. Their spirits, therefore, have no powers and will always remain entombed in their graves until the grave is opened.

When the grave is opened, the spirit walks the earth within ten feet of its resting place. Here it waits and can only be seen when there is some kind of electrical discharge, such as a Lightning Bolt. During this discharge, the spirit stretches itself towards the source of electricity. A strong (6D6 HTK) electrical discharge that strikes within thirty feet of the spirit will pull it into the electrical field. If five or more other spirits are also entrapped by the electrical discharge, an Ionic Discarnate is formed.

The Ionic Discarnate appears as a large spirit that reaches about fifteen feet in height. The spirit twists and contorts as it moves, resembling a deformed man. Around it is an electrical field, which not only protects it but acts as its attack ability.

It attacks twice each round with its hands, automatically doing 1D10 HTK of damage. A save vs. Rod negates the attack, but the roll must be made twice — once for each of the deformed creature's hands. Characters with metal armor roll at +2.

Any area hit by the spirit will be blackened by the electrical power. If an Evil character's HTK are reduced to ¼ of its total, the GM should tell the player that he feels his body being stretched and pulled as his spirit tries to merge with the electrical energy.

Ionic Discarnates are immune to Sleep, Charm, Hold, and Cold-based Spells. Electrical attacks have no effect. Holy water does 1-8 HTK of damage. The Discarnate is turned with the same roll as a ghost. A failed attempt to turn an Ionic Discarnate by a cleric with a metal holy symbol will cause the electrical energy to arc towards the holy symbol, causing 1-8 HTK of damage to the cleric and causing the cleric to drop the holy symbol.

BLOOD SPIRITS

AC: 4, 2, 0
HTK: 5D8
MV: 24"
AL: Neutral/Evil
IT: Variable
AT: 1, *DM:* (1-6), (1-8), (1-10)
THACO: 15
Special: Magic Resistance 30% within 100 feet of the place where they were created; immune to Cold, Sleep, Charm, Hold and Paralyzation-type attacks; Detect Invisibility.

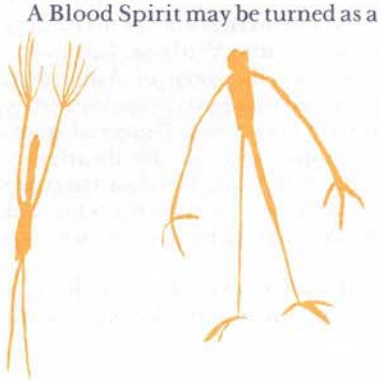
Blood Spirits are special undead created by Evil magic-users or clerics during a secret ritual (see *Ceremonies of Creation*).

The Blood Spirit may be found as a stick figure, drawn with red paint upon walls, rocks, or any flat surface. When any living humanoid walks within five feet of it, a red mist rises from the painting. Blood Spirits may also be created in the form of a mist that immediately attacks its chosen victim.

The Blood Spirit attacks with one hand and the damage it does causes an infusion of its blood into the body it attacks. Once a victim takes 25 HTK of damage or is killed, the victim's body is taken over by the Blood Spirit. The victim's original spirit leaves the body and may return only if an Exorcism spell is cast, in which case the Blood Spirit is immediately killed. Once this happens, the victim's spirit can reclaim the body; he will be the same as he was before the Blood Spirit's possession.

Blood Spirits are only affected by +1 or better magic weapons. They are so cold that if hit by a non-magical metal weapon the cold is transferred through the weapon, doing 1-4 HTK of damage to the wielder and causing the weapon to break. In the same way, if the spirit is hit by exposed flesh, the attacker takes 1-6 HTK of damage from the cold.

A Blood Spirit may be turned as a wight.



The LAND of VERDAISE

Divided by rivers of boiling lava and mercilessly blasted by freezing winds, Verdaise was transformed into a kingdom of extremes after the Great Catastrophe.

Near the lava flows, the land resembles a sweltering desert. Paradoxically, only hundreds of feet away, icy winds and chilling temperatures turn the desert into a frozen wasteland.

Dark clouds of ash swirl about in the sullen sky and prevent the sun from warming the land. Verdaise remains bathed in a perpetual violet twilight, keeping temperatures at a steady 35 degrees Fahrenheit. Although precipitation is rare, occurring only in sudden and brief downpours of driving sleet, its onset momentarily clears the air of volcanic debris.

The land is pitted and covered by a foot-thick layer of fine ash. A sea of bones juts out of the soft ground. Some of the bones are covered with a heavy layer of black dirt, while others are white and nobby like pebbles scattered across a rocky beach. Protruding from the bony terrain are gray-green basalt pillars and curved sweeping ridges of cooled magma. Deep fissures and splintered ravines extend across the dark ash like broken skeletal fingers.

In the center of the land is an immense skull-shaped granite standing stone (batholith) that impales the low-hanging grey clouds. Diverted streams of lava from the land's two active volcanoes empty into a deep gorge that surrounds the batholith, forming a steamy moat. A small stream of lava flows off of the moat underground to keep it from overflowing. Other rivers of lava slice across Verdaise and create bubbling lakes of fire on the land's east and west borders.

Directly north of the batholith stands an obsidian tower. Atop the tower is a crown-shaped battlement that extends up through the dusty clouds of ash.

East of the batholith is a dormant volcano that overlooks a well-tended garden. North of the volcano lie the high glistening walls of a prison yard.

Hidden beneath basalt pillars, which are also called hoodoos, in the northwest corner are the underground foundaries. There are dwarven slaves that are drugged and forced to make weapons for the undead troops here.

On the far northern border of the caldera is the main gate into Verdaise. Just inside of this gate lies the town of Ashlaeden, which is located in a deep ravine formed by two hardened lava flows. Beings of questionable repute, such as the dwarfengs, trade within this town. The dwarfengs are an unethical group of dwarves who will even sell members of their own race into slavery.

The only other way into Verdaise is a relatively unknown and dangerous path that cuts through a long, deep crack in the southern rim of the caldera and winds alongside a rushing river of lava. This is the entrance used by the dwarven freedom fighters called Bzontras and a few greedy, foolhardy thieves and miners.

The gap in the caldera's southern rim opens onto the bleak and icy southern wastelands. This area is covered by undulating hillocks and hollows of cooled lava. Interspersed between the hillocks are steep-sided domes of basaltic lava. These domes have glassy spines and plates protruding down the backsides. There are small piles of stone rubble at the base of these domes.

Beneath the hillocks of hardened lava is an intricate underground labyrinth of arched lava tubes (tunnels) that extend from the lava lake in the east to the rumbling volcano in the west. The Bzontra dwarves are using these tunnels as their hideout.

To further complicate the scouting efforts of the undead, huge ash storms swirl across the southwest and can last from hours to days. These are caused by powerful winds that tumble over the high cliffs at the opposite end of the caldera and pick up speed as they whip across the land. When the icy torrents of air crash into the southwest cliffs, the ash dunes are blown into billowing cyclones of cold.

Because of the extremes of cold and heat in Verdaise, only the hardiest plants and animals can survive here. Most of these live within the thin band of moderate temperatures that surrounds (but is not too near) the bodies of lava.

VERDAISE IN DETAIL

A Gamemaster may use this section to conduct ongoing excursions into the land.

RANDOM EVENTS IN VERDAISE

While the party is traveling through the land, roll three times a day for a random event to occur. Consult the *Random Events Chart* under the region that the party is currently traveling through.

THE REGIONS OF VERDAISE

The map of Verdaise is divided into three geographical regions. The features that are found in more than one region are described first. Next, unique characteristics of each region are given.

REGIONAL FEATURES

The following are found in more than one of the three regions of Verdaise; additional details can be found in their appropriate regions.

BASALT PILLARS (HOODOOS)

These are found in all three Regions. See the individual listing under **REGION III** for the Underground Foundary.

These high pillars, which are also called hoodoos, tower over the entire landscape, jutting 80 feet or more into the sky. Many of the pillars are hollow; these can serve as safe (although not very comfortable) shelters. Because they are ridged with layers of pumice and granite, the pillars can easily be scaled.

Following a heavy sleet, Bzontras often collect the snows that cling to the sides of the pillars for fresh water.

* * *

Whenever a character enters a hoodoo there is a 5% chance that the hollow basalt pillars run deep into the ground, opening into small underground caverns where 1D4 Hoodoo Men may be encountered.

(1-4) Hoodoo Men

AC: 4, *HTK:* 4D8
MV: 12"
AL: Neutral
IT: Low
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-4 (shovels), 1-12 (pick axes)
THACO: 15
Weapons: Shovels, pick axes (these always go last in a round).

Special: These skeletal miners can Detect Invisibility. they can only be hit by silver or magic weapons; edged weapons do half damage. (For further information on Hoodoo Men, see *New Monsters.*)

BONE BRIDGES

These can be found in **REGION I** and **REGION III**. See individual Region listing for details.

ACTIVE VOLCANOES

There are two active volcanoes in Verdaise. The one in **REGION I** is called *Fire Mound* and the one in **REGION III** is called *Prison Peak*. See individual Regions' listings.

LAVA LAKES

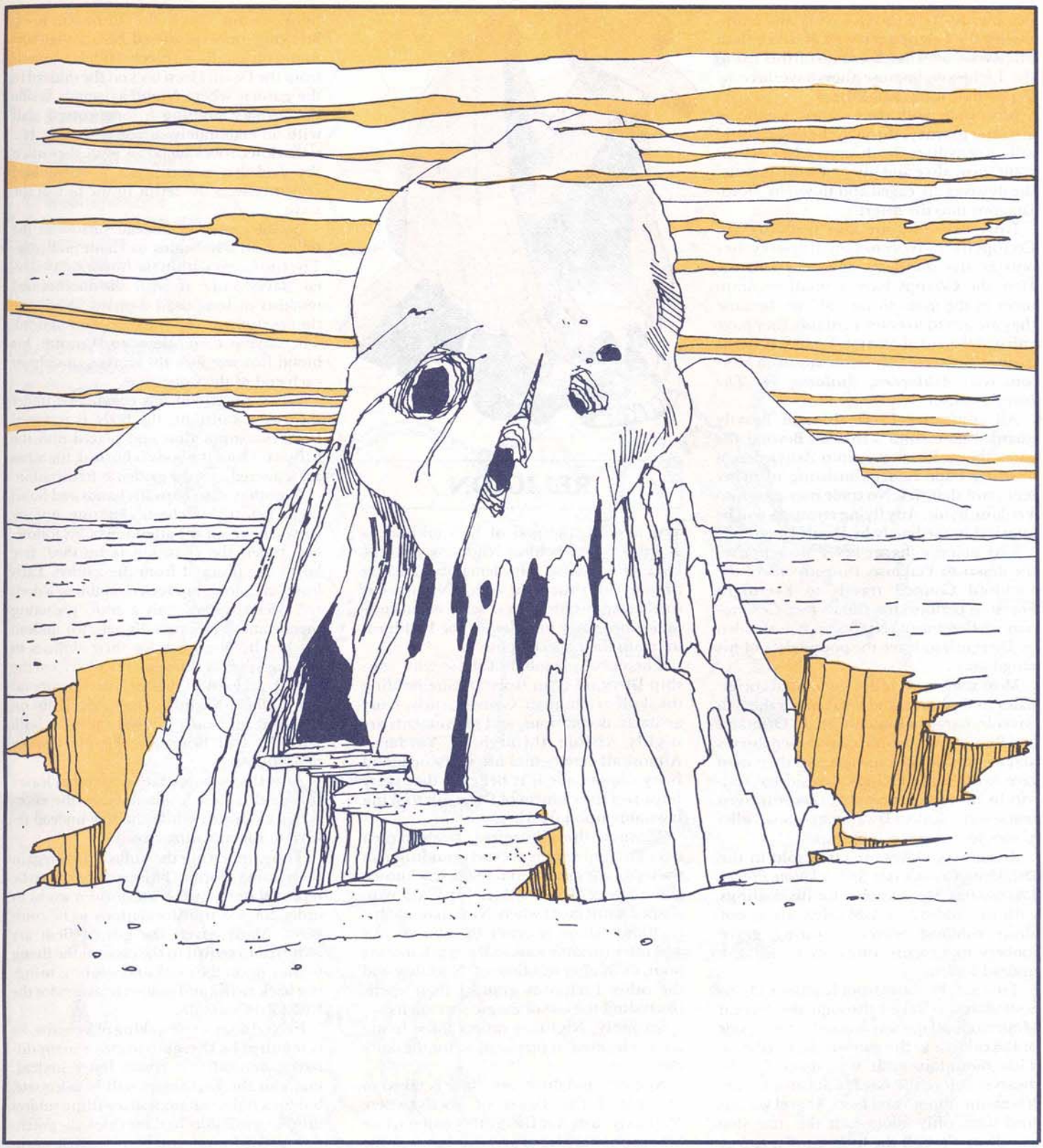
See individual Region listings in **REGION I** and **REGION II**.

LAVA TUNNELS (or LAVA TUBES)

This network of tunnels spans over **REGION I** and **REGION II**. See individual Regions.

COMMERCE

Not long after the Lichlords took over Verdaise, they began to set up trade systems with those in the area who were willing and unscrupulous enough to deal with them. Harsh treatment of slaves and



frequent sacrifices soon reduced the number of dwarven captives to a handful. Nightbay traded dwarven swords and the use of undead mercenaries in exchange for humans, elves, and dwarves for both sacrifices and strong healthy slaves.

The swords, forged by brainwashed dwarven captives, were not as good as those made before the Great Catastrophe. However, they were quite sufficient for the needs of the traders.

The smugglers trade for swords but sometimes zombies and skeleton warriors are included in the deal. The warriors are under orders of Nightbay to obey the commands of their owners.

For the offer of fine ivory, the Lichlords sometimes lend the services of intelligent undead for a limited period of time. The Lichlords do not approve of their undead being used for menial tasks or as slaves or mercenaries; they do not take kindly to wasting intelligent undead in such a way. Instead, it is expected that the smugglers use Nightbay's gift to achieve even greater success during future raids.

The most favored trading partners of the Lichlords are the Cecrops (see *New Monsters*) who dwell in Grimspade Desert. The Cecrops are skilled hunters of the mammoth herds in the Evernight Forest. Here they either kill mammoths for ivory or capture them for the Lichlords in creating war

mammoths. In return for ivory and mammoths, the Cecrops get fresh dwarven flesh (dwarven slaves that are of no further use to the Lichlords because they have become crippled or incapacitated).

Most trade with the Cecrops is done by air; long journeys through the desert could kill or dehydrate the dwarves (the Cecrops want them alive and juicy). Consequently, the dwarves are caged and flown by Death Dragons into the desert.

Ivory deliveries are also made by air. Cecrops fly the ivory to a small desert valley outside the northeast edge of Verdaise. Here the Cecrops have a small encampment at the gates to the caldera. Because they are afraid to enter Verdaise, they have enlisted the aid of Morton Festrell to act as their go-between. (For information on Morton, read ***Ashlaeden,*** *Building #4, The Ivory Trader.*)

All commerce flows through heavily guarded gates into Verdaise. Beyond the gates the traffic moves into Ashlaeden, a bustling trade center consisting of many tents and shanties. No trade may pass into Verdaise by air. Any flying creatures will be attacked immediately by Death Dragons.

Live mammoths are never brought over the desert to Verdaise. Instead, one of the Lichlord Council travels to Evernight Forest to perform the rituals (See *Ceremonies of Creation*). (Nightbay is forbidden by Dierguth to leave the boundaries of his kingdom.)

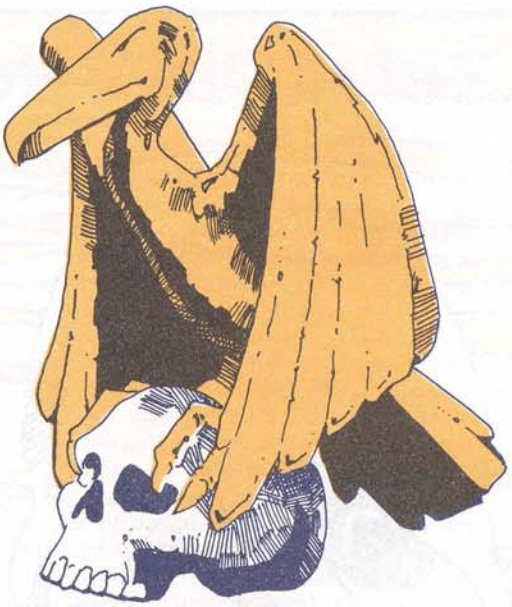
Most trade with other humanoids originates in Oribrand and is taken up the Ash River by barge to Roguestead. In Oribrand and Roguestead, a group of dwarven thieves and smugglers sells members of their own race to other humanoids. Considered traitors by the rest of their race, these dwarven marketeers—called Dwarfengs—boast allegiance to no race or kingship.

Remaining slaves are often sold to the Dwarfeng Cruenk (see *Special Non-Player Characters*). He is known for his dealings with the undead in Ashlaeden. He is not above robbing graves or hiring grave robbers to procure carcasses to fill the undead legions.

To reach Verdaise from Roguestead, the contraband is taken through the Dvegar Mountains all the way around the west side of the caldera to the gate on the northeast. This mountain trail was made by the dwarves before the Great Catastrophe and it remains smooth and level. Travel via this trail takes only about half the time that travelling though the little-known gap in the southern caldera rim does.

Even with this made-to-order trade route, there are many dangers. Dwarves from Duurgau constantly attempt to disrupt barge traffic on the Ash River and Bzontras often ambush the Verdaise Trail. Also, many bands of thieves operate along the river with small armies of their own. All this makes trade with the Lichlords extremely perilous.

The return route from Verdaise is not considered as dangerous because many of the smugglers return with undead mercenaries under their control.



RELIGION

Dierguth, the god of Evil undead, is the power behind Nightbay and the land of Verdaise. He demands exacting prayers and rituals for which Nightbay is solely responsible. These services must be performed daily in order for the Lichlords to retain their special powers.

The unholy symbol of those who worship Dierguth is an ivory vulture holding the skull of a human. Consequently, ivory artifacts, decorations, and monuments are highly visible throughout Verdaise. Almost all ceremonies use ivory or inlaid ivory objects, for it is believed that ivory improves the chances of Dierguth looking favorably upon the rites.

There are three liturgies performed each day. The first begins at exactly midnight at the top of the great obsidian obelisk known as the Tower of Spells. At its top is a crown-shaped battlement where Nightbay and his Lichlords stand beneath the starless sky and utter incantations to Dierguth for one hour. Only after this time are Nightbay and the other Lichlords granted their spells (including the use of magic user spells).

Secondly, Nightbay orders three living slaves cleansed in preparation for the daily ceremonies.

At dawn and dusk, one slave is taken to the top of the Tower of Spells where Nightbay calls out Dierguth's name while his talisman is placed over the slave's prone body. With a sudden fury, a cloud of fiery ash sweeps over the top of the Tower, killing the victim through suffocation. Nightbay remains unharmed.

The chief observance takes place at midday amid a long field of neatly furrowed rows known as Nightbay's Fleshly Garden. Stone footpaths bisect the field and lead to the center where a short cinder furnace continuously smokes. Beside the furnace stands a sacrificial altar which is horribly stained with dark red blotches.

Each day as the cinder-shaded sun pierces the midday clouds, broken rays of violet light stream down the furrowed rows, breaking into splintered beams that surround the sacrificial block. Hideous sounds from the Death Horn beckon the undead to the garden where Nightbay stands beside the furnace holding a long curved staff with an elaborately carved ivory hilt. His rich violet robes blend in with the sullen sky and his magnificent jewel-studded crown reflects the terror in the face of the slave.

As the crowd of undead surrounds the field, it slowly begins to chant and pray. The fire burns within the furnace as dwarven slaves stoke it with the mummified remains of long-dead dwarves. While the flames rise, so does the fervor of the undead. The slave is then offered to Dierguth, his blood flowing into the sunken troughs at each end of the stone altar.

When the blood has coagulated under the violet sunlight, the body is removed from the stone altar and placed into the furnace. Once the body is burned, the ashes are scattered over the garden as fertilization.

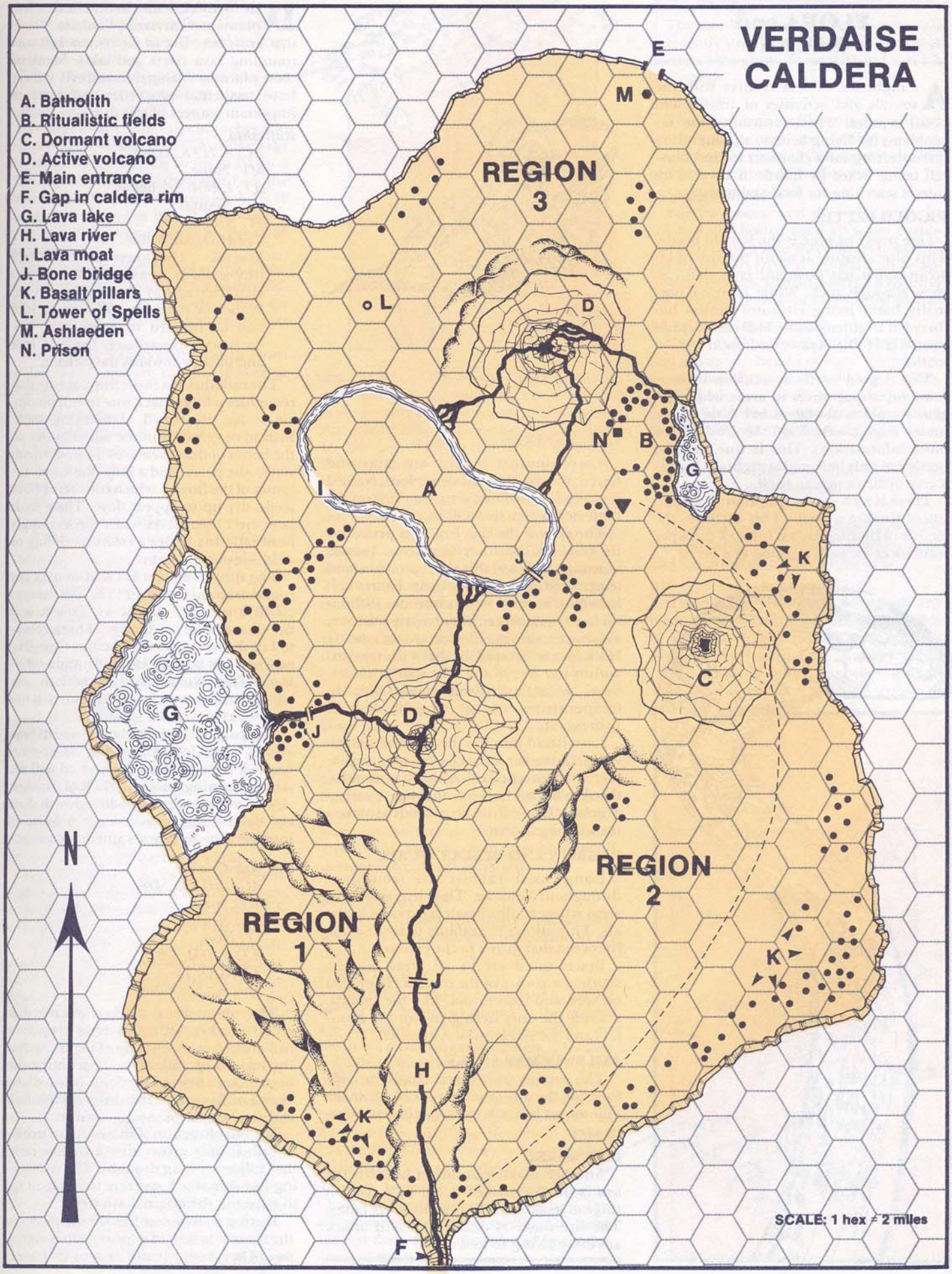
Nightbay then cups his hands and holds them before his chest, chanting unholy verses to regain the attention of his followers. When the chanting is finished, five bulbs are plucked from the garden. Each bulb has a long tap root resembling a deep red beet covered with a thin, pulsating membrane. Five specially selected undead (picked by Nightbay for their abilities to serve as spies or thieves) are called from the crowd and kneel before the ceremonial stone block. Nightbay places the bulbs on the altar and each undead ingests a bulb while it still beats (see *Fleshly Garden* description).

After the bulbs are eaten, Nightbay leaves the garden and heads towards the enormous batholith while the five undead return to the moaning crowd.

Those ingesting the bulbs slowly regain their human forms. This ceremony must be repeated once a week for thirteen weeks in order for the transformations to be complete. Many given the gift of flesh are required to return to the cities of the living to prey upon the weak and wealthy, bringing back riches and golden treasures for the Lichlord Council.

In Nightbay's role as king of Verdaise, he is required by Dierguth to create many different undead. To create lesser undead, many of the Evil slaves will be adequate, but for a powerful undead a willing subject must be available. In these cases, the potential undead must come to Verdaise or, in rare circumstances, be sought out by the Lichlords.

Nightbay creates the undead inside the obsidian batholith which also houses the obsidian palace of the Lichlords. Here Nightbay keeps all the necessary materials and reference works for undead creation. By carefully following the prescribed rituals, Nightbay is capable of keeping the gods of death from claiming the souls of many Evil humanoids. Instead of receiving their punishments for Evil deeds, they are snatched by Nightbay and rewarded with undeath in Dierguth's service.


VERDAISE CALDERA
A. Batholith
B. Ritualistic fields
C. Dormant volcano
D. Active volcano
E. Main entrance
F. Gap in caldera rim
G. Lava lake
H. Lava river
I. Lava moat
J. Bone bridge
K. Basalt pillars
L. Tower of Spells
M. Ashlaeden
N. Prison
REGION 3
REGION 2
REGION 1
N
SCALE: 1 hex = 2 miles

FLORA and FAUNA

At night the caldera is alive with the sounds and activities of insects and small reptiles. These creatures pose no problems for living beings, although it is disconcerting for a character to find himself being licked by lizards or covered by insects searching for food and moisture.

RIGOLD BEETLE

One insect of note is the Rigold beetle. This blue creature is about the size of an acorn but it has powerful jaws that can chew through rock. While it won't normally harm living creatures (unless bothered or frightened, in which case it could cause 1-2 HTK), it does feed upon rotting matter.

The Rigold beetle is notable because some say it only lives in areas where the gem Rigold is abundant (see *New Magic* under *Rigold—Bane of the Undead* for more information). This is true, but the beetle can only be found at night—which is a very difficult task in itself.

There is a 1% chance per hour of searching of finding a beetle. This increases the chance of finding Rigold from 1% to 5% per forty rocks for each sighting of a beetle.

LAVA LIZARDS

These unusual reptiles are large and round, the size of ripe watermelons. Named for their lava-colored skin, they live on the high ridges of active volcanoes.

The skin of the lava lizards is prized for its great ability to reflect heat. Anyone wearing clothes of this skin can withstand temperatures of 1,500 degrees Fahrenheit for a maximum of twenty minutes without taking any damage. After twenty minutes, a character wearing the skin would take 1-4 HTK for every round that he or she remains within five feet of the heat source. Otherwise, a character feels comfortable in temperatures of up to 220 degrees Fahrenheit.

Lava lizard skin has the protective equivalent of leather armor (*AC* 8) and is completely water repellant. After three months, the skin begins to crack, making it useless as armor. It takes four lava lizards to make a man-sized garment.

RABBITS AND DESERT QUAIL

Long-eared rabbits are abundant throughout Verdaise. They live mostly in areas where cooled basalt is exposed to the air. This allows the rabbits to feed on the fire-weed that grows in the crevices.

Desert quail are in all areas but the southwest corner of the caldera. They feed on seed and insects and, like the rabbits, provide the only fresh game for the Bzontras and the residents of Ashlaeden.

ASH SWIMMER SNAKE

The rabbits and desert quail provide food for the ash swimmer—a black snake that moves beneath the ash when stalking its prey.

FIRE SNAKE

Another snake that moves beneath the ash is the fire snake—noted by a reddish tinge to its skin and long protruding fangs. The fire snake is deadly and will attack anything living to feed upon.

Due to the extremes in the climate, few plants can survive in Verdaise. Those that grow here live in the narrow belt surrounding lava rivers and lakes. Many of these plants are dangerous and evil. Others have medicinal properties and serve as important sources of safe drinking fluids.

Rafleshia

AC: 8, *HTK:* 1D8
MV: None
AT: 1, *DM:* See below
AL: Neutral
IT: Non-
THACO: See below
Special: The flower can shoot 4D20 tiny seeds at a range of 20 feet. Any character within 20 feet must save vs. Wands or the seeds will land on him and be inhaled or swallowed. The seeds will immediately begin to root and burrow towards the skeleton

The rafleshia is a flowering parasite that resembles a huge black rose in full bloom, yet it has the smell of decaying flesh. Instead of growing in the ash, it grows on the bones of dead creatures. In its dormant state, the petals and a large button in the center of the flower, which consists of 4D20 seeds, dry up to appear dead. These seeds later eject themselves when the seemingly dead rafleshia senses a creature—living or dead—moving nearby.

The sprouts do 1D4 HTK of damage per round externally and 4-24 HTK of damage (4D6) internally. A save vs. Poison will negate any internal damage. The only way to kill the new growths is with a Cure Disease spell or potion; Heal, Neutralize Poison, or Cure Wounds spells or potions only temporarily restore lost HTKs but will not stop the effects of the sprouts.

The parasite feeds on the bones of its host and is often found growing on skeletal undead. In such cases, the undead will die after sustaining only one HTK of damage.

Removing external bodily growth does not destroy the parasite since it burrows into the skin and causes internal damage.

The Ash-Quaker

AC: 1, *HTK:* 5D8
MV: None
AL: Neutral
IT: Non-
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-8
THACO: 15
Special: See below

The ash-quaker is a hybrid ash tree that grows quickly. Although it has not grown in Verdaise, it serves as a sad reminder that the legions of undead are penetrating the border lands beyond Verdaise. Much of the Forest of Evernight is filled with the dark arching boughs of the ash-quakers.

The only function of this mutated tree is to kill. It only grows after a sudden rain that follows a long drought. The increasing number of ash-quakers is threatening to wipe out the original ash trees.

During its two-year life, the ash grows to the normal height of approximately eighty feet. After death, it still retains its leaves,

which drip a toxic chemical, killing all other trees in a fifty-foot radius. The newly infected trees will in turn die and become deadly ash-quakers.

These vile trees are vicious and will not let any life—or even undead—pass unharmed.

The trees attack with their branches and exposed roots, doing 1-8 HTK of damage per attack. When rolling to hit, a 20 on a 1D20 requires a reroll. If the roll is 1-15, the foe is impaled for double damage. A 16-19 means that an eye is hit; the damage is doubled and the victim loses an eye (GM discretion).

The ash-quaker's chemical composition makes it immune to normal fires and cold. Magical fires such as a Fireball will do normal damage to the trees but will not set them on fire.

The hideous sounds of the Death Horn soothes the ash-quaker, causing it to cease its attack.

Yucca Aberration

AC: Main Body 2; Head 0
HTK: See below
MV: See below
AL: Neutral
IT: Non-
AT: See below, *DM:* See below
THACO: 10 for runner; 15 for head

Made by Evil magic-users and clerics, the yucca aberration is a cross between plant parts and human heads. This gruesome "plant" is another one of Nightbay's innovations that he uses to insure his power in the land.

The yucca aberration looks like a giant yucca plant and is a formidable defense of the undead kingdom of Verdaise. It is found near lava lakes and rivers. The ruling Lichlord, Nightbay, took a normal desert yucca and crossed it with a strawberry plant that had thick, sturdy runners. This specially bred plant grew to a height of eight feet and sent out runners in all directions. The runners can grow up to forty feet long to gather nutrients, stabilize the main plant, and start new plants.

Once this giant yucca was perfected, Nightbay masterminded a horrible monster by placing humanoid heads at the ends of the long runners. Instead of passing over the ground, the runners burrow underground awaiting the passage of live beings. Whenever a humanoid passes over the ash-laden terrain, the runner shoots out of the ground and coils around its victim while the yucca attacks with its mouth. If the runner succeeds in killing its prey, the head feeds off the dead body and begins to propagate a new plant, sending off new runners.

When attacking, the yucca aberration will first try to grab hold of its prey by coiling around the victim with one or more of its runners. This is accomplished by a successful to hit roll. The next round, it will attack with its attached head, biting and chewing for 1-6 +1 HTK of damage and eventually consumes the trapped prey.

The runners are very thick and have an AC of 5. They each take up to 3-24 HTK of damage before being severed. Only 2D4 runners will actively attack unless the main body of the plant is attacked or if an enemy surrounds more than one side of the plant. In this case, (1D6+7) will return to defend the main body.

The main body of the plant has an Armor Class of 2, as it is very woody and can sustain 10-80 HTK of damage before the entire plant is killed. Severing the runners is usually the best way to kill smaller plants, as the runners act as roots. The heads, which were originally taken from humanoid slaves, now grow by themselves as part of the plant. They are hard to kill because of the quick movements of the runners. Each head has an AC of 0 and up to 2D4 HTK.

Yucca aberrations can be Turned (and will drop any prey) the same as mummies. Holy water does 1-4 HTK of damage, but only to the heads.

They are immune to Sleep, Charm, Hold, and other mind-affecting spells. Spells against plant life will not affect these creatures; darkness will not make them dormant, for they prefer small amounts of moonlight. Because of their tough skin, all normal fire damage is halved.

BLACK CACTUS

This is a dark green/gray cactus that sprouts several arms with long razor-sharp needles.

Cactus Juices

The juice of the cactus is used by living beings as a source of liquid. If the insides are squeezed and the juices boiled, the result is a refreshing replacement for water.

Undead, however, put the unboiled juices into the water or wine of dwarven slaves. This drug-like liquid helps keep the slaves brainwashed and willing to make swords for Nightbay. Drinking the unboiled juices has the effect of a Confusion spell for 1D10 turns with no save allowed. Also, the imbiber is much more susceptible to Charm or Suggestion spells, getting a -4 to all saves versus these spells. All saves against these spells are reduced by ten for the next ten turns.

Cactus Needles

The needles from the black cactus are frequently used by humans and dwarves as darts in blowguns. These will do 1-4 HTK of damage.

YARROW

This plant is about fifteen inches tall and has a rough stem and feathery leaves. Crowning the plant are flat-topped clusters of sweet-smelling white flowers.

Healing Potion

Yarrow roots and flowers must be crushed and boiled until all water evaporates. (It takes about three hours to boil 10 plants.) A soft paste is left that can be applied to wounds. Curing one HTK requires the root and flowers of two yarrow plants.

BLACK NIGHTSHADE

This shrubby weed has shiny oval leaves and grows to a height of eight inches. It is found mostly near the basalt pillars. Nightshade can be distinguished by its plump black berries and its petals, which fold back to reveal yellow anthers.

