

THE SULLENLANDS ADVENTURE OMNIBUS AND GUIDE

BY MARK BISHOP

COMPATIBLE WITH

**DCC
RPG**





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THE SULLENLANDS ADVENTURE OMNIBUS AND GUIDE

BY MARK BISHOP

A DUNGEON CRAWL CLASSICS RPG CAMPAIGN RESOURCE
FEATURING FOUR FULL ADVENTURES, CITIES, THIEVES GUILDS, NEW
MONSTERS, MAGIC ITEMS, AND A HOST OF RANDOM TABLES!

Author's Introduction	3
Nebin Pendlebrook's Perilous Pantry	7
The Frost Fang Expedition.....	47
The Crypt in Cadaver Canyon	117
Life in the Sullenlands Campaign Guide	175
The Bellows of Bromforge	284



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AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

"Adventure is worthwhile."

Aesop

In the summer of 1979, the middle-school group of friends I belonged to heard about a new game you played with funny dice and graph paper. The game had no board, no tokens, no cards, and no-one who could really tell us how it was meant to be played. But Andy Bucknam, who was a full year older than the rest of us, took the mysterious book, read it, and said that he thought he could be the "dungeon master". And so, to the best of his ability, he ran a game for us.

On Saturdays that summer, my dad would drive me to Andy's house and drop me off with a little bit of pizza money. There I'd meet my fellow adventurers, and we, with our character sheets before us, would gather around a pool table. We'd chart maps on 1/4" graph paper as we made our way through dark labyrinths filled with strange and wicked creatures, all in a quest to find artifacts and treasures.

The weeks flew by, and soon the summer ended, along with our campaign into that wonderful, foreign world. We soon began a new kind of adventure as we left middle school behind and started high school. We were never able to get back to rolling those funny-looking dice again. Life changed. And we moved on.

Fast forward through the years... past school, past work, even beyond getting married and producing two wonderful daughters with my wife, until eventually something magical happened: in 2004 while we shopped as a family, our oldest daughter found a Dungeons and Dragons Starter Set. "What's this dad?" she asked. "I've heard of this."

"Oh wow... that brings back memories," I responded. I bought the box set, we played the adventure included within... and so it began. The fire had been rekindled.



But while the game was still fun (4th edition), something about it had changed from what I had remembered. The art had become slick and commercial. The game was more tactical now. Yes, the powers were cool, but the reliance on minis and maps pushed the theatre of the mind to the back burner. The game I remembered from long ago was just a little subversive and dangerous. We had felt like we were on the frontier of some strange country. I was still enjoying playing the game again, but it just wasn't what it was before.

The game I had remembered from before had been looked upon with skepticism from adults, as if we kids were trifling with powers best left alone. There was something about it that had felt very underground, like an undiscovered secret. It captivated my thoughts and imagination. The game we had played back in the day made us feel like we were on the edge of a new, untamed frontier. Now, I just wondered if that same feeling was still out there... somewhere.

It took a few more years of playing before I discovered the **Dungeon Crawl Classics** rulebook. Before I'd finished the first chapter, that long-lost feeling had somehow found me again. It was everything that I had remembered about our first game in 1979. The art sometimes seemed crude and unrefined, but I kept coming back to the images and their elemental power: they inspired me in ways more polished or safe art never could. The ruleset was old-school, and packed with cool features, but the experience was easily accessible to my new players who by this point were familiar with the d20 system. We played it as written, and we never looked back.

The community around DCC encourages creativity, and being a creative soul myself, one thing soon led to another and before I knew it **Nebin Pendlebrook's Perilous Pantry** was born. **The Frost Fang Expedition** followed, and after that, **Joseph Goodman** himself published an adventure of mine called **Sisters of the Moon Furnace** in the **Goodman Games Gen Con Guide**.

Now we proudly bring you a new adventure entitled **The Crypt in Cadaver Canyon**, along with an omnibus collection that combines all three of my Purple Sorcerer adventures in one place. Enhanced with, oh yes, a customizable campaign setting



suitable to house these adventures plus any others you'd like to drop into your unique world. We've designed things to be flexible: there are so many great DCC adventures out there, we thought it would be cool for a Judge to have a map and environment where it's easy to tie all your adventures together without much hassle.

Perhaps one day Dungeon Crawl Classics will grow to be the behemoth that the world's most popular RPG is, but if I'm being honest with myself, I hope not. (Sorry Joseph). Right now, this game still belongs to those who remember the untamed danger of their first table-top role-playing experiences, and I think that's wonderful.

Thank you Mr. Goodman and your stable of talented writers and artists who have remembered how to get back to that fog-enshrouded grove. Thank you Jon Marr for first indulging an amateur writer's crazy submission about a halfling who gets lost in his pantry. Thank you to all of the folks who have supported Jon's remarkable work in the DCC community by purchasing Purple Sorcerer games and helping out when there is a pledge drive to support those amazing online tools.

Thanks most of all to you my friends, for all those Saturdays when you too remembered to bring some pizza money, rolled up a character, and then held your breath as the chains clattered, the portcullis slammed shut behind you, and the torch light blew out.

Everyone roll a d20... and be sure to add your Luck modifier.

Enjoy!

Mark Bishop
May, 2019



A QUICK NOTE FROM THE PURPLE SORCERER

I remember clearly when Mark first contacted me with the idea for his first adventure: Nebin Pendlebrook's Perilous Pantry. I was immediately charmed by Mark's writing and art styles, and I had a pretty good idea from the beginning that the adventure would prove popular with new judges, as well as judges looking to introduce The Dungeon Crawl Classics RPG to new players. And I was right! We've heard from dozens of judges who have had a fantastic experience running the adventure, and as a publisher, that really is the point of everything we do. There are few things more satisfying than knowing that we've played a small part in bringing some fun to the gaming community!

Now five years later, you hold this massive compilation of Mark's creative mind in your hands. Its 300+ pages are filled with four adventures:

- Nebin Pendlebrook's Perilous Pantry (0-level)
- The Frost Fang Expedition (1st level)
- The Crypt in Cadaver Canyon (2nd level)
- The Bellows of Bromforge (2nd level mini-adventure, featuring the absolutely amazing art of Misinkthrope!)

It also contains:

- World details: cities, towns, and thieves guilds
- New Monsters
- New Magic Items
- Random Encounters and Events
- Tables, and more Tables
- And much more!

On a personal note, this project provided me with the opportunity to work with two of my all-time favorite artists: Peter Mullen and Stefan Poag. That alone made the project worth while on my end!

I hope you love the Sullenlands Adventure Omnibus and Guide. Working with Mark is always a joy, and it's my hope that you will sense Mark's love for what he does in every page. Thanks to one and all for continuing to support us in our desire to bring a little fun and adventure into the world. - **The Purple Sorcerer**



Nebín Pendlebrook's Perilous Pantry

An Instant Action 0-level Funnel Adventure
by Mark Bishop



Nebin Pendlebrook's Perilous Pantry Credits

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Nebin Pendlebrook's Perilous Pantry

Danger Under Bitterweed Barrow

Introduction

The sleepy little village of *Bitterweed Barrow* harbors an ancient secret. Beneath the placid farms and the quaint town square runs a dark and mysterious labyrinth; a network of tunnels forged in another dimension by a twisted wizard named *Moldark Zeroth*. The town's portly halfling—*Nebin Pendlebrook*—uncovered a doorway into this hidden place while burrowing into the hillside to enlarge his food pantry before the coming winter, soon after vanishing into the inky darkness without trace. The local constable investigated the matter and now he is missing too! The folks of Bitterweed Barrow have grown fearful of what might have been unleashed upon their village and in desperation have gathered to form a search party. Their task? To find their neighbors and uncover the mystery that lies beyond Nebin Pendlebrook's unexpectedly perilous pantry!

This 0-level funnel adventure is intended to be run in one short action-packed session with 16 to 24 0-level characters divided equally among the players. Along the way, players will encounter creative and mysterious environments, foreign and dangerous creatures and an opportunity to forge an origin story for their future wizards, warriors, clerics, and thieves.

Background and Overview

Nebin Pendlebrook is a rotund and jolly halfling who lives on the outskirts of Bitterweed Barrow. His home is a simple dwelling burrowed into the west-facing hill. A week ago while digging further into the hillside to enlarge his food pantry before winter, Nebin's shovel unearthed a tunnel that descended downward into cool, shadowy gloom. With his curiosity defeating common sense, Nebin stepped into the dark to investigate, and never returned. Three days passed before anyone in the village noticed his absence, and another morning went by before the village constable entered the breach to search for the halfling. While the rest of the village waited in mounting dread, three days slid by in agonizing silence. With





no sign of the constable, it appears something terrible waits in the dark below Nebin Pendlebrook's formerly cozy home.

The local residents have gathered together at ***The Bloody Bullfrog Tavern*** to discuss the matter and to form a search party. There are no seasoned adventurers in Bitterweed Barrow, only hardy folk who work and toil each day to eek out a meager existence in a harsh borderland environment. Most have lived their entire lives in the village, never venturing more than a few miles from the modest dwellings where they were born.

They survive the harsh winters by bartering their goods and services, and some have never earned or even needed a coin. The forests and farms of Bitterweed Barrow have held little mystery for them... until now. They do not know it, but this may be the last day of toiling that many of these simple villagers will ever know. But for those who survive, the adventure that begins in Nebin Pendlebrook's pantry will change their lives and fortunes forever.



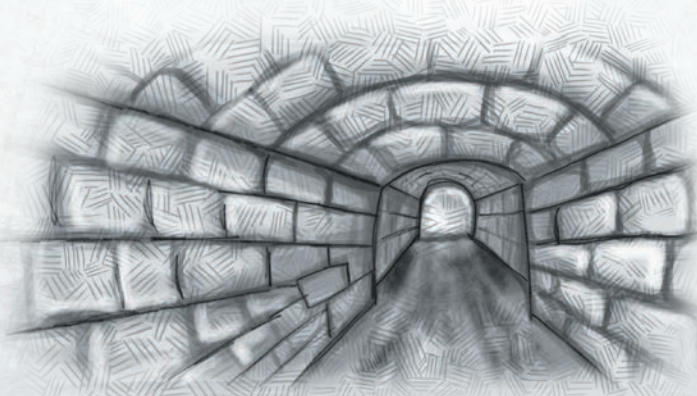
Player Introduction

(Read after character creation but before the players have spent their coin...)

The tiny village of Bitterweed Barrow sits on the edge of Ebon Wood, against the Barrier Hills. It is the only home that any of you have ever known. You are not adventurers, rather apple-pickers and shoe-cobblers; blacksmiths and poultry-farmers who form the backbone of this secluded borderland village.

Just last week, one of your neighbors –a portly halfling by the name of Nebin Pendlebrook– was digging into the side of the hill to enlarge his food pantry before the coming winter when his shovel unearthed a long-buried tunnel. No one even knew that the halfling had discovered the mysterious passageway until he was finally noticed missing three days later. Kelvran, the local constable, investigated the matter, and with lantern in hand descended downward into the tunnel to bring Nebin Pendlebrook back. Three more days have passed, and neither man has returned from his descent into the darkness.

So here you are, gathered together at the Bloody Bullfrog Tavern in your work aprons and muddy boots, holding shovels and sheep-shearing knives, to form a makeshift search party. Nebin Pendlebrook's hillside home is no more than a ten-minute walk from here. Should you anticipate needing any sundry items for the task, this would be the most opportune time to acquire them from the Tavern's stores, providing you can gather a few copper coins for the purchase. After that, you and your fellow citizens should tighten your belts, hold your makeshift weapon's close, and make the short journey to meet whatever fate awaits at Nebin Pendlebrook's hillside home.



Gathering Information

The Perilous Pantry is an *Instant Action Adventure* designed to be completed in a single session of danger-filled derring-do. If that's what you're looking for, proceed directly to page 15! (For additional tips about running the adventure in a tight time window, see **Appendix B: Moving Things Along** and **Appendix C: Judging Tips**.)

But if time is not an issue at your table—such as it might be at a gaming convention or game store event—then your players may wish to spend a little time conversing with the village's other patrons at The Bloody Bullfrog Tavern. Conversation may reveal bits of useful information. Regardless, it will provide an opportunity for players to role-play their new characters and meet their fellow adventurers. These activities can be combined with shopping for supplies at the tavern.

People and Places of Bitterweed Barrow

The Bloody Bullfrog Tavern: The inn and tavern was built nearly fifty years ago by the great-grandfather of the current owner (Solomon Gruth) who swore that on the day he broke ground for the foundation he witnessed a miracle: with the first spade of upturned earth, the sky turned dark and then—incredibly—it began to rain frogs upon the land where Solomon stood; the large amphibians bursting on impact in geysers of blood for a full minute! He knew then and there only one name could suit his tavern. Village lore, conversely, only remembers that old Solomon was deep in his cups that day.