Berries

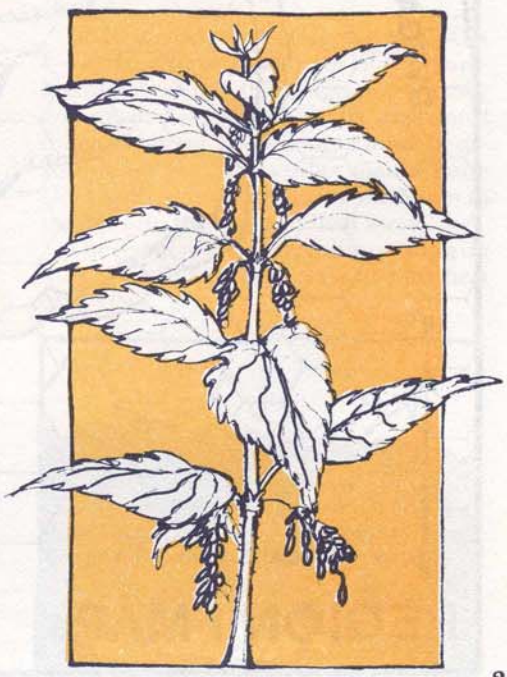
Each berry ingested causes 8 HTK of damage with no save allowed.

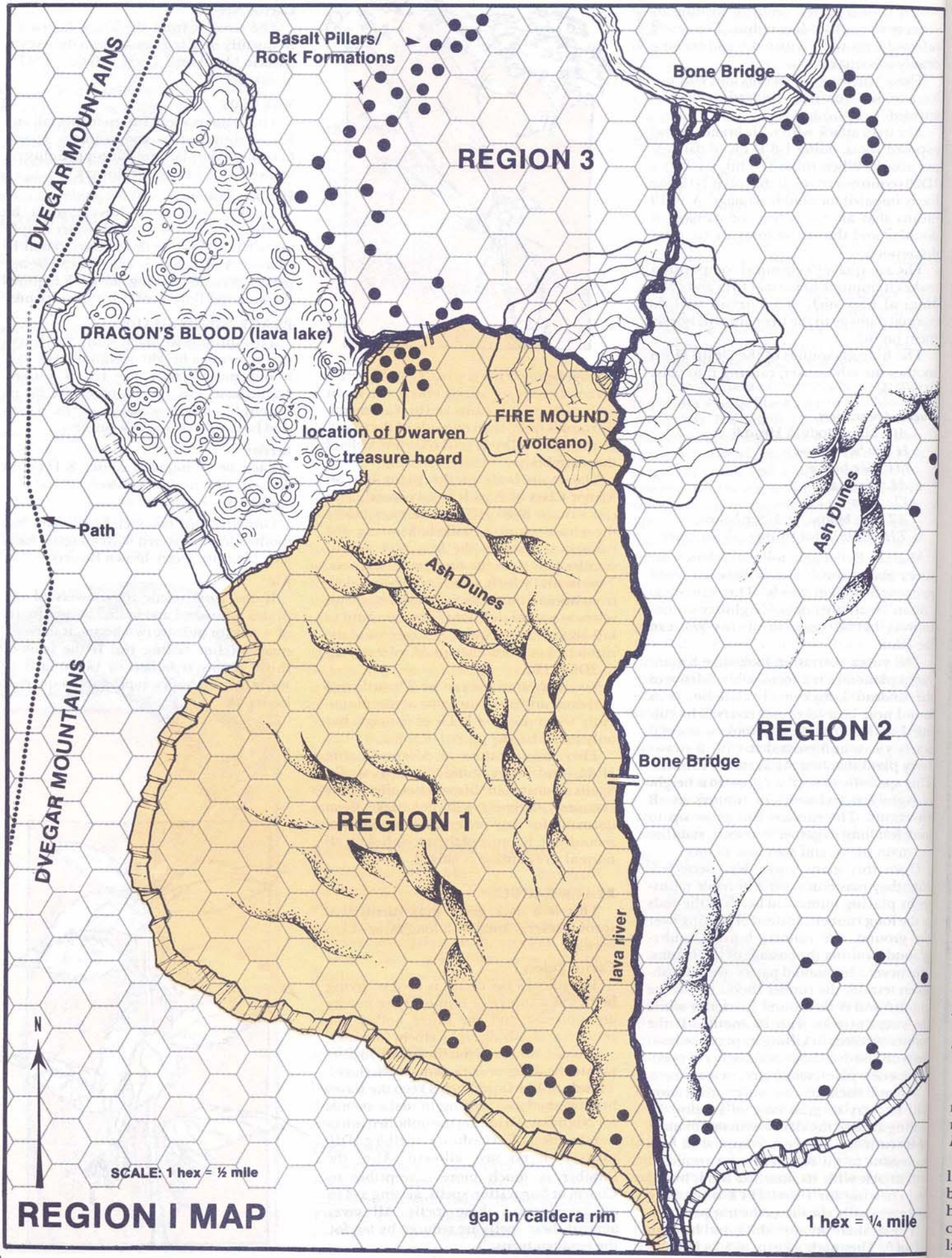
NETTLE

Growing only one inch high, nettle has toothed leaves covered with stinging hairs and dangling green/brown flowers.

Ale

If the fruit inside the flowers of ten plants is crushed and boiled in two quarts of water for at least two hours, it makes a quart of fine-tasting tea. If the fruit of thirty plants is boiled in two quarts of water for two hours, it produces a quart of hearty ale.




Basalt Pillars/
Rock Formations
Bone Bridge
DVEGAR MOUNTAINS
REGION 3
DRAGON'S BLOOD (lava lake)
location of Dwarven
treasure hoard
FIRE MOUND
(volcano)
Ash Dunes
Path
Ash Dunes
REGION 2
Bone Bridge
DVEGAR MOUNTAINS
REGION 1
lava river
N
SCALE: 1 hex = ½ mile
REGION I MAP
gap in caldera rim
1 hex = ¼ mile

REGION I

WEATHER

This is the coldest region of Verdaise. Chilling winds and swirling torrents of ash constantly beat down upon weary travelers who wander the southern wastes. The wind chill here is zero degrees Fahrenheit. Visibility is very poor (no more than 25 feet regardless of light source, even Continual Light) and characters can easily become disoriented.

Unless there is a shire-folk player character among the party, there is a 10% chance that the party will be lost in this region; with the shire-folk party member there is only a 5% chance. Should an ash storm arise, characters have an even higher chance of getting lost. (See the *Random Events* section for details.)

REGION I Features

ASH DUNES

If applicable, read to the players:

Great dunes, composed of fine particles of ash, are ever-shifting across the barren wastes and reach heights of up to 50 feet.

* * *

All movement is halved while the characters cross the ash dunes.

Moving about beneath the layers of ash are the harmless black ash swimmer snake and the fire snake. The fire snake has a red tinge to its skin and long protruding fangs. It is deadly, but it will not attack unless provoked. There is a 15% chance that the party will encounter a fire snake in this area. If a character provokes a snake that character must first save vs. his DX or be bitten. He must then save vs. Poison or the venom will do 2D20 HTK of damage per round until the poison is neutralized.

LAVA LAKE-DRAGON'S BLOOD

This bubbling lake, called *Dragon's Blood* by the Bzontra dwarves, covers three square miles. For any characters viewing the lake, read the following to the players:

Steam rises from the lake, smothering everything around its blackened shores with a hot, heavy vapor. Bubbles form across the entire lake, growing larger and more violent at the western edge. Here steam rises up from the base of a waterfall; these falls flow over the cliff that rises up over the western bank of the lake.

* * *

The 'waterfall' is actually is a stream of molten lava that flows from the northernmost lava river of this region (see *Lava Rivers* below).

As the molten rock falls into the lava lake, billows of white steam hiss from the base of the falls. Once the cascade of lava hits the lake it cools quickly, forming crusty protrusions that emerge from the lake like twisted, wrinkled coils of rope.

The temperature of the lava reaches 2,200 degrees Fahrenheit — hot enough to instantly melt the flesh of any character that comes closer than 5 feet of the falls; no save is allowed. The character will sustain 3-24 HTK of damage each round that he remains in this area.

The chilly winds temper the blistering heat so that characters wearing leather armor, padded armor, or no armor may venture within 10 feet of the lava falls and not be scorched. However, a character in metal or chain mail armor may only step within 20 feet of the lava falls (or take 1-6 HTK of damage per round) because the armor's material conducts the heat.

Desert wildlife lives in a band that encircles the lava lake, stretching from 20 to 2,000 feet from its shore. Rabbits and quail are abundant, as are black cactus, yarrow, and nettle plants. (See the *Flora and Fauna* section for statistics and/or descriptions of these items.)

LAVA RIVERS

There are two lava rivers that run along the edge of this region. Each river is 30 feet wide. Approaching the flows of lava, characters see:

Boiling lava flows from the volcano "Fire Mound" towards the west and south.

* * *

The western river empties into the lava lake, Dragon's Blood. The southern river flows through the gap at the base of the caldera and cascades down a fissure into underground pools of fire.

Like the area around the falls described above in the *Lava Lake* section, temperatures run 2,200 degrees Fahrenheit. The same damage specifications as described in the *Lava Lake* section above also apply here.

Like the band of wildlife that surrounds the lava lake, a smaller selection of flora and fauna inhabit the strip of land 5 to 500 feet on either side of the rivers. (See *Flora and Fauna* section for statistics and descriptions of wildlife.)

LAVA TUNNELS (LAVA TUBES)

Beneath the rolling hills of solidified lava are hollow tunnels or tubes that form a labyrinth of connecting pathways between the southeast and southwest. Only a well-trained Bzontra who is familiar with the land and knowledgeable of the secret dwarven signposts will be able to locate the entrances into this system of tunnels. However, it is possible for characters to find an opening in the southeast hillocks of Verdaise. See **REGION II** for details.

ACTIVE VOLCANO

As the party moves closer to the volcano, read the following to the players:

A biting wind hisses around the jagged ridges and ledges, tossing volcanic debris into the air. Heavy blankets of mist hang over the boiling streams of lava that continually belch forth from the cone's mouth.

* * *

This active volcano has been dubbed *Fire Mound* by the Bzontra dwarves.

Although climbing the 4,000-foot high volcano is possible, it is also very dangerous. Poisonous gasses are emitted from vents that peek out from the sides of the volcano. For every three rounds a character spends climbing, that character must save vs. Poison or be overcome with nausea. Three rounds later, the poisoned character will become unconscious and, if the poison is not neutralized, he or she will die three rounds after that.

Living on the volcanoes are fiery red lava lizards that have been aptly named for their lava-colored skin. (See the *Flora and Fauna* section for more details).

The lava lizards are practically undetectible next to the lava flows. They increase in number the higher up the volcano the character climbs. For each 400 feet, there is a 4% cumulative chance of spotting (and capturing) a lava lizard. The lizards are slow moving. When one is cornered it will let out a high-pitched whine that warns the others of danger. In response, nearby lizards will hide alongside the lava for 20 minutes (too close for a character to safely reach unless protected by some magical means against fire). While the lizards are hidden there is only a 2% chance (not cumulative) that a character will see one. After 20 minutes, the heat of the lava will force the lizards to move away.

BONE BRIDGES

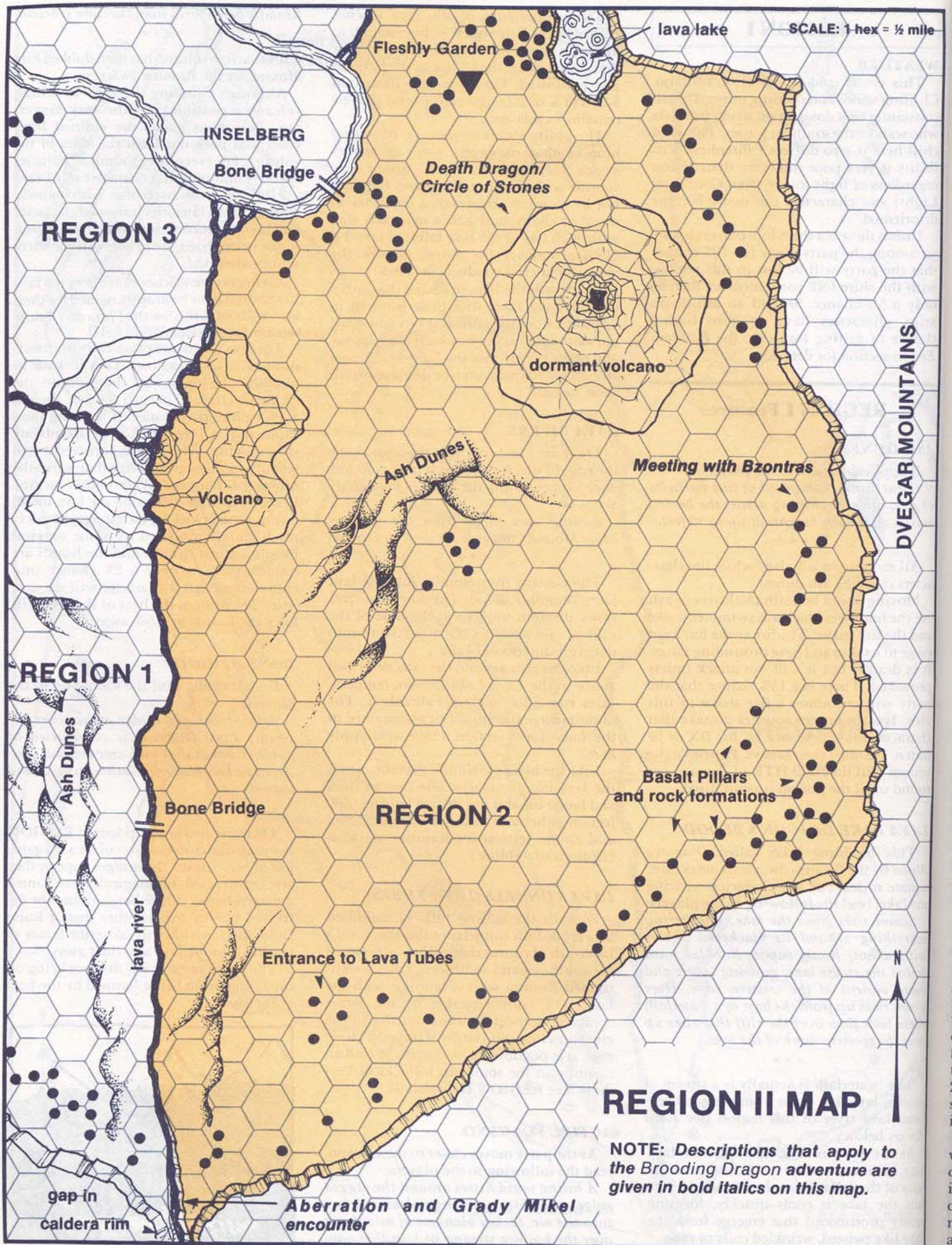
If applicable, read the following to the players:

A five-foot wide bridge arches over the steamy Lava River. It is constructed of parched bones that look cracked and brittle; its rickety rails are swathed in mists and vapor.

* * *

There are two bone bridges in **REGION I** — each one crosses a river of lava. Regardless of how shakey the bridges appear, they are constructed of magically enchanted dwarven bones. These bones cannot be destroyed by any means other than a Raise Dead spell, which will cause the bones to tumble into the lava and float away.

The bones prevent any thing or being on the bridge from being harmed by the heat of the lava.


SCALE: 1 hex = ½ mile
lava lake
Fleshly Garden
INSELBERG
Bone Bridge
Death Dragon/
Circle of Stones
REGION 3
dormant volcano
DVEGAR MOUNTAINS
Ash Dunes
Meeting with Bzontras
Volcano
REGION 1
Ash Dunes
Basalt Pillars
and rock formations
Bone Bridge
REGION 2
lava river
Entrance to Lava Tubes
N
REGION II MAP
NOTE: Descriptions that apply to the Brooding Dragon adventure are given in bold italics on this map.
gap in
caldera rim
Aberration and Grady Mikel
encounter

REGION II

WEATHER

Arid winds and hovering clouds of ash keep the temperature close to 35 degrees Fahrenheit (or 15 degrees with the wind chill factor). For characters other than those of cold-blooded races (such as reptilian forms), the weather in this region does not directly affect playing conditions.

REGION II Features

LAVA TUNNELS (Lava Tubes)

Within **REGION II** of Verdaise, the shadows and ridges of the jutting hoodoos and the endless waves of hillocks make it very difficult — but not impossible — to spot an opening into the maze of underground lava tunnels (also known as "lava tubes"). A dwarf, gnome, or elf traveling over these parched, ash-laden hills has a 6% chance of spotting an opening if he/she passes directly by it. All other races have a 3% chance of detecting the openings.

Once inside the tunnels, a gnome, dwarf, or shire-folk has a 70% chance of successfully choosing the desired directions at each crossroad. For all other races, the chance of choosing the right direction at each crossroad is reduced to 35%.

* * *

Should the characters enter a lava tunnel they will see:

The dark, gloomy tunnel has an 8-foot high arched ceiling. Its curved ground has a rounded ridge down the center and spans a width of up to 15 feet.

* * *

Normal movement is possible down the center of the tube, but movement is reduced to half along its sloping edges.

Lava tunnels are generally straight and clear of rubble. However, certain sections of the tunnel pass over empty cavities, making the pathway unstable. Please make sure that the player characters' weights are included with their statistics or make up a logical weight for each character at this point. These areas are indicated on the Lava Tunnel Map with an asterisk (*). Any weight over 10 pounds on the unstable ground will cause the floor to collapse; whomever or whatever falls through here will fall anywhere from 10-100 feet into the cavity below, taking 1D6 HTK of damage for every 10 feet of the fall (GM roll). Every time a character or undead falls, there is a 20% chance that the crash will set off a small tremor, alerting Bzontras to the intruders' presence.

The Bzontras know the locations of the weak spots in these tunnels. If intruders crash through the weak ground and tumble into the hollow cavities, the dwarven freedom fighters will later conceal or poorly repair the lava pathway so it will continually function as a trap against intruders.

In addition, the Bzontras have blasted holes into the walls at irregular intervals, thus interconnecting many tunnels. They have also built a significant number of concealed doors, allowing them to pass undetected from one lava tunnel to another. Any concealed door that is forcefully pushed open will release a trap of 2 quarts of holy water that squirts in a 10-foot radius, causing 1D8 HTK of damage to any doused undead. Holy water is not normally available in these quantities. However, the Bzontras have special clerics who bless enough water to keep all of their traps set. The Bzontras know how to open the concealed doors gently without setting off these traps.

To further protect themselves from undead, the Bzontras have trapped many of the pathways with foot-deep puddles of holy water that cover an area 3 feet long and the width of the tunnel (causing 2D8 HTK of damage to each undead who passes through).

DORMANT VOLCANO

If applicable, read the following to characters:

It is unnaturally quiet on the ridges of this dormant volcano, which is 2,000 feet high.

There are countless barren and desolate overhangs of dried lava here. Remnants of campfires can be seen.

* * *

The lava overhangs can provide shelter from the biting winds. The campfires were left by Rigold prospectors and bands of thieves.

FLESHLY GARDEN

If applicable, read to following to the players:

A 300-x-300 foot garden is carefully tended with neatly plowed fields. Stone footpaths lead to its center, where a small furnace smokes. Beside it stands a stone block that is stained dark red.

Walking around the perimeter of the garden are 20 mummies, each wearing a small golden amulet.

* * *

The mummies will attack any living creature entering the garden.

(20) Mummies

AC: 3, *HTK:* 6D8+3
MV: 6"
AL: Lawful/Evil
IT: Low
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-12
THACO: 13
Equipment: Golden Amulet of Resistance to Normal Fire (works only on non-living creatures).
Special: Hits inflict rotting disease; causes Fear within a 60-foot radius unless a save vs. Spells is made; can only be hit by magical weapons, which do half damage; unaffected by Sleep, Charm, Hold, and Cold-based spells; not affected by Poison or Paralyzation.

For each Skill level of an adventurer who is sacrificed, a living root takes seed in the garden. Attached to the root is a bulb that resembles a deep red turnip covered with a thin pulsating membrane. For example, if a Skill 9 adventurer was sacrificed, there would be 9 new bulbs growing in the garden. These bulbs were created by Nightbay to grant his chosen undead the privilege of maintaining a human appearance.

* * *

Any living character standing within 10 feet of the field notices . . . (read the following to players):

Your heart begins a strange, uneven beat that increases in intensity with each step you take closer to the furnace. At last, when you reach the furnace, the pulsating beat drowns out all other sounds and becomes a deafening, murderous dirge.

* * *

Anyone standing within 2 feet of the furnace must save vs. Fear. Failure to save renders the character totally mad; the character will drop all weapons and cover his ears to block out the sound. He will remain senseless until dragged at least 10 feet from the furnace.

* * *

If a character begins to dig into the furrowed fields read the following aloud to the players:

You find a smooth but tough black root attached to a bulb. The bulb is encased in a thin, oozing, pulsating membrane. Holding the bulb magnifies the maddening beat into a hypnotic rhythm, mesmerizing you by its incessant sound.

* * *

If the character makes a save vs. IN he will toss the bulb back upon the ground. It will immediately burrow into the dirt and disappear from sight, releasing the character from its hypnotic effect.

If a character ingests the bulb, he automatically gains one Skill level. No more than one bulb per character can be ingested in a year's span. If more than one is ingested it causes nausea and vomiting, negating all of its positive effects. In addition, a character's SM is reduced by 2 points for as long as he or she remains inside the land of Verdaise. Once outside the land, the character's skin will peel for a week, reducing Appeal during that time by 4 points.

* * *

If the party visits the garden near noontime read the following to the players:

The sun pierces through the clouds and sends broken rays of light down the neatly furrowed rows. The sounds of a gong can be heard resounding from deep within the batholith. From the direction of the batholith come hordes of undead that swiftly encircle the garden.

Slowly, a robed figure approaches the furnace; each step is like a precise cadence of a drum beat. He holds a long carved knife with an elaborately carved hilt; a magnificent jewel-studded crown rests

upon his head. You notice that his left eye looks like a round faceted ball of marble. Both eyes focus on a terrified dwarf who is tied to the stone block.

The crowd of undead begins to chant. When the fervor heightens to a maddening pitch, the victim is slain and then stuffed inside the furnace, which dwarven slaves continually stoke. Within minutes, the victim's ashes are scattered over the furrowed rows of rich dirt.

The crowned leader then pulls four dark purple bulbs with pulsating membranes from the folds of his robes. He then beckons four undead from the group. These summoned creatures are partially covered by flesh and membranes; two are nearly human in appearance, the other two are more skeletal with mere patches of flesh.

Kneeling before the robed figure, the supplicants ingest a bulb while it still beats.

As the ceremony ends, the robed figure leaves the garden and disappears amid the swirling winds of ash. The troops of undead slowly leave, returning towards the batholith.

* * *

The robed figure is Nightbay (see statistics in *The Lichlord Council* section on page 7). The undead surrounding the garden during the ceremony include: 3D20 skeletons, 2D20 zombies, 2D12 ghouls, 2D12 ghasts, 1D10 mummies (not including the 20 mummy guardians), 1D4 vampires, and two Death Dragons.

The undead participating in the bulb ceremony were previously chosen by Nightbay. These selected undead maintain their humanoid forms through the daily worship ceremonies and serve as spies for the Lichlord Council. They often return to the cities of the living and pass for human beings. Preying on the weak and wealthy, the flesh-and-blood undead return to Verdaise bringing special riches and prizes back to their Lichlord.

PRISON

If characters investigate the prison, they will find:

The walls of this U-shaped enclosure are built with 15-foot high basalt blocks that are 4 feet thick. Built on top of the wall at each side of the U-shaped entrance is a large round orb that is 6 feet in diameter. A glistening light emanates from around the center of each orb, flickering like a row of embedded pale gems. Fifty feet beyond the entrance on opposite sides of the courtyard, black stone turrets rise from the walls and overlook the rear of the courtyard. A moat of lava laps up against the turrets and divides the U-shaped courtyard in half.

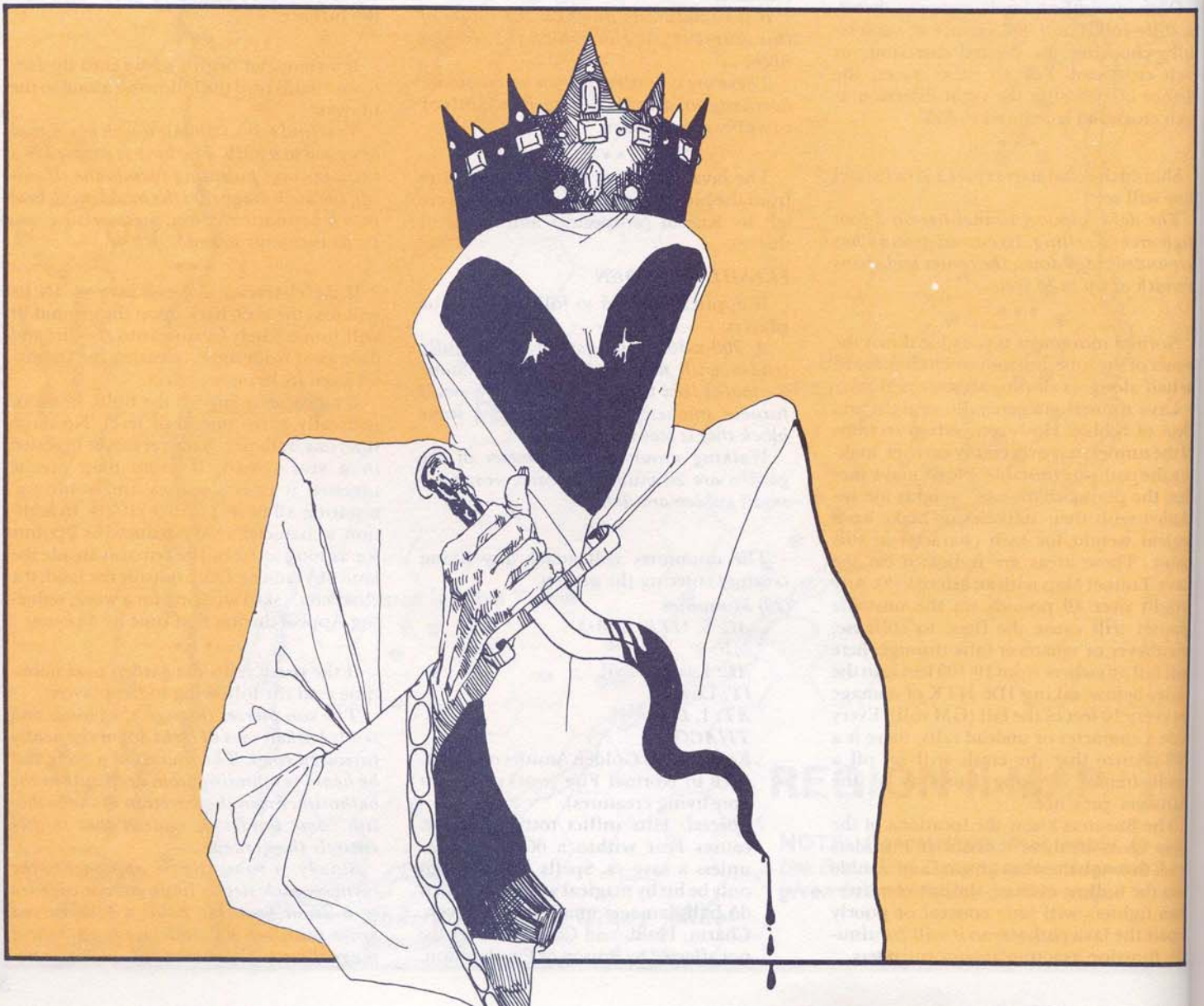
In the front half of the courtyard near the northern wall, a ladder lies partially hidden in the soft ground.

On the far side of the moat, rows of 4' x-4' windowless stone cages are built along the curved back wall.

* * *

Any character within 40 feet of the orb will be spotted (unless Invisible). The eyes are controlled by the large crystal eye in Nightbay's left eye socket. Through these eyes Nightbay is able to know when there is any threat present.

The guardian eyes can be destroyed by a weapon (each orb has 50 HTK). Or, characters can successfully destroy the eyes by casting several spells, including Blindness, Shatter, Dispel Magic, etc. Also, the eyes can be Turned (the same as a lich) by a cleric; they will close for as long as they are



Turned. Whenever the eyes are damaged or Turned, Nightbay will lose vision in his large globular left eye.

Once the guardian eyes have spotted a character or they are attacked by a weapon or a spell, characters have 5 rounds until the first Prison Escape Troops — 30 zombies — appear and 10 rounds until a Death Dragon appears.

PRISON ESCAPE TROOPS

(30) zombies

AC: 8, *HTK:* 2D8
MV: 6
AL: Neutral
IT: Non-
ATT: 1, *DM:* 1-8
THACO: 16
Special: Covered with Brain Dust (see *New Magic Items*).

Five rounds after an alert, 30 zombies (teleported by Nightbay from the batholith) enter the prison between the orbs. In another round they will have entered the prison yard through the turrets. Around each zombie's neck is an amulet of a swollen eyeball, allowing Nightbay to be aware of any possible danger that any of his undead may be in. The zombies' bodies are covered with dirt and a shimmering greyish dust, which is the Brain Dust (see *New Magic Items* for details).

Any successful strike against the zombie with a weapon will cause the dust from its body to be dispersed into the air. However, if a zombie is turned or destroyed magically, the dust is not released.

Death Dragon

See *New Monster* section on page 25 for statistics and description.

Five rounds after the zombies appear, characters will be attacked by a Death Dragon.

The stone cages are prison cells. The cells may be reached by climbing over the walls or entering through the secret doors in the turrets. Flying over the moat is possible. However, if a character ventures within 20 feet of the moat, the heat rising from the lava will cause 3D8 HTK of damage; no save is allowed unless the character is protected against magical fire.

The doorway into each turret is secret from the outiside of the turret. Once a character is inside the turret, however, the door is clearly visible. A winding staircase leads from the doorway to the base of the turret.

Another secret doorway leads into the turret from the prison yard. But once a character is inside the turret, it is also clearly visible.

Thin arrow slits within each turret provide a view of the prison cells within the rear courtyard. Standing guard inside each turret is a wraith wearing an amulet of a swollen eyeball. The eyeball allows Nightbay to see whatever is in front of the guard wearing the amulet.

Hanging on a large hook inside each turret is a covered basket that holds a key to the prison cells. This large key is shaped like a serpent; its forked tongue forms the notched edge that fits into the key slot to turn the bolt.

Anytime the key is used to open a locked cell, it is transformed into a poisonous snake in 2 segments. Any living being with bare hands holding the key longer than that will be automatically bitten. The victim must save vs. Poison or die in 3 turns. Once the snake bites a victim, it will immediately turn back into a key. If the key is thrown onto the floor or back into the basket within 2 segments after unlocking a cell, the key will not be completely transformed. Therefore, no harm will be done and it will revert back into its original shape within 1 round.

(2) Wraith Guards

AC: 4, *HTK:* 28, 35
MV: 12″/24″
AL: Lawful/Evil
IT: Very
ATT: 1, *DM:* 1D6 plus drains 1 Skill level
THACO: 15
Special: Can be hit only with silver weapons for half damage or magic weapons for full damage.

Once the wraith guards are alerted to any escape they will attack any intruder. Each wraith guard is also wearing the same type of orb amulet that the Prison Escape Troop zombies are wearing. The first Prison Escape Troop zombie will appear in 5 rounds.

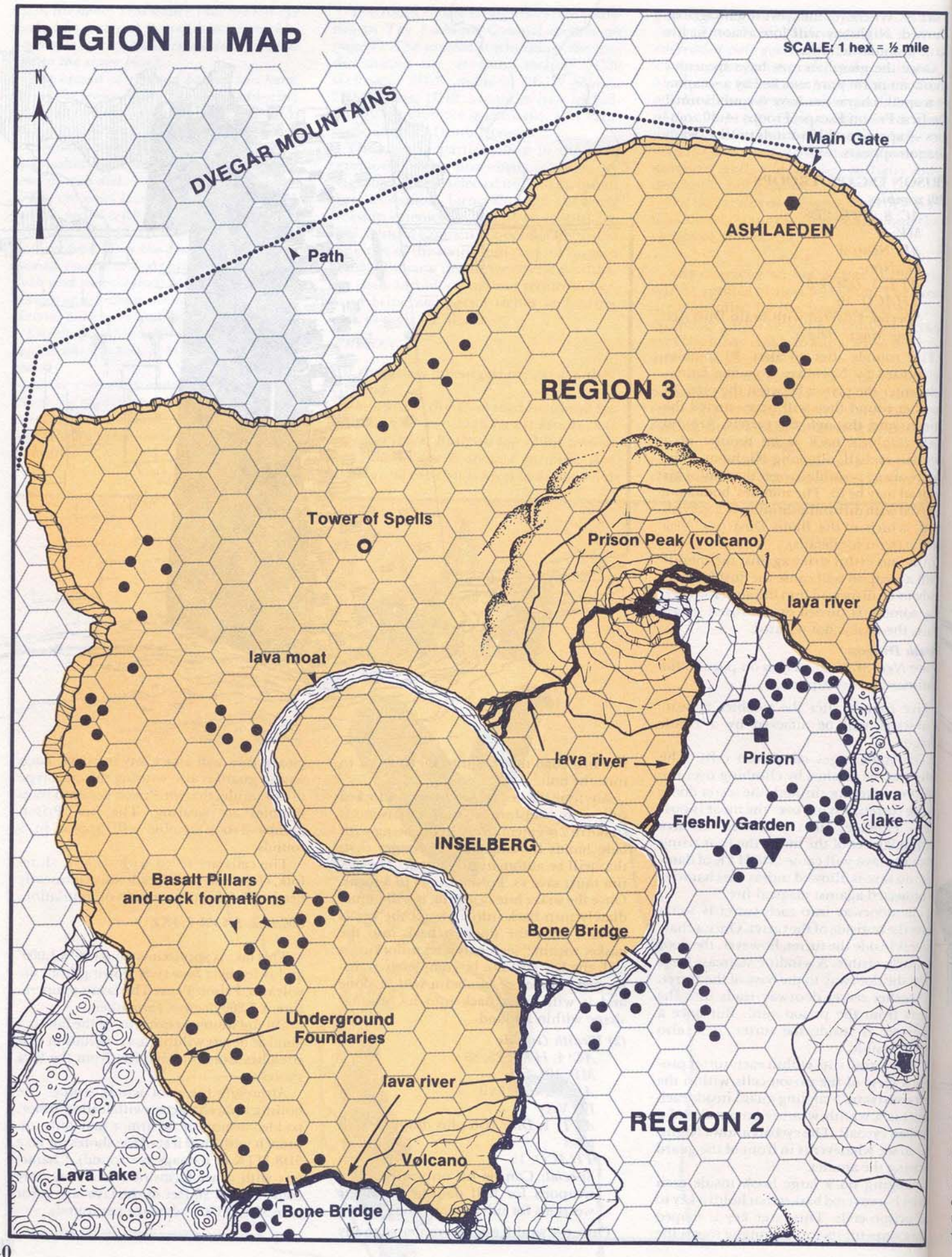
The cells are filled with dwarfs, shirefolk, elves, and humanoids. Most are nearly dead, either from starvation or mutilation.

SMALL LAVA LAKE

This lake is approximately 3,000′ x 1,000′ and is fed by a lava river flowing from the volcano, Prison Peak. The lava's temperature is 2,200 degrees Fahrenheit.