Solomon Gruth III: Third in a line of Gruth men to own and run the Bloody Bullfrog Tavern, Solomon, along with his wife (**Sarah**) and daughter (**September**) serve an evening meal for those villagers who can afford such niceties. Although travelers seldom traverse the crooked path to Bitterweed Barrow, once every few weeks a merchant might pass through bearing finer fabrics and spices than the locals usually see. When this happens Solomon offers a meal and the spare room at the back of the tavern for a silver piece. Solomon is lean and lank, standing a little over six feet tall, fifty-ish with tufts of gray hair sprouting around each ear. Otherwise he is completely bald. He usually wears an apron and fancies himself a fine dancer. In the evenings, he will indulge this talent whenever his daughter picks up the fiddle.



September Gruth: The Gruth's twenty-two year old daughter, named for the month she was born, cooks meals, serves drinks, and cleans rooms at the tavern. She is slender like her father, with flowing brown hair. After the dishes are done for the evening, locals relax with a pint and listen around the crackling fireplace as she plays the fiddle. It was September who alerted the constable when Nebin failed to answer his door when she made her regular grocery delivery.

Constable Kelvran Stockton: A retired soldier, Kelvran returned to his birthplace in Bitterweed Barrow with a noticeable limp, favoring his right leg. Thirty-ish with a mop of unruly brown hair, Kelvran is the only law enforcement presence in the village. Tasked three days ago with finding the missing halfling, he too has come up missing.

Nebin Pendlebrook: Looked upon favorably by all of the villagers, this short and round halfling prides himself on good manners and a cheery disposition. His hair is as black as coal; his nose a fat and wide anchor upon which thick glasses rest. Nebin is nearly blind without his spectacles and is rarely seen without them. Recently, he purchased a fine top hat from a traveling merchant who regaled Nebin with fanciful stories of the bigger cities, filling his head with notions of wonderment concerning all that life outside the barrow might hold. And so of late, Nebin wore the hat everywhere and jabbered about perhaps one day taking a trip. It would be out of character indeed for the halfling to leave without saying goodbye, however.

Rumors and Scuttlebutt

If the players have taken the time to speak with the locals, each should select one of their characters to roll a d10 to uncover a piece of random information from the table below.

D10 Rumors:

1. "They say that he disappeared down a hole and has yet to return. I think he found a hidden mine and that he's keeping a great treasure to himself!"
2. "I've never known Mr. Pendlebrook to miss a meal, not that he couldn't stand to lose a few pounds. But the poor fellow can hardly see without his glasses... he just doesn't seem the exploring type."



3. "Ever since that peddler came through and filled his head with fanciful thoughts of high society life, he's not been the same... him and that silly hat! I wouldn't be surprised to learn he just up and left us."

4. "I've been by there in the wee hours and I've seen the light from inside and I heard the digging. He's up to something. It's time his secret was revealed."

5. "I don't know if it's a coincidence or not, but ever since he came up missing, my garden has been overrun by frogs. I suppose that sounds silly... but it's true!"

6. "What a fine fellow he was! Or is... it's sad to think something might have happened to the little bloke. If you are going to search for him, please take him these biscuits... he's sure to be starving." (Receive three wrapped biscuits.)

7. "I heard my father say that this land was somehow cursed and that one day we would all know it to be true. First Nebin... then the constable... I wonder if this is leading to something much, much worse for us all?"

8. "I'm afraid I lack the courage to investigate the matter. I can't imagine Nebin, half-blind as he is, plunging himself into a deep hole either. I feel the cold eyes of Death himself looking over our shoulders!"

9. "He did tell me of a tunnel he had unearthed, that sometimes, late at night, he heard whispers from the tunnel's darkness. I knew that his curiosity would get the better of him. He should not have gone in alone."

10. "Speak of this to no one... The halfling came to me in a dream. I swear it to be true! His face was pale and his eyes were empty but he sat upon a great treasure, singing and laughing. He was happy and sad, all at the same time..."



Into the Perilous Pantry

Encounter Table

Area	Type	Encounter
1-1	C	Piranha Salamanders
1-2	C	Toad-Spiders
1-3	T	Wizard's Chasm
1-5	C/T	Two-headed Hounds/Demon Fountains
1-6	T	Mirror Closet
1-7	C	Sentient Pudding
1-9	C	Giant Cave Grub
1-10	C/T	Skeletal Dwarves and Tortoise Nebin Pendlebrook/Door Trap
1-11	T	Prison Cell Block Drop
1-12	C	Stone Behemoth/Chest Mimic/Wizard

Luck Mechanic: Be sure to remind new players that they may burn luck to affect active attack and skill rolls. (DCC Rulebook, Page 95.) The burning of Luck points early on in the adventure could make some encounters easier to overcome, but low Luck scores could very well put the adventurer in greater peril later on in the story, so the players should be encouraged to be judicious!

Areas of the Map

When the characters have assembled their party, purchased their provisions and gathered at Nebin Pendlebrook's home, read or paraphrase the following:

Area 1-1, Nebin's home: *The day's work is done and you have all gathered to form a search party in front of Nebin's home. The orange twilight casts a soft glow upon the hand-carved walnut door set into the hillside. No light is burning from within. Nebin dug his pantry inside the walls of his home so that he would not have to walk in the frigid snows of winter; within, you will need to go.*

The door is unlocked. If anyone wishes to listen before entering, a successful DC 10 Listen check overhears skittering noises from inside. By peeking through the windows, characters can detect shadowy, indiscernible movements.



NEBIN PENDLEBROOK'S PERILOUS PANTRY



The first person through the door (or window) is greeted by a wave of skittering yellow salamanders pouring over their feet and limbs! The salamanders have blood-red eyes but under normal circumstances will not attack, instead quickly dispersing into the tall grasses and rocks of Nebin's lawn. If, however, someone happens to be holding any food (or small pets) in their hands, the tasty tidbits will attract the ravenous lizards, and the treat-bearer will discover that the starving salamanders possess rows of razor-sharp teeth. The character(s) must make a DC 8 Reflex save (to quickly discard the food or pet) or suffer 1d4 damage from a piranha-like attack: being viciously nibbled by thousands of tiny gnashing teeth. Unlucky characters in the front rank coming through the door—whose occupations provided a small animal—will see that creature devoured alive before their eyes.

Once inside, the party is greeted by a home obviously overrun by hundreds of starving piranha salamanders. Anything even remotely edible was devoured long ago. On the far wall leans a shovel resting near a large hole dug deeper into the hill. A **new torch** and **50' of rope** sit upon a small chair. A rough pathway is just visible beyond the mouth of the hole descending into darkness.

Area 1-2, Lair of the Toad Spiders: *The tunnel before you slopes downward into cool and silent darkness. The walls are rough-hewn rock but the footpath appears to be smooth, well-worn and covered in a thick layer of dust. There are two sets of footprints in the dust, both leading downward; neither lead back up.*

If the party continues into the opening, ask them about their light source and who is holding it, and then read the following:

The tunnel descends for nearly fifty feet before it opens into a taller and wider chamber. Stalactites hang from the ceiling above while stalagmites force a meandering path around the chamber floor. One set of footprints lead to the opposite wall of the chamber where they end abruptly. The other set simply stops in the middle of the cavern where the disturbed dust hints at some sort of scuffle. A small, shiny object glints in the dirt nearby.

The darkness above conceals two large, rubbery-skinned **toad-spiders** that will wait for the room to fill before they drop upon the two adventurers with the lowest Luck scores. Since they fear fire, anyone holding a torch is automatically



exempted from the attack. The toad-spiders will drop, envelop their prey in gooey strands of sinewy web (DC 16 Reflex save to avoid) and then quickly ascend with a character in their clutches back toward the ceiling, making no further attack until their next turn in the initiative order. On the next round their bound prey will suffer an acidic bite from the toad-spider's dagger-sized fangs. If a toad-spider is killed, it falls from the ceiling. Its captive has a 50% chance of falling with it, otherwise remaining suspended in the sinewy strands of thick webbing (DC 12 Strength check to escape). If the character and the spider should both fall, have the character roll under their Luck to see if their landing is cushioned by the dead spider, otherwise the fall and spider's weight causes 1d6 damage. Characters (trapped or otherwise) near the ceiling notice a small ledge if they look for it. If a character on the ground has no ranged weapon, there are ample angular rocks to throw at the spiders (Agility mod as the attack bonus; 1d4 damage). Ranged attacks into melee rules apply (DCC rulebook, page 96).

Toad-spiders (2+2): Init +2; Atk bite +2 melee (1d4 + acid); AC 12; HP 12; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP acid (DC 6 Fort save or additional 1d3 damage); SV Fort +2; Ref +2; Will +0 AL N. *(A gangly, eight-legged creature with sickly green skin like an open festering wound, but with the bulbous head of a toad.)*



There are three “cocoons” hanging amidst the moist webbing, near the ceiling (30' in height). Inside one of them is the decaying half-eaten body of Kelvran the constable. The other two bodies are dried husks

from an age past, their intestines long sucked out. If the characters manage to hack the cocoons down, they discover amongst the corpses a **hand axe**, a **rusty dagger**, a human-sized set of **padded armor**, and a pouch containing **14 copper pieces**. The shiny object on the floor in the middle of the room is a **set of eye-glasses**. The characters recognize the glasses as Nebin Pendlebrook's.

The hidden ledge holds the skeletal remains of an aged explorer, clutching a **fine dagger** in his withered hand. Turning



out his pockets reveals a **glass eyeball**, **7 gold coins**, and a small **kit of thieves' tools**. However, taking time to loot the body exposes the party to additional danger. Once the body is looted, two more spiders will emerge from the dark recesses of the ledge and attack in 1d3 rounds!

Where the second set of footprints ends at the wall of the chamber, characters examining the thick webs covering the wall notice they are subtly “breathing”. Behind the layers of sticky strands another tunnel continues on into the dark, its floor covered in more dusty footprints.

Area 1-3, Wizard's Chasm: *Again the tunnel winds downward, growing narrower as it descends. The walls and pathway are cold and damp, turning the dust to slime. From ahead you hear the flutter of a thousand wings. Suddenly, you are engulfed in a cloud of screeching, fluttering bats! As you attempt to fight off the bats, you find yourselves slipping forward on the path's steep slick surface of mud and loose gravel!*

This steep footpath ends at a gaping chasm. All on the path must succeed on a DC 6 Reflex save or tumble and slide into the chasm. All who slide over the edge may attempt a final DC 10 Luck check to grab the edge of the crevice or the nearby tree bridge. Failure results in falling 30 feet into the dark crevice and a likely grisly death, with characters suffering 3d6 falling damage.

(If the party is struggling to this point, or is low on numbers, consider exempting the back half of the party from needing to make saves (or lower the DC to 4) as they have additional time to catch themselves.)

Once the party has righted themselves at the chasm's edge, read or paraphrase the following:

The footsteps in the slime lead to a mossy, rotten tree that crosses the 20' chasm. The tree was obviously placed here as a rough bridge, as the gulf seems too wide to jump, but that was clearly long ago. Outcroppings of rocks jut out from the far side, and you can barely discern—a door?—set into the far wall.

Unencumbered, it takes a DC 18 Agility check to make the miraculous jump. Crossing the 20' chasm via the rotten bridge is simple, as long as the characters proceed one at a time, and avoid attempting to cross bearing inordinate weight. As the last person crosses, there is a 50% chance that the tree bridge





finally gives way. That character must make a DC 8 Reflex save or plummet to the bottom with the old log unless secured by rope or some other manner.

While standing near the edge of the chasm on either side, the adventurers will hear a faint whisper –“*Help me*”– that rises from the dark depths. The sound emanates from a speaking branch ensorcelled by a **magic mouth** spell. It has been whispering for ages. Near the branch lies the broken body of a long-dead man in wizardly robes. Should someone investigate the body, the man’s leather carrying bag contains various spell casting components such as raven’s feet, brittle frog husks and the skin of a snake, rolled like a parchment and tied with a ribbon. If someone unwinds the parchment, the runes inscribed upon it will begin to glow. A DC 12 Intelligence check grants the user the ability to cast **magic missile** (DCC rulebook, page 144) 1d4 times before the power is spent. (*Spell check: 1d16. Roll upon the manifestation table in the spell’s description to see how the spell manifests.*) The speaking branch is not a wand (merely a stick) and will continue to whisper its plea wherever it may go (the judge should remember this if the carrier of the whispering stick tries to make any sort of stealth check later).

A small tunnel, nearly hidden in the dark of the chasm, leads to the east. It is barely more than a crawl space, but humans can struggle through with minimal effort.

If characters cross the chasm by using the log or by jumping its width, on the far side they notice footprints in the muck leading up to the door to **Area 1-5**. If tested, the door is unlocked.

Area 1-4, The Secret Tunnel: *Not far from the old wizard’s crumpled and rotted body you spy an opening in the side of the chasm wall.*

It is a dark tunnel, much smaller than the one you just traversed. You would have to crawl single-file to navigate it, but it appears to be sound and dry.



This tunnel leads to the secret room in **Area 1-7b**. As the crawl space is navigated, a slight draft pulls any torch flames slightly forward. At times the tunnel becomes extremely cramped, but if the adventurers push on, they will arrive at an overhead grate without incident. A DC 12 Strength check is required to lift the wrought-iron grate and push it to the side. There is only room for a single character to make an attempt at a time. The small room above is dark.

Area 1-5, The Wellspring: *The weathered door is dry-rotted but sturdy. It swings open on rusty hinges revealing an open chamber of smooth marble walls and ornate tile floors covered in dust. In the center of the room, a circular column of water, six feet in diameter, rises from a well in the floor. It stands perfectly placid and still, defying gravity as it reaches all the way from floor to ceiling where it disappears into another hole above.*

If the party ventures further into the room with a light source, read or paraphrase the following: *There is a door on each of the four walls. Numerous scattered bones lie close to the door on the eastern wall. In the far northeastern corner a fountain protrudes from the wall in the misshapen form of a vaguely humanoid tree. It is carved of stone, and in its open cupped hands drops of condensation have formed a tiny pool. In the southeastern corner a small demon face juts from the wall. Its lower pool contains an equal amount of collected water.*

The room is approximately 40'x50'. The doors on each of the four walls are of similar construction: thick wood with wrought-iron metalwork. A DC 12 Intelligence check reveals the workmanship of the doors and room's masonry to be of dwarven craft. A dwarven character recognizes this automatically.

If the adventurers examine the footprints in the dust, they appear to have entered the room from the western door, proceeding first to the tree fountain. A DC 14 Intelligence check is required to deduce what path the footsteps followed from there: from the fountain to the northern door (which appears to have been opened, but not entered), then to the southern door (which appears to have remained shut) and finally to the door upon the eastern wall which appears to have been opened and passed through.





The column of water that defies gravity in the center of the room reaches from the floor to the ceiling, twenty feet straight up. If the characters touch the water, their hands will pass through the surface with no ill effect other than becoming wet. If the party tarries in the room for an extended period, they may notice a bucket dropped into the top of the water column from above. They will recognize it as the bucket used at the well in the village common area. It will quickly be filled and drawn back up. The characters can swim in the column of water but should they swim downward, they reach no bottom, only deepening darkness. Those swimming to the top of the column of water find themselves floating at the bottom of the village well. It is likely late evening, and, if so, no one hears their calls.



The tree-shaped forest sprite fountain contains one sip of water which magically bestows *1d4 temporary hp* to the first explorer of Lawful or Neutral alignment to drink from it. These hp will be the first subtracted from any hp loss. If a Chaotic character drinks, their true nature will be revealed for all to see as two small purple horns suddenly emerge from the top of their head! The horns gradually subside over the course of a week. (*You sip the cool waters and suddenly you hear the distant laughter and singing of faerie-folk.*)

Ancient script is inscribed above the forest sprite fountain. A DC 12 Intelligence check reveals the inscription to be a prayer to the goddess of nature, Ildavir. If the prayer is whispered in sincerity, a small stone medallion previously undetectable as part of the engraved tree will begin to glow. If detached from the wall it can act as a holy symbol, granting the owner the ability to **turn unholy** (DCC rulebook, page 96) in Ildavir's name three times. (*Spell check: 1d20*).

If the single available sip in the demon-face fountain is imbibed by a Lawful character, it will inflict *1d4 poison damage 1d4 rounds* after drinking. A Neutral character will be overwhelmed by an irrational fear of dark and confined places (!) and will avoid any action for *1d3 rounds*. A Chaotic character will gain *1d4 temporary hp*, but in *1d3 rounds* will make an unprovoked attack against the nearest creature, friend or foe. (*As you taste the tepid water, the demon's stone face briefly contorts into a smile.*)

As characters approach the eastern door, the scattered bones begin to rattle and coalesce into the forms of three skeletal guard dogs, each with two heads! The bone creatures will lunge at the nearest characters, attacking relentlessly until destroyed.

Two-headed Skeleton Hounds (3): Init +2; Atk bite -1 melee (1d4); AC 12; HP 4; MV 25'; Act 2d20; SP Makes two attacks (one from each head) on same target; undead, half damage from piercing and slashing weapons; SV Fort -1; Ref +2; Will +0; AL C. (*Cobbled together by ancient magic, their bleached bones are inscribed with glowing runes and glyphs.*)



Area 1-6, Mirror Closet: *The door is unlocked and opens outward into the chamber. Beyond is a small closet containing a mirror that runs from floor to ceiling; nothing else is present in the small enclosure. The mirror is covered in a thick layer of dust, so obscured you can barely see your own movements in its dim reflection.*

If a character wipes the dust from the mirror, they will clearly see a circlet of ethereal green glyphs and symbols rotating around the column of water, but only in the reflection in the mirror. The symbols are not visible in the actual room. The mirror is in fact an interplanar portal that leads to another realm, placed here long ago by the deceased wizard found at the bottom of the chasm (See sidebar: **The Realm Beyond the Mirror**). If the mirror is broken for whatever reason, the nearest adventurer to it must make a DC 14 Will save or be sucked into it as it repairs itself and reassembles. Anyone trapped inside the mirror may explore the room in the “mirror universe”, where they will

The Realm Beyond The Mirror

The Mirror Portal hints to the adventurers that there are things at work in this underground labyrinth far beyond their previous comprehensions. The strange creatures... the gravity defying well... the broken wizard... all are artifacts of the foreign realm linked by this portal.

Four centuries ago, the mad wizard **Moldark Zelroth** grew very powerful in arcane knowledge. His insatiable lust for power eventually led him to enslave an entire dwarven mining community. He commanded them to create the elaborate underground lair of his dreams. A century into the construction, the dwarves uncovered the portal between their world and ours. Even the mad wizard Moldark Zelroth feared the dangers of beings from two dimensions traveling back and forth between the two realms unfettered. He spent years in dedicated research before constructing and placing the gate at the threshold, cloaking the portal in the illusion of a simple mirror, a barrier of the mind as well as a tangible force. Perhaps this is why small creatures such as baby toad spiders and piranha salamanders unknowingly skitter back and forth between the two worlds uninhibited and free. But to any creature with reasoning power, the locked gate is a formidable barrier requiring great concentration and knowledge to cross.



confront the same Skeleton Hounds and other challenges as in the original labyrinth. Once a character crosses into the other plane, however, they cannot re-enter this plane from here, and will need to find their way home through further adventure!

The armory and secret room in **Area 1-7** can be approached from either **Area 1-5** or **Area 1-4**. If the party approaches from **Area 1-5**, they find the door locked (DC 12 Intelligence check to jimmy the lock, DC 10 with lock-picks; DC 12 Strength check to smash). If they approach the room via the tunnel from **Area 1-4**, they must enter through the heavy metal drainage grate (DC 12 Strength check to lift and move).



Area 1-7a, Armory: If the party arrives via **Area 1-5**, read or paraphrase the following:

The creaky wooden door jingles slightly, opening into a small room with two tables. The room is lined with stone alcoves and appears to have been an armory once, long ago. It stands mostly empty now, with thick dust upon the floor and shelves, but a few dust-covered items peek out of the gloom. As you enter, a few familiar skittering salamanders scamper across the walls and into the crevices of the stone walls where some of the large stones appear to be crumbling or loose.

The armory room is cramped, only 10'x10' square. On the tables and shelves, the characters find **two rusty short swords** in sheaths, a **batleaxe** with a dwarven face carved into the hilt, a **longbow**, a **quiver with 4 arrows** and a **rusty grappling hook** (50% chance it breaks on each use). There are also **two suits of rusty chain mail** fitted for a dwarf. Because of their age and disrepair, they will only offer a +2 bonus to AC. Closely examining the loose stones in the wall reveals that one large stone can be easily shifted, uncovering a short passageway to a hidden chamber beyond. If a character crawls through the 2'x2' crawl space, they discover the tiny chamber.



Area 1-7b, Secret Chamber: If the party arrives from the Wizard's Chasm tunnel (**Area 1-4**) read or paraphrase the following:

A tiny chamber waits beyond the drainage grate. Even standing shoulder to shoulder, you can only squeeze four—maybe five—of your party into the room at a time. A small stone altar stands in the middle of the tiny room. Atop it rests a peculiar artifact: a massive four-fingered hand affixed to the end of an oaken branch.

The hidden chamber is only 5' square and 6' tall. The item on the pedestal is a 3' long **heavy club** with a severed troll hand attached to the end. (1d6 damage. On a critical hit the troll fingers snap shut delivering an additional 1d4 claw damage, but the entire hand will detach from the shaft.)

As the party enters the chamber they disturb and awaken a **sentient pudding**. It takes the first opportunity to creep up the leg of the character with the lowest Luck score in the room when the club is lifted from the pedestal. If the pudding is subjected to a fire-based attack, it will flee into the tunnel, attacking the nearest adventurer as it retreats. While in the tiny confines of this room, the pudding can only be attacked by party-members actually in the chamber.

The crawl space leading to the armory is easily detected. It requires a DC 10 Strength check to push the stone aside and gain access to the armory.



Sentient Pudding: Init (last after a surprise round); Atk acidic creep +2 melee (1d4); AC 10; HP 8; MV 10'; Act 1d20; SP half damage from slicing and piercing weapons; double damage from fire-based attacks; SV Fort +0; Ref +2; Will -4; AL N. (*A mass of orange-brown mucous that quivers and creeps as it grafts itself to your skin.*)

The key that unlocks the door in **Area 1-5** leading to the hallway (and **Area 1-10**) hangs on the back of the armory door. Without this key, the door can alternately be smashed with a DC 12 Strength check or jimmied open with a DC 12 Intelligence check. Whoever opens the door will notice their hand is now coated with drying blood from the door handle. Though they cannot know for certain, it is indeed the blood of Nebin Pendlebrook.

Area 1-10, Dwarven Sanctum Hallway: *Beyond the doorway a set of stairs rises upward, ending in a crossing hallway running north and south. When the party proceeds: The passageway that leads to the north turns to the east about 30' from your location. A flicker of light dances from some source around the bend, beyond your sight. To the south, the hallway reaches another set of stairs that descend downward into darkness. Just before you at the junction, a black top hat lies on its side in the dust.*

The top hat is Nebin Pendlebrook's. Close inspection reveals a spatter of blood upon the rim. Should the adventurers search for more foot-steps, they easily discover dozens, marching north and south. A DC 14 Intelligence check reveals that something has also been dragged down the hallway that leads to the north.

Going North: The northern passageway leads directly to the Great Dwarven Hall (**Area 1-10**), a once festive and lively dinner hall for the dwarven miners. As the adventurers approach the northern-most bend in the passageway, they hear the faint sound of snoring. If they reach the doorway into the hall, read the description for **Area 1-10** The Great Dwarven Hall.

Going South: The southern hallway leads to a set of steps descending into darkness. Unless the adventurers have infravision, they require a light source to navigate the staircase by more than feel. The stairs end at another closed door (unlocked). Behind the door waits a long-abandoned kitchen, once used to prepare food for the miners. If the adventurers open the kitchen door, read or paraphrase the following:



Area 1-8, The Dwarven Cookery: *The door creaks open on rusty hinges, brushing back cobwebs spun thick across the jamb; many years have passed since last the door was opened. Inside, it is dark and the faintest aroma of old cheese wafts from the room. Though obviously long abandoned, it appears the chamber once served as a kitchen. Two preparing tables dominate the room, and an old stone hearth sits cold in the northern corner. Dozens of small shapes dangle from the ceiling wrapped in webs.*

The kitchen is covered in a thick layer of undisturbed dust, with no sign of footprints. The tables sit empty; the cupboards bare. A **wheel of cheese** peeks from a tattered and dilapidated burlap sack, hanging in the center of the room from an iron spike hammered into a ceiling joist. A horde of large blue spiders have spun elaborate webs near the joists that run alongside the hanging cheese, using it as irresistible and perpetual bait for mice and rats. Hundreds of tiny rodent bones picked clean by the spiders are still trapped in the webbing. Though the blue spiders are large and numerous, they pose no real threat; retreating into the shadows and crevices when approached. The cheese wheel, should it be procured, is dwarven made and cured to perfection using techniques lost to time. Dwarves and PCs with culinary occupations (cheese maker, baker, etc.) will recognize it could bring a handsome price of 25 gold pieces from knowledgeable merchants. Any aristocratic or noble dwarf would pay even more!

A small, wide door is fitted into the eastern wall, by its size clearly meant for none but dwarven-kind. It leads to the pantry/sleeping quarters for the cook's crew.

Area 1-9, The Dwarven Pantry: *This side room appears to have been an extension of the kitchen—a pantry perhaps—with a few beds, sized for a dwarven staff scattered about. In addition to the door you just entered, another door exits through the northern wall. It seems an earthquake or some other cataclysmic event has nearly sucked the room back into the bowels of the earth. The ceiling joists are broken and large stones have fallen through. The floor tiles are cracked and the loose earth has been pushed up. Beds and tables are overturned.*

As players make their way across this room to the northern door, dust and pebbles fall from the broken beams in the ceiling. And though players may guess a cave-in is the room's



greatest threat, they would be wrong: a large cave grub has made this area of the labyrinth its home, and is easily summoned by any noise or vibration. Characters must succeed on a DC 8 Agility check to quietly navigate the beams and rubble. A failed check will alert the grub to that character's presence, spurring a surprise round attack. After determining who is in the room, read or paraphrase the following:

Your boot catches a beam and a handful of pebbles and stones fall from the ceiling to the floor. As you hold your breath, the floor beneath you begins to rumble and quake. Suddenly a large alabaster-skinned grub-like creature pushes through the earth, as big around as the trunk of a tree! It arches its head like a snake, its open maw revealing row after row of finger-sized yellow teeth!