On the western perimeter of the lake is a band of desert wildlife and vegetation that stretches from 5 to 500 feet from the lava shores.

Although the cool winds temper the boiling lava, characters with leather armor, padded armor, or no armor may only approach within 10 feet of the shores (or take 3D8 HTK of damage per round). Characters with other forms of armor may only come within 20 feet of the lava shores (or take 3D8 HTK of damage per round).


REGION III MAP
SCALE: 1 hex = ½ mile
N
DVEGAR MOUNTAINS
Main Gate
Path
ASHLAEDEN
REGION 3
Tower of Spells
Prison Peak (volcano)
lava river
lava moat
lava river
Prison
lava lake
Fleshly Garden
INSELBERG
Basalt Pillars and rock formations
Bone Bridge
Underground Foundaries
lava river
REGION 2
Volcano
Lava Lake
Bone Bridge

REGION III

WEATHER

Less windy than the other regions, this area has a dull, bitter cold that clings to the ground. Thin vapors rise from the ash like soft breaths of the barren wasteland. The temperature hovers around 35 degrees Fahrenheit day and night.

REGION III Features

ACTIVE VOLCANO

Named *Prison Peak*, This volcano has the same description as the volcano in **REGION I**.

BASALT PILLARS/HOODOOS UNDERGROUND FOUNDRY

Most of the pillars or 'hoodoos' are exactly the same on the outside as in **REGIONS I** and **II**.

There is a 20% chance that the characters will notice a high narrow hoodoo (too narrow to climb into) billow with a black heavy smoke that fades into the sullen clouds of ash. There is an additional 10% chance that every hoodoo that is wide enough to climb into will have iron rungs on the inside, leading to the undead's underground foundary operation.

* * *

If the characters climb down the hoodoo, read the following to the players:

You are entering a low, irregularly shaped cavity. In the corner rests an empty barrel and 100 feet of rope. A roughly cut archway of stone leads down a narrow tunnel for 10D10 feet, then opens into a large underground cavern.

Ten dwarven slaves stumble around this torchlit chamber as if in a trance. Four of the dwarves are heating what appear to be pieces of steel over a large cauldron of blood. Four more dwarves are beating the metal strips into blades and the final two are sharpening finished blades.

A pool of lava bubbles up through a crack in the stone floor, causing the entire room to be blanketed in a maze of steam and mists. Above you, the roof of the cavern narrows into a chimney-like pillar, open to the dark violet sky.

Floating through the chamber is a transparent figure that fades in and out of the mists like a cloud of steam.

* * *

Upon seeing intruders, the spirit guard (a spectre) will attack immediately. The dwarves will continue their operation as though nothing unusual is happening. If the dwarves are spoken to by the characters, they will appear not to hear. A Dispel Magic will bring the dwarven slaves out of their trance but they will be too weak to escape from the cavern without help. Once they are outside, they will need to be given warmer clothes or they will perish from exposure in 2 hours. If they are told that there is an exit through the southern gap, they will try to escape.

(1) Spectre
AC: 2, *HTK:* 37 (7D8 + 3)
MV: 15"/30"
AL: Lawful/Evil
IT: High
ATT: 1, *DM:* 1-8
THACO: 13
Special: Drains 2 Skill levels per hit; can only be hit by +1 or better magic weapons; not affected by Sleep, Charm, Hold, or Cold-Based Spells; not affected by Poison or Paralyzation; can be killed by a Raise Dead spell.

In the far corner of the cavern is a barrel filled with 30 poorly-made short swords (worth 100 gp each).

BONE BRIDGE

Approaching the batholith, the characters see:

Diverted streams of lava flowing from the twin volcanoes empty into a deep gorge surrounding the enormous standing stone, forming a blistering hot moat.

Suspended over the steamy lava is a 5-foot wide bridge constructed of bleached bones. The far end of the bridge is hidden in heavy veils of mist rising from the lava moat.

* * *

The bridge is 20 feet long. Read the following to the characters as soon as they step half-way over the bridge (10 feet):

A hideous wail pierces the foggy darkness. As the unearthly cry fades, the mists partially clear. Standing before you is a beautiful woman clad in violet robes. Her hair is the color of dark copper and she stretches out her arm as if to welcome you. "Whom do you seek?" she softly asks.

* * *

The woman is a vampire. Behind her, on the far end of the bridge, are 10 wraith guards; they are barely distinguishable among the mists; there is a 10% chance that a player character will see the wraiths

The vampire will attempt to Charm all persons, sweetly promising them whatever they request. However, she will attempt to lure them to 'a place of refuge' — the prison camp where they will be used as slaves or sacrifice victims.

If the characters attack, the wraiths will help the vampire weaken the characters sufficiently to be thrown into prison. Only as a last resort will the wraiths attempt to kill the party members.

Vampire
AC: 1, *HTK:* 8D8+3
MV: 12"/18"
AL: Chaotic/Evil
IT: Exceptional
AT: 1, DM: 5-10 plus drains 2 Skill levels from victim
THACO: 12
Special: Can only be hit with +1 or better weapons; unaffected by Sleep, Charm, or Hold spells. If reduced to 0 HTK, the vampire turns gaseous and summons a replacement who will show up in 3 rounds.

(10) Wraiths
AC: 4, *HTK:* 5D8+3
MV: 12"/24"
AL: Lawful/Evil
IT: Very
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-6 plus drains 1 Skill level
THACO: 15
Special: Can only be hit with silver weapons (half damage) or magic weapons (full damage).

BATHOLITH

This enormous standing stone (batholith) is 1,000-feet high, 2,500-feet wide, and 6,000-feet long. Characters who cross the bone bridge see:

Beyond the bone bridge is an enormous standing stone made of black crystallized rock. Bulging ridges on its southern exposure form 10-foot high scripted letters that read ***INSELBERG****.*

It is impossible to see the top of the batholith, which is hidden amid the low hanging, tainted clouds.

* * *

There are no openings in or out of the batholith. Even the most vigorous examination — whether by physical or magical means — will not detect any doors, windows, or openings. The batholith looks to be an ordinary block of stone.

Inside the batholith is the headquarters of the Lichlords (the Obsidian Palace), and Nightbay's experimental laboratories.

The batholith houses the more intelligent undead; the rocky lairs and catacombs for lesser undead are also here. One can only enter the batholith by magical means.

TOWER OF SPELLS

If characters approach the Tower, read the following:

Made of smooth black obsidian, this sleek tower juts high into the purple sky. Its crown-shaped battlement rises up through the hazy clouds of ash.

An arched doorway faces east. Two shadowy figures can be seen crouched just north of the Tower entrance.

* * *

The 100-foot high, 40'in diameter tower is constantly guarded by two robed spectres.

(2) Spectres
AC: 2, *HTK:* 37, 43 (7D8 + 3)
MV: 15"/30"
AL: Lawful/Evil
IT: High
ATT: 1, *DM:* 1-8
THACO: 13
Special: Drains 2 Skill levels per hit; can only be hit by +1 or better magic weapons; not affected by Sleep, Charm, Hold, or Cold-based spells;

not affected by poison or paralyzation. They can be killed by a Raise Dead spell.

The door to the tower opens inward. Inside, a narrow rail-less staircase spirals unevenly upward into the darkness. It appears that the walls of the Tower begin to narrow the higher one climbs.

After 50 feet (half-way up), the stairs appear to curve away from the wall. The wall is an Illusion; the true staircase continues upward past the illusionary stone wall. The stairs that curve away from the wall are also an illusion. If characters continue on what appears to be the continuation of the staircase — without testing the stairs before they proceed — they will fall 50 feet to the stone floor. No save is allowed, as the stairs have no rail and there is nothing to grab as one steps off into empty space. Appropriate falling damage applies.

If the characters discover the Illusion and continue up the real staircase, they will be led to a stone ceiling. Concealed in the stonework of the ceiling is a small hatch that leads onto the roof of the tower. It is here on the roof that Nightbay holds his dawn and dusk ceremonies to his god Dierguth (see the *Religion* section on page 30 for details).

* * *

If the party enters the roof, read the following to the players:

In the center of the circular roof rests a marble slab. Hidden in the slab's eastern side is a small compartment. Inside the compartment is an ivory chalice studded with small red gems. Carved on the underside of the chalice's ivory stem are magical runes.

* * *

To a magic user or cleric who reads magic, the runes say: *To drink of life.* The ivory chalice with red gems (blood rubies) is worth 5,000 gp. Nightbay drinks dwarven blood from the chalice before the victim is offered to Dierguth during the dawn and dusk ceremonies.

ASHLAEDEN

If characters approach the pathway leading down into Verdaise, they see:

A warm, light mist rises from a great fissure in the caldera, which is about 450 feet long and 250 feet wide. At its northern tip, a steep pathway descends into the mist.

If the characters climb down the path, read the following:

Roughly oval in shape, the fissure sinks to a depth of 150 feet at the far southern end and rises towards the northern edge where it is the same level as the basin floor.

Shouts and laughter drift up the sloping pathway. It seems that the air grows warmer as you descend deeper into the fissure.

After 100 feet, the mists begin to clear and you see the roofs of wooden buildings and the tops of pitched tents.

Characters who enter the city see:

You are immediately surprised to see the townsfolk wandering about in summer clothing rather than the heavy garments needed in the upper caldera.

From here you can see a large pool of bubbling water at the center of the town. Tents cover most of the northwestern section of the fissure; these provide raggedy homes for many nasty-looking humans and their large covered caravans. There are also a few poorly-built wooden and log buildings. The only stone building is a large manor that dominates the southern half of the town.

A bustling business of some kind is obviously taking place.

The sides of the crevice cannot be climbed except by a thief, who has a 25% chance of climbing it, because they curve inward.

* * *

The town of Ashlaeden is the center of the slave, ivory, and sword trade that is conducted between Nightbay and local profiteers. The town rests upon a large magma chamber which emanates heat from below. A pool of bubbling mineral water marks the remnant of a geyser that occasionally spouted gas and steam. Because the town is built within the fissure, the winds of the caldera's wastelands do not penetrate to disperse the warmth.

All prices in Ashlaeden are six times higher than in an average city or town, reflecting the difficulty of supply.

1. THE TAVERN

"Thirst Quenching Drinks" *reads a sign over this three-sided, run down shanty. A crowded bar neatly runs the length of the building's rear. The only other furniture is a long table in the center that runs parallel to the bar. No intact chairs can be found, only splintered pieces of chairs cover the floor.*

* * *

It is evident that all that this tavern has to offer adventurers ,other than drinks, is the smell of filthy traders (and maybe a punch in the mouth).

The owner, August Montier, is a tall, wiry man with thin lips and deep-set brown eyes. He wears a jerkin and trousers made of leather. When working, August takes orders from customers with a wide smile and an unrelenting gaze that weighs heavily upon customers.

Many customers that August does not recognize are given a free drink called *Lava of Death*. For the first drink a character must save vs. Poison or pass out. For each drink after that, the imbibing character saves at -1 to his die roll; the effects are cumulative. For example, a character who has already made his save for the first two drinks will save at -2 to his saving throw on the third drink. Characters passing out while alone will be robbed by August.

August will not avoid confrontation. If overmatched, he will attack with his poison dagger. At night he uses his thieving skills, targeting drunks or anyone found wandering through Ashlaeden alone.

August Montier, *Skill 12 human thief*
ST: 14, *IT:* 12, *IN:* 16
SM: 17(+2), *DX:* 17(+3), *AP:* 11
AC: 2 (with DEX adjustment)
HTK: 10D6+4
MV: 12"
AL: Lawful/Evil
AT: 1, *DM:* 2-9 with +1 long sword; 1-4 with dagger (plus poison)
THACO: 16
Equipment: poison dagger (victim saves at +4 or dies)
Special: Attack from behind with surprise; is +4 "to hit" and quadruple damage; Pick Pockets: 105%, Open Locks: 87%; Find/Remove Traps: 75%; Move Silently: 99%; Hide In Shadows: 82%; Hear Noise: 35%; Climb Walls, 92%; Read Languages: 60%.

August sleeps in a large tent behind the tavern. His belongings and treasure are kept inside a large chest which is locked and trapped. The lock is 75 percent to pick and too heavy to break without considerable noise and without triggering the poison gas trap. If the trap is not successfully removed, anyone within the tent (or a 15-foot radius of the chest if moved outside the tent) must save vs. Poison or die in 2-5 rounds unless a spell such as Neutralize Poison is used.

On any given day, the chest holds between 100D10 gp, 10D10 sp, and a mixture of gems worth 1,500 gp. It always has a small inkpot that contains 1-3 applications of liquid poison for his dagger tip.

2. BLACKSMITH SHOP

Characters approaching the shop see:

This shop is a weathered wooden building with a sign reading, "Smith" *scrawled in red paint across its boards. The entrance is through an opening where a door has been replaced by knuckle bones strung together like beads.*

When the characters pass through the bony beads they see:

Materials are strewn about on the floor, making it difficult to walk. The center of the building contains a firepit, where a long piece of glowing red iron lies unattended. A toothless, rat-faced man sits in a chair smoking a long-stemmed pipe.

In the northeast corner, an open door leads into a surprisingly clean room with a cot and several finished products such as saddles, tack, harness, pack equipment, swords, horseshoes, and other leather and iron goods marked for sale.

* * *

The sale items are crude and of poor quality. Obviously, the cot is not for sale; it belongs to the blacksmith.

The proprietor is known as 'the Gerbil.' He is a squat, stumpy man. Except for the fact that he has no teeth, his face resembles that of a rat. His waddling walk masks his quickness and agility in combat. Although he is friendly to prospective customers, the Gerbil will not tolerate anyone asking questions unrelated to business. Prying customers will be regarded with suspicion and will be reported to guards of the Moon's Silhouette (see #5, *Dwelling of the Slave Queen*).

During combat, the Gerbil wields his 2-handed sword with unexpected grace. He always keeps the sword unsheathed and within arm's reach. He wears no armor, just leather pants and a cotton shirt.

The Gerbil, *Skill 7 human fighter*
ST: 18/55 (+2 to hit, +3 to damage)
IT: 6, *IN:* 5, *SM:* 18(+4)
DX: 16, *AP:* 7
AC: 8 due to his DEX, *HTK:* 7D10
MV: 9"
AL: Neutral/Evil
AT: 1, DM: 1-10 +3 with 2-handed sword
THACO: 12

The doorway opposite the entrance leads to the stable. The Gerbil has his personal items and treasure (100 gp, 105 sp) hidden here in a leather sack.

3. THE STABLES

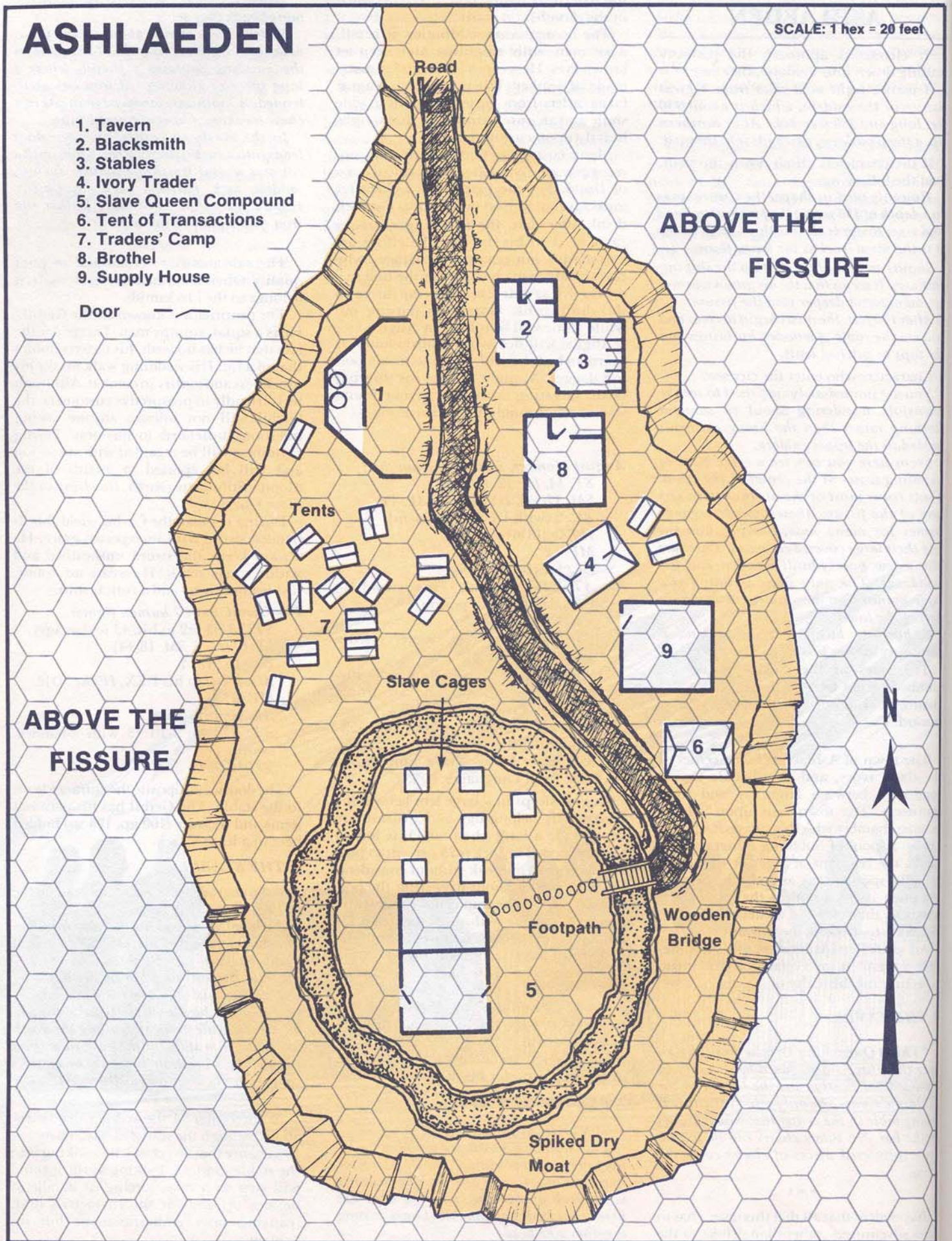
If the characters enter the stables read the following to the players:

Built onto the blacksmith shop is another ramshackle wooden firetrap. The smell of manure and hay greets you as you enter.

Straw lies on the floor of the building that houses six stalls and a storage compartment for hay. Two stalls are occupied. There is a mule in the stall along the north wall and in a stall on the eastern wall, a proud black stallion snorts. The horse's coat is immaculate and well tended.

* * *

In the center of the stable mice scurry about through the scattered hay. There is a 30% chance that any character walking into the stables and not looking at the ground will step on a rake, forcing its handle to bounce up and hit the character's head (causing only embarrassment but no damage).


ASHLAEDEN
SCALE: 1 hex = 20 feet
1. Tavern
2. Blacksmith
3. Stables
4. Ivory Trader
5. Slave Queen Compound
6. Tent of Transactions
7. Traders' Camp
8. Brothel
9. Supply House
Door
Road
ABOVE THE FISSURE
ABOVE THE FISSURE
Tents
Slave Cages
Footpath
Wooden Bridge
Spiked Dry Moat
N

The mule was taken from a trader who was killed when the Gerbil caught him trying to steal a saddle from the back room of the blacksmith's shop. The black horse is Ashley, the Gerbil's pride and joy. If anyone should harm the horse, the Gerbil will fight to the death. Ashley guards a chest that holds his master's treasure. This consists of 3D10 gp, 2D10 sp, a ruby-studded dagger worth 750 gp and a potion of Gaseous Form.

***Ashley,** horse*
AC: 7, *HTK:* 4D8
MV: 24"
IT: Animal
AL: Neutral
ATT: 1, *DM:* 1-3
THACO: 16

Unless magically restrained, Ashley will always attack anyone (except the Gerbil) who enters his stall.

4. TENT OF THE IVORY TRADER

Read the following to the players if the party is outside the tent:

Your eyes are drawn to the brightness of a large orange tent. Its opening has two hollow ivory tubes dangling in front of it, each with a name inscribed on it. One is Morton, *the other,* Festrell.

Behind the tent is a wagon with two horses tied to it. One horse is a chestnut beauty and the other horse appears to be a white plow horse.

* * *

If the characters go into the tent, read the following to the players:

Roomy enough for 4 humans, the tent contains one bedroll, two finely crafted wooden chairs, and two small wooden barrels resting on a rug of exquisite weaving.

A handsome but extremely thin man sits on one of the chairs, examining ivory statues of a War Mammoth and a Death Dragon. He wears a jade-colored, studded leather shirt. His long black hair is pulled back over his squared shoulders and tied in a short pony tail. He smiles up at you and begins rubbing an ivory ring on his hand.

* * *

The man, Morton Festrell, holds artificial ivory reproductions of a War Mammoth and a Death Dragon. He will attempt to sell these as real ivory to strangers for 2,000 gp each. Their actual value is 200 gp each.

If the characters choose to negotiate for the statues, two thugs will strut into the tent, ackowledge Morton, and ask if he needs help with anything. Unless he feels threatened, Morton will shake his head and tell them to wait outside while sighing, "My poor undeserving brothers."

Morton works as an agent for the Cecrops (see *New Monsters* for a description of this race of half human/half dragon creatures). Since the Cecrops will not enter Verdaise, they have hired Morton to do their bidding.

His two hired thugs — Galbraith and Gitern — are well paid and fiercely loyal bodyguards. They are large, muscled men who do not seem too intelligent. They wear chain armor and coifs which cover the scars and hide the broken bones marring their bodies and heads. They are paid to cart the ivory from the Evernight Forest through the gates of Verdaise into Ashlaeden.

When ivory trade is slow, the thugs are sent by Morton to prospect for Rigold. While this is forbidden by Nightbay and his subjects, the promise of money speaks louder than the law in this town of smugglers and thieves. The penalty for Rigold prospecting is death.

***Morton Festrell,** Skill 5 human fighter*
ST: IT: 14, *IN:* 17
SM: 14, *DX:* 14, *AP:* 17
AC: 5, *HTK:* 5D10
MV: 12"
AL: Lawful/Evil
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-6 with short sword
THACO: 16
Equipment: +2 studded leather armor, Ring of Free Action, and 2 potions of Cure Light Wounds.

***Galbraith and Gitern,** Skill 9 human fighters*
ST: 15, *IT:* 14, *IN:* 12
SM: 16, *DX:* 14, *AP:* 11
AC: 5, *HTK:* 11D8, 12D8
MV: 9"
THACO: 9 (due to +2 strength and +1 sword)
AL: Lawful/Evil
AT: 1, *DM:* 3-9 with +1 broad sword
Equipment: Chain armor

The barrels in the room hold dried fruits and salted meats. There is a locked cedar box built into the ground under the carpet where Morton stores his ivory. Personal treasure is in the box under a false bottom. At any one time, there are 4D20 × 500 gp worth of ivory in the top. Hidden in the false bottom are 3D20×40 gp, 2D20×60 sp, and 3D20 × 100 cp as well as gems worth 3,000 gp, potions of Haste, Invisibility, and Cure Light Wounds (×2). There is a 20% chance that Morton will have 1-2 Rigold stones that can be cut into 1 oz. gems — each worth 5,000 gp.

5. COMPOUND OF THE SLAVE QUEEN

If the player characters come upon the compound, read the following to the players:

You come upon a dry moat that is 15 feet deep and wide. Sharp metal spikes protruding from the bottom wait to impale anyone who should fall into the moat. Across from the moat, a man-made ridge of volcanic debris rises to a height of 15 feet. Eight guards stand patrol across the ridge.

* * *

The only crossing point is a guard station at the center of the moat's eastern side, where a 5-foot wide wooden plank spans the defense. It is watched by six soldiers wearing chain armor and brandishing broad swords.

The spikes in the moat have a THACO of 12 and cause 1-10 HTK of damage when fallen upon. Anyone falling in the moat has a 30% chance of being impaled by 1D4 of the deadly metal stakes.

The Slave Queen's compound is under watch 24 hours a day by a total of 42 guards. During all 8-hour periods, 14 guards are on duty; the other 28 are on call. There is always one Skill 8 guard on duty. The guards display complete loyalty (mostly out of fear) to their Slave Queen leader, who is sometimes known as the *Moon's Silhouette.* (See section 5c. *The Slave Queen's Office,* for her statistics.)

Anyone crossing the moat must first climb the ridge of volcanic debris before reaching the grounds of the Moon's Silhouette's home. The ridge is guarded by 4 pairs of warriors who patrol the top, taking care not to follow any regular pattern.

Of the (42) guards, there are:

(39) Skill 5 human fighters
AC: 5, *HTK:* 5D10
MV: 9"
AL: Lawful/Evil
AT: 1, *DM:* 2-8 (broad sword)
THACO: 16
Equipment: Chain armor, broad sword, oxhorn (instrument)

(3) Skill 8 human fighters
AC: 2, *HTK:* 8D10
MV: 6"
AL: Lawful/Evil
AT: 1 in first round, 2 from second round on.
DM: 2-9 with +1 long swords
THACO: 13
Equipment: Plate mail, shield, +1 long sword, oxhorn

The party's chance of being seen in daylight is 85%, diminishing to 55% during the night. Thieves have appropriate Hide in Shadows bonuses. Of course, Invisible characters will not be seen. If something strange is noticed, a guard will blow his oxhorn twice. From within the guardhouse, all off-duty men that are in the compound will rally to the point of trouble. Response takes 2 rounds.

The only time a guard will leave his post is when the horns are blown 3 times — indicating a serious problem. Response takes 1 round.

* * *

If characters reach the top of the ridge or enter the compound, they see:

A stone walkway leads west toward a rectangular-shaped building made from blocks of olive green stone. No windows can be seen but there are 3 doors — 2 are along the east wall, 1 on the west.

In the northern half of the compound are 8 cages that are 9' x 9' each.

* * *

Two cages are empty. Six others are crammed with 8 slaves each, all waiting to be handed over to Duke Stanton when the cages are all filled. The prisoners are Skill 0 peasants, weakened and helpless.

The stone building houses both the Moon's Silhouette and her guardsmen. It is made of 1-cubic foot basalt blocks pieced firmly together.

The 2 entrances on the southern portion of the rectangular-shaped building lead to the guard's quarters. These doors are bound with iron strips and are large enough for two armored men to exit at the same time. To prevent unwanted intruders, the doors are also barred from the inside by thick oak planks. (Breaking down the door requires 40 HTK of damage and the door is AC 3. The door can also be opened by magical means.)

The entrance on the northern section of the building leads to the Slave Queen's dwelling. Distrustful and suspicious, she has designed an elaborate lock on the door, which is -35% to pick.

5a. THE GUARDS' QUARTERS

If the characters open the door using magical means, they gain the advantage of surprise (read to the players):

In a 30'-x-30' room filled with cots, 20 guards are relaxing. Many are sleeping, others are eating, speaking in small groups or busy mending clothes. A barred door is directly across from you.

* * *

The characters will have Surprise and can attack first. There are 14 guards sleeping on the cots, 6 more are awake. However, if the party enters forcibly, the guardsmen will be fully armored and wielding swords. The oxhorn will be blown three times, warning the Slave Queen of danger. She will then join the attack on the party.

Scattered under the cots are 42 small locked chests. Each chest has a name carved into the leather bindings. The contents include normal clothing, personal items, and 2D8 gp, 3D12 sp, and 5D12 cp.

The barred door leads outside. There is no entrance into the northern section of the building from inside the guards' quarters.

5b. THE MOON'S SILHOUETTE

If characters enter the northern section of the building read the following to the players:

Before you is a beautifully furnished 20'-x-20' living area with exquisite paintings covering plain pale walls. The handcrafted furniture looks quite comfortable. It is obvious that a rich and powerful person lives here. A closed door is opposite the entrance.

* * *

The five paintings, which are all landscapes of different areas of Verdaise, are worth 5,000 gp each. The couch and chair are worth 3,500 gp and 2,000 gp respectively. There is a richly-colored rug worth 4,000 gp, two gold vases that are inlaid with precious stones are worth 3,500 gp each, three chairs worth 5,500 gp each, and a set of 6 platinum goblets that is worth 3,000 gp per goblet.

Depending on when the party enters the room, they run the risk of encountering the Moon's Silhouette (the Slave Queen), who is a Moonscourge (see *New Monsters* for more on Moonscourges). There is a 30% chance at night and 50% chance during the day. At night she will be in her office; during the day she will be in the living quarters in her invisible form, admiring her paintings.

The Moon's Silhouette, *Moonscourge*
(a.k.a. The Slave Queen)
ST: 18, *IT:* 17, *IN:* 16
SM: 16, *DX: 18, AP:* 18
AC: 2, *HTK:* 11D8
MV: 12″
AL: Chaotic/Neutral
AT: 1, *DM: 1-10 or by weapon*
THACO: 12
Special: Thief abilities, +4 to hit from Surprise, backstab does quadruple damage; Open Locks: 62%; Find/Remove Traps: 60%; Move Silently: 70%; Hide In Shadows: 56%; Climb Walls, 98%. Also has ability to change victims to Moonscourges, engage in lunatic frenzy and turn invisible during the day.

Resembling a pale golden goddess, her deadly beauty is accented by the finest clothes money can buy. Those who have dealt with her realize quickly that her temperment does not match her warm eyes and sensuous smile. Anger comes quickly to the Moon's Silhouette, and she will not tolerate defiance or competition. If anyone angers her by competing in the slave trade, the unfortunate soul is usually found with a broken neck shortly after the transaction is completed with Nightbay's agent, Duke Edgar Stanton.

The Slave Queen stalks her victims during the day or on moonless nights, when she is most powerful. During the day she becomes invisible, having no weight, smell, true form, or strength. She can move without restriction unless she tries to enter an airtight area.

The only person known to successfully defy the Moon's Silhouette in the slave trade is the Dwarfeng Cruenk, who has earned a grudging respect from the Slave Queen.

5c. SLAVE QUEEN'S OFFICE

If the party goes into the office they will find (read the following to the players):

This 10'-x-20' room is distinctly different in appearance than the one you just exited. A wooden desk rests near the back of the room and the west wall is covered by a bookcase that holds many old, dusty books. An iron strongbox lies upon the floor by

the bookcase. Mounted on the north wall is a large portrait of a very official-looking man. Strangely, a jeweled dagger has been plunged into his throat so that small slices of torn canvas appear like ragged pieces of flesh curling around the dagger.

* * *

This section of the basalt dwelling houses the living quarters of the Slave Queen, chief slave trader in Ashlaeden. The entry room to the Moon's Silhouette's quarters contains several expensive items.

There is a richly-colored rug worth 3,000 gp, two gold vases that are inlaid with precious stones are worth 3,500 gp each, three chairs worth 5,500 each, a carved wooden table worth 5,000, and a set of 6 platinum goblets that is worth 2,000 gp per goblet.

In her office she has books; these are journals of the slave trade business. The painting is of the magistrate that had her hung for murder. The chest holds payment money for the guards and 3 items of jewelry. The value of each piece is 12,000 gp. There are 5,000 gp, and 2,000 sp. The jewelry is all wrought gold, studded with diamonds (her favorite gem). The strongbox isn't locked because the Slave Queen cares little for monetary wealth; she much prefers wealth in the form of fine paintings and furnishings.

6. TENT OF TRANSACTIONS

GM NOTE: This tent is only in place when Duke Edgar Stanton is about to trade with the Moon's Silhouette or Cruenk.

* * *

Approaching the tent, the characters see (read to the players):

A large black tent stands just in front of the fissure's east wall. The sides of the tent have paintings of a vulture holding a skull in its beak.

At the entrance to the tent, two rotting creatures wearing tattered and torn crimson burial clothes stand guard. Twenty - four skeletons mill about four wagons whose cargo is hidden by leather coverings. There are four skeletal mules hitched to each wagon. Six dwarven slaves are shackled to the wheels of one wagon. Sitting on the ground hugging their knees, they stare at your party with open disgust.

* * *

The rotting creatures are wights.

(2) wights
AC: 5, *HTK:* 4D8, 5D8
MV: 12
AL: Lawful/Evil
IT: Average
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-4 plus one Skill level drain
THACO: 15
Special: Can only be hit by silver or magic weapons; not affected by Sleep, Charm, Hold, or Cold-based spells, Poison, or Paralyzation.

(24) skeletons
AC: 7, *HTK:* 1D8
MV: 12″
AL: Neutral
IT: Non-
AT: 1,*DM: 1-6*
THACO: 19
Special: Immune to Sleep, Charm, Hold, and Cold-based spells; half damage from edged weapons.

Inside each wagon are 3 barrels, each holding 100 short swords. Each sword is worth 40 gp.

* * *

If the characters enter the tent, read the following to the players:

Seated on a plush sedan chair is a tall pale man dressed in fine clothing.

A sable cape is pulled tightly around his upper body by long transparent fingers. Standing beside him an attractive, scantily clad woman feeds him red, cherry-like globules while he listens to the jittery tones of a well-armored dwarf.

In the darkness of the southeast corner, a faint figure can be distinguished. Sumptuous furnishings and food decorate the tent.

* * *

When a meeting is to take place, a group of lowly undead arrive in advance to put up the tent and provide it with rich furnishings and food.

The man seated in the sedan chair is the vampire Duke Edgar Stanton, Nightbay's agent in securing ivory and slaves in return for weapons. The Duke is awaiting Cruenk, the Dwarfeng, to discuss a future transaction. (See *Special Non-Player Characters* for more on Cruenk.)

A slave woman is feeding dried blood to the Duke while the envoy of Cruenk explains why his leader has been detained; Cruenk is bringing in extra wagonloads of dead bodies for induction into the undead legions.

While the Duke deals mainly in slaves, he will pay gold for large shipments of dead recruits.

The figure in the corner is the wraith Ophron.

Ophron the trading agent, *Wraith*
AC: 5, *HTK:* 6D8
MV: 12″/24″
AL: Lawful/Evil
IT: Very
AT: 1
DM: 1-6 plus drains one Skill level
THACO: 15
Special: Can be hit only by silver or magic weapons; has no power in full sunlight.

Duke Edgar Stanton, *Vampire*
AC: 1, *HTK:* 8D8+3
MV: 12″/18″
AL: Chaotic/Evil
IT: Exceptional
AT: 1
DM: 5-10 plus drains 2 Skill levels
THACO: 12
Special: Can only be hit with a +1 or better weapon; unaffected by Sleep, Charm, or Hold spells. If he is reduced to 0 HTK he will turn gaseous.

Dwarfeng, *Skill 4 fighter*
AC: 4, *HTK:* 4D10
MV: 9″
AL: Neutral
IT: Average
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-6 broad sword
THACO: 15
Equipment: Chainmail, shield, broad sword, a pouch with 10 gp, 20 sp, 15 cp, and a potion of Gaseous Form.

(1) Slave woman — Skill 0

Duke Stanton is a no-nonsense trader who rarely puts up with excuses. He only meets with individuals who handle large quantities of ivory and slaves. He enters Ashlaeden with great fanfare, seated in a sedan chair carried by six dwarven slaves. As protection, the fissure is surrounded by an undead guard that protects him against a surprise attack.

The Duke is always found in the company of the wraith Ophron, two wight guards, and at least two dozen skeletons.

Ophron also has the duty of dealing with anyone trading in small quantities of ivory and slaves. He arrives quietly and trades in misty corners of the barren town. Most of those who trade slaves to Ophron end up dead before leaving Ashlaeden for he always reports them to the Moon's Silhouette after the deal has been completed.

When he is with Duke Stanton, Ophron only appears in spiritual form. At all other times, he wears yellow bloodstained robes. Having no vocal cords, he speaks telepathically to all beings he encounters. He hears by interpreting sound waves.

7. THE TRADERS' CAMP

As the party approaches the camp read the following to the players:

An uneven cluster of tents reaches back to the fissure's west walls. Mule-drawn wagons and men roll in and out, kicking ash high into the air. Those who are camping in the make-shift tents are large and brutish-looking. The smell of unwashed bodies permeates the air.

* * *

The trading camp hosts a high level of activity. Slave caravans arrive every other day and stay a few nights before departing with a load of swords. A typical caravan consists of 2-4 wagons of slaves, one wagon of provisions, 16 mules, and 25 men.

Most of the slavers are a very rowdy crew. They spend their free time drinking, fighting, carousing, and sometimes prospecting for the forbidden gem, Rigold. They sleep in tents, wagons, or the open air.

(25) Traders, *Skill 3 human fighters*
AC: 8, *HTK:* 3D10
MV: 12″
AL: Neutral/Evil
IT: Average
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-8
THACO: 16

Weapons: Longsword
Equipment: leather armor, large pouch with 1D4 gp, 4D10 sp, 4D10 cp, a bottle of cheap ale, dried rations, a tinder box, and 5 torches.

8. THE BROTHEL

As the party approaches the brothel, read the following to the players:

A black, unroofed building needs no sign for you to know that it is a house of ill repute. Five women and 2 men in gaudy attire stand next to its rotting timbers. Four nasty-looking Dwarfengs are standing here as well. Shouts of raucous laughter spill out from the open door.

* * *

This house of pleasure is run by the Dwarfeng Cecil Brumsley. Disease and squalor pervade this overpriced (10 gp/hour) firetrap. (See below for Brumsley's statistics.)

Characters must pay to enter the brothel. If they refuse, they will be accosted by the 3 Dwarfeng bodyguards. Being slaves, the men and women that work for the house will cheer for the party during any fight.

Anyone having intimate contact with one of the companions has a 40% chance of contracting a disease and a 75% chance of infestation by lice.

The disease will do 2D4 HTK of damage the first week, 2D8 HTK of damage per week during the next three weeks, then 2D20 HTK of damage for each week after that; this damage is cumulative. In addition, the unfortunate character will permanently lose 1 point of SM per week from the fifth week on. A character that is infested with lice will have a -2 to all attack rolls due to itching.

The lice may be removed magically (with the Repel Insects spell, for example). They may also be removed by shaving all of the afflicted character's body hair, followed by a thorough washing in lamp oil.

(4) Skill 3 Dwarfeng fighters (bouncers)
AC: 8, *HTK:* 3D10
MV: 12″
IT: Average
AL: Neutral/Evil
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-8
THACO: 18
Weapons: Short sword
Equipment: Leather armor, pouch holding 10-40 sp, 10-40 cp, a bottle of ale and rancid rations.

* * *

If the adventurers enter with their choice of companion (there are both male and female companions here), they see:

Five empty straw beds rest upon the filthy floor; another holds a couple that totally ignores you. It appears that each bed was once in its own room, but the walls have all fallen or been torn down. In the northeast wall, you see a shut door.

* * *

The door to the back room is locked. If the characters are able to enter:

The glitter of gold and silver on the floor stands out among the food bits, cockroaches and rags.

* * *

Scattered among the vermin and deadly Rafleshia seeds (see below) lies 500 gp, 200 sp, and 5 small gems that are worth 800 gp each.

Those entering the treasure room will automatically be infested with lice and fleas (causing no damage, but extreme irritation due to itching). This infestation can be countered by washing in lamp oil.

Anyone searching the floor for treasure has a 75% chance to be exposed externally to the Rafleshia seeds. Once a character is exposed, there is a 15% chance that the seeds will be ingested.

Rafleshia
AC: 8, *HTK:* 1D8
Special: If ingested, the seeds root in body tissues and burrow towards the skeleton. Externally, the seeds cause 1D4 HTK of damage per round. Internally, the seeds cause 4D6 HTK of damage. A save vs. Poison negates internal damage. If the save is failed, the only way to kill the parasite is with a Cure Disease spell. Healing spells or potions have no effect. One vial of holy water, bathed on external wounds slows the growth of the parasite, limiting external damage to 1-2 HTK of damage every round for 3 rounds. Drinking one vial of holy water reduces internal damage to 2D8 HTK of damage per round for three rounds.

Cecil Brumsley, *Skill 10 Dwarfeng fighter*
ST: 16 (+1 to damage), *IT:* 8
IN: 4, *SM:* 17 (+3 HTK/Skill)
DX: 12, AP: 10
AC: 6, *HTK:* 9D10+3
MV: 12″
AL: Chaotic/Evil
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-8 with short sword
THACO: 12
Weapons: Short sword
Equipment: Lizard armor, +2 Ring of Protection, Net of Snaring.

Cecil always wears a broad smile across his pudgy bearded face. His plump short body is adorned in clothing made from the skin of the lava lizard (see *New Monsters* for description and statistics).

Normally, Cecil is not seen in the brothel. Instead, he spends his time in the tavern (Building #1) drinking and trying to drum up business. He makes a fine living and, since there is no place to spend his money, Cecil just stashes it in the disgusting room in the back of his building.

To get his treasure, Cecil walks close to the walls to the back of the room where his treasure chest is hidden beneath heaps of trash. He has carefully kept the Rafleshia seeds away from the trash hiding his treasure. In the chest is 3,000 gp, 7,000 sp, and miscellaneous gems worth 2,000 gp.

Cecil has hired 6 Dwarfeng fighters to act as fee collectors and bouncers. Three of the fighters are always on duty and particularly noticeable. The others can be found in the brothel, the tavern, or the traders' camp.

Cecil resides behind the brothel in a simple tent.

9. THE SUPPLY HOUSE

Read the following to the players:

Standing on the roof of a 30′-x-30′ red log building are four alert warriors wearing chain mail. Guarding a padlocked door are two more stout warriors.

Against the south wall a rung ladder leads up to the roof.

* * *

This structure houses all the necessary supplies for the permanent residents of Ashlaeden. The padlock is very strong and is -30% to pick. The padlock can be broken with 15 HTK of damage (treating the padlock as AC: 3), but it would cause a lot of noise. The building cannot be burned by normal fire because it is kept coated with red War Paint (see *Magic Items*). Each land owner has a key.

The supply house is protected by 12 half-orcs. Six are always on-duty; the others are either asleep or at the tavern.

(6-12) Skill 6 half-orc fighters
AC: 4, *HTK:* 6D10
MV: 9″
AL: Chaotic/Evil
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-8 long sword
THACO: 13
Weapons and Armor: Chain mail and long sword.
Equipment: Helm, small pouch containing 1D10 gp, 1D12 sp, and 2D12 cp.

* * *

If characters climb to the roof read the following to the players:

The roof slants slightly to the building's rear.

Once the characters are inside the building read the following to the players:

Upon opening the door, the squeaking of startled mice can be heard. Barrels, casks, and sacks are piled head-high throughout the building. The room is sectioned and well marked according to contents and owner.

Salted and smoked foods, sacks of grain, casks of water and wine, etc., are kept here.

* * *

Every two months, a large caravan pulls into town to replenish supplies.

THE MAIN ENTRANCE

From the inside of the caldera, viewing out (read to the players):

Two enormous doors of bronze fill in a great gap in the northeast caldera rim. Cut into the base of the sheer rock walls are 6 dark 7-foot holes that occasionally flicker with the sheen of metal.

* * *

From outside the caldera, looking in:

Two enormous doors of bronze fill in the great gap in the northeast caldera rim. Round symbols of a vulture holding a human skull in its beak are cast in the center of each bronze door. The eyes of the vulture seem to follow your every movement.

* * *

Housed in the dark holes is a regiment of undead soldiers, consisting of 400 skeletons, 200 zombies, 100 mummies, 70 ghouls, 50 wights, 5 wraiths, 1 spectre (the leader), and 50 dwarven slaves.

The vulture's eyes are white globular eyeballs. Through these, Nightbay can be aware of any possible threats to him or his undead. One of the wraith guards also has a crystal ball that mirrors whatever the vulture's eyes see. Depending upon who appears at the gate, the guards decide whether or not to permit entry.

Two mummies are in charge of 2 giant cranks that open the doors inward. The cranks are manned by dwarven slaves. It takes 4 rounds to completely open the bronze doors. Anytime that the doors are opened, one-quarter of the undead regiment is stationed outside the entrance. In a surprise attack, the spectre blows his Death Horn (see *New Magic Items*), alerting the remaining guards.

If they are alerted to a large attack within Ashlaeden, half of the guards will immediately move to defend the town. They will begin arriving in two rounds.

(400) skeletons
AC: 7, *HTK:* 1D8
MV: 12″
IT: Non-
AL: Neutral
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-6
THACO: 19
Special: Immune to Sleep, Charm, Hold and Cold-based spells; half damage from edged weapons.

(200) zombies
AC: 8, *HTK:* 2D8
MV: 6″
IT: Non-
AL: Neutral
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-8
THACO: 16
Special: Immune to Sleep, Charm, Hold and Cold-based spells.

(100) mummies
AC: 3, *HTK:* 6D8+3
MV: 6″
IT: Low
AL: Lawful/Evil
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-12
THACO: 14
Special: Hits inflict rotting disease, causes Fear in a 60-foot radius unless a save is made; can only be hit by magical weapons, which do half damage; unaffected by Sleep, Charm, Hold, and Cold-based spells; not affected by Poison or Paralyzation.

(70) ghouls
AC: 6, *HTK:* 2D8
MV: 9″
IT: Low
AL: Chaotic/Evil
AT: 4, *DM:* (1-3)(1-3)(1-6)
THACO: 13
Special: Paralyzation by touch; not affected by Sleep and Charm spells.

(50) wights
AC: 5, *HTK:* 4D8+3
MV: 12″
IT: Average
AL: Lawful/Evil
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-4
THACO: 15
Special: Immune to Sleep, Charm, Hold, Paralyzation and Cold-based spells, only affected by magic or silver weapons.

(5) wraiths
AC: 4, *HTK:* 5D8+3
MV: 12″/24″
IT: Very
AL: Lawful/Evil
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-6 plus energy drain
THACO: 15
Equipment: One wraith holds a crystal ball that sees who stands outside the bronze doors of Verdaise.
Special: Can only be hit with silver weapons (half damage) or magical weapons.

(1) spectre
AC: 2, *HTK:* 7D8+3
MV: 15″/30″
IT: High
AL: Lawful/Evil
AT: 1
DM: 1-8 plus 2-Skill level energy drain
THACO: 13
Equipment: Death Horn (see *Magic Items*)
Special: Unaffected by Sleep, Charm, Hold, and cold-based spells; +1 or better magical weapon to hit.

(50) dwarven slaves, Skill 0

The BROODING DRAGON

An Adventure

This next section is an adventure for 4-6 characters from Skill level 6-9; clerics in this adventure should be at least Skill 7. It is set in the heart of the land of Verdaise and includes encounters and events involving many of the special features that are covered in the previous sections of this book.

PLACING VERDAISE in an ONGOING CAMPAIGN

Any region that is heavily dwarvish in population will be a perfect place for Verdaise. Here, the Great Catastrophe is assumed to have happened about a hundred years ago, but you may adjust the amount of time between when the Catastrophe occurred and the present time in your campaign without losing its flavor.

During your current campaign, you can issue reports of a great disaster in the dwarven lands or your characters could rest at an inn in which a troubadour recounts the tale of the "Woeful Land of Woldham." Even an encounter with a troop of undead legions would lead the player characters on until they could find Roguestead and carry on from there.

BACKGROUND HISTORY

Amid the chaos and death of the Great Catastrophe, a few dwarves made a stand against the new rulers of their land; these dwarves were the predecessors of the freedom-fighters known as the Bzontras.

The dwarves' great treasure hoard survived the explosion of Mount Ironhead. Its great magical properties also protected a few hardy souls. At first the dwarves spent time repairing the damage to the treasure-hoard. Then they formed ranks and marched to their deaths, defending their land. Not one survived and the secret of the dwarven hoarde lay buried in the ash of Verdaise.

For forty years that was true.

Though the liches have searched for decades, they have not found the treasure hoard. This honor fell to a Rigold miner named Fallon and his party of dwarves. While studying to be a cleric, Fallon began to trade in arms with the dwarves to make a living when his Rigold finds were low. Fallon's mission and allegiance were not known, nor were they questioned. He spoke little and his stern, drawn face encouraged few to attempt conversation. Fierce and aloof, he was a friend of no one in a land that was not his own.

Picking about in the broken rocks, Fallon literally fell through the weakened roof of the main chamber. As if in a dream, he and his compatriots beheld the magnificent wealth that remained intact beside the broken rubble.

Fallon was quite resourceful. He patched the hole he made in the treasure vault roof. He then carefully marked the surrounding area. With a few gold trinkets in their sacks to prove their find, the adventurers left the area intending to come back with a full-fledged expedition.

No matter where you go in Verdaise you can meet undead. Fallon's party met them on the cold dusty morning the day after their find. Escape seemed futile. From every direction the rigid rows of skeletons met them. In desperation, Fallon and his group picked the weakest part of the undead's formation and attacked.

Surprisingly, the dwarves broke through. His men scattered while Fallon stood like a rock, hoping to provide time for a few of his party to escape. Fallon's brave stance was short-lived. Rows of skeletons closed in around him; gasping and cursing, Fallon fought them off. Then, from behind the ranks, a robed figure ordered the skeletons to spare Fallon's life. This figure was the Lichlord Nightbay.

In defiance, Fallon swung at the figure, only to strike thin air. With one deft move, the figure struck with his own sword and cleanly severed Fallon's left arm.

After that, Fallon's compatriots fled. They do not know what happened to him.

In the weeks that followed, the fact that Fallon's arm had been severed saved him from becoming a victim of religious ceremonies-Nightbay felt that Fallon was not worthy of being offered to Dierguth. Instead, Fallon was chained at the ankles and neck and served as a slave to rebuild the caldera as Verdaise, Kingdom of the Undead.

Nearly 1 year later, a group of the traitorous Dwarfengs (which means *not of the dwarves* in dwarvish) visited Verdaise with dwarven prisoners to trade. One of these Evil dwarves found out that the miner Fallon was also a well-skilled cleric and fighter. Nightbay paid well for this information and set Fallon aside to be sacrificed, for he needed Fallon's Skills to fertilize his Fleshly Garden of souls — whether Fallon was maimed or not. (See the *Fleshly Garden* description on page 37 for more details.)

When the Dwarfengs returned to the trade city of Roguestead, news spread that Fallon was alive. To a young dwarven Bzontra named Pfingsten, this news was particularly interesting.

It was Pfingsten's uncle who stumbled onto his doorstep months before, bleeding and weary, to tell how the miner had saved the uncle's life and found the dwarven treasure. But sadly, the old dwarf died before he could reveal where the treasure was hidden.

Until this incident, the great treasure was considered lost forever. With Pfingsten's story, however, new hope blossomed. Fallon was alive after all; he was the only one who knew the hiding place of the dwarven treasure. Yet, hope turned quickly to despair, for it became known that Fallon was a prisoner in the heart of the undead kingdom.

An emergency meeting of the freedom-fighting Bzontras was summoned and it was decided that a group of adventurers must be hired to free Fallon and find the treasure. It was a difficult decision choosing who was to go on the mission because many of the young Bzontras begged to go themselves, but their priest-leader refused to let them go. He had heard that Nightbay had developed a new "brain-drain" powder that allowed him to read the minds of his captured rebels. Should one of the Bzontras be captured, they would divulge too much critical information—such as the intricate pathways within the lava tubes of Verdaise.

No, someone else had to accept the quest—adventurers with no knowledge of the Bzontras or their operation. And it had to be soon!

NOTE: Descriptions that apply to the Brooding Dragon adventure are given in bold italics on this map.
DVEGAR MOUNTAINS
REGION 3
A. Batholith
B. Ritualistic Fields
C. Dormant Volcano
D. Active Volcano
E. Main Entrance
F. Gap in Caldera Rim
G. Lava Lake
H. Lava River
I. Lava Moat
J. Bone Bridge
K. Basalt Pillars
L. Tower of Spells
M. Ashlaeden
N. Prison
Route Fallon takes after his release.
Fallon's Entrance to Lava Tunnels
Circle of Stones
Ash Dunes
REGION 2
REGION 1
Where the party exits the Lava Tubes
Dotted line is path of least resistance
Ash Dunes
DVEGAR MOUNTAINS
DVEGAR MOUNTAINS
VERDAISE CALDERA
SCALE: 1 hex = 2 miles

PLAYERS' INTRODUCTION

TRADING in ROGUESTEAD

Although it is dangerously close to the Kingdom of the Undead, the town of Roguestead offers clever adventurers a quick way to make money. Bartering is swift and the merchandise varied. Food, trinkets, gems, weapons, and slaves are favorite commodities but even magic items are sold—if the right deal is made and the adventurer knows where to look. The best deals are often made behind closed curtains or in shadowy alleyways. This is a town of mercenaries, pickpockets, and tradesmen, each one trying to outsmart the other.

The town is built on the rugged foothills of the Dvegar Mountains on the banks of the Ash River. Stone archways connect rows of small whitewashed buildings. Countless narrow alleyways wind and twist throughout the city, which is filled with pitched tents and open stands. Minimal privacy is available behind each stand's long curtain of animal pelts. Permeating the dense, heavy air is the stench of sweat and rotted food.

The following encounters happen one after another. As one encounter ends, simply continue on and read the next players' information section.

* * *

Read the following to the players:

After finishing a successful adventure, your party is passing through Roguestead on its way southwest.

It is rumored that a great fire sword is up for sale, as well as a ruby-studded mace. As you maneuver through the winding alleys and streets, you pass a heavily armored dwarf standing on a wooden block shouting, "Bodies for sale! Useful as slaves, husbands, or warriors!" Behind him sit two weary human men and a dwarf, burdened within heavy chains. Their eyes are cast down as they listen to bids from the crowd.

At the crowd's edge is a man unfolding a long carpet filled with bright-colored stones and gems. He smiles a toothless grin and calls out, "Precious jewels for sale!"

* * *

GM NOTE: The jewels Simon sells (costing from 2 sp-100 gp) are all worthless bits of glass. As he bargains with passersby, he will also attempt to pick pockets.

(1) Dwarfeng slaver, *Skill 4 fighter*
ST: 15, *IT:* 12, *IN:* 12
SM: 16, *DX:* 14, *AP:* 10
AC: 4, *HTK:* 4D10
MV: 9″
AL: Neutral/Evil
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-8
THACO: 15
Armor and Weapons: Chain mail, Short sword
Equipment: Shield, pouch with 25 gp, 15 sp, 14 cp, rations, 2 bottles of good mead, and a Philter of Persuasiveness.

Simon Everloose, *Skill 2 human thief*
ST: 13, *IT:* 14, *IN:* 13
SM: 15, *DX:* 17, *AP:* 15
AC: 8, *HTK:* 2D6
MV: 12″
AL: Neutral/Evil
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-4
THACO: 16
Weapon: Dagger
Equipment: leather armor, small pouch with 6 gp 12 sp and 4 cp.
Special: Pick Pockets: 35%; Move Silently: 21%; Hide in Shadows: 15%; Climb Walls: 86%.

* * *

Read the following to the players:

In the shadows beneath a high arch is an open tent. A tall bearded man stands in the tent opening, looking at the throng of passersby. Behind him is a table cluttered with swords, daggers, and shields. As your party moves toward the tent, two short robed figures approach from the shadowy archway, blocking your path. Their faces are hidden beneath the heavy robes and one speaks to your party, "There is nothing in that tent worthy of your money. But I can offer you gold and glory. Are you interested?"

* * *

GM NOTE: If the two robed figures are asked to identify themselves, they will only say that they are messengers from the local priest, who requests audience with the party.

(2) Dwarven Bzontras, Skill 4 fighters
AC: 8, *HTK:* 4D10
MV: 12″
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-6
AL: Neutral/Good
IT: Average
THACO: 15
Weapon: Bzontra lasher; on a roll of 18-20 on a 1D20 a save vs. Poison must be made (from the lasher's fangs).

* * *

If the party follows the robed figures, read the following to the players:

The robed figures lead you beneath the stone archway and into the back alleys. You pass more peddlers, beggars, and slave dealers as the winding alleys take you deeper into the heart of the city. The odors of roasting animal flesh float through the open doorways, making the alleyway hazy with smoke.

Turning a corner, the robed figures enter a small whitewashed hut. It is empty except for a large table filled with food. At the head of the table sits another hooded figure, beckoning you to join him. As you approach he casts off his hood, revealing a beardless dwarven face horribly mutilated with scars. He wears a necklace made of snake fangs and golden beads.

"The food is good," he says lifting a large leg of mutton to his mouth. The two figures go to the dwarf's side, their faces still hidden beneath their dark hoods.

As your party sits at the table, the dwarf continues.

GM NOTE: Try to read the following speech while stuffing food into your mouth. Don't strain yourself, but give the impression of someone who doesn't often get a good meal. 'Stage directions' are given in bold italics ***[like this].***

"Your arrival in Roguestead was revealed to me in a dream. I sent my faithful watchers to search the town for you. ***[Pretend to wipe your sleeve on your mouth.].***

"My land is Woldham, now called Verdaise. For generations, my family served as keepers of the Sacred Treasure — the heart and pride of our race. But the undead came and the land was filled with shooting rivers of lava — the treasure was thought to be lost forever.

"But there is hope. Last week, rumors spread through Roguestead that Fallon has been a slave in Verdaise; he knows the treasure's location. He has lost an arm and has grown weak, and the foul Lichlords are planning to sacrifice him. If he dies, all knowledge of the treasure's location will be lost.

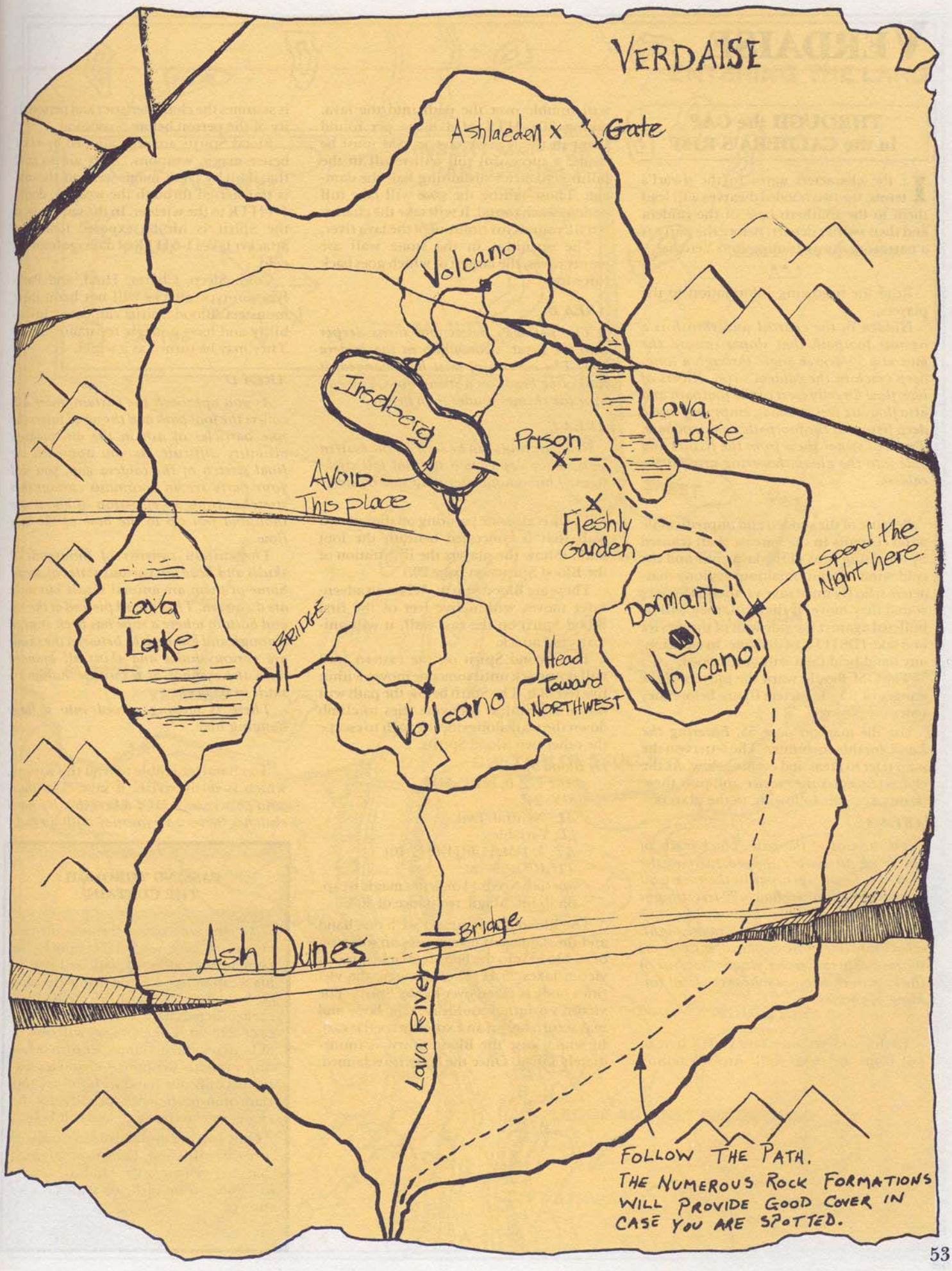
[Points to players.] *"To save him, you must enter Verdaise and free him from the Lichlords' prisons. Once he is released, dwarven freedom-fighters will provide you with shelter in our secret tunnels.*

"As your reward, you will each be given 30,000 gp and your choice of any item from the treasure. Fail, and I will pray for your souls."

GM NOTE: If the characters accept the challenge, hand them the crudely-drawn map on page 53 that shows a little-known entrance into Verdaise. The location of the prison camps is marked with an 'X'.

"Return to this town with the treasure and my watchers will find you. But I caution you, speak to no others. We are constantly surrounded by idiots, saboteurs, and potential assassins."

"Free Fallon!" ***[Raise your voice — give it a big finish.]*** *The dwarves will believe you to be gods — warriors who dared to face legions of the damned to return our sacred treasure. Songs will be sung for you; great statues will be built; your names will be long remembered.*


VERDAISE
Ashlaeden
Gate
Volcano
Inselberg
Lava Lake
Prison
AVOID This place
Fleshly Garden
Spend the Night here
Dormant Volcano
Lava Lake
BRIDGE
Head Toward NORTHWEST
Volcano
Ash Dunes
Bridge
Lava River
FOLLOW THE PATH. THE NUMEROUS ROCK FORMATIONS WILL PROVIDE GOOD COVER IN CASE YOU ARE SPOTTED.

THROUGH the GAP in the CALDERA'S RIM

If the characters agree to the dwarf's terms, the two hooded dwarves will lead them to the southern base of the caldera and then swiftly depart. Before the party is a narrow pathway leading into Verdaise.

* * *

Read the following information to the players:

Hidden in the charred underbrush is a narrow footpath that slopes toward the lava at a 30-degree angle through a long, deep crack in the caldera's rim. Rivers of lava flow directly west of the footpath and also flow six feet below it, emptying into a deep fissure at the footpath's western base. Trails of steam spew from the fissure and fade into the gloom hovering around the caldera.

* * *

Because of the sudden and unpredictable wind currents in the narrow shaft (caused by the rising heat of the lava river and the cold wind of a mountainous region) characters who fly must save vs. their DX every round they move. If they fail, they will be buffeted against the side wall of the crevice and take 1D8 HTK of damage. In addition, any hand-held item will be dropped.

The GM should warn the players of the danger of the characters flying before they enter the passage.

Use the map on page 55, *Entering the Land*, for this encounter. The letters on the map refer to areas and events below. As the characters enter the crevice and pass these points, read the following to the players:

AREA A

To the east of the path, black walls of sheer rock jut sharply upward, piercing the gray sky. Small openings in the rock wall are visible at approximately 70 feet straight upward.

Off in the distance is a strange sight; what looks like a thin curtain of mist covers the far end of the crevice. Above the noise of the lava river below you hear the faint tinkling of chimes.

* * *

Each character must save vs. DX here or fall from the steep wall. Anyone falling will tumble over the path into the lava, taking 8D6 HTK of damage per round spent in the lava. A save vs. SM must be made; a successful roll will result in the falling character sustaining half the damage. Those failing the save will take full damage each round. It will take the character(s) 2 rounds to climb out of the lava river.

The openings in the stone wall are empty caves; the largest of which goes back three feet.

AREA B

The pathway twists and turns deeper into the great, steamy gap in the caldera rim. The curtain of mist has changed; it looks like beads on a string now. You can hear the chimes louder than before.

AREA C

Red paintings can be seen on the eastern wall. They depict two six-foot tall stick-figured humanoids standing side by side.

* * *

There is also one painting on the western wall that is concealed beneath the foot path. (Show the players the illustration of the Blood Spirits on page 20.)

These are Blood Spirits. When an adventurer moves within five feet of the first Blood Spirit on the east wall, it will animate and attack.

The second Spirit on the eastern wall will not attack until someone moves within five feet of it. The Spirit below the path will not attack unless someone tries to climb down the wall alongside the path to escape the other two Blood Spirits.

(3) Blood Spirits

AC: 4, 2, 0; *HTK:* 5D8
MV: 24"
AL: Neutral/Evil
IT: Variable
AT: 1, *DM:* [1-6] [1-8] [1-10]
THACO: 15
Special: Needs +1 or better magic weapon to hit. Magic resistance of 30%.

The Blood Spirit attacks with one hand and the damage it does causes an infusion of its blood into the body it attacks. Once a victim takes 25 HTK of damage, the victim's body is taken over by the Spirit. The victim's original soul leaves the body and may return only if an Exorcism spell is cast, in which case the Blood Spirit is immediately killed. Once the body is reclaimed, it assumes the characteristics and personality of the person before possession.

Blood Spirits are only affected by +1 or better magic weapons. They are so cold that if hit by a non-magic weapon, the cold is transferred through the weapon, doing 1-4 HTK to the wielder. In the same way, if the Spirit is hit by exposed flesh, the attacker takes 1-6 HTK of damage from the cold.

Cold, Sleep, Charm, Hold, and Paralyzation-type attacks will not harm these monsters. Blood Spirits can detect Invisibility and have a magic resistance of 30%. They may be turned as a wight.

AREA D

As you approach the curtain, more ash covers the foot path and the wind tosses the fine particles of ash in the air, making visibility difficult. As you approach the final stretch of the caldera gap, you and your party see an enormous curtain that stretches from an elevation of about one thousand feet up to the base of the lava flow.

The curtain consists of thousands of skulls and heads in various states of decay. Some of them are animal skulls but most are dwarvish. They are all pierced at the top and bottom where a rope has been slipped through and knotted. In between the skulls are various hides and skins all branded with the symbol of a vulture holding a skull in its beak.

There is writing carved into a large hanging hide.

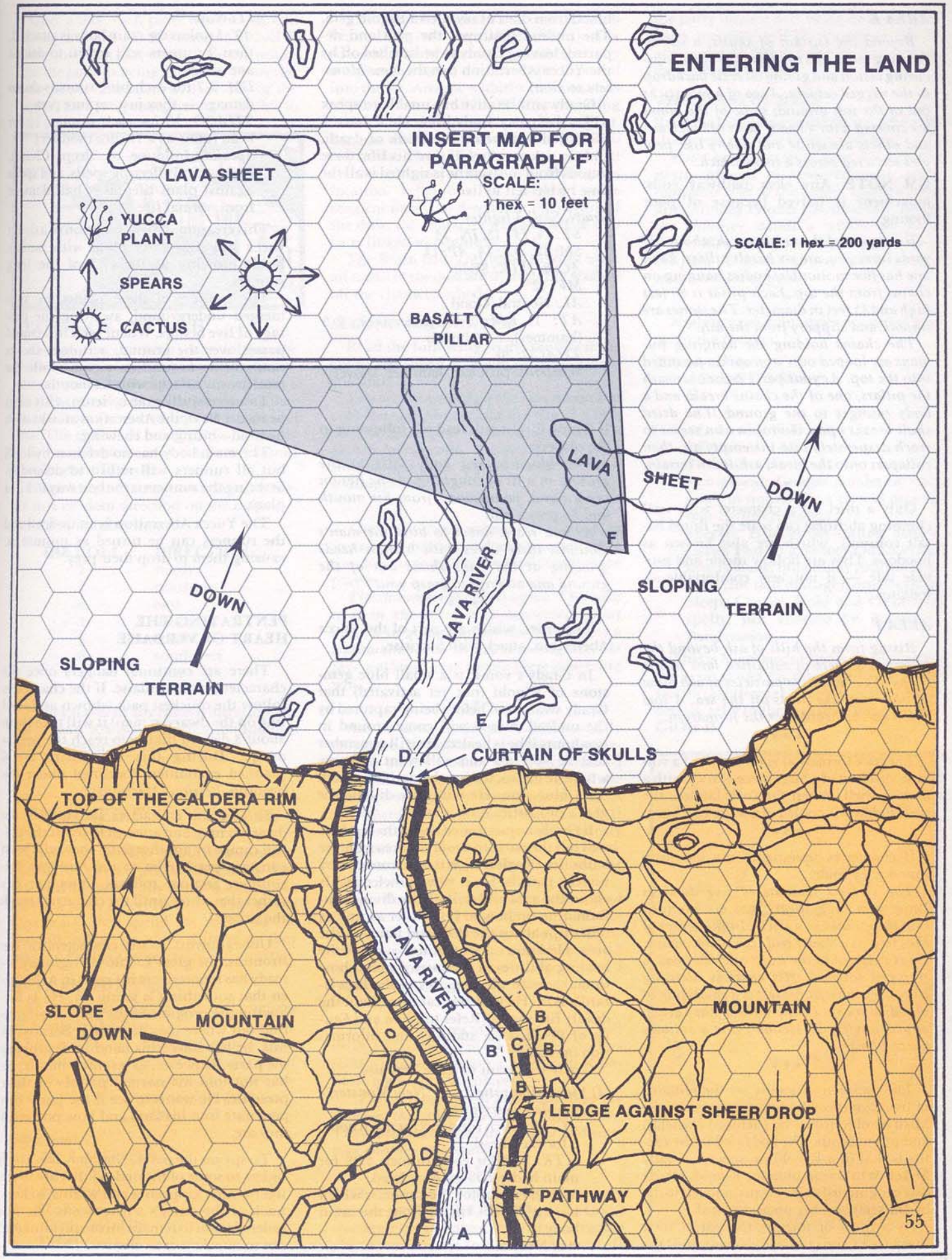
* * *

If a character is able to read the writing, which is in dwarvish, it says: *"All those who pass enter a land where death's hand clutches theirs on a journey with no end."*

PASSING THROUGH THE CURTAIN

Anyone who passes through the curtain must save vs. Paralyzation or be permanently afflicted with arthritis in his weapon hand while inside the land of Verdaise. The arthritis will cause each afflicted character to incur a penalty of -2 to hit. The character will only be able attack three rounds per turn before dropping his weapon. A character may use his opposite hand with the appropriate non-proficiency penalty for his character class (see standard rule books).