Judges Prerogative: At this point in the adventure, the judge may use their discretion as to whether the worm gets a surprise attack or if everyone rolls for initiative first. If the party has so far circumvented most of the encounters with little loss and you wish to offer them a true challenge, a surprise attack before rolling initiative is in order. If on the other hand, the party has suffered many losses at the hands of fickle die rolls or poor decisions, it might be appropriate to roll initiative first and let the heroes have a chance to draw first blood.

Giant Cave Grub: Init +0; Atk +3 melee (1d4 + swallow); AC 10; HP 20; MV 40' (burrow); Act 1d20; SP The worm waits beneath the ground to erupt and swallow any unlucky victim on a hit in a surprise round. Swallowed characters take 1d4 dmg, and an additional 1d4 damage every round they are inside. The character can escape with a DC 14 Agility check on their round. The grub is large enough to hold two characters at a time in its innards, retreating to the depths with its prizes when full. Trapped characters have one final round to escape before being lost forever as the grub vanishes into the earth; SV Fort +3; Ref +0; Will+0; AL N.



There is nothing of value in this room, only a few broken beds and dry-rotted mattresses. The door on the northern wall leads to a set of ascending stairs. When climbed, a crack of flickering light shines from beneath the closed door ahead. It is unlocked and leads to **Area 1-10**, the Great Dwarven Hall.

Area 1-10, The Great Dwarven Hall: *Flickering light shines from two large braziers burning at the northern end of a great hall. This is the largest chamber you have so far encountered in the underground labyrinth, its ceiling rising some 30 feet above! The light from the braziers cause shadow and light to dance across tall marble pillars lining the eastern wall. In the middle of the room dining tables are attended by the skeletal remains of long-dead miners slumped over dusty tankards and plates. Between the two burning braziers stands a peculiar throne: a tall wooden chair with the head of a great stag carved*



ornately into the top. The chair appears to be strapped to the large bleached hull of a skeletal tortoise. Atop the throne, a smallish figure lies crossways with legs and head resting on the arms of the chair. The figure appears to be snoring.

The room is a 40'x60' rectangle and is well-appointed compared to the other rooms of the labyrinth. Tapestries upon the walls bear the regal crests of long-dead dwarven lineages. Carpets adorn the stone floors. A gigantic chandelier made of numerous deer antlers hangs in the middle of the room above the tables and the dwarven skeletons. The chandelier's securing rope runs along the ceiling and down the middle of the western wall where it is spooled around a wooden securing pin. The figure sleeping in the chair is Nebin Pendlebrook. When the characters enter the room, Nebin will not awaken until someone fails a DC 12 Agility check. Even then, he will greet the characters with a cheerful recognition. After a stretch and a yawn, he will say:

"My greatest wish... if such a thing could be wished for... is that my rescue party might have brought biscuits and jam for their long-lost halfling friend!"

Nebin will spin around to sit more properly upon the throne. In this new light, the characters will see that Nebin has suffered a great bloody wound to the side of his face. His jacket and pants are stained with dried blood. His features are pale; his eyes sunken and blood-shot. His mood betrays none of these things as he speaks to the party from atop the modest throne in a jubilant tone.

"No need to skulk about in the shadows my friends! Come and see your friend as you have never seen him before!"

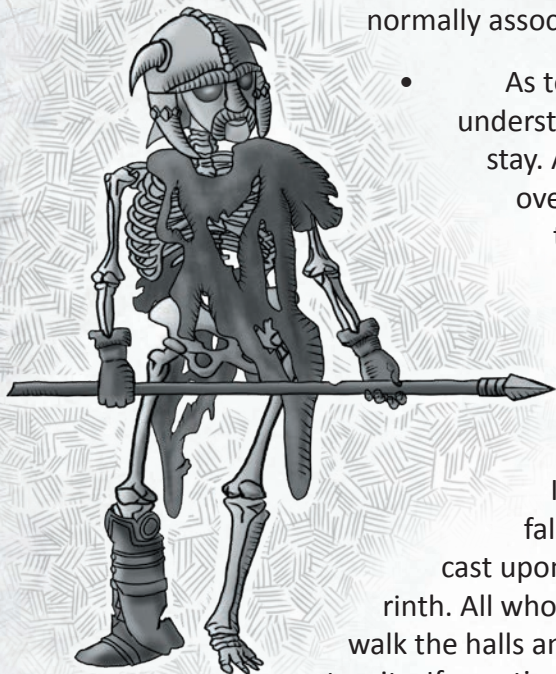
Roleplaying Nebin Pendlebrook

If the characters have not yet deduced that Nebin has joined the ranks of the undead, it will probably be revealed as you—the judge—role-play the following interaction. No doubt the players will have many questions, and to answer them, you need to know the following:

- Nebin did explore the caverns alone, and after an altercation with the skeletal hounds, was discovered on the second day by the dwarves (listed below). Of course, without his glasses and in the dim light, he could not see the dwarves for what they were.



- Nebin knows that something has changed but he will not quibble with the party about being “dead”, “undead” or any such “foolishness!” His retorts will be along the lines of: “You say that your friend is dead... I say that I stand before you, walking and talking. Are these qualities that you normally associate with the deceased?”



- As to why he is here, Nebin only understands he feels compelled to stay. And that he possesses an overwhelming desire to “guard the great treasures of the most magnificent wizard who ever lived” (he will point to the door on the eastern wall as he says this).

In truth, Nebin in death has fallen victim to a powerful spell cast upon the entire Dwarven labyrinth. All who die here are compelled to walk the halls and stand as guardians for all eternity. If questioned what treasures are being guarded, he replies cryptically: “Some treasures are even greater than gold and silver!”

Nebin will eventually grow tired of conversation and under no circumstance can he be persuaded to leave. (If he is kidnapped and taken outside of the labyrinth, he will truly die as a result of the curse.) When the halfling decides to end the conversation, he becomes agitated, suddenly standing in the chair and raising his arms. As he does, the turtle he stands upon will also rise and lift its head. At the tables in the great hall, the **skeletal dwarven soldiers** will also begin to animate and face the party.

“The time for words has passed. How can you not see the great gift of immortality that stands before you? What has been bestowed upon me shall now be bestowed upon you! It is a gift! You will thank me for it, I can assure you!”



The skeletal dwarves will begin to advance upon the characters, each brandishing a spear. Their bones appear to be cobbled together much like the guardian hounds earlier. Roll initiative, with the dwarves all acting on the same initiative. Roll initiative for the giant skeletal turtle as well. Nebin will act on the turtle's initiative so long as he rides astride its back. He has no ranged attack (without his glasses and cursed with bad vision even in un-death!) so unless he is engaged with a melee attack, he will mostly only bark commands. If he leaves the back of the skeletal tortoise for any reason, move his turn in the initiative order directly behind the tortoise.

Nebin, throughout the contest, will implore the characters to... "give in to your destiny! We are chosen to perform a great task!"

*(See the Sidebar: **The Wizard's War** to learn more about the curse that controls Nebin so completely.)*

Should the party attempt to lure the skeletons beneath the chandelier, do not deprive them of the joy of dropping it! If a character is standing by the western wall where the rope is secured, it only takes an action to cut it or loosen it. If a character is not within reach of the securing rope, and finds some other creative way to sever the rope (an arrow shot, thrown dagger, etc...), a ranged attack against AC 14 is required. Upon a success, roll a d6 to see how many dwarves are under the massive chandelier when it falls. Each dwarf must succeed on a DC 16 Reflex save to dodge or suffer 2d10 damage.

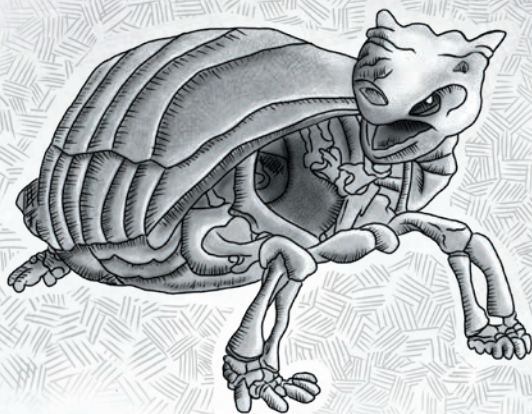
Skeletal Dwarves (6): Init +1; Atk spear +2 melee (1d6); AC 11; HP 8; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2; Ref +1; Will +2; AL C. Each skeleton wears leather armor and carries a spear. *(Like the guardian hounds earlier, these dwarves appear to be cobbled together by a mish-mash of parts; arms for legs, heads turned upside-down, and skulls inscribed with glowing glyphs.)*

Nebin Pendlebrook: Init +2; Atk dagger +2 melee (1d4); AC 11; HP 4; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +1; Ref +2; Will +0; AL N.

Large Skeletal Tortoise: Init +0; Atk bite (*and tail slap if flanked) +3 melee; Dmg 1d6; AC 13; HP 14; MV 20'; Act (*2)d20; SV Fort +3; Ref +0; Will +0; AL C.



Again, regardless of the outcome of the encounter, Nebin will not leave the sanctum of his own volition. If he survives and is conscious, Nebin will reveal the eastern door beyond the pillars as the place where the “great treasure” is stored. The door is locked and Nebin will claim that it is



forbidden for the guardians to enter, lest they provoke the anger of “the master”. Dwarven script is etched into a small indentation in the stone wall next to the door. Beneath these cryptic runes hang three distinctly **decorated keys** on three pegs (See **Handout A-1** at the end of the adventure).

Only one key will open the door. The other two spring traps. A dwarf in the party (or others who can read dwarven) can decipher the runes as a riddle, anyone else will need to succeed on a DC 14 Intelligence check to recognize the runes as such. The inscription reads: *A wee little man with a red, red coat... a staff in my hand, a stone in my throat... guess who I am to avoid death's bloat.*

The key designed with the cherry motif is the correct choice. If either of the wrong keys are used (or if the door is battered), traps will trigger. (These traps are beyond the abilities of low level characters to detect or disarm.) The first incorrect choice causes the stone floor to give way: any adventurer within 5' of the door will fall into a 20' deep spiked pit (DC 10 Reflex save or take 3d6 damage).

If players then jury rig access to the door using tables, etc, and a second incorrect key is used, a large stone falls from the ceiling onto the 5' area in front of the door, compacting everything in its path down into the spiked pit! (DC 12 Reflex save or take 3d10 crushing damage).



The Wizards' War

The adventurers and Nebin Pendlebrook are now entangled in the swirling eldritch eddies of an ancient quarrel between two powerful wizards from another realm. As it is in this realm, magic in that other place is also a dangerous and foolhardy art, and arcane knowledge is sought with the utmost respect and trepidation. Such was the rivalry between **Varooth Moss** and **Moldark Zelroth** however, that each seized upon dangerous strategies to gain superiority over the other.

As sometimes happens among those who derive their magic from a mystical being of immense power, Varooth Moss fell out of favor with his patron **Bobugbubilz**, and in his weakness was subdued by his nemesis Moldark Zelroth. Fearing that Bobugbubilz might someday forgive Varooth and search for his once-devoted follower, Moldark whisked the rival wizard away to this realm in an effort to better hide his prisoner. The ruse worked: Varooth Moss remains encased in a magical block of ice, guarded by a Stone Behemoth in this very catacomb, seemingly locked away forever. (*Described in **Area 1-12: The Inner Sanctum.***)

As magnificent as Moldark Zelroth had become, in his old age he was still subject to the simple laws of gravity. One day long ago, while surveying his spectacular underground network, alone and isolated from everyone and everything, he tripped and fell into a deep chasm. Trapped with multiple broken bones and punctured organs, he could only muster a simple cantrip to try and stave off a lonely death. With his final faltering breaths he cast one last spell upon a nearby branch, commanding it to call for help when his own voice had gone silent. Unfortunately, no one heard the quiet cries and the great wizard perished alone in the dark.

Though the evil wizard Moldark Zelroth is gone, all that he conjured and built remains, feeding off the energy coursing between realms. Great magic is still at work in the dark places beneath the village of Bitterweed Barrow and it was only a matter of time before someone like Nebin Pendlebrook would accidentally unearth it! (*See **Appendix A: The Second Death** for ways to use Moldark's legacy and curse to spice things up as character deaths begin to pile up!*)



Area 1-11, Ascension of Great Sorrow: *Beyond the door a hallway leads to a set of ascending stone steps. Wall-mounted sconces flicker with a sickly greenish light, casting an unearthly pall. As you climb the stairs and look around at the grizzled faces of your comrades, they appear as they would in death: pale, gaunt, drawn and staring with sunken eyes filled with despair. Is the effect a twisted illusion or merely an artifact*

of the flickering shadows? As you climb, you come upon four small holding cells hewn into the rock walls on your right, each protected by a door of iron bars. Suddenly prisoners appear from the shadows behind each set of bars, pleading for freedom!