Only leaving the land of Verdaise will cure this affliction. Each time a cursed character re-enters the land, he or she will suffer from arthritis with no save allowed.


ENTERING THE LAND
INSERT MAP FOR PARAGRAPH 'F'
SCALE:
1 hex = 10 feet
LAVA SHEET
YUCCA PLANT
SPEARS
CACTUS
BASALT PILLAR
SCALE: 1 hex = 200 yards
LAVA SHEET
F
DOWN
SLOPING TERRAIN
LAVA RIVER
DOWN
SLOPING TERRAIN
E
D
CURTAIN OF SKULLS
TOP OF THE CALDERA RIM
LAVA RIVER
SLOPE DOWN
MOUNTAIN
MOUNTAIN
B
C
B
B
B
LEDGE AGAINST SHEER DROP
D
A
PATHWAY
A

AREA E

Beyond the curtain of skulls, a strong swirling wind lifts ash from the basin, obscuring vision and giving an eerie backdrop to the rugged caldera. A sea of bones sticks out of the soft ground; some of the bones are covered with a heavy layer of black ash and others are white and nobby like pebbles scattered across a rocky beach.

GM NOTE: Any clear pathway ends; movement is halved because of poor footing.

Rising out of the swirling ash, about 100 yards from you, are six basalt pillars. Each one has five motionless bodies hanging on chains from the top. Each pillar is 80 feet high and 15 feet in diameter. The stones are smooth and slippery from the ash.

The chains holding the dangling humans are looped over iron spikes pounded into the top. As your party passes beneath the pillars, one of the chains breaks and a body plunges to the ground. The dried skull breaks open. A broken arm seems to reach desperately into the empty air, then collapses onto the bleak, ash-laden terrain.

* * *

Only a thief (or a character with wall climbing abilities) can scale the fluted basalt columns, which are also known as hoodoos. They are hollow inside and provide safe — if not very comfortable — lodging.

AREA F

Rising from the hills of ash beyond the pillars is a sheet of solidified lava in the shape of a wave. Fine particles of ash blow off the crest like mists off the sea. A low moan can be heard near the formation.

* * *

The rock formation is the result of a volcanic ejection of a huge piece of rock with a molten shell. When the rock landed, the shell sudddenly cooled in a wave-like form.

* * *

If characters investigate the moaning sound, they find:

The skeletal remains of five dwarves hang from long spears that are plunged into the ground in a circle. In the center of the circle is a dwarf tied to a black cactus. He is stripped to the waist and his head is slumped forward. His chest is bleeding from deep cuts. At his feet is a small pile of bloodied rocks. To the right of the cactus, approximately 20 feet away, is a solitary yucca plant.

* * *

The dwarven skeletons are the remains of five Bzontras who were captured by the Mistress of Sorrow (the Lichlord Darselai) and put to death. The body tied to the cactus is that of a Rigold prospector, Grady Mikel. While searching for Rigold, Grady was caught, tied to the cactus, and left to die by Darselai and her undead patrol.

As a form of torture, the patrol took sharp rocks and cut Grady's chest until the blood from one cut revealed a Rigold gem. The undead destroyed the gem and departed, leaving Grady to be finished off by the Yucca Aberration (see the *New Monsters* section).

Grady will be alive but unable to speak when the party finds him. He'll have 0 HTK and will be on the brink of death. Only quick action will save his life; three rounds from the time he is sighted is all the time he has left to live.

***Grady,** Skill 3 fighter*
ST: 14, *IT:* 13, *IN:* 14
SM: 12, *DX:* 14, *AP:* 11
AC: 8, *HTK:* 3D10
MV: 12"
AL: Neutral/Good
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-6 (pick axe), 2-5 (hammer), 1-4 (shovel)
THACO: 20
Weapons: pick axe, hammer, shovel

* * *

If Grady is released, read the following to the players:

The blood-soaked body falls to the ground in a fit of coughing. As he lies on the ground, vomit oozes from his mouth and he passes out.

As you reach down to bind the man's wounds, three vines with human heads growing at the ends shoot out of the ground and attempt to grasp you.

* * *

The vines, which are part of the Yucca Aberration, attack with Surprise.

In Grady's vomit is a small blue gemstone of Rigold (not yet activated) that Grady swallowed before being captured by the undead. Grady will come around in two hours if he is healed. He will remember that he vomited and will want to know where he did so, telling the party to search for a blue gem. He will only discuss the gem's properties if he is asked.

If Grady is questioned about the land, he will tell the party to avoid the area near the batholith (**Region II**) as it is surrounded by undead patrols. He is very knowledgeable about the area and will gladly divulge information on how to find water as well as other tips about the flora and fauna of the area. He knows about things such as the healing abilities of the yarrow plant, how to make nettle ale, the uses of the lava lizard's skin. He will also caution about the deadly fire snake. (Refer to *Flora and Fauna of Verdaise* for statistics and information on these.)

Grady will want to leave Verdaise.

***(1) Yucca Aberration** (see "New Monsters" for complete description)*
AC: 5 for each runner; 2 for main body; 0 for each head.
HTK: 3D8 for each runner; 5D8 for main body; 2D8 for each head.
MV: 0, except for the runners, which have a 40-foot radius from the main body.
AL: Neutral
IT: Non-
AT: 3 unless the main body is attacked, then 9 runners will return to defend and attack
DM: 2-7 for each bite; runners do no damage — they just capture prey
THACO: 10 for each runner, 15 for head (same as a 12 dice monster).
Special: Immune to Sleep, Charm, Hold, mind affecting spells, and spells against plant life; takes half damage from normal fire.

This creation is a combination of a desert yucca and strawberry plant with human heads growing at the end of the long runners.

The runners of these plants are submerged underground, awaiting the passage of live beings. Whenever a humanoid passes over the ground, a runner shoots out, coiling around its victim while the monstrosity attacks with its mouth.

To successfully grab a victim, a hit must be made. Next, the Aberration attacks with its head—biting and chewing.

The main body has no defenses by itself but all runners will return to defend it. Severing the runners is the best way to kill a plant.

The Yucca Aberration is an undead and the runners can be turned as mummies, causing them to drop their prey.

PENTRATING THE HEART OF VERDAISE

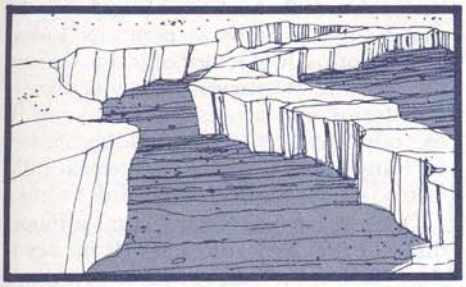
There are continual dangers once the characters enter Verdaise. If the characters follow the quickest path (shown as dotted line on the dwarven map) it will take them about 3 days of hiking to reach the prison camps. During this time there are 6 planned encounters (outlined under the heading, *Perilous Meetings*).

Should the characters not follow the dwarven map and attempt to reach the prison camps by another path, they will be in constant peril (refer to the *Random Encounters* section; roll six times per day rather than three until the characters reach the prison).

Unbeknownst to the characters or the Bzontras, the great Lichlord Nightbay already has reports from his spies in Ashlaeden that something is going on. He is following the progress of the party, trying to find out where they are going. Because of this, he has stayed his hand in destroying the party. However, to test their mettle, he has not told his normal patrols of their presence. He wants to see if the party can penetrate into his land and how powerful they are.

To spy on the party, Nightbay has given orders to some of his undead that are intelligent, such as spectres and wights, to keep track of the party's whereabouts. He has ordered them to remain inconspicuous and not to attack; just to observe.

Once a day, each party member should roll against his IT. If a successful roll is made, then that player character will notice that the party is being followed. However, none of the characters will see any of the "spies" for a long enough time to be able to find and attack them.



STAYING ON THE PATH

Should the characters not follow the dwarven map and attempt to reach the prison camps by another path, they will take a great chance of getting lost. Every day they deviate from the dotted line, they could get lost. The chance of being lost is 35% (only 20% if a shire-folk is in the party) minus their highest IT score.

When lost, the party loses a day and travels in a random direction on the map. Roll 1D8 for direction.

DIE ROLL	DIRECTION
1	north
2	northeast
3	east
4	southeast
5	south
6	southwest
7	west
8	northwest

If they travel in any eastern direction, the party has a 50% plus their highest Intellect score in regaining the correct path.

PLANNED ENCOUNTERS

There will be three planned encounters during the party's trek to the prison. The first will automatically happen four hours after the party enters the land. The second happens if they spend the night on the dormant volcano, and the third when they pass the Fleshly Garden next to the prison.

FIRST ENCOUNTER

Read the following four hours after the party enters the land:

There is a low moan off in the mist. Then silence. A moment later, dozens of zombies appear in the fog. They are covered with a fine greyish-white dust.

* * *

(30) zombies
AC: 8, *HTK:* 2D8
MV: 6
AL: Neutral
IT: Non-
AT: 1, *DM:* 1D8
THACO: 16

The zombies' bodies are covered with Brain Dust (see *New Magic Items*). Any successful strike against a zombie with any weapon will cause the dust to be dispersed into the air. Anyone within a 10-foot radius of this area must roll his IT or lower (using 3D6) or be afflicted with the Brain Dust. Anyone who fails to save is mind linked to Nightbay. The Lichlord can now read that character's every thought—including his location, intentions, etc. Without some magical means to determine the nature of the dust, the character will not know that he is linked to Nightbay.

The Brain Dust continues to work until all traces of the dust are thoroughly washed off the character's body.

SECOND ENCOUNTER

Read the following to the players if the characters spend the night on the dormant volcano:

You are encamped on the mountain. It is cold but you can't afford the risk of a fire. Shivering in your coats, you huddle together for warmth. Suddenly, you see a shimmering glow appear in mid-air, then it disappears.

* * *

The party might panic, run away, turn invisible, whatever, it doesn't matter. After they have reacted, read the following to the players:

The shimmering begins again. This time it is in the form of a bejeweled dwarf dressed in golden armor. In his hand is a warhammer that shines very brightly. He says nothing, just stands there observing you.

* * *

Any dwarves in the party will instantly recognize the figure as an avatar (manifestation) of the God of Dwarves and will begin bowing (no save). The rest of the party is on its own. Any magical test of alignment will register Lawful/Good. If the party attacks, the image will instantly disappear. If they do nothing, try to speak to the avatar, or show signs of respect, the avatar will speak:

I am the soul of the Mountain Ironhead that once stood here. Now it is gone but those like myself remain. I do not know what quest your party is already on but I sense that you are on a mission for Good. I request that you grant me a boon.

* * *

If the party agrees to help the god, he will smile and hand one of the player characters (GM's random choice) a huge gem. Continue reading to the players:

"This is a mountain seed. Give it to the dwarves that still hide out in this region. They will know how to plant it and nurture another mountain."

* * *

The mountain seed is a fabulously expensive gem, worth 1,000,000 gp. If a Good character tries to take it, he will undergo an alignment change to Chaotic/Neutral. If the party turns it over to the dwarves, each party member will be rewarded with an additional 10,000 experience points from the God of Dwarves.

THIRD ENCOUNTER

Read the following to the players when the characters pass the Fleshly Garden:

Your party passes a long field that is neatly plowed in furrowed rows. Stone footpaths lead to the center, where a short dirt chimney smokes continuously. Beside the chimney stands a red-stained stone block. Wandering around the perimeter of the field are 20 mummies, each wearing a small amulet of gold.

* * *

Nightbay performs daily noontime rituals in the Garden.

(20) mummies
AC: 3, *HTK:* 6D8 +3
MV: 6″
IT: Low
AL: Lawful/Evil
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-12
THACO: 13
Equipment: Golden amulet of resistance to normal fires (works only on non-living creatures)
Special: Hits inflict rotting disease, causes Fear in a 60-foot radius unless save is made; only hit by magical weapons (for half damage); unaffected by Sleep, Charm, Hold and Cold-based spells; not affected by Poison or Paralyzation.

This is Nightbay's Fleshly Garden and is the main center for religious worship and sacrificial offerings in Verdaise. For further details, refer to the area description of **REGION II**.

THE PRISON OF VERDAISE

The prison is directly north of the Fleshly Garden. The terrain here is particularly blasted and windblown. There are few landmarks except for the Garden and the prison. Towards the east, the ridge of Inselberg and the volcanos rise above the ever present ash.

If the characters go directly to the prison after they have slept on the dormant volcano, they will have a 100% chance of encountering *The Sacrifice* (see section below).

The prison is a U-shaped wall of stone, 15 feet high. See prison diagram on page 59. As characters approach, they see the following:

* * *

The prison is enclosed by a U-shaped wall of basalt blocks that is 15 feet high and 4 feet thick. On either side of the entrance is a large round orb that is 6 feet in diameter. Encircling the orb is a glistening light that appears like pale gems flickering with a white sheen. Rising from opposite sides at the rear of the curving wall are two dark turrets. No guards are visible.

* * *

If characters get within 50 feet of the prison, they can see that the row of glistening gems on the orbs are actually thousands of eyeballs. Anyone who comes within 40 feet of the orb will be seen (unless invisible). These eyes function as a "security system" along with the large crystal eye in Nightbay's left eye socket. By using the eyes to case out the area for living beings, Nightbay will be aware of any possible threats. Once the eyes spot a character or are attacked, the Prison Escape Troops will first appear in 5 rounds.

Orb eyes
AC: 10, *HTK:* 11D8
Special: Can be destroyed by weapon or such spells as Blindness, Shatter, Dispel Magic, etc. Also can be turned as a lich; in this case the eyes will not function for as long as they are turned.

(31) Prison Escape Troops
30 Zombies and 1 Death Dragon

Once these guards are alerted of an escape (usually through Nightbay's eyeball amulets), the zombies will be teleported from the batholith to the prison. The Death Dragon is summoned by Nightbay.

In 5 rounds: 30 zombies appear at the prison gates.
In 10 rounds: 1 Death Dragon appears.

The zombies' bodies are covered with Brain Dust in the same manner as the zombies were in ***First Encounter***. See that encounter for information.

(30) zombies
AC: 8, *HTK:* 2D8
MV: 6
IT: Non-
*AL:*Neutral
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-8
THACO: 16

(1) Death Dragon
AC: -2, *HTK:* 22D8
MV: 12"/24"
IT: Nil
AL: Neutral
AT: varies, *DM:* claws (1-12 x2), bite (3-32), horns (4-24), wings (6-60)
THACO: 8
Special: (see New Monsters)

Penetrating the Prison Walls

If the characters enter the entrance of the prison, they see:

Thirty feet inside the U-shaped courtyard of ash, a small lava moat (12 feet wide) laps up against the walls of stone. A ladder is lying half hidden in the soft ground against the northern wall. On either side of the moat are dark stone turrets that overlook the rear courtyard. Beyond the moat in the far courtyard, windowless cages have been built against the curved prison wall.

* * *

The cages are the prison cells. The only way into the rear prison yard is to climb over the walls or to walk along the top of the prison walls and enter the concealed doors into the turrets. One could fly over the moat; however if a character flies within 20 feet of the moat, the heat rising from the lava will cause 3D8 HTK of damage (no save allowed unless magically protected).

The Sacrifice

Read this to the players only if they are inside the prison or spying from above:

Two zombies approach the prison from the north. Slowly, they lift the ladder to the nothern wall and climb up to the walkway. From there, they walk to a nearby turret and disappear through a secret doorway.

If the party waits for the zombies to return read the following:

The zombies appear carrying a dwarf wrapped in purple robes. He looks dazed and drugged.

* * *

If it is noontime, the dwarf is led to the Fleshly Garden. If it is dawn or midnight, the prisoner is taken to the Tower of Spells where he and the guards enter its large arched doorways.

Inside the Turrets

Although the doorway into each turret is concealed from the outside, it is clearly visible from the inside. A winding staircase leads from the doorway to the base of the turret.

* * *

Another visible doorway opens into the prison yard from the turret. However, once a character is outside, the doorway back into the turret is concealed in the stonework unless its location is already known.

Thin arrow slits provide a view of the prison cells in the rear courtyard. Standing guard in each turret is a wraith, wearing an amulet of a swollen eyeball that allows Nightbay to see whatever is in front of the wraith.

Hanging on a large hook is a covered basket. Inside the basket is a large key in the shape of a hideous serpent; its forked tongue forms the notched edge that fits into the key slot. Whenever the key is used, it transforms into a poisonous snake in 12 seconds. Any living being holding the key for longer than 12 seconds is automatically bitten (save vs. Poison or die after 3 turns).

Once the snake bites a victim, it immediately turns back into a key. If the key is thrown into the basket within 12 seconds (before it has a chance to completely alter), it is transformed back into a key within one round.

(2) wraith guards
AC: 4, *HTK:* 4D8, 5D8
MV: 12"/24"
AL: Lawful/Evil
IT: Very
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-6 plus drains 1 Skill level
THACO: 15
Special: Can be hit only with silver weapons (half damage) or magic weapons (full damage).

The wraiths will investigate if they hear any unusual noises or if there is any indication of an attempted escape. Once alerted of any escape, they will immediately attack any escaped prisoner or intruder. Because of the eyeball amulets, Nightbay will also know what is happening and will dispatch 30 zombies (his Prison Attack Troops) to the gates of the prison in 5 rounds (see statistics given at the beginning of the Prison section).

Inside the Prison Cells

When the party enters the cell area, read the following to the players:

The cells are filled with dwarven, shire-folk, elven and human prisoners. Most of them are nearly dead from suffocation (lack of air in the cells), starvation or mutilation.

* * *

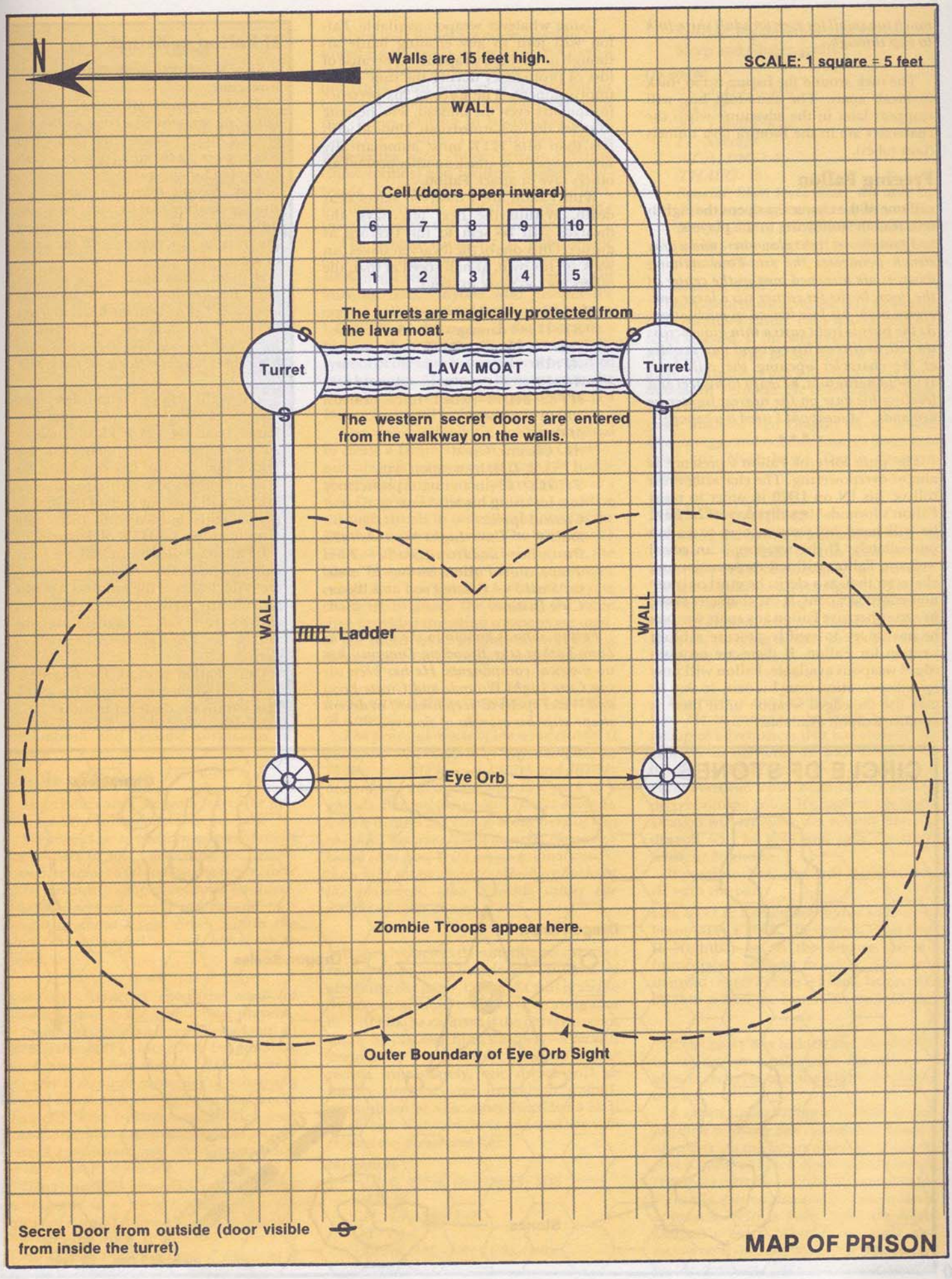
None of the prisoners will answer to the name Fallon, except Fallon himself. Fallon is in the 8th prison cell. If this cell is ever opened, read the passage below entitled: *Freeing Fallon.*

In the 3rd cell is a recent addition—a shire-folk boy captured in Rushbury Mound by a Dwarfeng slave trader on his way to Verdaise. The boy's parents, who are the members of the Rushbury Mound town council, will pay a handsome reward of 10,000 gp to anyone who returns their son to them alive. The boy dug into the ash floor of his cell and found a small fissure in the rocks beneath.

* * *

If the characters enter the 3rd cell, read the following:

You see a small shire-folk child disappear into a fissure in the floor, which is



MAP OF PRISON

much too small for even an adult shire-folk to slip through.

* * *

The rock around the fissure is too thick to break apart. The shire-folk boy will reappear later in the adventure when the characters are in the Bzontra lava tunnels (lava tubes).

Freeing Fallon

If one of the characters opens the eighth cell, read the following to the players:

A faint violet light glows here and a gray stench permeates the air. Four starving dwarves are hunched over in the center of the floor. In the far corner sits a large one-armed man, his face bowed in meditation. As the purple light casts a thin glow across the cell, he lifts up his eyes and stares coldly at the character opening the cell door. Without hesitation, he leaps to his feet and leveling his gaze on the nearest fighter he demands, "A weapon! I need a weapon!"

* * *

The pure force of Fallon's presence is almost overpowering. The character must roll vs. his IN on 1D20 in order to resist Fallon's formidable willpower. If he fails, he will hand his weapon over to Fallon immediately. If the weapon is an edged weapon, Fallon will tell the contributing character that, as a cleric, he must only use non-edged weapons. If the character saves, he can either give Fallon any spare weapon he has or try to swiftly procure a blunt weapon for Fallon. If there are no non-edged weapons available, Fallon will pray for a dispensation from his deity so that he may use the edged weapon until there is another weapon available.

Using whatever weapon available, Fallon will join in any ensuing battle although he wields a weapon at -2 because of loss of proficiency during the time of his imprisonment. The force of his presence intimidates even the undead, who hesitate to attack the one-armed man. Undead with less than 6D8 HTK must automatically save vs. Spells or attack another person; all others save or attack Fallon.

With Fallon are 4 dwarven slaves near death. Within the next few days, the dwarves will be sent to the Cecrops as dinner. Only one of the dwarven slaves can walk on his own, at half speed at that; the others are too weak to stand.

Fallon, *Skill 6 Fighter/Cleric*
ST: 17 (+1 damage), *IT:* 15, *IN:* 16
DX: 10, *SM:* 17 (+2 HTK adjustment)
AP: 18
AC: 10
HTK: 24D10 (when fully healed), 10D10 at present
MV: 12"
AL: Chaotic/Good
AT: 3/2, *DM:* by weapon type
THACO: 18 (including -2 proficiency loss for using his left arm)
Clerical spells:
Skill 1 — Cure Light Wounds (x2), Purify Food and Drink; Skill 2 — Find Traps, Slow Poison, Silence 15' radius; Skill 3 — Create Food and Water, Cure Disease.

Fallon, who is known to the dwarves as Zum Tarbor (the Brooding Dragon), has no magical components. He has been using Cure Light Wounds and Create Food and Water spells to keep himself in decent shape after his months of slavery.

If Fallon is Killed

Should Fallon be killed in this adventure, read:

As the weapon falls from Fallon's hand, he screams in agony as the ash around his feet shoots from the ground like geysers. As the cloud of gray retreats to the land, Fallon stands consumed in flames. Rising from the flames is a strange creature that looks like a humanoid with wings. As it soars past, you see that it is Fallon, reborn with the wings of a dragon.

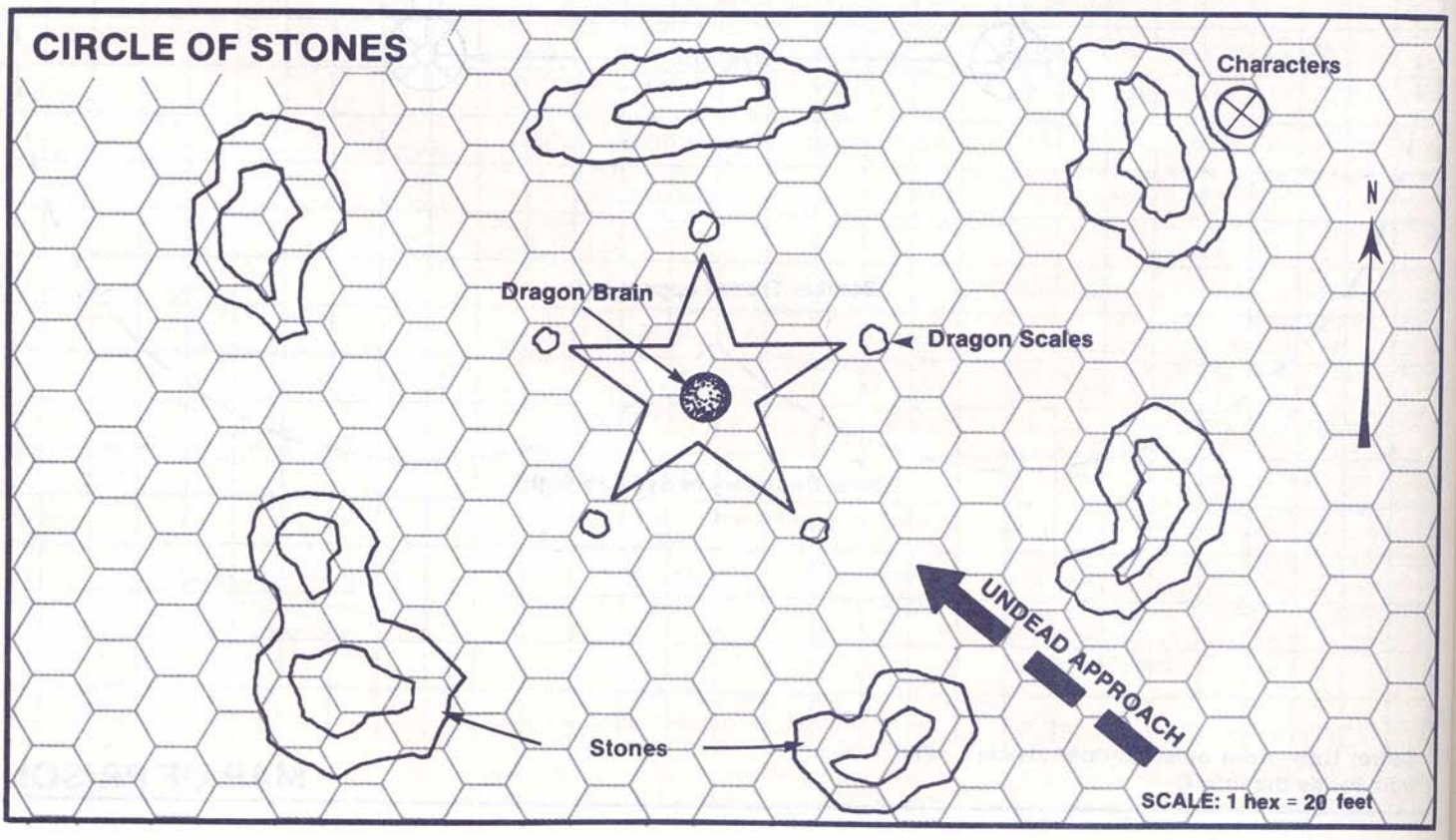
A great cloud shaped like an open palm reaches down from the violet sky and pulls Fallon into the heavens. For a moment, the darkness of Verdaise is split by the bright rays of the sun and a high light laughter floats on the breeze.

* * *

The right arm of the murderer who cast the killing blow will burst into flames (causing 3-24 HTK of damage). As the flames die, the characters will notice that the fire has consumed the arm. All others who participated in the killing will have the sign of the dragon permanently burned onto their right arms (causing 1-6 HTK of damage).

If Fallon is killed by undead, the party will automatically encounter Ernathri the Wild, leader of the Bzontras. He will provide any well-mannered characters with food and safe passage through the tunnels (see *The Ambush* for Ernathri's statistics).

Once Fallon is dead, the Regeneration spell will be erased from the scroll-case within the dwarven treasure.



DISCOVERING the LAVA TUBES

If the party escapes, Fallon will tell the characters that they can find temporary protection in the hollows of the basalt pillars (also known as hoodoos) scattered throughout the land. He will then swiftly depart to the northwest, assuming that the characters will follow. This leg of the journey will take 18 hours because Fallon will insist on helping any freed dwarves that are travelling with the party (roll 2D20 for number of dwarves).

During this particular journey, roll six times a day on the **REGION II** Random Event Chart; Nightbay will want to test the group and see where they are going. In addition to the Random Events, there will be one definite planned encounter per area no matter where the party goes. Eight hours after the party leaves the prison, read *Circle of Stones* below.

Also, if any of the characters' minds has been read because of Nightbay's Brain Dust, Nightbay will gather a great host to capture the treasure (see *The Trap Closes* below).

Should characters explain that they were sent to free Fallon so he can recover the great dwarven treasure hoard, Fallon will show no response except for exhaustion. (He does not trust their motives.)

Fallon's first priority is to contact the dwarves. He will then try to secure the treasure. He will lead the party into a standing ambush set up by the Bzontras (See *A Friendly Meeting* below). If the party follows him, they might have a chance to spot the ambush and become suspicious of Fallon.

Circle of Stones

Eight hours after the party leaves the prison, read the following to the players:

Keeping close to the formations of rocks and pillars to avoid detection, your party stumbles across a 30-foot in diameter circle of six unevenly shaped volcanic boulders. The boulders rise from the ground to a height of about 8 feet. From within the circle, the soft sound of wind chimes can be heard.

* * *

If any characters enter the circle of boulders, read to the appropriate players:

Inside the circle is a large reversed star. At each of the star's points, a Red Dragon scale has been stuck into the ash. In the center of the star is a round container of glistening crystal that is two feet high and four feet in diameter. Five frosted runes (which look like the number 4 turned upside-down) are carved equidistant into the circumference of the crystal's dome lid.

Dangling from a rock that overhangs the pentagram is a mobile made from the bones of a small humanoid. From another overhanging rock is suspended a set of wind chimes that make sweet music as it dances in the breeze.

The wind chimes are made from the hollowed finger bones of dwarves and have a soothing effect. Any character who enters the circle must save vs. Paralyzation or become hypnotized by the soft tinkling of the chimes, staring in fascination at the swinging mobile. The spell lasts for as long as the wind chimes remain tinkling (three rounds) and for three rounds afterwards. Breaking the mobile has no effect, but destroying the wind chimes or holding them soundless will break the spell.

The crystal container is unbreakable (although the dome can be removed) and 100% magic resistant. The runes are traps of burning cold. Anyone who touches the crystal will be scalded by the cold (taking 1-6 HTK of damage). If the character's hands are bare he takes double damage; the symbol of the upside-down 4 will be burned into his palm. Magic can be detected on the crystal runes, which also radiate Evil if a Detect Evil spell is done.

The scales and star are used in the ritual to create a Death Dragon (see the *Ceremonies of Creation* section on page 19). Inside the crystal container is the living brain of a Red Dragon. The brain must be kept alive through rituals in order for the body of the Death Dragon to survive. The brain has 25 HTK. Although no magic will harm it, the brain is automatically hit on any attack except a '1'. It is possible for more than one character to attack the brain at the same time provided thrusting weapons are used. If the brain takes as little as 1 HTK of damage, the Death Dragon must land.

* * *

Eight rounds after characters see the circle of stones:

The peaceful music of the wind chimes is suddenly interrupted by the clanging of chains. Moving from the north and directly toward the circle of stones is a pack of 6 ghouls. Behind the ghouls strides a wight, which insures the steady movement of two shackled dwarves. Each dwarf is carrying a heavy iron pot. With an occasional smirk, the wight snaps a whip at the bare backs of the prisoners, who stumble under the weight of their chains.

* * *

If the characters do not hide on the next round, they will be spotted. Instead of attacking the party, the wight will grab the dwarves and make motions indicating that he will kill the captives if the party does not leave. By just touching the dwarves he will drain Skill levels. If the characters do not retreat immediately, one dwarf will be totally drained and turn into a half-strength wight. One other dwarf has 3 Skill levels left. If the wight is attacked, he will release the dwarf and fight.

(6) ghouls
AC: 6, *HTK:* (3) 2D8, (3) 3D8
MV: 9″
AL: Chaotic/Evil
IT: Low
AT: 3, *DM:* (1-3), (1-3), (1-6)
THACO: 13
Special: Paralyzation; not affected by Sleep and Charm spells

(1) wight
AC: 5, *HTK:* 5D8
MV: 12″
AL: Lawful/Evil
IT: Average
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-4
THACO: 15
Special: Skill level drain; hit only by silver and magic weapons; immune to Sleep, Charm, Hold and Cold-based spells; not affected by Poison or Paralyzation

(2) dwarves, *Skill 0*

The captured dwarves are very weak and have no attack value. They will be grateful to be rescued. If the wight kills one dwarf the survivor will be Struuch (if he is still alive). Struuch is not a Bzontra; he is from outside of Verdaise. He is detailed on page 77. The pots the dwarves carry contain a paste made of Red Dragon blood, a Red Dragon egg, and crushed human bone. It is used for Nightbay's Death Dragon ceremony.

Nightbay Arrives

During the battle, if a character looks to the sky — and if the dragon brain has not taken any HTK of damage — he will see:

A great distance away a figure appears in the sky. As it flies closer you see that it is a skeletal dragon, which is known as a Death Dragon, carrying a rider directly towards the circle of stones.

* * *

The rider of the Death Dragon is Nightbay. He is going to the circle to see the group of adventurers that has violated the sanctity of his land. In four rounds, the dragon will reach the circle of stones, circling overhead while Nightbay laughs in a deep booming voice. If attacked, the Death Dragon will fly away. Six rounds later, the dragon will be back and join the melee without Nightbay.

If possible, Nightbay will avoid any battle with the party.

GM NOTE: Remember that as soon as the brain takes 1 HTK, the dragon must land. If Nightbay is on the dragon, he will immediately teleport to safety. Also, keep in mind that if Fallon is killed, no one will be able to find the lost dwarven treasure.

* * *

If the party has hidden and chooses not to engage in battle with the group of ghouls, dwarves, and the wight, the characters see:

A robed figure riding a skeletal dragon begins a swirling descent toward the circle of stones. As the figure dismounts, you see that a hood of black cloth masks his face. He walks into the circle of stones just as the 6 ghouls, one wight, and 2 dwarven slaves approach. With a bony hand, the Death Dragon's rider takes a red scale and immerses it into one of the iron pots carried by the dwarves. Taking the paste-covered

scale in one hand, he removes the crystal dome with his other hand. He then spreads the paste onto a pulsating mass of brain tissue that rests inside the crystal container.

When he finishes, a crooked smile splits the darkness beneath the robed figure's cowl. Laughing with merciless abandon, he mounts the Death Dragon and rides away.

* * *

The robed figure is Nightbay. If the characters attack, Nightbay will teleport back to his Obsidian Palace in the batholith (in **Region II** of Verdaise), leaving the Death Dragon and the other undead to fight.

Nightbay, of course, takes no damage from the cold runes of the crystal dome.

Nightbay
ST: 14, *IT:* 18, *IN:* 16
DX: 11, *SM:* 11, *AP:* 9
AC: 0, *HTK:* 19D8
MV: 6″
AL: Evil
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-10
THACO: 7
Special: See *Lichlord Council*, page 7, for abilities.

A Friendly Meeting

Fallon will lead the party into this ambush because he does not trust them. During the march after the *Circle of Stones* encounter, casually tell the players that their characters notice Fallon whispering to the dwarves. If the characters cast spells to read minds, they will learn that Fallon plans to ambush the characters. One hour later, the party will reach the ambush.

The Ambush

You come across a clearing of hard rock. One rock is lifted up, revealing a tunnel below. Fallon points to the rock and says:

"There is the entrance to a lava tube. Go ahead while I bring up the rear."

* * *

If the characters insist on Fallon going first, he will laugh and say:

"Let us compromise. I will go with you scared little rabbits."

GM NOTE: 10 feet from the entrance, the trap will be sprung. Fallon is not worried, because the trap consists of buckets of holy water that will drench the party. He wants to make sure that the player characters are not undead. A Magic Mouth will also activate, alerting the Bzontra guards to the party's presence with a high-pitched whistle.

Read the following to the players:

As you walk towards the entrance, you are suddenly doused in liquid. Fallon draws his weapon and, in one deft motion, stands apart from your party in a defensive position. Suddenly, there is a high-pitched whistling noise coming from the direction of the tunnel entrance.

* * *

Since the party is (most likely) not undead, no one will be harmed by the trap. Fallon (who will put away his weapon and fight only to subdue if attacked) will tell them he had to do this. At this point, read the following:

* * *

Appearing at the entrance is a beardless dwarf. He smiles a toothless grin. "Welcome to Woldham, kingdom of the Dwarves." Staring deep into the eyes of Fallon, the smile dies on his face. "Zum Tarbor," he says softly and bows on one knee before Fallon.

* * *

If Fallon was killed, but the characters need healing or assistance the toothless dwarf, Ernathri the Wild will help. The GM should continue with this encounter, eliminating any references to Fallon.

* * *

As if from nowhere, six armed dwarves appear behind you. Following the lead of the toothless one, they also kneel in reverence. With a light jovial laugh, Fallon takes the arm of the dwarf and lifts him to his feet. It seems that as he smiles, his face becomes that of a younger, more carefree man. The other dwarves stand as the one before Fallon speaks again. "We welcome you. Yet for your own protection, we must blindfold you before you enter our temporary shelter of the lava tubes. Nightbay's spies are everywhere. The less you know of where we live, the safer you'll be once you leave."

* * *

If any characters need healing, the dwarves will offer their help once everyone is inside the tubes. The characters must enter blindfolded. If the characters consent, the dwarves will blindfold all except Fallon. If any characters resist, Fallon will offer to be blindfolded with the others. If characters still resist, the dwarves will refuse to lead them inside the lava tubes. Fallon, disgusted with characters, will go alone with the dwarves.

The dwarves will not enter the tubes if they are followed; instead, they will wait until dark when they will be able to fade into the ashy gloom without a trace.

If a battle ensues, Fallon will fight on the side of the dwarves.

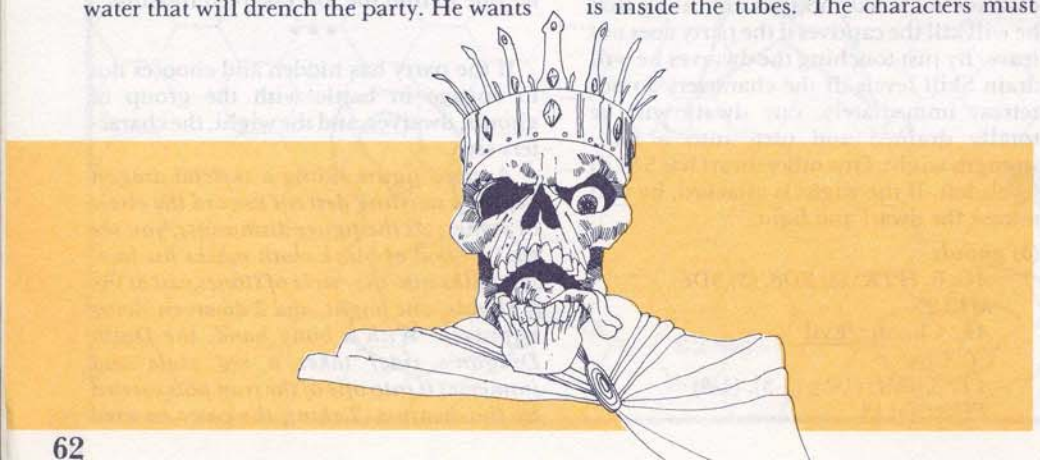
(1) ***Ernathri The Wild,*** *dwarf, Skill 16 fighter*
leader of the Bzontras
ST: 18 (+1, +2), *IT:* 14,
IN: 15, *SM:* 17 (+3),
DX: 16 (-2), *AP:* 15
AC: 8, *HTK:* 12D10
MV: 12″
AL: Neutral/Good
AT: 1 *DM:* (1-6) Lasher (on roll of 18-20 on D20, opponent must save vs. Poison), (1-4) dagger
THACO: 5
Weapons: Bzontra lasher, +2 bow, seven +1 silver-tipped arrows, dagger.
Equipment: No armor, just a torn jerkin, Ring of Invisibility, Amulet of Proof Against Detection and Location, Potion of Extra Healing.

Ernathri the Wild is the leader of the Bzontras. He was appointed leader with the dying breath of Griswold II. The old king had been impressed by the way the dwarves rallied to Ernathri's seemingly foolhardy battlefield prowess.

Ernathri's tactics did appear foolish, but they worked when the dwarves were not overmatched by the sheer numbers of undead. It seemed that unusual ideas worked very well against the programming of the mindless undead.

(5) Dwarven Fighters, Skill 8
AC: 7, *HTK:* 8D10
MV: 12″
AL: Neutral/Good
IT: Average
AT: 1, *DM:* (1-6) lasher, (1-4) dagger
THACO: 14
Weapons and Armor: Studded leather armor, Bzontra lasher, Dagger
Equipment: rope, holy water (2 vials each), 2 jugs of high quality Bzontran ale made from the Nettle plant, 1 Chain of Manifestation, 7 Candles of Beinder (see *Magic Items*).

(1) Dwarven Thief, Skill 10
AC: 8, *HTK:* 10D6
MV: 12″
AL: Neutral/Good
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-6 lasher, 1-4 dagger
THACO: 16
Weapons and Armor: Bzontra lasher, ivory dagger made from tusks of war mammoth (+3 against undead), leather armor
Equipment: Thief tools, potion of gaseous form, 1 use of green war paint.



INSIDE THE LAVA TUBES

Assuming the adventurers have agreed to be blindfolded by the dwarves, read the following to the players:

Your party is led along the stony ground into sudden and complete darkness. After many twists and turns through what seem to be long corridors, you stop. The blindfolds are removed and as your eyes get accustomed to the torchlight, you find that you are on a rather wide pathway that slopes downward at either side. The damp olivine walls are rounded and the low ceiling is curved.

The leader—Ernathri the Wild—is sitting on a pile of furs while one dwarf is busy slicing rations of smoked quail and another is preparing medicinal salves and potions. The torchlight penetrates only a short distance down the dark corridors. No other dwarves can be seen.

The healing aids are now administered.

* * *

There are 8 bottles of healing potions—each cures 1-8 HTK of damage. There are also 2 containers of Healing Herbs. This healing salve will cure a wound completely if spread on the injury.

* * *

Once the healing aids are used, read the following to the players:

You begin to relax. Suddenly, Ernathri leaps up and readies his lasher. The two other dwarves quickly extinguish their torches and wait in silence.

After a moment, you hear a soft tapping sound coming from down the corridor. Ernathri whispers, "I see nothing with my infravision. Tza Jnee! It must be undead!" He lights a torch and hands it to one of your group's fighters. Grinning, he says, "Take some of your friends and prove your worth."

* * *

Fallon remains with Ernathri. Of the two dwarves, one is a fighter with 8D10 HTK and the other is the thief with 10D6 HTK (see previous section, *The Ambush*, for their statistics).

The noise is coming from 40 feet down the corridor from the other side of the secret door. If a character moves closer toward the source of the noise, he will notice that the tapping sound grows louder.

* * *

Whether a character detects the secret door and open it, or if the party simply stands by the wall where the door is, the door will open inward in two rounds. If a player character doesn't open the door, the shire-folk boy will open it from the other side. A trap will then be released that squirts 2 quarts of holy water in a 10-foot radius.

* * *

Read the following to the players:

A door in the wall opens inward. As you are drenched in a cold liquid, you see a small shire-folk child stumble from behind the doorway. He slips in the liquid and begins to sob wildly. You see a glowing dagger in his hand.

The boy is the same shire-folk child (he is 10 years old) who was kidnapped from Rushbury Mound by the Dwarfengs to sell to the undead, He escaped from his prison cell by squeezing through a small fissure in the rocks.

The boy's parents, who are town council leaders in Rushbury Mound, have offered a $10,000 gp reward for his safe return.

The fissure from the prison cell that the boy escaped from leads to a narrow tunnel that opens into the lava tubes. The shire-folk boy discovered a dwarven skeleton in the tunnel. He took a +1 dagger and a gold ring with a small milky-blue gemstone from the skeleton. (The stone is fully enchanted Rigold.)

Shire-folk child
AC: 10, *HTK:* 1D8
MV: 12″
AL: Lawful/Good
AT: 1, *DM:* (2-5) +1 dagger
THACO: 19
Weapon: +1 dagger

* * *

Continue reading to the players:

You hear Ernathri laughing behind you. "You needed a bath anyway!" he says. Fallon joins in merrily.

* * *

After this bit of jocularity, Ernathri will notice if any characters have Nightbay's Brain Dust on their clothes. (The holy water turns the dust into a foul-smelling red gel). With the help of Fallon's Create Food and Water spell (he will only need to create water at this time), the characters can cleanse themselves.

Nightbay's Attack

The characters spend an uneventful night in the lava tubes. The next morning, they are again blindfolded and marched through the tubes by the same dwarves as the night before. Nightbay suspects that they are in the lava tubes and has sent a cohort of his undead legions to destroy the party and recapture Fallon. The attack will take place at midday in a certain area that the undead have prepared for some time (see the *Lava Tubes* map).

The undead have dug tunnels down into the lava tubes. As the party passes the first of the Bzontra's secret tunnels, a signal will go out. Two melee rounds later, the undead will pour out of their tunnel attempting to block the path of the adventurer's party.

Remember that the party members are blindfolded. You may even actually blindfold the players, or simply request they close their eyes. After this, read them the following:

* * *

You hear a crash, then a shuffling of feet. The dwarves cry out: "Skree! Skree!" and Fallon calls out, "Draw your swords and prepare to die!"

At this time, the dwarves will tell the player characters to hurry and remove their blindfolds. The party then sees rows of skeletons armed with various weapons.

The undead will advance in two waves. The movements of the first wave is shown on the diagram. It will take them one round to form. The two groups will then advance toward each other to capture the party between their ranks.

Each skeleton of each group of 20 Archers will fire one arrow per round at random characters.

The second wave of undead troops consists of 100 Fourth Rank Skeletons. They will take four rounds to form groups of five each and will rush to any weakened areas of the line and act as a second line of defense. Roll a 1D5 to see how many groups of five will attack any characters that break through the main skeleton line.

GM NOTE: For more information on Ranks of Skeletons see page 10 on the Undead Legions.

(80) First Rank Skeletons
AC: 7, *HTK:* 1D8
MV: 12″
AL: Neutral
IT: Non-
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-6
THACO: 20

(100) Fourth Rank Skeletons
AC: 6, *HTK:* 3D8
MV: 12″
AL: Neutral
IT: Non-
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-8
THACO: 16

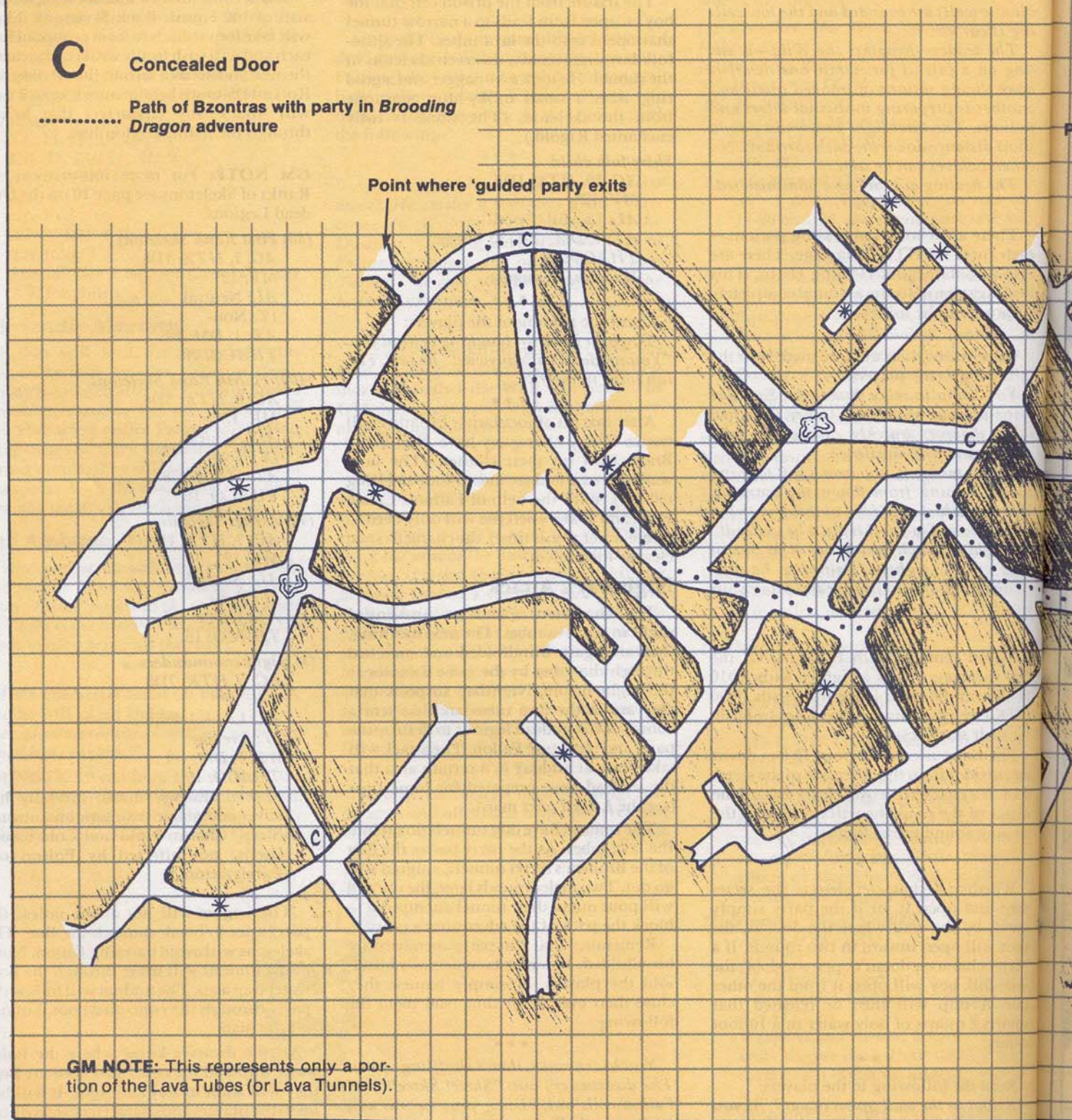
(40) Archer Skeletons
AC: 7, *HTK:* 1D8+3
MV: 12″
AL: Neutral
IT: Non-
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-6
THACO: 15

(3) wight commanders
AC: 5, *HTK:* 7D8
MV: 12″
AL: Lawful/Evil
IT: Average
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-4
THACO: 15
Special: Energy drain; hit only by silver and magic weapons; immune to Sleep, Charm, Hold and Cold-based spells; not affected by Poison or Paralyzation.

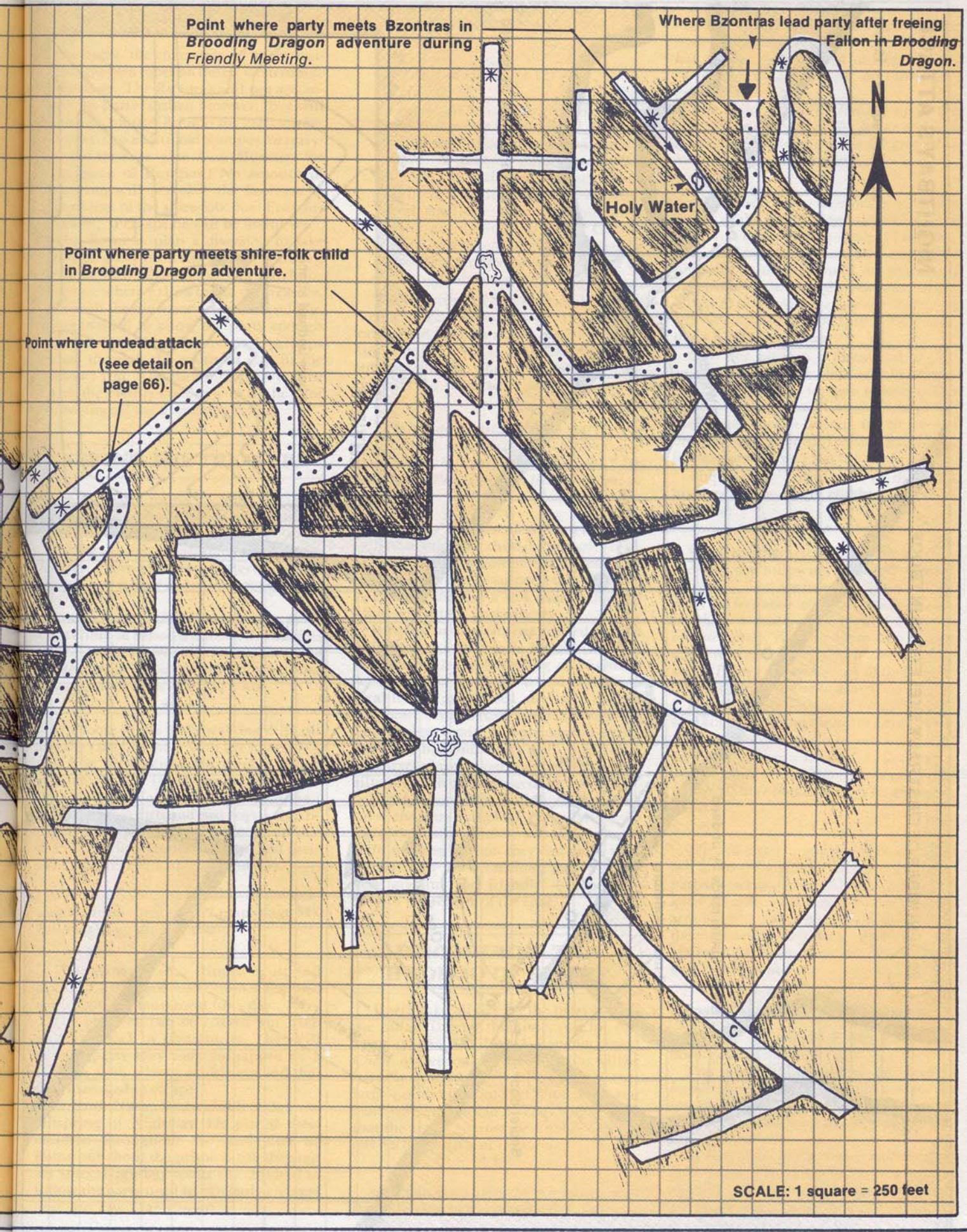
The wights will not attack unless the party tries to break through the line. The skeletons will avoid harming Fallon. None of the undead will move through the holy water trap area. The undead will follow the party through the concealed door, but not off the map.

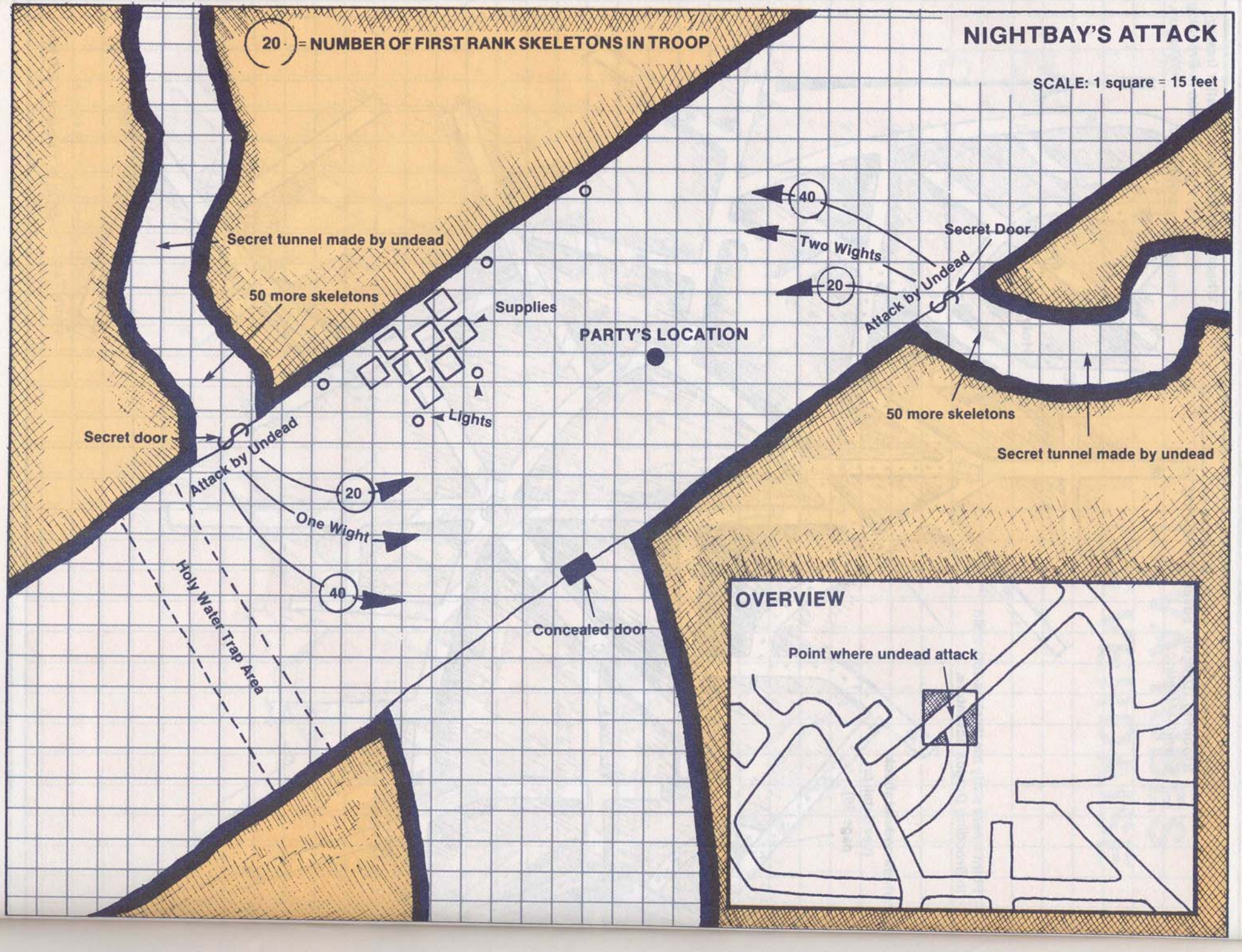
All the dwarves know where the holy water trap and the concealed door are but they will want to stay and fight. It will be up to the players and characters to convince the dwarves to flee.

LAVA TUBES OF VERDAISE



GM NOTE: This represents only a portion of the Lava Tubes (or Lava Tunnels).


Point where party meets Bzontras in *Brooding Dragon* adventure during *Friendly Meeting*.
Where Bzontras lead party after freeing Fallon in *Brooding Dragon*.
N
Holy Water
Point where party meets shire-folk child in *Brooding Dragon* adventure.
Point where undead attack (see detail on page 66).
SCALE: 1 square = 250 feet


NIGHTBAY'S ATTACK
SCALE: 1 square = 15 feet
20 = NUMBER OF FIRST RANK SKELETONS IN TROOP
Secret tunnel made by undead
50 more skeletons
Supplies
PARTY'S LOCATION
Lights
Secret door
Attack by Undead
20
One Wight
40
Holy Water Trap Area
Concealed door
40
Two Wights
20
Secret Door
Attack by Undead
50 more skeletons
Secret tunnel made by undead
OVERVIEW
Point where undead attack

LEAVING THE TUBES

By night, the characters are taken outside of the lava tubes on the far western side of Verdaise. The Bzontras will not accompany the party further; however, they will leave one trained Rompo for each adventurer and two additional Rompos for carrying the treasure. (See *New Monsters* for description of Rompos.) No amount of protesting will persuade the Bzontras to take charge of the shire-folk boy. Ernathri chuckles, "Perhaps he will be useful yet."

The Bzontras plan a diversion to take attention away from the western corner of Verdaise while the adventurers search for the place where Fallon found the treasure. Although the diversion will not last long, it is intended to allow the party enough time to find the treasure and perhaps escape through the southern gap in the caldera's rim. The Bzontra's plan is this: attack the Fleshly Garden with the hope of destroying all the disgusting bulbs.

SEEKING THE TREASURE

As the party moves towards the landscape dotted with countless basalt pillars (hoodoos):

Facing the countless pillars, Fallon sighs heavily, "The land has changed. I know the treasure is near one of the hoodoos. But which one?"

Leading up to the hoodoos, your party must climb in between numerous boulders and rocks. Steam from the nearby lava lake creates heavy clouds of hot mist, bathing the jagged rocks in sheets of white.

* * *

The loose stones make walking difficult and the party member with the lowest DX will lose his footing and tumble to the ground. He will find himself staring into the faces of four frightened human children—two girls and two boys—clutching each other and huddling in the crevice of a rock. Their clothes are torn and their faces are streaked with tears and dirt.

GM NOTE: Note the location of the treasure vault on the Region I map (page 34). Fallon will go directly there.

The character who tripped must roll again vs. his DX or suffer from a sprained ankle, halving movement for a day.

The children can be coaxed out from under the rock by pleasantries. They will tell the party they were kidnapped by a skeleton with a large marble eye and that they managed to escape.

In truth, these nasty children are the Offspring of Nightbay. He placed these children throughout the land after he found out about the prison break through his spies. Nightbay wants the children to follow the party until he can gather a large host (see *The Trap Closes*).

(4) Offspring of Nightbay
AC: 6, *HTK:* 1D8+2
MV: 9"
AL: Evil
AT: 2, *DM:* (1-12), (1-12)
THACO: 18
Special: When hit with holy water, noxious fumes are produced. Characters within 10 feet must save vs. Paralyzation or become nauseous for 2D4 rounds; the affected character will fight at -3 during that time. A Detect Evil spell does not work on them. They are immune to Sleep, Charm, Hold, and other mind-affecting spells (see *New Monster* section on page 23 for complete description.)

The Offspring of Nightbay skulk around Verdaise. They seek out Rigold miners and other living beings to kill them by attacking with surprise. In this case, they will surprise anyone who is vulnerable—particularly if a character is asleep or alone.

* * *

The shire-folk child tells you that there is something wrong with the children and says, "The children don't play right." He then says, "Please build a fire. They feel so cold."

* * *

If a player character touches a child, he will notice that the child is unusually cold. If the character mentions it and then looks or acts as though he suspects that the child is undead, there is a 95% chance that the child will attack immediately.

If no one in the party has noticed that the shire-folk child's ring is Rigold (and has not taken it), the Offspring of Nightbay will immediately detect it and attempt to steal it. If reprimanded, they will run off and pout, only to come back a short while later and try again. If reprimanded again, they will hiss and attack with surprise — their eyes glowing red and their flesh scintillating with an irridescent gleam.

If a character (or Fallon) has already taken the shire-folk child's Rigold ring, the Offspring will attack to kill the character with the ring as soon they can do so with surprise. In the meantime, they will act very grateful and friendly — especially toward the wearer of the ring.

DISCOVERING THE HOODOO OF RICHES

It will take all day for the party to find the pillar. During this time, roll for one event on the **REGION I** *Random Event Chart*. Any encounter with Bzontras will be friendly and they will tell the party that large numbers of undead have been seen marching into the lands. They will also say that the attack against the Fleshly Garden has encountered stiff resistance.

* * *

About an hour after the encounter, read the following to the players:

Examing the pillars, you move closer to the bone bridge and the lava lake. Fallon remembers aloud that the hoodoo he seeks has a large hole blasted out of its side, "Like this, Uncle Fallon?" asks the shire-folk child.

The child is pulling himself up to the rim of a large hole in the pillar of black stone. His feet dangle above the ground as he peers into the darkness.

* * *

Any person who comes within a 5-foot radius of the hole and weighs 100 pounds or more will activate a pit trap. (The shire-folk child is too light to set the trap off by himself.) At the bottom of the 20-foot pit are spikes of sharpened stones that have a THACO of 14. Anyone falling into the pit will be impaled by 1D6 spikes, each causing 2-7 HTK of damage.

Once the pit trap is discovered or triggered, the shire-folk child will be able to hold onto the rim for two rounds before falling. Looking into the hole of the pillar, the bottom cannot be seen. If a lit torch is dropped, characters can see that the ground is approximately 45 feet below.

The roughly hewn walls of the inner hoodoo can be easily climbed by a thief character.

* * *

When the characters go into the hoodoo, they see the following as they reach the ground: *You are in a dark and dank corridor 10 feet wide with pathways leading north and south. The ground seems to vibrate softly, causing loose stones from above to occasionally tumble down. Fallon says, "I don't remember any of this. Someone has gotten to the treasure!"*

Just then, the sounds of pounding and clanking come from the north passageway. The south passageway continues only 10 feet, where it seems to come to a dead end at a stone wall. At the bottom of the stone wall is a small hole that is slightly larger than a helm.

* * *

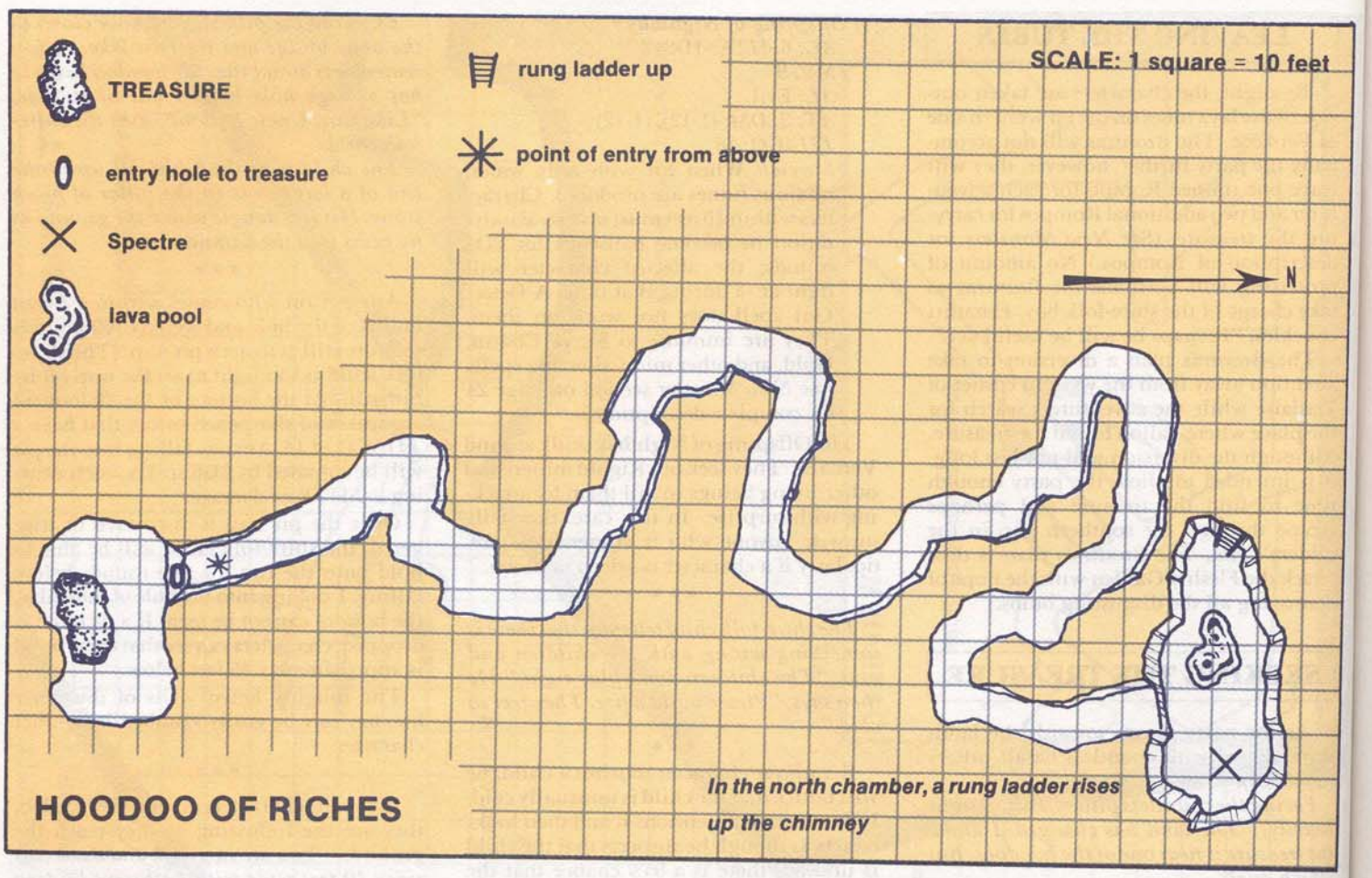
The characters have two choices. They can go to the north or to the south. Each path is described in detail below. What they and Fallon do not realize is that the treasure area has been taken over by the undead for their dwarven foundries. They do not realize how close they are to the great Dwarven treasure.