There is no key to be found for the cells; a DC 12 Intelligence check is required to jimmy any lock; a DC 16 Strength check will smash an iron bar, but at a cost: on any attempt to smash the bars (or any failed attempt to force a lock) a large stone in the ceiling of the targeted cell will fall and flatten the inmate with a sickeningly bloody thud. A very heavy **iron rod**, 2" in diameter and 6' in length leans against the wall opposite the cells. It is so heavy that it requires a DC 14 Strength check to lift! Clever players may use the rod to prop up the stone ceiling of a cell where future lock picks or smash attempts are made.



If the players succeed in freeing any of the prisoners, and need to reinforce their numbers for the final confrontation, kindly judges might allow them to create characters for each prisoner, or supply them with pre-gen characters representing the

freed slaves. If their numbers are so decimated that they need more than one prisoner per cell to replenish their force, simply add more prisoners so that each player has at least two for the final confrontation.

The prisoners can only vaguely recall waking up in this long-forsaken dungeon. To them, it seemed only yesterday, and perhaps in this realm it might have been, but in the place beyond the portal from whence they came, much more time has passed. The prisoners were all faithful apprentices and devotees of a once great wizard named Varooth Moss, captured and imprisoned by his nemesis Moldark Zelroth long ago (*See Sidebar: **The Wizard's War***). By some strange magic, they have been imprisoned here for over a hundred years. Should they be questioned about the wizards, they will gladly impart any knowledge they possess for the chance at freedom.

Some things the prisoners might remember

- Varooth Moss was a devotee of the amphibian lord Bobugbubilz until he began to understand the true depth of the demon lord's chaotic nature. His attempt to break his pact with his master triggered great disfavor.
- A rival wizard named Moldark Zeroth took advantage of Varooth Moss' weakened state to defeat him and his followers.
- They fear that Varooth Moss has been killed by Moldark and that they will suffer the same fate.

After the prisoners have been freed and the party is ready to proceed, read or paraphrase the following:

The stairs continue to climb upward until they reach an opening in a large stone wall. As you draw near, it becomes clear the doorway at the top of the stairs has been carved to mimic the gaping maw of some large grotesque beast! The only way to pass is through the enormous stone teeth. A flickering warm light from inside the chamber illuminates the hewn-out eyes and upper jaw of the contorted demon face, giving it the fey illusion of life. It seems to call you forward...

Area 1-12, Moldark Zelroth's Inner Sanctum: *As you enter beneath the jagged archway, you find yourselves in a cavernous room; larger even than the great hall of the dwarves, with 30' ceilings. The rock walls are tinted putrescent purple,*



etched everywhere with strange symbols and hieroglyphs in bright yellow chalk. The markings reach from wall to wall and floor to ceiling.

A torch is affixed to each of the four walls. In the center of the room a 6'x6' square block of ice sits inside a runic circle inscribed upon the floor. Empty torch holders flank each of the four sides of the block.



When the party enters the room, read or paraphrase the following:

Near the back of the room, large boulders appear to have fallen from the ceiling and now rest in a pile of rubble. Amidst the fallen stones, you spot a wooden chest with copper hinges. As your eyes return to the block of ice, you notice that a figure seems to be trapped deep within, frozen in some defensive position. Closer inspection reveals it to be a man garbed in regal dress, and though his hands appear to be human, his head is grotesquely frog-like. You're almost certain that the creature's bulbous eyes are following you.

The wizard Varooth Moss is trapped inside the ice, and is aware of any visitor's presence. If the characters seem hesitant to free him he will use a cantrip to communicate with them, manipulating a small rock to scratch phrases on the floor at their feet. Phrases include "*long forgotten in this place*" and "*free me for great fortune*". The choice to free the wizard is up to the adventurers. Regardless, after a few moments, the pile of stones behind the block of ice, triggered by the wizard's use of magic, will reanimate and coalesce into a massive stone guardian intent on ridding the chamber of living creatures. The enormous stone behemoth has been commanded to stand



guard over the entombed wizard, and the spell holds true despite the fact that his summoner has long since perished. Once animated, it will not halt its rampage until either it or the adventurers are vanquished. (To add insult to injury, the broken chest is a sinister mimic that bites when approached. It contains no treasure.)

The heavy stones from the pile of rubble begin to rumble and coalesce, rising up to form a towering guardian whose head nearly touches the thirty-foot ceiling! As the massive creature turns to face you, another message is hastily scratched upon the floor; "Free me or perish!"

In its rampage, the stone behemoth will smash into the ceiling the first round, and again at the beginning of each round (apart from his turn in the initiative.) Parts of the chamber ceiling and earth will fall with each collision, revealing cracks of daylight above. This will also temporarily seal the doorway from which the party entered. Have the players roll under their Luck to avoid being targeted by falling rubble. PC's failing their Luck roll must succeed on a DC 8 Reflex save to avoid 1d10 crushing damage. If the characters are taking massive losses, you could choose to have the stone behemoth use its turn in the initiative order to clumsily slap torches from the holders that the characters might have placed in order to free the wizard (see below).

Freeing the Wizard: Varooth Moss can be partially freed (enough to be of some aid) by placing the wall torches in the empty holders surrounding the ice and reading the incantation written in the runic circle (**DC 13 Intelligence check**). Taking a torch from the wall and placing it in a holder counts as one action (a move action), the check to read the incantation counts as one action as well. When all the torches are placed and the incantation has been read, the ice will melt enough to free the wizard's wand hand in 1d3 rounds. He will immediately drop the wand, and in the dust the word "*flame*" will be scrawled. Anyone in possession of the **Flame Wand** can attempt to cast a pre-loaded **flaming hands** spell (DCC Rulebook, Page 142. Spell check: d20). On subsequent rounds the wizard can fire off **magic missile** spells.

Stone Behemoth: Init +4; Atk slam +5 melee (1d10); AC 14; HP 30; MV 40'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +5; Ref +4; Will -2; AL N. (*Formed stones that occasionally resemble a gigantic humanoid form. Attacks against it result in pulses of blue light at the point of contact, as though you are not attacking the stone, but the magic that binds it.*)



Chest Mimic: Init +0; Atk bite +1 melee; Dmg 1d4; AC 8; HP 6; MV 5'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +1; Ref +0; Will +0; AL N. (*By all appearances, a normal chest, until it is approached. Only then does it reveal a set of razor-sharp teeth.*)

Varooth Moss (2nd level Wizard):

Init+0; Atk dagger +1 melee (Dmg 1d4) or spell +1 (*Magic Missile* pg 144; *Dispel Magic* pg 208); AC 12; HP 8; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2; Ref +2; Will +4; AL N

Role-playing Varooth Moss

After the battle, if Varooth Moss is freed he will thank the adventurers for releasing him. In his weakened state, he is no more powerful than a level 2 wizard. Judges will find the following information useful in the role-playing interaction.



- Though his head is that of a frog, Varooth still speaks the common tongue in a croaky lisp. He is eager to pass back through the portal (asking the adventurers for directions) to his own realm in order to beseech Bobugubilz for mercy.
- He has been counting the days since he was imprisoned by Moldark Zelroth (146 years, 7 months, 14 days, 22 hours). Amazingly, he was just *beginning* to think that Moldark had forgotten about him. Unless told by the characters, he is unaware that his captor is long dead.
- He has no interest in the treasures spread about Moldark's inner sanctum and is glad to see it distributed amongst his liberators. Varooth will implore the characters to keep the catacombs a secret as he ponders the implications of the portal between the two worlds.
- If Nebin has somehow survived to this point, when Varooth is freed the terrified Halfling suddenly clutches his chest and falls to his knees. Raising his gaze to the sky he screams: "I have failed you Mighty Moldark!" His eyes filling with confusion, the halfling tumbles forward into the rocks, never to rise again. Any dwarves left behind in the Great Hall crumble to dust.



Conclusion

If the party manages to defeat the Stone Behemoth, the following treasures are theirs for the taking spread throughout the rubble: **300 gold coins**, a polished **silver mirror** (20 sp), a fine **dwarven shield** of bronze and copper, set with **8 rubies** (worth 25gp each), a **silver mace** with the head of Ildavir as the hammer, a **mithril dagger** with a black onyx handle that contains a reservoir for poison, a **deed to a building and a map** to the location (future quest seed), and a **golden tankard** filled with **15 green emeralds**. (The tankard is worth 25gp, the emeralds 20gp each).

To offer some finality to your adventurer's journey, you may choose to read the following to your players, depending on the outcome.

If there are survivors

The great stone creature has been defeated and the bright sunlight of morning peeks through the broken roof above. You believe you could easily climb the mountain of rubble to your freedom if the stones are approached with care. A few days past you would never have considered such a thing!

Somehow, from among all of the hardy souls that began this adventure, fate has chosen you to survive. As you climb into the morning sunlight in your tattered and bloody clothes, you realize that this experience has forever changed you from the simple peasant you were before. You'll tell your grandchildren one day of the friends you lost and of how you somehow survived the fantastic terrors that were waiting beneath Nebin Pendlebrook's Perilous Pantry!

If there are no survivors

As the last warrior falls, so too does the stone behemoth, returning to its natural state, nothing more than a pile of rubble amidst a great treasure—its task is now complete. If the grisly scene is discovered later, it will appear that the adventurers were caught in a cave-in and were smashed beneath the stone roof. Should any hardy souls venture further into the underground labyrinth, they may possibly hear whispers hissing from the darkened halls. "Welcome!" the whispers will say. "We have a great task ahead of us. Won't you join us?"



Appendix A: The 2nd Death

The nature of Moldark's curse means that *everything* that dies in the labyrinth eventually rises as a guardian. Of course, this includes player characters, which can create some interesting complications! Here are ways you can use the new undead to add spice to the adventure.

- If play begins to lag, and you feel the players are being a bit too deliberate in their approach, raise some fallen comrades to slowly begin closing in from behind to speed them along.
- In the case of a Total Party Kill (TPK) the fallen can be used to restock the dungeon with fresh foes for a new band of villagers to encounter on a second go at the dungeon.
- If the party is destroyed by the Stone Behemoth, the fallen adventurers can eventually rise and begin spilling out of the damaged Inner Sanctum to threaten the village. The curse will kill them before the sun rises, but an evening battle with a new band of village defenders could prove extremely exciting!
- Alternately, the curse is finally beginning to weaken. When the fallen adventurers rise, they retain a small measure of autonomy in un-death. A debris-covered stairwell in the inner sanctum leads down to a forgotten temple and further dangers! Allow the players to reform the party as a mob of undead, driven by a crazed desire to recover the bones of Moldark in the chasm, seeking some method in the dark ruins below to either barter or desecrate the wizard's remains to break the curse and regain their lives!
- Rather than succumbing to Moldark's curse if the party frees Vavrooth, Nebin rises again as a final expression of the curse's power, tasked with hunting down the survivors and punishing them for their acts of desecration! Over the course of further adventures, provide the players with subtle clues that *something* is following them, haunting their every move. Nebin uses the time stalking to slowly evolve into something far more deadly than the simple halfling the characters once knew!



Appendix B: Moving Things Along

If you are running this adventure at a gaming convention or your local gaming store, you will most likely find yourself with certain time constraints. Here are some tips and observations that may be beneficial should you find the clock on the wall an adversary!

- The Perilous Pantry has been successfully run in a four-hour window, including character creation. Times *can* vary widely with playing styles. If your group tends toward extensive role-play, make sure that you leave plenty of time for the back half of the adventure where most role-playing interactions exist. Testing suggests you'll have plenty of time if you enter the Great Dwarven Hall with at least an hour and fifteen to an hour and thirty minutes still on the clock.
- If you need to trim some of the adventure (and most likely you will not be aware of this until you are at least halfway through the labyrinth), one easy area to discard is the dwarven kitchen and pantry. Add a simple cave-in on the hallway stairs and you'll save valuable time with no detriment to the main story line.
- Dwarven Kamikaze! To expedite the engagement in the Great Dwarven Hall, have the skeletal dwarves be the ones to drop the chandelier on themselves and every other adventurer who engages them beneath it! What do they care? They're dead to begin with!
- More characters per player equals more time to play them. If the players don't need the reinforcements from the prison cells, make the prisoners frail, gaunt and unable to contribute.
- Varooth Moss collapses unconscious when freed from the block of ice! Yes, it postpones an opportunity for role-play interaction at the end of this session, but now the characters have an unconscious wizard of unknown power lying at their feet. Is he cruel? Is he kind? Can he be held for ransom? Can his organs be harvested for the black market? Will we get warts if we touch him? This option of ending the game saves time when there is no time left, and it gives your players a great cliff-hanger that will leave them wanting more. No doubt they will have fantastic ideas about what to do with an unconscious wizard with the head of a frog!