Down the North Passageway

Read to the players if they follow the north passageway:

The pathway meanders for several hundred feet. The further north you go, the louder the sound of metal upon metal becomes and the more the ground vibrates beneath your feet.

At last, you turn a corner and stand at stone ledge. Thirty feet below in a torchlit chamber are 10 dwarven slaves that stumble around as if in a trance. Four of the



dwarves are heating strips of metal; four more are beating the metal strips into blades. The last two dwarves are sharpening finished blades.

In the center of the room is a large cauldron of blood. A pool of lava bubbles up through a crack in the stone floor, causing the entire room to be blanketed in a maze of steam and mist. Above you, the roof of the cavern narrows into a chimney-like pillar, open to the violet sky.

On the chamber floor 20 feet to the right of the ledge is a transparent figure resting upon a throne of blades. The figure fades in and out of the mist like a cloud of steam.

Seven small children are harassing the dwarves with hot pokers. The children are dressed in rags and their faces are covered with dirt. As one of them turns, you can see that half of the child's face has exposed muscles and membranes.

* * *

The children are more Offspring of Nightbay. They will immediately attack with surprise, alerting the spectre below.

* * *

Read the following to the players:

A figure rises from the throne as a chilling laughter echoes through the cavern. Then the throne of blades explodes, sending razor-sharp shards of metal streaking through the torchlight.

* * *

The blades cover a 40-foot radius. Anyone within this area will be hit by 1D10 metal shards, which cause 1-6 HTK of damage each. The shards have a THACO of 13. The spectre will be unharmed because magic weapons are needed to hit him.

The Offspring of Nightbay will join the battle.

(1) spectre
AC: 2, *HTK:* 7D8+3
MV: 15"/30"
AL: Lawful/Evil
IT: High
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-8
THACO: 13
Special: Drains 2 Skill levels per hit. Can only be hit by +1 or better magic weapons, not affected by Sleep, Charm, Hold or Cold-based spells, not affected by Poison or Paralyzation. A spectre can be killed by a Raise Dead spells if it does not make its save vs. Spells.

(7) Offspring of Nightbay
AC: 6, *HTK:* 1D8+2
MV: 9"
AL: Lawful/Evil
IT: Very
AT: 2, *DM:* (1-12), (1-12)
THACO: 18
Special: When hit by holy water, produces noxious fumes causing nausea (see previous reference); Sleep, Charm, Cold, and mind-affecting spells have no effect.

All the while, the dwarves (Skill 0) continue working as if nothing has happened. Unless a Dispel Magic is cast upon the dwarven slaves, they will not respond to any stimuli. Should the magic be dispelled, the dwarves will be too weak to escape from the cavern without help. If they are helped to the outside, they will stumble towards the southern gap in the caldera.

Down the South Passageway

If any character sticks his head inside the hole on the far southern wall, he will see:

Inside the hole is a skeletal miner. He swings a pick axe in his bony hands. Amid the stench of decayed bones and debris are piles of glittering gold and jewels. In the corner of this room are seven empty sacks.

* * *

The skeletal miner is a Hoodoo Man (see *New Monsters*).

Some of Fallon's men, dying from the attack by the undead, came back to the treasure vault and sealed themselves in. Eventually, they became Hoodoo Men and have protected the treasure ever since. They will attack all except for Fallon, who they will stare at but not harm.

The character unfortunate enough to stick his head into the hole will be struck by

the pick axe, automatically causing 1-12 HTK of damage from the glancing blow. The axe will bury itself in the loose stone floor. The Hoodoo Man will not attack again since he will be trying to pry his axe from the floor.

The hole is only large enough for a shirefolk, a thin elf, or a human child to climb through. However, the hole can be enlarged in 1D6 rounds using blunt weapons, pick axe, or tools.

* * *

Once the characters are inside, read the following to the players:

The Hoodoo Man ignores the party as he tries to free its pick axe from the ground. Fallon cries out, "Is that you, Pentaris?" He stands before the struggling undead. The Hoodoo Man stops, stares at him, then returns to freeing his pick axe.

* * *

No spells or attempt at reasoning will bring Pentaris back to his senses. During the melee, Pentaris' two Hoodoo companions will climb down the pillar as quietly as thieves. Seeing invaders trying to steal the great treasure, the Hoodoo immediately attack. If they successfully roll their Hide in Shadows, Move Silently, and Climb Walls abilities (see percentages below) they will attack with surprise.

(3) Hoodoo Men
AC: 4, *HTK:* 4D8
MV: 12"
AL: Neutral
IT: Low
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-4 shovel, 1-6 pick axe
THACO: 15
Weapons: shovel, pick axe
Special: These skeletal miners can Detect Invisibility. They can only be hit by silver or magic weapons; edged weapons do ½ damage. They can Move Silently (40%), Hide in Shadows (31%), and Climb Walls (90%) as Skill 5 thieves. See the *New Monsters* section for complete details.

THE TRAP CLOSES

Now that the characters have discovered the treasure, Nightbay will close his trap. He will release an entire legion (4,000 warriors) to recapture Fallon and the treasure. What he does not know, however, is that within the treasure is a special sword that can destroy his legion and possibly himself as well. This is the **Holy Sword of Griswold**, which can only be wielded by a dwarf or a human.

The main power of the sword is its ability to strike down scores of undead with any hit; it needs to actually score a hit on a single undead to release its power. Otherwise, it acts as a normal +1 sword (see *New Magic Items* for details).

One other item is especially important. The **Scrolls of Azur**, if read, will teleport any treasure not held by the player characters into another dimension. There it can be retrieved by the dwarves by using the Mountain Seed that the party received from the soul of the mountain, the god of the dwarves. If the Seed has been destroyed, the dwarves may still retrieve the treasure by having one of their clerics pray to the dwarven god.

Party members will not be teleported by this scroll.

The Undead Arrive

For 1D10 rounds after the party has fought the hoodoo men they can go ahead and fill their packs with gold and magic items. If any character picks up the **Holy Sword of Griswold** and/or the **Scrolls of Azur**, Fallon will explain what the nature of the items are to the character(s) who picked up either one of these items.

* * *

Just as Fallon finishes explaining the Holy Sword and/or the Azur Scrolls to the appropriate characters, or after the characters have filled their packs if no one picked up the above-mentioned items, read the following to the players:

You hear laughing from outside. You look out from the hoodoo and see . . .

GM NOTE: Show the players the *Closing the Trap* diagram at this time.

As shown on the *Closing the Trap* diagram, this great horde has surrounded the treasure opening to prevent any possible escape. Furthermore, Nightbay has cast a Dispel Magic on the party so it will be impossible to teleport out. The party must fight. However, this will not affect the Azur Scroll spell.

There are some weaknesses, however, that the player characters can exploit. Given here are some of those:

1. The First Rank Skeletons are packed in so tightly that they cannot move. They also prevent any reinforcement of the Third Rank Skeletons already inside the spear wall.

2. Nightbay is amused by the whole situation. He is contemptuous of the party and its puny powers. He will not attack for quite a while, enjoying the antics of the player characters. He will attack if the party tries to escape and will send in groups of Third Rank Skeletons to close any gaps in the ranks.

If the party retreats, he will laugh and give the player characters 10 melee rounds to surrender.

3. The foundry opening is behind the main line of skeleton spearmen and considerably closer to freedom. The characters will still have to fight the spectre and Offspring of Nightbay (see earlier encounter for statistics). If the characters use this approach they will have to fight the War Mammoth.

* * *

Read to players after the intital shock has worn off:

*You hear Nightbay laugh derisively, "Greetings hardy adventurers! Greetings from the lord Nightbay! [**pause**]*

"Did you know that this is holy ground? You are trespassing and must leave at once. What? My spearmen are in the way? Well, let me move them for you."

GM NOTE: At this point, the first row of spear men on the west side move one space towards the party.

"Sorry! that was the wrong way. Well, never mind, you have 10 minutes to go, leaving the treasure behind!

* * *

The characters are on their own as to which plan they must use. Any plan using the Holy Sword will probably work, unless they go directly after Nightbay or they split up their forces. Fallon (if he is still alive) will want to fight but being in this situation before, he knows when to run.

If the party surrenders, it will be brought to the Tower of Spells to be sacrificed. (The Tower of Spells is described in detail under Region III of Verdaise.)

THE POWER OF THE SWORD

The *Holy Sword of Griswold* has the power to disrupt and dispell large numbers of undead. It only works, however, once it has scored a legitimate strike on an undead opponent. Otherwise, the sword acts as a +1 sword.

The power of the sword is derived from a powerful ray of pure light. The force that holds the undead in its present state of existence vanishes and the body crumbles into dust.

The sword will destroy any undead in its path. Once activated, the ray blasts out in a beam 40' wide, 500' long, and 20' high, the beam lasts only for an instant and cannot be directed at specific targets.

The number of undead destroyed by the beam is determined by rolling 5D10. These undead must be within the path of the beam. The beam will always destroy undead closest to the sword's wielder first. For instance, there are 40 skeletons in front of a wight. The beam will have destroy all 40 skeletons before it can attack the wight.

Undead with more than 4D8 HTK must save vs. Death Magic or be destroyed (even those affected by more than +1 weapons). Undead with more than 10D8 HTK are unaffected by the beam. If a dwarf wields the sword, the number of undead destroyed is increased to 6D10.

The beam works every time an undead is struck. It will not affect any other form of Evil creatures in any way. The Sword has an IT of 10 and can tell its wielder of its power. However, its wielder will not know exactly how powerful it is.

THE TREASURE HOARD

NOTE: Items in boldface are found in the *New Magic Items* section.

The treasure in the room consists of:

- 4,000 gp
- 8,000 pp
- A glowing short sword with ancient dwarven runes etched into the steel and a star sapphire set in the end of the tang (**Holy Sword of Griswold**) — *worth 20,000 gp*
- Gems and jewels — *worth 200,000 gp*
- Dwarven regalia — *worth 120,000 gp*
- Diamond-studded ivory scroll case *(worth 25,000 gp)* holding the priceless **Three Scrolls of Azur**
- Bone scroll case with clerical Scroll of Regeneration (unless Fallon used this spell), Remove Curse, Resist Cold, and Flame Strike — *worth 1,000 gp*
- Bone scroll case with Scroll of Clerical Cure Serious Wounds, Divination, Augury, Find Traps, Command, Chant, and Dispel Magic — *worth 2,000 gp*
- Silver wand (Wand of Wonder) — *worth 10,000 gp*
- Rusted iron helm (Helm of True Seeing) — *worth 8,000 gp*
- Plain gold ring (Ring of Free Action) — *5,000 gp*
- Small ivory wizard statue (**Pontificus' Statue of Empathy**) — *6,000 gp*
- Four steel short swords (ordinary, non-magical)
- One ceremonial shield with a large emerald embedded in the center (non-magical) — *worth 2,000 gp*
- A large crystal that hums softly (**Crystal of Summoning Ectoplasmics**) — *worth 10,000 gp*
- Mithril tube (Chime of Opening) — *worth 20,000 gp*
- Bronze Bracers shaped as a coiled snake (Bracers of Defense (AC: 5) There is a 50% chance per round in open hand combat that both bracers will bite the wearer's opponent with bronze snake fangs [THACO: 15] causing 1-4 HTK in addition to any open hand damage) — *worth 15,000 gp*
- Short, human-sized silvery cloak with a simple brooch of silver (Cloak of Displacement)— *worth 17,500 gp*
- A velvet-lined box of four milky-colored beeswax candles (**Candles of Beinder**) — *worth 800 gp per candle*
- A set of small jars carefully arranged in a locust wood box (**War Paints**: 1 jar of each color) — *worth 3,000 gp per jar*

The only trap within the treasure is the diamond-studded scroll case that contains the **Three Scrolls of Azur**. Any Evil person who touches the case sets off a magical trap, causing 4 diamonds to turn into needles of ice that shoot into the bearer's wrist, doing 1-4 HTK of damage each. The needles burrow beneath the flesh and causes a numbing that slowly spreads. Within 10 rounds, the person's entire side will be numbed and useless. (No save allowed.) The numbness lasts 1D4 days unless a Dispel Magic or a Neutralize Poison is cast or the person takes at least 15 HTK of damage from any kind of extreme heat.

LEGION TROOP SYMBOLS

This section explains the symbols found on the diagram on the next page.

First Rank Undead Lancer:

Each symbol represents three First Rank Skeletons. These troops are packed into their space and cannot maneuver. They can only attack the space directly in front of them. These troops have been ordered to hold their position and fill in any gaps.

First Rank Skeleton
AC: 8, *HTK:* 1D8
MV: 1″
AL: Neutral
IT: Non-
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-6
THACO: 20
Weapon: Spear

Third Rank Skeletons:

Each symbol represents one Third Rank Skeleton. These have a greater initiative and have orders to attack the group. They can move and close with the enemy, although the ten Third Rankers inside the spear wall will not attack until the party attacks or they are ordered to by a a commander on an Ash Steed. Other groups outside the spear wall have orders to attack anyone trying to escape.

Third Rank Skeleton
AC: 7, *HTK:* 1D8+4
MV: 12″
AL: Neutral
IT: Non-
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-8 sword
THACO: 16

Archer Skeletons:

Each symbol represents one Archer. They have orders to attack anyone trying to escape the spear wall. They will not move from their positions unless ordered to.

Archer Skeletons
AC: 9, *HTK:* 1D8+3
MV: 9″
AL: Neutral
IT: Non-
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-6
THACO: 16

Weapon: 1 bow plus 40 arrows per Archer

War Mammoth:

The War Mammoth will not attack unless the party comes out from a foundary opening.

Ash Steed:

Each wraith commander of the troop rides an Ash Steed. The commanders will not attack unless attacked by the party, although they will direct all troop movement.

(4) wraiths
AC: 4, *HTK:* 5D8+3
MV: 24″ while on Ash Steeds or flying (12″ on ground)
AL: Lawful/Evil
IT: Very
AT: 1, DM: 1-6
THACO: 15
Special: Drain 1 Skill level per hit; can only be struck by silver or magic weapons; immune to Sleep, Charm, Hold and Cold-based spells.

Ash Steeds
AC: -2, *HTK:* Not applicable
MV: 24″
AL: Neutral
IT: Non-
AT: 1, *DM:* 4-24
THACO: 16
Special: Any single hit causing 8 or more HTK of damage will turn the Steed back into ash—otherwise no damage is taken; immune to Sleep, Charm, Hold or mind-affecting spells.

Nightbay:

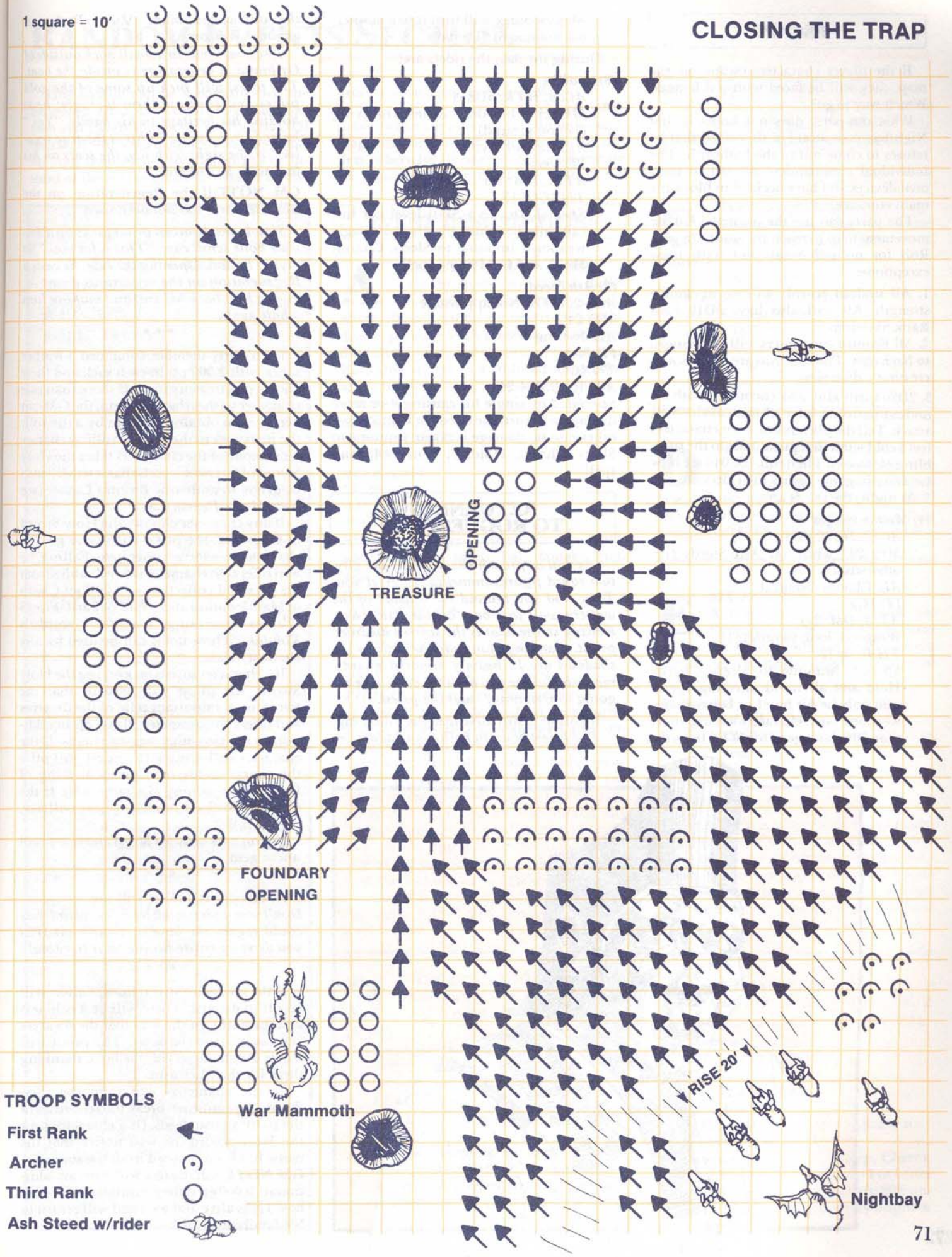
Nightbay will direct operations as long as he is not personally threatened; he will teleport away if a threat exists.

GM NOTE: Although they are not depicted on the map, there will also be three Death Dragons circling overhead waiting for any attempt at flight escape. They will automatically attack.

Basalt Pillars:

The opening to the foundary is marked in addition to the opening for the treasure.

A slight rise in terrain is depicted at the bottom of the map by slanted lines.


1 square = 10'
TREASURE
OPENING
FOUNDARY
OPENING
War Mammoth
RISE 20'
Nightbay
TROOP SYMBOLS
First Rank
Archer
Third Rank
Ash Steed w/rider

ESCAPE

If the player characters escape off the map, they will be faced with a dilemma. Which way to go?

What the party does not know is that Nightbay is so afraid of the sword that he refuses to come out of the batholith. The individual commanders are left to their own devices and have decided to block the main entrance.

The party can use the normal Verdaise movement map to reach the southern gap. Roll for normal events but with these exceptions:

1. All undead patrols will be of double strength. All will also have 5D10 First Rank Skeletons.
2. All Bzontra encounters will be changed to No Event. The Bzontras are in the south creating a diversion.
3. 2D20 turns after any encounter with an undead patrol, a force of fast cavalry will attack. Tell the players that their characters feel a cold wind that picks up into the rumbling of hooves. Then roll 1D20 to see how far away in game inches the riders are.

At night, the riders are:

(4) Moonscourges
AC: 2, *HTK:* 8D8
MV: 24″ while on Ash Steeds (12″ otherwise)
AL: Chaotic/Neutral
IT: High
AT: 1, *DM:* 2-9
Weapons: long swords (+1)
THACO: 12
Special: Immune to Sleep, Charm, Hold and all mind affecting spells; cam only be hit by +1 or better magic weapons; any character taking more than 70% damage of his HTK from the Moonscourge will turn into a homicidal maniac in 1D4 days.

During the day, the riders are:

(8) wraiths
AC: 4, *HTK:* 5D8+3
MV: 24″ while on Ash Steeds or flying (12″ on ground)
AL: Lawful/Evil
IT: Very
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-6
THACO: 15
Special: Drains 1 Skill level per hit; can only be struck by silver or magic weapons; immune to Sleep, Charm, Hold, and Cold-based spells.

(8) Ash Steeds
AC: -2, *HTK:* Not applicable
MV: 24″
AL: Neutral
IT: Non-
THACO: 16
AT: 10, *DM:* 4-24
Special: Any single hit causing 8 or more damage will turn the steed back into ash—otherwise no damage is taken; immune to Sleep, Charm, Hold, or mind affecting spells.

RETURNING TO ROGUESTEAD

As you approach the walls of the city, two robed figures immediately greet you. They lead you around the outside of the western wall to a boat on the Ash River. Resting in the boat is the scarred dwarven priest. Standing alongside the wall in the shadows are 12 heavily armored guardsmen who follow you onto the boat. "We are going to Oribrand," says the priest.

If Fallon is still alive read the following:
The priest bows to Fallon and addresses the one-armed man. "Zum Tarbor, I assume? Welcome."

The boat lands in a small dock outside of Oribrand. The treasure is inside the boat. The priest will pick up some of the gold pieces and examine them lovingly; he is holding his heritage in his hands. "Yes," he nods in wonder, "This is the true regalia." As he sighs with joy, the scars on his face seem less severe.

GM NOTE: If the Regeneration on the treasure scroll has not been used . . .

Slowly the dwarven priest picks up a delicate bone scroll case. "This is for you," he says to Fallon. Opening the case, he casts a Regeneration on the mysterious dwarf — giving him back his arm and making him whole again.

* * *

Each party member is handed 3 leather sacks with 2,000 pp in each sack and their choice of a treasure item. If more than one character wishes the same item, the GM can decide who obtains the item by a die roll; the item goes to the highest rolling character. If none of the characters takes the Holy Sword of Griswold, each character will also be given an authentic Bzontra Lasher (see *New Magic Items*).

If any character chooses the Holy Sword of Griswold, the priest will try to get the character to select another item. Failing, he will offer that character two valuables from his personal collection — a 20-foot Chain of Manifestation and a Staff of Earth Fire (8 charges remaining; command word is *Kobilak*). These items can be used by any character class.

If a character insists on keeping the Holy Sword, the priest will explain that the sword is an important relic of the dwarves and offers the character 10,000 gp in addition to the two other treasure items. If the character still refuses, the priest will offer the character his own personal Ring of Djinni Summoning (1 charge left). If the character **still** refuses, the priest will say, *"So be it."*

Fallon asks only for 30 gp and one small uncut gem.

* * *

At this point, Fallon will say:
Don't you understand, with this sword they could regain the land of Woldham. Will you deny an entire people their freedom?"

* * *

If the character still refuses, Fallon will go off in disgust. There will be a coldness and formality in the way that the dwarves act toward that character. The priest will escort the characters off the boat, thanking them for their heroism.

As the characters exit onto the pier, dwarven guardsmen break into choruses of the party's great deeds. (If a character kept the Holy Sword, he will notice that his name has been omitted from the songs.)
GM NOTE: Characters will earn an additional 10,000 gp if they return the shire-folk boy. He is alive and well and will return to his family in Rushbury Mound.

RANDOM EVENTS SECTION

This section can be used either for the *Brooding Dragon* adventure or for your own campaign that is set in Verdaise. Of course, if you wish to do so, you may make up your own events in addition to or instead of the events given here based on the information given in this book.

To determine random events on these tables while the party is travelling through a specific region, roll three times a day (unless otherwise instructed in the adventure or regional descriptions) on 1D20 on the table for the appropriate region below.

These events are in addition to those events that occur at specific locations within the regions or during the adventure.

EVENT TABLES

REGION I

ROLL	EVENT
1-5	No Event
6-7	**U** Dwarven Corpses
8-9	**X** Bzontras
10	**Q** Ash Storm
11	**S** Earthquake
12	**L** Spectres/Ash Steeds
13	**Z** Rigold Prospector
14	**T** Hoodoo Men
15	**A** Two Skeletons/Rafleshia
16	**E** Six Rompos
17	**P** Sleet Storm
18	**O** Yucca Aberrations
19	**R** Undead Patrol
20	**W** Escaped Slaves

REGION II

ROLL	EVENT
1-5	None
6	**B** Undead Patrol
7	**C** Undead Patrol
8	**F** Undead Patrol
9	**H** Prisoners
10	**I** Undead Patrol
11	**J** Dwarfeng/Undead
12	**M** War Mammoth
13	**G** Two Zombies
14	**N** Death Dragon
15	**R** Undead Patrol
16	**A** Two Skeletons/Rafleshia
17-18	**L** Spectres/Ash Steeds
19	**S** Earthquake
20	**P** Sleet Storm

REGION III

ROLL	EVENT
1-5	None
6-7	**D** Lava flow
8	**K** Slaves/Wraith
9	**P** Sleet Storm
10	**BB** Human Thief
11	**R** Undead Patrol
12	**S** Earthquake
13	**T** Hoodoo Men
14	**V** Moonscourge
15-16	**W** Escaped Slaves
17	**Y** Merchant
18	**Z** Rigold Prospector
19	**AA** Slave Trader/Slaves
20	**I** Undead Patrol

EVENT DESCRIPTIONS

A ***SKELETONS/RAFLESHIA***

Two skeletons covered with Rafleshia spores fall from the rocks above. Because they are covered with the deadly parasite, each skeleton crumbles to dust after hitting the ground, releasing the Rafleshia spores in a 20-foot radius. (For appropriate damage, see the Rafleshia's statistics below.)

Skeletons
AC: 7, *HTK:* 1D8
MV: 12″
AL: Neutral
IT: Non-
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-6
THACO: 19
Special: Immune to Sleep, Charm Hold, and cold-based spells; half damage from edged weapons.

Rafleshia
AC: 8, *HTK:* 1D8
MV: N/A
AL: Neutral
IT: Non-
AT: 1, *DM:* See below
THACO: Automatic if fail to save
Special: If the seeds land on a character and/or are inhaled or swallowed, they immediately begin to root in body tissues and burrow toward the bones. They grow quickly, causing 1-4 HTK of damage per round externally and 4-24 HTK of damage internally. A save vs. Poison negates any internal damage. A Cure Disease is the only way to kill internal or external spores. Healing spells or potions have no effect. One vial of holy water applied to external wounds neutralizes the parasite, limiting damage to 1-2 HTK of damage each round for 3 rounds.

B ***UNDEAD PATROL***

An undead patrol of 9 wights spots the party and attacks immediately.

Wights
AC: 5, *HTK:* 4D8+3
MV: 12″
AL: Lawful/Evil
IT: Average
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-4 plus Skill level drain
THACO: 15
Special: Immune to Sleep, Charm, Hold, Paralyzation, or cold-based spells; only affected by magic or silver weapons.

C ***UNDEAD PATROL***

An undead patrol of 30 zombies spots the party and attacks.

Zombies
AC: 8, *HTK:* 2D8
MV: 6″
AL: Neutral *IT:* Non-
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-8
THACO: 16
Special: Immune to Sleep, Charm, Hold, and cold-based spells.

D ***LAVA FROM GROUND***

A stream of lava spews forth from a fissure in the ground directly in front of the party (10 feet ahead). Each player character must save vs. his SM or sustain 1-20 HTK of damage from the lava.

E ***SIX ROMPOS***

A herd of six wild Rompos are feeding on the remains of a humanoid body that has been entangled by a yucca aberration. The Rompos spot the party and attack.

(6) Rompos
AC: 5, *HTK:* 2D8
MV: 12″/24″
AL: Neutral
IT: Low
AT: 1, *DM:* 2-8
THACO: 16

The Rompo is a large rodent that resembles a capybara without webbed feet. It is 4-feet tall at the shoulders and hops like a rabbit. It feeds on rotting flesh, but if there is little or none, it will not hesitate to kill its own fresh meat. It attacks with its jaws, tearing into the flesh of its victim.

F ***UNDEAD PATROL***

A patrol of 20 shadows and 2 ghasts spots the party and attacks.

(20) Shadows
AC: 7, *HTK:* 3D8+3
MV: 12″
AL: Chaotic/Evil
IT: Low
AT: 1, *DM:* 2-5 plus Strength drain
THACO: 16
Special: Unaffected by Sleep, Charm, Hold, or cold-based spells, +1 or better magic weapons needed to hit; 90% undetectable, except under very bright or magical light.

(2) Ghasts
AC: 4, *HTK:* 4D8
MV: 15″
AL: Chaotic/Evil
IT: Very
AT: 3, *DM:* 1-4, 1-8 plus paralysis
THACO: 15
Special: Immune to Sleep and Charm spells; cold iron causes double damage.

G ***TWO ZOMBIES***
Read the following to the players: *You see what appears to be two men approaching in the distance. Their bodies are partially covered by membranes and flesh; most of their faces are skeletal. They appear to be patting and caressing their bodies.*

* * *

If the party takes cover immediately, the men, who are zombies, will pass the characters; they will be unaware of the party's presence.

If the party hesitates, they will see the characters and run away (they will not let anyone harm their newly-forming flesh.) The zombies are undergoing Nightbay's fleshly rituals.

H ***DWARFENGS/PRISONERS***
Four dwarves (Dwarfengs) can be seen in the distance dragging 8 chained prisoners behind them — 4 men, 3 dwarves and 1 shire-folk female. Accompanying the Dwarfengs are 30 zombies and 12 skeletons.

* * *

They will not see the characters unless the party attacks first. The prisoners are all Skill 0.

(4) Dwarfengs, Skill 5 fighters
AC: 4, *HTK:* 5D10
MV: 9″
AL: Chaotic/Evil
IT: Average
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-6
THACO: 16
Weapons: short sword

I ***UNDEAD PATROL***
A patrol of 1 spectre and 16 skeletons spots the party and attacks.

Spectre
AC: 2, *HTK:* 7D8+3
MV: 15″/30″
AL: Lawful/Evil
IT: High
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-8 plus 2 level energy drain
THACO: 13
Special: Unaffected by Sleep, Charm and Hold, or cold-based spells; +1 or better magic weapons needed to hit.

(16) Skeletons
AC: 7, *HTK:* 1D8
MV: 12″
AL: Neutral
IT: Non-
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-6
THACO: 19
Special: Immune to Sleep, Charm, Hold, and cold-based spells; half damage from edged weapons.

J ***DWARFENG/UNDEAD PATROL***
One Dwarfeng and a patrol of 20 skeletons cross the dunes far ahead and do not notice the party. Four of the skeletons are carrying containers of food and water. (See Event **I** for Skeletons' statistics.)

Dwarfeng fighter, Skill 4
AC: 4, *HTK:* 4D10
MV: 9″
AL: Chaotic/Evil
IT: Average
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-6
THACO: 15
Special: short sword

The Dwarfeng carries a pouch with 10-40 gp, a gem worth 100-1,200 gp, and potion of undead control (either zombies or skeletons).

K ***SLAVES/WRAITH***
A procession of one hooded figure and six dwarven slaves pass by when one of the slaves sees you and cries, "Help us!" (The hooded figure is a wraith).

* * *

This event can only occur at night. The slaves are all Skill 0.

Wraith
AC: 4, *HTK:* 5D8×3
MV: 12″/24″
AL: Lawful/Evil
IT: Very
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-6 plus Energy drain
THACO: 15
Special: Can be hit only with silver weapons (half damage) or magical weapons (full damage).

L ***SPECTRES/ASH STEEDS***
Two black-robed spectres pass by on Ash Steeds. They seem unaware of you.

* * *

(2) Spectres (Same statistics as in Event **I**).

(2) Ash Steeds
AC: -2, *HTK:* 1D8
MV: 24″
AL: Neutral
IT: Non-
AT: 1, *DM:* 4-24
THACO: 16

M ***WAR MAMMOTHS***
Nine dwarves riding large rodents are having trouble with their rearing mounts. Suddenly, the ground begins to quake and the frenzied rodents throw their riders and flee.

Four War Mammoths rise from the ash. Ten skeletons cling to the rib cages of each of the War Mammoths. The skeletons leap from the beasts and attack the dwarves while two more skeletons in each howdah fire arrows. A wraith that gestures as though in command stands in the howdah of the largest War Mammoth.

* * *

The large rodents are Rompos. If a War Mammoth is down to 0 HTK it will retreat and head for Inselberg. The wraith will accept surrender.

The War Mammoths have been buried in shallow ash-covered pits, waiting in kneeling positions for Bzontras to pass nearby.

If the characters do not interfere with the battle four Bzontras (including Charl — see *Special Non-Player Characters* section) will be captured and tied to the rib cage of a War Mammoth. Two Skeleton Archers sit in the howdah and another eight skeletons walk alongside the beast.

Any character understanding the dwarven tongue can hear the dwarves' pained conversation, which concerns their fear of the Lichlord Darselai. The oldest dwarf, Charl, will rally the morale of the group by raising their hopes of being rescued. The wraith will lead the other undead southwest toward the ash dunes.

If the Bzontras are saved by the party they will head to the limestone pillars to hide and check on the bodies of their comrades. They will help the party as much as they can without letting them know the location of the lava tubes.

If the characters spend time with the Bzontras, Charl will relay the story, which is detailed in the *Special Non-Player Character* section, of his encounter with Nightbay. He has a Cloak of Turning (see *New Magic Items*). If you are playing the adventure, *the Brooding Dragon*, he will present the cloak to the party if a character mentions their quest to free Fallon.

(4) War Mammoths
AC: 0, *HTK:* 14D8
MV: 9″/12″ (running speed)
AL: Evil
IT: Low
AT: 1, *DM:* 2-12 (tusks), 2-12 (stamping damage)
THACO: 10
Special: 50% magic resistance, impale for double damage on rolls of 19 or 20, stamps prone characters for 4-24 HTK of damage (double normal damage), immune to Sleep, Charm, Hold, and cold-based spells. (See *New Monsters* for details.)

(8) Bzontra dwarves, Skill 4 fighters
AC: 7, *HTK:* 4D10
MV: 12″
AL: Neutral/Good
AT: 1, *DM* :1-6 (also see *Special* below)
THACO: 15
Weapons and Armor: Bzontra lasher, leather armor, shield
Special: For the lasher, on a roll of 18-20 on 1D20, the opponent must also save vs. Poison)

(40) Archer Skeletons
AC: 8, *HTK:* 1D8+3
MV: 12"
AL: Neutral
IT: Non-
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-6
Weapon: Bow with 40 arrows.

(1) Skill 14 Bzontra, Charl
(See Special Non-Player Characters section for statistics).

N ***DEATH DRAGON***
There are 1D4 Death Dragons flying overhead.

During the day, there is a 10% chance of being spotted from the air by a flying Death Dragon. This percentage is the same at night — unless characters are within 40 feet of a lava river or lake, in which case they will not be spotted. There is 70% chance of being spotted regardless of the hour if any character is flying at more than 60 feet high.

***Death Dragon (see** New Monsters* section for complete description)
AC: -2, *HTK:* 22D8
MV: 12"/24"
AL: Neutral
IT: Nil
AT: Varies, *DM:* (1-12x2) claws, (4-24) horns, (4-32) bite, 6-60 wings
THACO: 8
Special: Can cause ice storm for 6-60 HTK in a 20-foot square area as often as 3 times a day; only hit by +2 or better magic weapon; edged weapons cause half damage; flying creatures save vs. fear or fly away; immune to Sleep, Charm, Hold, and cold-based spells; magic resistance of 20%.

O ***YUCCA ABBERATION***
These deadly plants thrive near any lava flow (20-2,000 feet from the large lava lake and 5-500 feet from all other sources of lava). If the party is not near a lava flow treat this as *no event.*

The Aberration will attack with surprise.

Yucca Aberration
AC: 5 for runner; 2 for main body; 0 for head
HTK: 3D8 for runners; 10D8 for main body; 1D8 for head
MV: 0 except for runners which have a 40-foot radius from main body
AL: Neutral
IT: Non-
AT: 3-8 unless main body is attacked; then 8-13 (1D6 + 7) will return to defend and attack
DM: 2-7 for each bite, 0 for runners (they just capture prey)
THACO: 10 for runners and 15 for heads on runners
Special: Not affected by Sleep, Charm, Hold, and mind-affecting spells or spells against plant life; half damage from normal fire.

P ***SLEET STORM***
A sleet storm occurs that will last 1D4×30 minutes. During the storm, any character who attempts to move must save vs. his SM or become snowblind for as long as the sleet lasts.

The sleet will leave a frozen accumulation of snow, which can be gathered for water, for 1 hour.

Q ***ASH STORM***
When an ash storm occurs, the party's visibility is reduced to one foot in front of them. There is a 25% chance that the party will become lost during the storm. However, if there is a shire-folk player character with the party, these chances are reduced to 15%. With the use of magic the party's chance of becoming lost is 5%.

R ***UNDEAD PATROL***
This type of undead patrol includes 1 wraith, 2 wights and 24 zombies. Roll 1D4 to determine if the patrol sees the party. On a roll of 1-3 they do not see the party; on a roll of 4 they spot the party and attack immediately.

(1) wraith
AC: 4, *HTK:* 6D8
MV: 12"/24"
AL: Lawful/Evil
IT: Very
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-6 plus Skill level drain
THACO: 15
Special: Can be hit only by silver weapons (half damage) or magical weapons (full damage); unaffected by Sleep, Charm, Hold, and cold-based spells.

(2) wights
AC: 5, *HTK:* 7D8
MV: 12"
AL: Lawful/Evil
IT: Average
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-4 plus Skill level drain
THACO: 15
Special: Immune to Sleep, Charm, Hold, and cold-based spells and Paralyzation; only hit by magical or silver weapons.

(24) zombies
AC: 8, *HTK:* 2D8
MV: 6"
AL: Neutral
IT: Non-
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-8
THACO: 16
Special: Immune to Sleep, Charm, Hold, and cold-based spells.

S ***EARTHQUAKE***
Read the following to the players:
You hear a rumbling sound that gradually becomes louder. The ground then begins to shake beneath you. A fissure suddenly opens up in the ground directly in front of you as you struggle to maintain your balance.

* * *

Each player character must save vs. Dexterity or fall into the fissure (which is 1D10 feet deep) and sustain 2-16 HTK of damage. The earthquake will last for 1D10 rounds.

T ***HOODOO MEN***
Read the following to the players:
Four skeletal human figures are running toward you. The two at the front of the group wield pick axes, the other two behind them wield a hammer and a shovel.

* * *

The skeletal human figures are Hoodoo Men (see *New Monsters* for complete details). They will attack the party.

(4) Hoodoo Men
AC: 8, *HTK:* 4D8
MV: 12"
AL: Neutral
IT: Low
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-6 (pick ax), 2-5 (hammer), 1-4 (shovel)
THACO: 15
Weapons: Pick ax (which always goes last in combat), shovel, hammer
Special: Edged weapons do half damage; holy water does 2-8 HTK of damage. Skill 5 Thief abilities: Hide in Shadows — 35%, Climb Walls — 90%, Move Silently — 40%

U ***DWARVEN CORPSES***
Read to the players:
You see several corpses, which appear to be dwarven, directly ahead of you.

* * *

Roll a 1D8 for the number of corpses found.

V ***MOONSCOURGE***
Read the following to the players:
Suddenly, a member of your party is grabbed by a tall, black-haired man. With his dagger poised at the throat of your party member, he looks the rest of you over with wild eyes. He laughs maniacally as you react.

* * *

The man, who is actually a Moonscourge, will attack with surprise.

Moonscourge
AC: 2, *HTK:* 9D8
MV: 12"
AL: Chaotic/Neutral
AT: 1, *DM: 1-10 (sword), 1-4 (dagger)*
THACO: 12
Weapon: short sword, dagger
Special: +4 to hit with surprise, backstab does quadruple damage.
Thief Abilities: Open Locks: 62%, Find/Remove Traps: 60%, Move Silently: 70%, Hide in Shadows: 56%, Climb Walls: 98%. Also has the ability

to turn its victim into a Moonscourge and to engage in a lunatic frenzy and to turn invisible. (See *New Monsters* section for details.)

W ***ESCAPED SLAVES***

Read the following to the players:

You see two emaciated dwarves walking toward you. One of them is holding the other up. They see you and look frightened, but they do not try to run or attack.

* * *

The two dwarves are slaves who escaped from Ashlaeden. If any character speaks to them, they will beg the party over and over again to not let "the Slave Queen" of Ashlaeden get them. They will have no other information.

They are both Skill 0.

(2) Skill 0 slaves

X ***BZONTRAS***

Read the following to the players:

You see five dwarven figures walking toward you. As you pass them by you hear one of them say to the others, "If they're adventurers, I sure hope they know what they're up against around here. They sure don't look like slavers and if they show up around Ashlaeden . . ." The voice fades into the distance.

* * *

These are Bzontra dwarves. If a party member asks information regarding the area such as directions, the dwarves will be cautious toward the party but will still be helpful. They will not attack unless attacked first. If a character asks about Ashlaeden, they tell the party that there are many ruthless slave traders and unsavory people in Ashlaeden.

(5) Bzontra, *Skill 4 fighters*
AC: 7, *HTK:* 4D10
MV: 12″
AL: Neutral
IT: Average
AT: 1, *DM:* (1-6) lasher, (1-6) short sword
THACO: 18
Weapons: Bzontra lasher, Short sword
Equipment: holy water (2 vials each), rope, 2 jugs of Bzontran ale made from the Nettle plant, 1 Chain of Manifestation.

Y ***MERCHANT***

Read to the players:

You see a young, clean-shaven man walking toward you. As you begin to pass him, he says, "Greetings, brave adventurers. I'd like to interest you in some items you just can't do without." He pulls 3 rings with blue gems set into them from a leather pouch. "These rings are all honest-to-goodness Rigold!" he says with a flourishing gesture.

* * *

The man, who is a merchant, will not attack the party unless he is attacked first.

None of the rings have Rigold settings, but he will charge 8,000 gold pieces per ring. The rings are enchanted to give off a magical dweomer to seem more convincing to potential customers.

He will advise the group to stay out of Ashlaeden and to watch out for the business proprietors. He will tell you that he was once given a strange drink in the tavern and and then robbed after he had passed out. He has no other information.

Rigold Merchant, *Skill 2 human fighter*
ST: 14, *IT:* 15, *IN:* 17
DX: 12, *SM:* 14, *AP:* 15
AC: 8, *HTK:* 2D10
MV: 12″
AL: Chaotic/Neutral
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-4
THACO: 20
Weapon: dagger

Z ***RIGOLD PROSPECTOR***

Read to the players:

You see a stout but muscular bearded human busily digging a hole with a shovel.

* * *

The human, who is a Rigold prospector, will not attack the party unless they attack first.

If a party member tries to talk to him or ask him anything, he will disclaim any knowledge and gruffly order the characters to go about their business.

Rigold Prospector, *human, Skill 2 fighter*
ST: 16, *IT:* 12, *IN:* 13,
DX: 15, *SM:* 14, *AP:* 12
AC: 8, *HTK:* 2D10
MV: 12″
AL: Chaotic/Neutral
AT: 1, *DM:* (1-6) pick ax, (1-4) shovel, (2-5) hammer
THACO: 20
Weapon: Pick ax, shovel, hammer

AA ***DWARFENG/ TRADER/SLAVES***

GM NOTE: This event can only occur once.

Read to the players:

Coming toward you is a group of four sickly-looking dwarves that are chained together at the ankles. They are being herded along by a large, brawny human dressed in chain mail. As they approach the human sees you. He loudly clears his throat and spits on the ground. "All decked out for an adventure, ain't we?" he says. He snorts and laughs at what he perceives to be his own cleverness. "Hey, Cruenk, come look'it what we got here," he shouts to a stout, ruddy-faced dwarf, whom you now notice walking beside a wagon filled with dead bodies. The wagon is being pulled by four more dwarven slaves, to whom Cruenk barks out an order to stop.

As the dwarf moves forward to have a look at your group, the human continues to taunt you.

* * *

The human, who is a slave trader, and the Dwarfeng Cruenk are on their way to (or from) Ashlaeden.

If the party passes by without attacking, the humans and the Dwarfeng will simply continue to verbally harass the group.

If the party manages to free the slaves, they will be too weak to travel too much further without assistance.

The eight slaves are all Skill 0.

Slave Trader, *human, Skill 4 fighter*
ST: 16, *IT:* 9, *IN:* 8
DX: 11, *SM:* 16, *AP:* 6
AC: 5, *HTK:* 4D10
MV: 12″
AL: Chaotic/Evil
AT: 1, *DM:* 2-8
THACO: 18
Weapon: Broadsword

Cruenk, (see *Special Non-Player Characters* section)

BB ***HUMAN THIEF***

NOTE: This encounter can occur only once and only in Ashlaeden. If the party is in any other area in **REGION III**, or if this encounter has occurred already, treat this as *no event.*

Read the following to the players:

You are moving through the streets of Ashlaeden when you hear a high, squeaky voice behind you, "Please, good folk, help me!" They have guards looking for me!" You turn around and see a short, wiry man with red hair. As he tries to catch his breath, he motions you over to a hiding place.

After glancing around to make sure that no one notices his presence, he pulls a blue gem from the leather pouch on his belt. "It's Rigold," he says. "I took it from this despicable Dwarfeng named Cruenk down at the tavern. He must have confiscated it from one of the captured Bzontras. He was quite drunk and my thieving skills are not meager, but one of his flesh-dealer buddies happened to see me take it and called out for someone to summon the guards. Luckily, I was able to run from the tavern before any guards arrived."

* * *

Provided the characters don't attack the man, he will introduce himself at this point as Samuel Cutslefe, "thief extraordinaire". He will then say that he was once new to this area as a young adventurer himself. Samuel will then tell the party that although he does not wish to discourage them from adventuring in Verdaise, he would like to tell them of his experiences with the Lichlord Council. After asking the player characters if they could spare some time to listen, he will relate the story given in the *Special Non-Player Characters* section.

SPECIAL NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

This section may help the Gamemaster fill in an adventure by providing local history or background information through a non-player character. Each character is listed by name, location of appearance, and story subject (if applicable).

Name: **Samuel Cutslefe**
Location: Picking pockets in Ashlaeden or any crowded city of Western Duur.
Story: Information on Rigold and Lichlord Council.

Samuel Cutslefe, *Skill 12, human thief*
ST: 14, *IT:* 12, *IN:* 11
SM: 14, *DX:* 16, *AP:* 12
AC: 5, *HTK:* 11D8
MV: 9″
AT: 1
DM: 3-9 shortsword, 1-4 dagger.
AL: Chaotic/Neutral
THACO: 16 (14 with short sword)
Equipment: +1 leather armor, +2 short sword, Ring of Fire Resistance

Samuel is short and wiry with tufts of red hair tucked behind his ears. He speaks excitedly in a high, squeaky voice.

The following is Samuel's account of his experience with the Lichlord Council:

"I was summoned by Darselai to speak to the Council, for I knew of the entrance to the old Dwarven city of Edruzev. Darselai wanted to know where it was because she thought it might be a Bzontra hideout.

"I really had no choice in the matter because one night, while I sat dining at a roadside inn, a rather pale-looking man engaged me in conversation. It was only when he smiled and I saw the sharp fangs of his teeth that I tried to run, but it was too late. His eyes were hypnotic; I had fallen under his power. He led me to his waiting carriage and we sped away into the night.

"After a long journey to the Dvegar Mountains, we came to a river of lava. We left the carriage and walked on foot, following the course of the river through a gap in the steep cliffs that rose above us.

Once we were through the gap, we mounted an enormous skeletal creature that took us to a slave camp. Here I was hung upside-down from a pole, my shirt stripped from me. Soon scores of horrible creatures gathered around. For a while, they taunted me by spitting or getting close to me so that I could smell their foul, rotting stench.

"Then a robed figure, whom I recognized as the Lichlord Nightbay, was carried in on a sedan chair and placed before me. He shouted a command and all of the creatures ran to a large bin that was filled with pieces of black rock. They cut me with the sharp edges of the ebony-colored rocks and watched as my blood flowed onto each rock.

"I couldn't understand why they were doing this until one of the rocks that they cut me with began to change. It started to smoke; when the smoke cleared, the rock was transformed into a tiny gemstone, as blue as the sky on a cold winter's day. This gem was then handed to Nightbay.

"My torture continued for an hour until I was nearly dead. I was cut loose and caged; shortly afterward, I passed out.

"When I awoke, I was laying in the center of a large pentagram. At each point of the pentagram, a robed figure sat upon a throne of blood-red rock. I recognized each one of them; they were the members of the Lichlord Council. My right arm burned from where a slice of skin had been removed from shoulder to wrist.

"Slowly, one of the robed figures approached. I could see none of its features except for the skeletal hands that wrapped a long thin piece of skin—which I believe was my own—around its forehead. The skin was decorated with strange writings.

"It was then that the Lichlord began the interrogation. If I lied or hesitated to answer, the Lichlord touched its bony hands to the band of skin on its brow. Immediately, sharp pains shot through my head, and I felt as though wooden nails were being pounded into my skull.

"After I had given the information that the Lichlord desired of me, the Lichlord touched me and I could no longer move. I was blindfolded and led away. Later I was escorted out of Verdaise, given a horse, and left to find my way back."

Name: **Struuch**
Location: Circle of Stones in the adventure, *Brooding Dragon*
Story: Attack on Woldham.

Struuch, *Skill 3 dwarven fighter*
ST: 8, IN: 12, IT: 11
DX: 10, SM: 7, AP: 8
AC: 10, *HTK:* 2D8
MV: 6″
AL: Lawful/Good
AT: 1, *DM:* 1-4 fist
THACO: 18

Tired and worn from his years as a slave, Struuch is bent and badly scarred. His long, dark beard drags along the ground and bushy eyebrows nearly conceal his small, dark eyes.

If he is saved from the wight in the adventure, *Brooding Dragon,* he will be grateful. After drinking as much liquid refreshments as he possibly can, he will proceed to talk about his capture and the attack upon Woldham.

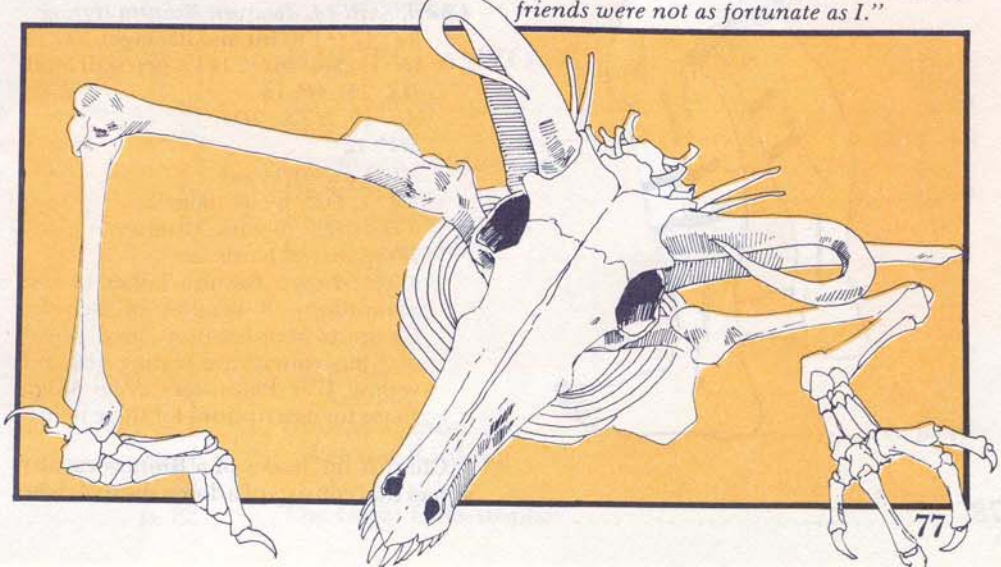
He will follow his rescuers until befriended by local Bzontras, who will guide him back to safety outside of Verdaise. The following is the tale of Struuch, a survivor of the attack on Woldham.

"It started with the Death Dragons. They seemed to be dead and cold like winter winds. Suddenly, they turned and reared. They shook their wings; we were then hit by a fierce storm of ice. Afterwards they flew to safety. Then, great masses of zombies and skeletons came through the caldera gap. I saw the great Lichlord Nightbay leading them. He was riding a nightmare that was decorated with bleached skulls and barded with ivory scales.

"With just a stare he could give orders to his army; and the battle was soon to begin.

"We were still in shock from the explosion, but we had enough wits about us to recognize our plight. We fought valiantly in the face of terrible odds, but the thunderous footfalls of the War Mammoth dispelled any hopes of victory. Hundreds of these monsters began charging through the zombies and skeletons.

"Trampling everything in sight, the mammoths routed us. I was lucky enough to escape through another gap in the caldera with a few others. Many of my kin and friends were not as fortunate as I."



Name: **Cruenk**
Location: Ashlaeden

Cruenk, *Skill 7 fighter (Dwarfeng)*
ST: 16, *IT:* 12, *IN:* 10, *DX:* 14,
SM: 16 (+2 HTK per Skill level),
AP: 13
AC: 5, *HTK:* 9D8
MV: 9″
AL: Neutral/Evil
AT: 1, *DM:* 2-9 battle axe, 2-5 dagger plus poison — save vs. Poison or die.
THACO: 14
Equipment: studded leather armor, battle axe, poison-tipped dagger, +2 Ring of Protection, Potion of Gaseous Form, small leather pouch with 20 pp, 35 gp, 6 sp and a small emerald worth 300 gp

Cruenk is considered by many of his race to be a traitor because he deals in the flesh trade of slavery. He cares little whether the race is human, elven, shire-folk, or dwarven. Because of this lack of loyalty towards his own race, he has been named a *Dwarfeng,* (which means *not of the dwarves*) by the Bzontras.

Cruenk also sells wagonloads of dead bodies in Ashlaeden to serve as new recruits for the undead legions. He (or a paid grave robber) exhumes these bodies from crypts and burial grounds.

In return for slaves, Cruenk receives weapons which he then sells to orcs in eastern Duur. He receives gold for the corpses.

Ruddy-faced and stout, Cruenk has a thin mouth that perpetually curls up in a snarl. A pipe hangs from his lips, though it is rarely lit. A curly beard is trimmed close to his waist, which he tucks inside his belt buckle.

Quick to anger and slow to forgive, Cruenk has few friends, but he is well regarded among the undead for his excellent selection of flesh and his consistency of delivery.

Name: **Charl**
Location: War Mammoth encounter of the *Random Events* section.
Story: Recounts sight of Nightbay's rise from grave

Charl, *Skill 14, dwarven Bzontra fighter*
ST: 17 (+1 to hit and damage), *IT:* 14
IN: 15, SM: 16 (+2 HTK per Skill level)
DX: 14, *AP:* 16
AC: 10, *HTK: 9D8*
MV: 12″
AL: Lawful/Good
AT: 1, *DM:* by weapon
THACO: 7 (5 with battle axe)
Weapons: +2 battle axe
Magic Items: Bzontra lasher (3 uses remaining), 3 candles of Beinder, Chains of Manifestation, small pouch of 3 jars containing orange, red, and yellow War Paint. (See *New Magic Items* for descriptions for these items.)

Charl is the leader of a Bzontra cavalry squad that consists of a dozen dwarves who ride trained rompos on their patrol of the southern reaches of Verdaise. Expertly acquainted with the terrain and sources of food and water, Charl's group is specially prepared for missions that may take them away from the main camp for two weeks at a time.

Outgoing and loyal, Charl's smooth face shows few traces of his years spent fighting Nightbay's warriors. His youthful appearance is enhanced by his shock of golden hair.

Tall for a dwarf, Charl stands 4½ feet tall, with a large belly that droops over his belt. Charl claims that his paunch is the result of having no hair on his face and says, *"It's where I store the extra protein."*

The following description should be read to the players if Charl is asked about the Lichlord or Nightbay.

"We found what looked like an ancient shrine in the woods outside of Toredo. A sense of evil overwhelmed all of us as we cut through the underbrush. Our leader, Mershan, discovered a bloodstained altar and was in the process of examining it when I tripped over a low mound in front of it. I began to poke at the mound with my dagger and tear away the thick-set brambles when I heard Mershan cry out.

"The bloodstains on the altar liquified before our eyes and formed tiny streams that flowed towards the mound where I kneeled. Mesmerized, I touched the blood and was immediately paralyzed. Helplessly I watched the blood sink into the mound and felt the earth moving beside me. Something was crawling from that lump of dirt, something with a stench so horrible I wanted to retch.

"Slowly, the thing tore itself from the ground and ripped away the weeds covering its grave. It was dead, but not wholly decayed. Its eyes glowed with a light not of this earth. I would call it a zombie, but no zombie could have done to my friends what this creature did.

"When I could finally move again, the time for help had passed. Mershan leaned against the altar by a pool of blood and vomit. He had been tortured horribly, yet the monster could not have been by his side more than a few minutes.

"Another companion, Petran, was lying on his stomach. He was still breathing, but his skin was rotting. I turned him over only to see a mass of flesh fall from his face. The best I could for my old friend was plunge a dagger deep into his heart and end his suffering.

"Our last companion, Alestri, was never found. I feel that I did him wrong; perhaps he wanders the land as a living corpse, never to find peace.

"From the descriptions of Nightbay that I've heard since, I am sure that this was his doing. To think that it may have been possible to destroy him if only we knew what we had found . . ."

REFERENCE INDEX

The page numbers given refer to where the major explanation and/or the first mention is found on the topic.

NEW SPELLS

Become Non-Corporeal ..... p. 14
Decompose ..... p. 13
Enhanced Animate Dead ..... p. 14
Entomb ..... p. 14
Mist from the Grave ..... p. 13
Shroud ..... p. 13
Torture ..... p. 13

NEW MAGIC ITEMS

Brain Dust ..... p. 15
Bzontra Lasher ..... p. 18
Candles of Beinder ..... p. 16
Cape of Turning ..... p. 15
Chains of Manifestation ..... p. 16
Crystal of Summoning Ectoplasmics ..... p. 16
Death Horn ..... p. 15
Fingers of Xenadar ..... p. 17
Holy Sword of Griswold ..... p. 16
Masks of the Dead ..... p. 19
Pontificus' Magic Tusks ..... p. 17
- Arm of Chance
- Arm of Misfortune
- Statue of Control
- Statue of Empathy

Rigold ..... p. 19
Scroll of Fatigue ..... p. 15
Staff of Earth Fire ..... p. 17
War Paints ..... p. 19

NEW MONSTERS

Ash Steed ..... p. 27
Blood Spirit ..... p. 27
Cecrops ..... p. 23
Children of Pnogwyn ..... p. 22
Death Dragon ..... p. 25
Fear Spider ..... p. 23
Flame Zombie ..... p. 26
Hoodoo Men ..... p. 23
Ionic Discarnate ..... p. 27
Moonscourge ..... p. 26
Offspring of Nightbay ..... p. 23
Rompo ..... p. 26
War Mammoth ..... p. 24

PLACES

Western Duur ..... p. 4
- Dvegar Mountains ..... p. 4
- Forest of Evernight ..... p. 4
- Grimspade Desert ..... p. 4
- Ironhead ..... p. 4
- Oribrand ..... p. 30
- Pnogwyn ..... p. 22
- Roguestead ..... p. 4
- Sea of Dreams ..... p. 4
- Woldham ..... p. 4

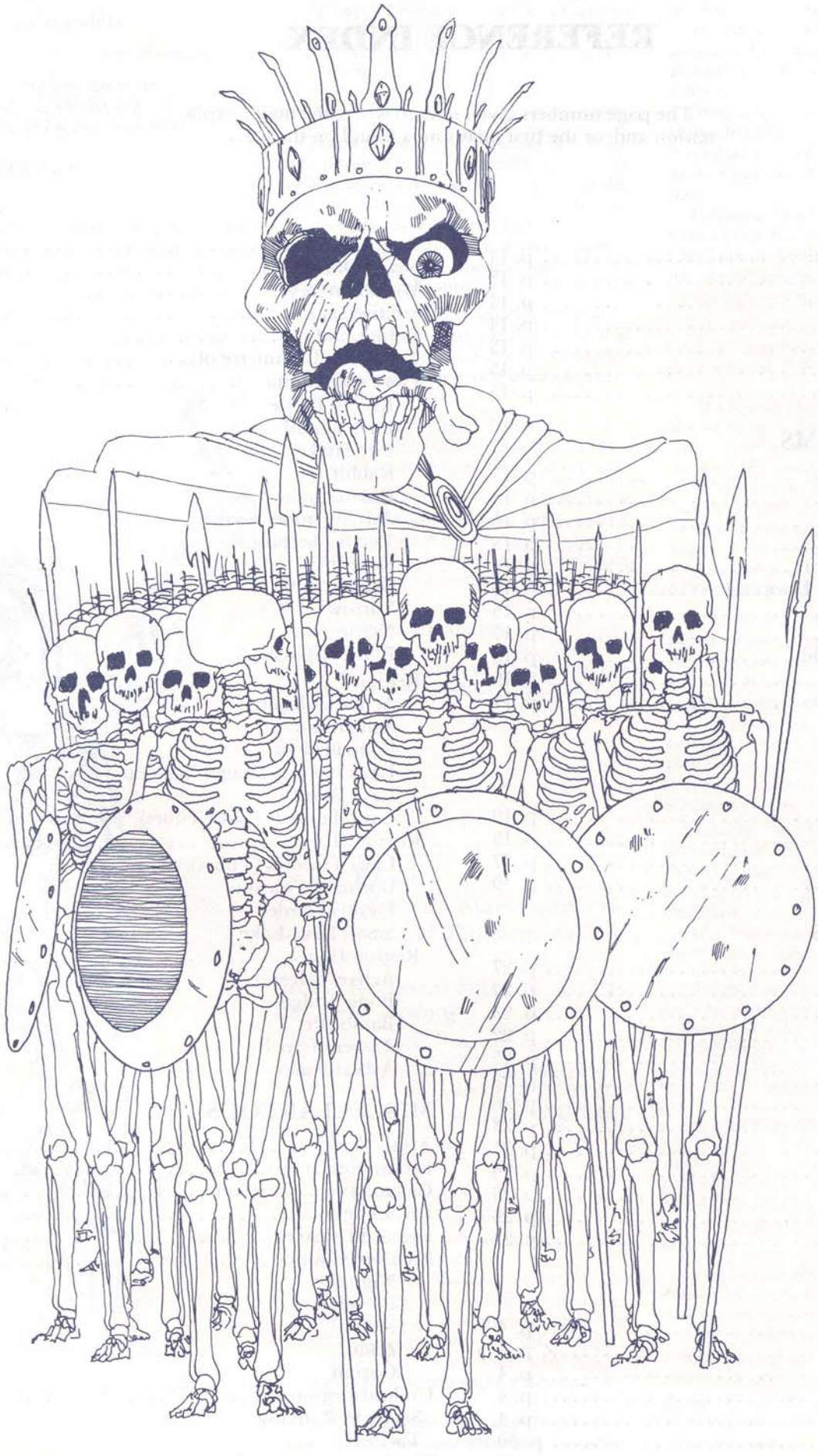
Verdaise ..... p. 28
- Religion of ..... p. 30
- Trade and Commerce of ..... p. 28
- Flora and Fauna ..... p. 32
  - Rigold Beetle
  - Lava Lizard
  - Fire Snake
  - Rabbit
  - Desert Quail
  - Ash Swimmer Snake
  - Yucca Aberration
  - Rafleshia
  - Black Cactus
  - Yarrow
  - Nettle
  - Black Nightshade
- Region I ..... p. 35
  - Active Volcano
  - Ash Dunes
  - Bone Bridges
  - Lava Lake — Dragon's Blood
  - Lava River
  - Lava Tunnels (Lava Tubes)
- Region II ..... p. 37
  - Lava Tunnels (Tubes)
  - Dormant Volcano
  - Fleshly Garden
  - Small Lava Lake
- Region III ..... p. 41
  - Active Volcano
  - Bone Bridge
  - Batholith
  - Tower of Spells
  - Ashlaeden

MISCELLANEOUS

Azur's Scroll ..... p. 19
Bzontra (dwarves) ..... p. 12
Ceremonies of Creation ..... p. 19
Dwarfengs ..... p. 30
Elgaard Dwarves ..... p. 4
Lichlord Council ..... p. 6
- Nightbay
- Darselai
- Kemal
- Zekur
- Garian

Undead Legion ..... p. 10
- Skeleton Ranking
- Tactics

The Great Catastrophe ..... p. 4



How To Use This Book

Conventions include the 'D' abbreviation for "die" or "dice". 1D20 means roll one 20-sided die; 1D100 (or D%) means roll two 10-sided dice sequentially, generating a percentage or number between 01 and 00 (00 is read as 100); 3D6 means roll three 6-sided dice and add the results for the sum.

Value assumes, with medieval level of civilization, that the value of one gold piece is about $20 in current U.S. dollars. An income of 20 gold pieces (or gp) would be a very profitable day for a merchant, but 5-10 gold pieces is a more likely sum for a day's effort. Hirelings' wages are usually 10 gp per day per Skill level, with a dramatic increase for jobs that are perceived to be dangerous.

Armor Class works on a scale where a lower number is better. A character with no armor has AC: 10. A shield adds one step to make it AC: 9; chain mail is AC: 5; and plate and shield is AC: 2.

HTK means Hits To Kill. This is the number of dice that a character or monster has before he is killed. The type of dice used for a character depends on a character's class; monsters always use D8.

THACO is a convenient statistic meaning "To Hit Armor Class 0". When you know someone's THACO, you will know the number required to score a successful hit with a D20 (or multiply that number by 5 to get the percentage chance of success). A target's Armor Class is subtracted from the attacker's THACO to obtain the required die roll on a D20.
For Example, if Erik's THACO is 16 and the target is wearing chain mail with no shield (AC: 5), Erik needs to roll 11 or less on a D20 (16-5 =11) or roll 55 or less on a percentile dice (11 x 5% = 55%).

Characteristics (or Attributes, Ability Scores, or Statistics) are derived from 3D6. The lowest score for a human is 3 and the highest score is an 18 (00).

Saving Throws (Saves) decide how you are affected by spells, poison, etc. You are often required to roll a certain number on a D20; if you roll that number or over you succeed and the effects of the attack on your character are reduced or negated. Remember, for normal saving throws you must roll **equal to or greater than** your character's saving throw number to succeed.

Ability Rolls on your character's abilities or statistics work much like saving throws. On certain occasions, your character will be directed to "save vs." or "save against" a basic statistic.

For example, if you want to detect a lie or get information, you may have to save on a die roll vs. your Insight (IN).

Roll a D20 for all saves vs. ability scores. If the number is **equal to or lower than** the ability score, you make your save. You are able to tell if a person is lying or notice an important clue.
Ability rolls are often modified. If you are instructed to make an IN ability roll (a roll vs. your IN) at +3, you add 3 to the die roll. For example, if your IN is 12 and you roll a 10, you still fail to save (10+3 = 13).

Maps: Most of the time, adventure maps will be at the end of (or the middle of) an adventure and not scattered throughout the book. See Table of Contents of this book for the page numbers of maps.

Reading the Entries

Each of the entries in this book has two sections. What the GM reads to the players is printed in *italic type*. This portion of the text is followed by three asterisks, as follows:

* * *

The portion of the text that tells what the GM should know is printed in regular (Roman) type.

Any information that is of special interest to the GM in conducting the adventure will be indicated by the words: **GM NOTE.**

Example:

11 CASCADE
Entrance to Cavern Level II

A small waterfall flows from a hole in the center of the ceiling. It feeds a stream that cuts through the cave and flows down the passageway to the east.

* * *

The hole in the ceiling is about 8' in diameter and it leads up vertically. The rush of falling water is not sufficient to impede a climbing attempt.

GM NOTE: This hole in the ceiling is the only access to Cavern Level II.

In some cases, the party will confront more than one opponent in a cave or room. When this happens, the number of attacking opponents will be shown in parenthesis before the opponents' name or monster type, as in this example:

(6) Dire Wolves
AC: 6, *HTK:* 3D8+3
MV: 18"
AL: Neutral
IT: Semi-
AT: 1, *DM:* 2-8
THACO: 16

ABBREVIATIONS

AC . . . . . Armor Class
HTK . . . . . Hits to Kill
MV . . Movement in ft. per melee round
/#" . . . . . Flying Speed
//#" . . . . . Swimming Speed
AL . . . . . Alignment
AT . . . . . Attacks per melee round
DM . . . . . Damage per attack
THACO . . . . . To Hit Armor Class 0
Special . . . . . Special attacks or defenses
ST . . . . . Strength
IT . . . . . Intellect
IN . . . . . Insight
DX . . . . . Dexterity
SM . . . . . Stamina
AP . . . . . Appeal
gp . . . . . gold pieces
sp . . . . . silver pieces
4/2/1 . . . . . Spells per level of spell
ft. . . . . . Feet
EP . . . . . Experience Points
GM . . . . . Game Master
Mage . . . . . Magic-User
TIME:
Segment . . . . . 6 Seconds
Melee Round . . 10 Segments, 1 minute
Turn . . . 10 Melee Rounds, 10 minutes

THE LICHLORDS ROSE TO POWER AS THE LAND FELL TO THEIR ARMIES.

As molten fire spewed forth from the fissures in the earth, the Lichlords' leader Nightbay sent hordes of his skeletal legions over the blasted lands. He would claim this place and the dwarves that inhabit it for his own evil rule.

Travel through these vast lands and battle Nightbay's armies!

***Undead* is a reference work that includes an adventure for 4-6 Player Characters of Skill levels 6-9.**

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ISBN 0-912771-42-9

0986-737MFG10.00

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