Appendix C: Judging Tips

We've tried to include tips throughout the text of Nebin Pendlebrook's *Perilous Pantry* to help judges new to *Dungeon Crawl Classics* run their first funnel adventure. But there's no getting around the fact that the need for creative, seat-of-your-pants judging is baked into the very DNA of DCC! Funnel adventures are often wild and unpredictable, but that's a major reason why they're so fun! Stay on your toes, keep things moving, and realize that adapting to the crazy things your players do will often create the most memorable gaming moments!

Keep the following in mind as you prepare to run the adventure:

- This adventure respects your initiative. If you think an encounter is too easy, increase the challenge! Too difficult? Just drop the number of foes. If a particular enemy doesn't fit in your campaign, replace them with a logical substitute with the same stats. Always bend the text to your vision!
- Demo and convention style play creates different challenges than running the adventure as part of your regular campaign. In particular, players tend to burn enormous amounts of luck early and often, as they don't need to worry about the long-term consequences. Using low luck scores as a targeting mechanism is an effective way to right the balance. There are many examples of the technique in *Nebin Pendlebrook's Perilous Pantry*, but feel free to find additional ways to reinforce the message if your players are going a bit overboard.
- With so many characters, it's important to keep things moving. If the pace seems to have bogged down, don't be afraid to edit descriptions down and limit rolls that affect the whole party to a subset of characters. (Another way that luck can come into play...)
- DCC isn't all that concerned with strict balance, but the encounters as written assume the party is being slowly whittled down to about two characters for each player (8-10 total) before the final confrontation. Adjusting the strength of the encounter in the *Dwarven Hall* is a convenient place to refine the party size: beef it up if the party is having too easy a time, or ease off if the party is facing extinction. (Assuming, of course, that you're not gunning for multiple TPK's that have players attacking the labyrinth in waves. Some groups love that style of play!)



- That being said, the strength of the party will have a huge impact on the final challenge with the Stone Behemoth. If your group has managed to come through relatively unscathed, their combined attacks have a good chance of dropping the Behemoth in short order. Much of the fun and challenge of the encounter comes from the falling stones imperiling the party over multiple rounds, so it might be a good idea to increase the Behemoth's hits to provide the proper challenge for a large, strong party.

Author's Note

As a devotee of our beloved DCC RPG (Does that make Joseph Goodman my patron? Does he know Bobugbubilz?!), I take great pleasure in introducing new players to the system. I have been privileged to run the very module you are holding at a few public play-tests, mostly at local gaming cons and at our local FLGS and nothing makes me happier than seeing a young person's mind blown when they realize what old-school gaming is all about.

In this strange little adventure, I wanted the player to enjoy all of the tropes that drew me to table-top gaming so many years ago. There are strange creatures galore and chances for heroes to act heroic. There are traps and puzzles, and—when the dust settles at the end—a nice little story about a zombie halfling will have been told by the Judge and the players.

Thanks Jon for invaluable aid and for all who helped playtest to make this adventure the best it could be, my thanks to you also. Ok... enough talk. It's time to break out the pencils and the dice. Let's see what makes this pantry so freakin' perilous.

Mark Bishop



The Frost Fang Expedition

An Instant Action
Dungeon Crawl Classics RPG Adventure
for 4-8 1st Level Adventurers
By Mark Bishop

Introduction	49
Running the Frost Fang Expedition/History of Neverthawes	50
Dagon's Note	56
People and Places.....	57
Player Introduction.....	58
Rumors and Scuttlebutt	60
The Expedition Begins/NPC's	62
Main Map/Encounter Index.....	64-65
Encounter Descriptions.....	66-104
Appendix A: Levi Fangred and Gruin Ardokk	104
Appendix B: Spell Duels Simplified	107
Appendix C: Dagon's Amulet.....	108
Appendix D: Malotoch as Patron	110
Appendix E: Linking to Nebin Pendlebrook's Perilous Pantry.....	114



The Frost Fang Expedition Credits

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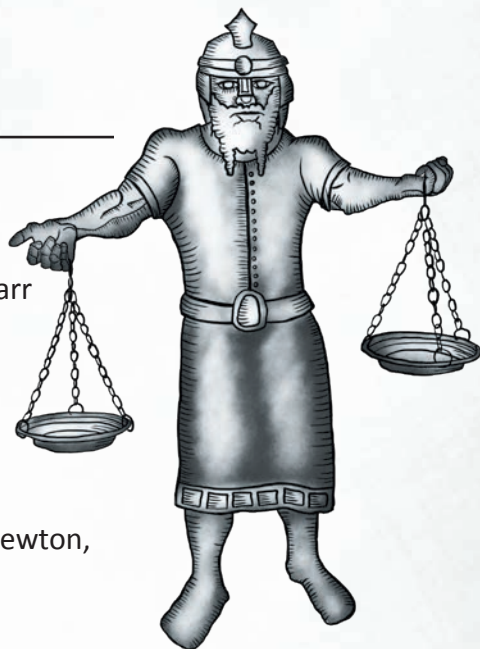
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The Frost Fang Expedition

High above the Village of Neverthawes, near the icy peak of Frost Fang Mountain, a mysterious castle floats among the clouds, dangling precariously like an anvil above the wilderness town. The stone keep houses the bizarre workshop of a reclusive sorcerer known as Dagon the Doleful. For over a hundred years the floating island, or earth mote, has cast a shadow of foreboding upon the village beneath it. Recently though, the lights have gone dark in Dagon's floating castle, and large chunks of the earth island have begun to fall from the sky.

Today an expedition leaves from the base of Frost Fang Mountain to investigate these mysterious changes. Adventurers must endure a treacherous journey to the mountain's peak, and then cross a tenuous bridge that stretches to Dagon's surreptitious sanctum in the sky.

But be warned: not all who join the expedition harbor pure motives. Rumors report that great wealth and incomprehensible arcane knowledge are ripe for the taking if the castle is reached. Even the most noble of heart might be tempted by the treasures accrued by the eccentric wizard. Will explorers seek to find and aid Dagon the Doleful, or will they attempt to pilfer the castle's riches? Will they seek means to keep the castle aloft or abandon the village to a crushing death? The frozen backdrop is set. The time for action has come.

In the Frost Fang Expedition, only one thing is certain... the adventurers will face great danger from within and without Dagon's castle walls. None who join the expedition will return unchanged, if indeed they return at all!



Running the Frost Fang Expedition

The Frost Fang Expedition is an *Instant Action Adventure* designed to be enjoyed in a single action-packed session of mystery and derring-do. This makes the adventure ideal for convention play or for a home game where you wish to wrap up play in a single session. That being said, play times can vary widely from group to group depending on play style. If it is the judge's intention to run this game in a four hour block (such as a convention game), it is recommended that the party begin with pre-generated characters in order to allow sufficient time for game play.

If on the other hand, the clock is not a factor at your table, we have provided background information and a short history of Neverthawes, Dagon the Doleful, and the Frost Fang Mountain region, enabling you and your players to immerse yourself in a fantastic setting suitable for extended campaign play.

In order to help streamline the narrative to the judge's taste, each new chapter contains a section of *Adventure Notes*, "cliff notes" of a sort that highlight the key information judges need to know for that area. This is especially useful for judges seeking the bare-bones narrative needed to move the game along in a time-restricted setting, but should also prove helpful for those who are integrating the adventure into a larger campaign.

The History of Neverthawes

The Village of Neverthawes was formed in the shadow of the Frost Fang Mountains, just north-east of the once prosperous **Ardokk Mines**. The village and nearby regions all benefited greatly from the prodigious amounts of gold and other minerals mined by the Ardokk dwarves. Every man, woman, and child within a hundred miles grew up hearing the stories of the mines and their legendary grandeur.

A mysterious sorcerer of great renown, **Dagon the Doleful**, had also lived in the area for generations before Neverthawes was established. Villagers had found his once-isolated castle's high walls a comforting neighbor when they founded their village, but as the mines prospered, new arrivals came to Never-



thawes seeking its fabled wealth, expanded the village borders again and again. The more the village encroached, the more secretive and paranoid the old wizard became. Despite the keep's proximity, few villagers had ever passed beneath its portcullis. As the years passed, the orange-bearded, gaunt-faced Dagon increasingly shunned the people of the village, losing himself in his experiments and retreating from human contact. The portcullis remained closed, rusted into place, with only an occasional thick plume of green or purple smoke rising above the parapets betraying Dagon's earthly existence at all.

The Ardokk Mines, and thus Neverthawes, continued to prosper and grow for a generation before Dagon finally found the creeping impingement of the village unbearable. Certain that prying eyes were upon both him and his arcana, the reclusive sorcerer determined to hide his wizardry once and for all — in a place where he would never be bothered again. Early one morning, the village awoke to the sound of strange guttural incantations wailing down from behind the castle walls. Some said they witnessed Dagon through the metal gates, slashing his own arms while kneeling before a glowing hourglass that seemed to hover in mid-air before him. Suddenly the earth began to shake, the peal of an ear-splitting thunderclap echoing across the valley. Through rattling windows the villagers watched as Dagon's castle and yard wrenched itself from the earth and began to slowly rise into the heavens. The entire village gaped in awe as the *earth mote* rose skyward, finally arresting its ascent near the peaks of Frost Fang.



Local legend might have remembered the rise as astonishing and magnificent had not the old wizard's actions also triggered a chain of events that doomed the Ardokk dwarves and their legendary mines forever. For in the ensuing earthquake, an evil beast was freed from her underground prison; an ancient medusa named **Helgathia Myrr**. Some say it was Dagon himself who had imprisoned (then forgot) her in the rune-locked chamber eons ago. Regardless, the serpent-haired demon stormed through the halls of Ardokk with complete surprise, petrifying every man, woman and child into lifeless stone. In a matter of days, the medusa completed her horrific campaign: transforming the Ardokk mines into a seemingly lifeless, stony tomb.

The effect upon the region was nearly as swift. Without the flow of gold from the mountains, the local economy collapsed. Barter ceased as rumor and fear ran wild. Many believed the creature would leave the mines and destroy Neverthawes as well, so they fled. Those who stayed behind held the brash wizard in great contempt, cursing his name for the recklessness he displayed.

A decade passed before anyone dared to venture back into the Ardokk mines. The first was a halfling named **Egad Greenthicket** who claimed that Dagon the Doleful had visited him in a dream. The aged sorcerer was supposedly filled with re-

morse, seeking to right his wrongs, "better a little, and too late than nothing at all, ever". Egad woke the next morning to find a rolled parchment on his nightstand, wrapped around a small mirror. Few if any believed the halfling's improbable story, but some villagers remember clearly that early one morning Egad took the scroll, the mirror, and his favorite cow up the path to the old Ardokk mines. Both Egad and his cow disappeared into the mouth of the mountain, never to be heard from again.



Soon after, the bravery of the villagers returned. A few hardy souls scaled the mountain with supplies intent upon building a bridge that would connect the earth mote and Dagon's floating castle to the nearest peak of Frost Fang. Although the tenuous rope bridge can still be seen spanning the gap to this day (bathed in the eerie lights of the castle that never dimmed), none of the workers who built the bridge ever returned. Nor did any souls who went looking for them.



One hundred years have now passed since Dagon's castle vaulted skyward. It remains as great a mystery today to the few plucky descendants, traders, trappers, and hard-scrabble miners who remain as when it rose generations ago. But answers might finally be forthcoming! Two weeks ago, a mysterious medallion fell from above, smashing through the roof of the temple of local cleric **Levi Fangred**. He claimed that a note was attached from Dagon himself, breaking his long silence to request urgent aid from the village. Since then, the castle lights have at last gone dark, and large chunks of the earth island's cliff edges have begun to break off and tumble down on the village below. Some fear that the old wizard is dead or dying, and that the entire castle might soon come crashing down upon them. With such an impending catastrophe looming literally above them, Levi has summoned all willing souls to the **Frosty Tankard**, a local ale house, to form an emergency expedition.

The call for adventurers has gone forth. Known opportunists, cutthroats and mercenaries have descended upon the desperate town in waves, sensing an opportunity for profit. Locals in fear of their lives have begun to load their belongings into wagons, preparing to depart. Better to face the wilderness, they reason, than to be squashed into bloody pulps from above!

Such a quick death might be considered a blessing compared to what surely awaits those who join Levi Fangred in scaling Frost Fang Mountain!



Dagon and the Hourglass

Briefly mentioned in the town's history, Dagon's mysterious floating hourglass will play an integral role in this adventure. What the PCs decide to do with the hourglass at Dagon's castle will, in the end, determine the outcome of their drama. Clues to the nature of the hourglass will be revealed to players as the journey unfolds through dreams, notes, and the words of NPCs, but it's important for the judge to understand the history of Dagon and the enchanted hourglass before play begins. The PCs will likely die in confusion about what they need to do during the final encounter if they haven't acquired the information necessary to deal with Dagon and the hourglass!

No one knows quite how old Dagon the Doleful is, though none alive can ever remember a time without him. His wrinkled and creviced face reveals a man possessing ancient wisdom and experience, his features framed by unruly locks of bright orange hair - at least it was the last time that anyone saw him. Though everyone knew of the old wizard, few ever mingled with him, and the rare social encounters were always awkward due to Dagon's searing gazes and long, menacing pauses without conversation. In chance meetings on the streets of Neverthawes, he seemed more enamored with the careful and intrusive inspection of lapel buttons, walking sticks and ear lobes than the folk of the village.

In a short period of time, Dagon grew weary of human contact altogether, lowering the metal slats of his portcullis for good. Rumors ran rampant after that. Children declared seeing the wizard roaming the streets at night, his left arm as greasy and limber as the body of a serpent.

In fact, their reports were accurate. Dagon, corrupted by the experiments he conducted within the castle walls *was* undergoing changes, both physical and mental. In order to further plunder the depths of mysticism and magic, Dagon had entered an unholy pact with a creature not of this realm: the carrion crow goddess **Malotoch**. The bargain had expanded and altered the old wizard's mind, but at the price of corrupting his physical appearance. Dagon quickly grew to understand that every new unveiling of the universe's secrets came at great cost.



A day arrived when Dagon realized he trusted neither himself nor the unholy portals he had opened so near to the village's population. Rather than recklessly imperiling the village, Dagon strove to keep it safe, beseeching Malotoch to create the earth mote out of her own immense power to separate his castle from the village. The price for such a request was severe: every year he would sacrifice a portion of his remaining being to the dark goddess to keep the castle afloat. She fixed a magical hourglass in Dagon's castle courtyard to continually remind him of this patron pact. The earth mote will stay afloat as long as the hourglass is turned once every year. When the hourglass is turned for its 100th time, Dagon must submit himself completely, subsumed and forever in servitude to Mistress Malotoch. With the agreement fulfilled, only another soul's servitude, coupled with another pact, will keep the earth mote intact and afloat. Only then will the citizens below be safe from total destruction.

As the ever-more corrupted Dagon the Doleful descended into madness, he scribbled notes and pleas for aid, dropping them onto the village below. He has hidden the fact that his own fate is sealed, realizing that a replacement must be found or Neverthawes is doomed. Perhaps in his last cogent moment, he purposefully dropped his final plea for help through the rooftop of Levi Fangred, the town's cleric and a devoted disciple of the lawful Ulish.

Should the expedition, by some miracle of luck or valor, actually reach the castle of Dagon the Doleful, tough decisions will need to be made regarding the fate of Neverthawes in an uncertain environment. Will Dagon in his final corrupted state allow anyone to complete the ritual that will turn the hourglass and save the village, but also doom him to an eternity of servitude? If the ritual is completed, will anyone in the expedition submit to 100 years of servitude to the chaotic Mistress Malotoch to keep the castle afloat?

The fate of the castle and the village now lies in the hands of the few hardy souls who have undertaken an impossible journey: scaling the frozen reaches of the Frost Fang Mountains only to find themselves deposited into the clutches of a deranged and defiled wizard!



To whom it may concern...

I am not long for this world. My body and soul are corrupted and failing.

I wish to spare your township.
Please bring quickly the following...

thirteen crow's feet
2 lbs. sycamore bark, north side
1 pint of porcupine blood

I will also need the ritual scroll held in safety's keeping by the blue-skins at the top of the mountain. You'll know them when you see them.

Please accept the amulet as a gift to the brave soul who undertakes the journey. It will give you strength for the trials you may face. I would also desire a loaf of fresh raisin bread (this is not for the spell... I just miss it).

Sincerely,
Dagon



11 BISHOP

People & Places of Neverthawes

Many buildings in the village are now empty or have been re-purposed after the defeat of the mines. No demand remained for the fine luxuries of a haberdashery or a dedicated tobacco shop among the small populace remaining.

The Frosty Tankard: The only tavern left in town; the site where PCs will join the expedition. Owned by one-eyed **Lemeth Strunk**, it is filled with a large stone hearth, a crackling fire, and a host of seedy characters eyeing your pockets. Visitors take care.

The Mountain Merchant Hall: If the PCs need supplies before they leave, they can get them here from foppish proprietor **Chauncey Evergood**. (Chauncey is famous for his delicious raisin bread which he's offloading at fire-sale prices: 2 loaves for a single copper piece). But the party needs to hurry. On the morrow, he'll be loading up his wagons and leaving town for good. Chauncey's great-grandfather was one of the builders of the bridge that links the earth-mote to the mountain's peak. *"First they were frozen by the bitter cold, and then they were cooked by the dragon's breath. They were stupid men. Brave... but stupid."*

Temple of Ulish: The last remaining temple in Neverthawes, served by cleric **Levi Fangred**. It was through his roof that Dagon's amulet and request for aid fell. Levi has bravely volunteered to lead the expedition to Dagon's castle.

Ardokk's Axes and Shields: In recent years this shop has proved more a museum than a store. Owner **Gruin Ardokk** is the last known descendant of the Ardokk dwarves in the area. He will join the expedition with the intentions of reclaiming the Ardokk Mines and seeking revenge against the wizard who destroyed his clan.

Irongate's Midnight Smithery: Recently crushed by a large chunk of Dagon's crumbling earth mote. **Dornthrek Irongate** sits with a pint each evening near the hearth of The Frosty Tankard, bitter at his lot in life. Mention Dagon the Doleful and you'll hear a string of curses as long as a fence rail.



The Gilded Griffin: A modest inn maintained by **Erlathan and Elora Duskmere**, an elven couple, both silver-haired and finely arrayed. They remember old Dagon well, even keeping an upstairs room for him, where he stayed on infrequent trips to visit the couple. A portrait of the wizard still hangs above the bed. More peculiar is the door in the room that seems to lead nowhere, with only a wall of brick behind it. Erlathan and Elora seem to take the village's impending doom in stride. *"Whatever shall happen, shall happen whether the linens are changed or not. If we are to perish, we shall perish upon clean sheets."*

Player Introduction

In the cold north of the Barrier Hills sits the wilderness village of Neverthawes, where the citizens have grown accustomed to a very peculiar sight. Although outsiders might be struck dumb at the sight of a castle resting upon an enormous chunk of earth hovering high above the village, the locals view the wizard's castle as nothing more than an annoying shadow that blots out the noonday sun.

"Dagon the Doleful", as he has been named, lives in the castle, perched upon the earth mote that hangs above the village so ominously, floating near the highest peaks of Frost Fang Mountain. Even from the town square it is easy to see a crudely-constructed rope bridge spanning the distance between the mountain's snowy crest and the old wizard's fantastical home.

You have responded to a call for help from the village: the castle lights have grown dark as chunks of the earth island have begun tumbling down with devastating effect upon the town. It is feared that the entire mote may soon plummet to earth, completely crushing the village and the citizens beneath it. An expedition is being formed to scale the mountain paths to investigate whether the old wizard inside the castle is still alive, and if anything can be done to keep the castle afloat.

*As you enter the village, you notice one family after another busily loading their wagons and hitching up their horses. Along the muddy streets, nervous chatter is paired with occasional glances skyward. Word has gone out that local cleric Levi Fangred is recruiting willing souls for the expedition within *The Frosty Tankard* just ahead. Shady characters, muscle-for-hire, and obvious cut-throats stand in groups, whispering as you walk by. Perhaps they have come in response to*



the promise of 76 gold pieces for each man or woman who can reach the castle? Or perhaps the rumors of great treasure and arcane wisdom contained within the castle have proved a more enticing draw? Just before you enter the tavern, you glance up one last time at the stone walls of the keep looming ominously above you in the dull gray skies. So many questions waiting to be resolved!

Beginning the Expedition

After reading the introduction, the players should have a vague understanding of the challenge awaiting them. In the role-play portion of the adventure that takes place inside *The Frosty Tankard*, the judge can reveal additional information to the players about Neverthawes, Dagon the Doleful, the Ardokk Mines, and the other members of the expedition that will accompany them.

Adventure Notes

- PCs can join the expedition by speaking with cleric Levi Fangred, seated at a corner table. He will offer 38 gold pieces now; with 38 more upon completion of the journey. He wears an amulet he claims was dropped from the castle above by Dagon the Doleful himself, and will show literate PCs the note that was attached to it. (**See Dagon's Note on page 56**).
- It will benefit the PCs greatly to meet with Gruin Ardokk, the last known descendant of the famed Ardokk Mines. The sullen dwarf is deep in his cups, but eager to begin the expedition, and no one knows more about the history of the mine than Gruin. In his drunken state, he will likely publicly accuse cleric Levi Fangred of being a lily-livered pacifist, unfit to lead a herd of goats, much less an expedition to the top of Frost Fang. He might also mention that the only good wizard is a dead wizard...
- Conversations with Gruin, Levi, Lemeth, or other tavern patrons should include important foreshadowing clues regarding the Ardokk Mines and town history:
 - **Gruin:** *"The mines been closed for a hundred years, since Dagon unwittingly unleashed the beast."*
 - **Lemeth:** *"Brave soul went in the mines to destroy the creature and never returned."*



- *“A hundred years ago Dagon the Doleful’s castle broke free, bringing ruin to a whole dwarven clan.”*
- (Concerning the ongoing feud between Levi Fangred and Gruin Ardokk) *“Those two are always going at it. One despises the old wizard; the other thinks he hung the moon.”*
- PCs can also spend their coin to prepare themselves for the journey. Along with the items listed in DCC Tables 3-1 through 3-5, players may wish to procure items specific to a mountain expedition such as picks (3 gp), climbing cleats (2 gp), and cold-weather wear (gloves, coats, etc. 10 gp total). At the judge’s discretion, these items can provide a +2 bonus to checks for climbing, frost-bite, etc.
- Feel free to populate The Frosty Tankard with additional rustic locals or dangerous newcomers. Any player who chooses to interact should be rewarded with a 1d10 roll on the rumor table.

Rumors and Scuttlebutt

1. “When the old wizard dies, so shall we all. The legend tells of an hourglass that only he can turn to ward off disaster. If he is dead, then we are all doomed.”
2. “My grandfather told me that a fierce dragon sleeps upon the carcasses of the men who built the bridge. You should speak to Chauncey at the Mountain Merchant Hall. His great-grandfather was one of the men incinerated by the devil-bird.”
3. “Aye, there is a shortcut through the mountain that would save half a day’s travel, but only a fool would journey through the old Ardokk Mines. Those haunted halls are guarded by a beast with serpents for hair, as well as seven-hundred dead dwarves. Poor Egad Greenthicket and his cow passed that way and never returned!”
4. “The river is swollen at the old Boulder Bridge, and I’ve heard talk of bandits. They say that one of them is as large as a house and smells like a dead catfish in the sun. You’ll do well to avoid that path to the mountain’s top.”
5. “Gruin Ardokk is the last of his clan and drinks himself into a stupor every night. I’ll wager a whole keg that he intends to murder the old wizard, falling castle or nay.”



6. "Levi Fangred is sober of mind and a good man to lead the expedition, though of late he seems somewhat obsessed with finding the old wizard."
7. "There are rumors of a strange clan that inhabits the mountain's peak. Some say they are like dwarves, but with blue skin and jagged teeth."
8. "You can be certain that the stories about the dragon are true. Many in the village have seen the gouts of flame from his nostrils. It is no legend. The Frost Fang dragon is as real as you and I!"
9. "Gruin Ardokk's own mother told him of the she-beast that destroyed the mines and all the Ardokk clan. Serpents for hair, and a gaze that turns men into stone. The shortcut through the mine would be a fool's folly."
10. "Not many remember the old wizard, but the Duskmeres of The Gilded Griffin Inn knew him as a friend. Kept a room for him, they did. Top floor... and Dagon's mad gaze looks down from a portrait upon a door leading to nowhere!"



The Expedition Begins!

The expedition will leave at first light. The PCs can make arrangements for spending the night in Neverthawes if you wish to role play such encounters. You may prefer to jump right in to the expedition if time is scarce. Judges can decide if they wish the night to pass without incident: there are, after all, some very shady and nefarious characters lurking about! The NPC stats of Gruin, Levi, Agandis, and Drakoe listed below should suffice as models for a shadowy encounter with bandits or ruffians attempting to steal the medallion in Levi's possession, or relieving the PCs of their recently acquired gold coins!

Levi Fangred and Gruin Ardokk are the two primary NPCs playing a role in the expedition. If there are less than 4 1st level PC's, the judge may wish to add more NPCs to the group if they feel the expedition's strength needs shoring up.

At certain points in the adventure (listed in the Adventure Notes for each chapter), the judge will need to take control of the NPCs to implement key actions. It is important, however, that in general playing the NPCs should not steer the party or shine above the PCs. When, *and if*, the NPCs engage in an encounter, the judge should settle their actions simply and swiftly and move on. It is also recommended that NPCs should act together at the end of the initiative order.

Gruin Ardokk (dwarf merchant): Init -1; Atk warhammer +2 melee (1d8+2); AC 14; HD 1d10; hp 11; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP infravision; SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +0; AL N.

Possessions: warhammer, chain mail, lantern, 36 cp in purse.

Levi Fangred (human cleric): Init +1; Atk battleaxe +0 melee (1d10) AC 11; HD 1d8; hp 11; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP: heal 4/day (character's HD); *blessing* spell 4/day (pg.255 DCC), Turn Unholy 4/day (page 96 DCC); SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +3; AL L.

Possessions: battleaxe, holy symbol, dagger, shovel, 50 gp. **Dagon's Enchanted Amulet:** wearer gains +2 to Luck while climbing Frost Fang, +1 to Strength and Agility. In Dagon's presence, wearer will be compelled to defend the powerful wizard to the death. (Wearer must succeed on a DC 16 Will save at the beginning of each turn in order to resist this effect. A roll of 18+ will allow them to remove it).



Optional NPCs and expedition members

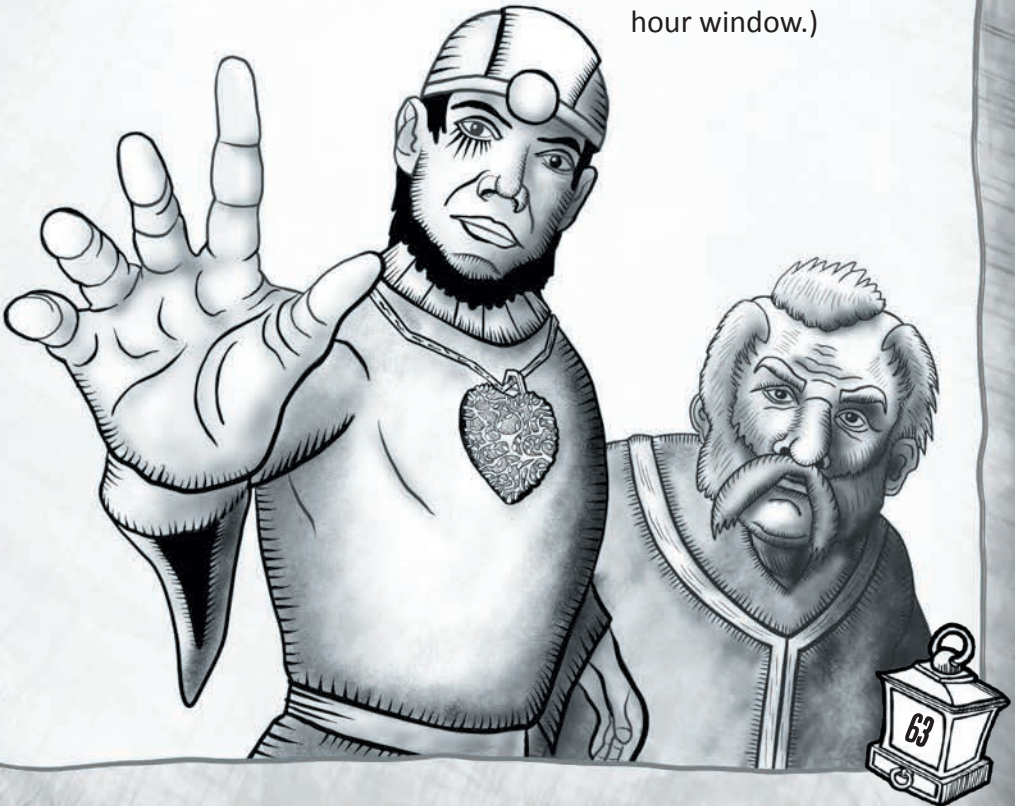
Agandis Thistlecreek (halfling chicken butcher): Init +0; Atk handaxe +1 (1d6+2); AC 11; HD 1d6; hp 7; MV 20'; Act 1d20 (two-weapon 2d16); SP two-weapon fighting, Good luck charm (+11 Luck to Start), Stealth (+3 sneak and hide), infravision; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +1; AL L.

Possessions: handaxe (x2), 5 lbs. chicken meat, hand-sized mirror, 29 cp.

Drakoe Harenhall (human ropemaker): Init +1; Atk short sword +1 (1d8+1); AC 13; HD 1d12; hp 11; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will -1; AL N.

Possessions: Hide armor (+3), short sword, dagger, rope 100', candle, 12cp.

These characters were generated by the Purple Sorcerer Upper Level Character Generator. If you need more or different characters to fill out your expedition, feel free to make your own! (Again, if you are running this adventure as a convention game, for time's sake it is recommended that you arrive with pre-gen characters in order to finish the expedition in a four hour window.)





Encounter Index

1-1	Leaving Neverthawes.....	65
1-2	The Mines of Ardokk.....	67
1-2A	Ardokk Hall of Remembrance	69
1-2B	Ardokk Reception Chamber	70
1-2C	Ardokk Treasury.....	73
1-3	Boulder Bridge.....	74
1-4	The Devil's Stairway	79
1-5	Abandoned Mill	81
1-6	Tunnels of Frost Fang	85
1-6A	The Ugnoid Encampment.....	87
1-6B	The Ugnoid Dragon Room	91
1-7	The Bridge	93
1-8	Dagon's Castle, Outer Walls	95
1-8A	Dagon's Cloud Castle.....	96
	The Final Confrontation.....	98
	Adventure's End	102



The Frost Fang Expedition!

Encounter Table

Area	Type	Encounter
1-1	C	(Bandits/optional. See <i>The Expedition Begins!</i>)
1-2	C/T	Rust Centipedes/Ceiling Trap
1-2A	C/T	Dwarven Ghosts/Tribute Trap
1-2B	C	Medusa Cow
1-2C	C	Dwarven Ghosts
1-3	C	Spell Goat/Mummified Yeti, Ugnoid
1-4	C/T	Frost Gnats
1-5	C/T	Possessed Windmill
1-6	C	Frost Fang Ugnoids
1-6A	C	Frost Fang Ugnoids/Trained Penguins
1-6B	C	Frost Fang Ugnoids/Dragon
1-7	C/T	Frost Fang Ugnoids/Precarious Bridge
1-8	C	Mutated Evergreenk
1-8A	C	Dagon the Doleful/Scroll Golems

Area 1-1: Leaving Neverthawes

The cock crows into a dull gray morning sky, echoing with distant thunder. In the cold drizzling rain, a few of the town's citizens have gathered to see you off. The Barren Road stretches out before you, from this vantage point it seems to wind forever up the face of Frost Fang Mountain.

Setting off, the first leg of your journey runs west toward Shiver Creek, before the road cuts north toward the mines of Ardokk. After an hour of slogging over a muddy rutted trail, the expedition comes to a crossroads. You can either continue along the Barren Road toward Frost Fang via the Boulder Bridge, or you can save valuable daylight by cutting through the abandoned Ardokk mines.



Both directions contain challenges and difficult decisions. The shortcut through the Ardokk Mines, however, will shave valuable hours from the journey and could allow the party to reach the summit before nightfall (helping them avoid potential frostbite). Conversely, it is likely the more dangerous route.

Adventure Notes

- Gruin Ardokk will try to persuade the party to venture into the mines of his forefathers. He will tell of great treasure still buried and guarded by a “she-devil”. He promises an additional 50 gold to anyone who helps him defeat the “vile ruination of my people’s legacy”.
- Levi Fangred will caress the amulet around his neck, explaining that his heart tells him the mines are a fool’s folly, and it is better to stick to the road. Regardless of the decision, either NPC will grumble, but go along with the majority.
- If the party enters the mines, proceed to **Area 1-2: The Mines of Ardokk**. If they choose to stay on the Barren Road, they will soon arrive at **Area 1-3: Boulder Bridge**.

Area 1-2: The Mines of Ardokk

Carved into the side of the mountain above you, the mouth of the Ardokk Mines can just be made out, covered with winter-dead branches and vines. The entrance is literally the enormous carved mouth of a dwarven warrior!

Entering the tunnel reveals a once-great dwarven hall with massive columns and tiered platforms. Most of the doors are blocked by massive cave-ins, but to the north, one massive door remains clear. Footsteps echo in this cold, dead cavernous chamber.

Adventure Notes

- Dwarves smell gold coming from behind the massive doors ahead.
- The door is locked and rusted, requiring a DC13 open locks check to pick; DC 10 if lubricant is applied. The door can be smashed with a DC 12 Strength check, but doing so attracts 1d4 **Rust Centipedes** and triggers a ceiling fall (see page 68).



- PCs can apply their Luck modifier to a DC 15 Listen check to hear the faint dinging of a cowbell echoing in the distance.
- Gruin Ardokk will argue that the party needs to press forward. Levi Fangred will counter they should “turn back and seek a path under the open skies”.
- All chambers in the mines excepting the entrance are dark, requiring some form of light source to navigate.

Dagon’s amulet: This powerfully enchanted amulet worn by Levi Fangred affects not only the wearer, but also those nearby. Anyone who touches the amulet might suddenly see a vision. Likewise, anyone who uses magic, prayer, or other mystical skills (or who even strikes a magical beast!) in its presence might feel its effects. Refer to the table in **Appendix C on page 108** for a list of possible visions, most providing important clues that will help the players complete the adventure.

Rust Centipede (1d4): Init +2; Atk bite +1 melee (2+ corrosion damage); AC 8; HD 1/2; hp 2; MV 15’ or climb 15’; Act 1d20; SP corrosion (Any metal weapon that strikes the creature is weakened, suffering a -1 to hit and damage going forth. Any successful bite attack also inflicts a -1 to wearer’s metal armor bonus); SV Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +1; AL N.

Falling Ceiling Trap: DC 12 Reflex save for all in room; 1d4 damage.



Area 1-2A: Ardokk Hall of Remembrance

Beyond the ornately carved door a stone corridor leads to a long rectangular hall, lined with statues of dwarven warriors; seemingly a tribute to the Ardokk lineage. Gruin Ardokk grimly places one brawny hand upon the first statue, while Levi Fangred mutters that there is no time to waste on sentimentality. Suddenly the already chill hallway grows noticeably colder as the braziers on the wall flicker to life with a sickly green flame.

Adventure Notes

- A door similar to the entrance rests on the far side of the chamber. The spirits of undead dwarves inhabit this room and can be detected by any cleric with a successful DC 11 Personality check.
- A few steps into the chamber, engraved dwarven runes form a threshold upon the floor reading: "Only in tribute shall any pass these our forefathers." One of the statues on this side of the threshold holds a scale in each perfectly balanced hand, a gold coin resting on each, covered in dust. Anyone who crosses the threshold without placing a gold coin in tribute on one of the trays awakens 1d4 dwarven ghosts. Additionally, after everyone has crossed the threshold, if the scales are not balanced the PCs will hear an ancient mechanism grinding as it pushes open a stone slab on either the right or the left wall (depending which side of the scale was lifted up) releasing 1d4 rust centipedes! Each round that the scale is not balanced results in an additional monster joining the fray. (The scales of the statue raise and lower as coins are placed on them).
- A successful DC 13 Intelligence check will recognize that the ding-ding of a cowbell is sounding from the end of the hall, behind the door.
- The door ahead is stuck slightly ajar. As the PCs leave the room, the green braziers dampen and die behind them. Any unresolved combat will follow the party into the next room.
- Levi or Gruin might take this opportunity to pass a note or whisper to a party member with whom he feels a kinship (see **Appendix A: Judge's Notes on pages 104-105**).



- Any close inspection of the statues will reveal that one models a grotesque deformity: a figure sporting strange alabaster horns and over-sized teeth. Gruin Ardokk will not discuss its appearance, repulsed by the “obvious vandalism”.

Dwarven Ghosts of Ardokk (1d6): Init +2; Atk special (see below); AC 10; HD 2d10; hp 12; MV fly 40'; Act 1d20; SP undead traits, half damage from non-magical weapons, ethereal mining pick +2 melee (1d4 dmg, and the attacked creature must make a DC 12 Will save to resist overwhelming fear accompanied by 1d4 rounds of uncontrollable weeping as they see a vision of the dwarves' demise: -2 to all attacks); SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +4; AL N.

Area 1-2B: Ardokk Reception Chamber

The dusty presence of one-hundred year old air surrounds you as your footsteps echo in the darkness of this large room. The chamber is lined with tall pillars near the walls, with dozens of other vague, shadowy shapes scattered throughout the space. The clip-clop of hooves on stone pavers and the lonesome dink-dink of a solitary cowbell bounce off the stone walls from somewhere in the dark.

Adventure Notes

- A hundred petrified Ardokk dwarves stand scattered throughout the room, frozen in various defensive postures. This chamber was once used by the Ardokks to negotiate with emissaries from distant lands, the Ardokk Treasury conveniently attached to one side. A staircase winds upward to the northern exit of the mines.
- The outer edges of the room are lined with large pillars. The silhouette of a cow can be seen ambling behind them in the shadows. The PC with the lowest luck will step into a fresh pile of cow dung (phlogiston manure).
- A petrified stone **Egad Greenthicket** crouches like a statue in the center of the room, mirror in one raised hand, a scroll in the other (both items also petrified). The skeletal remains of the once-fearsome medusa lie crumpled and caked in dust before him.



THE MINES of ARDOKK

to
FROST
FANG

1-2C

1-2B

1-2A

1-2

BISHOP

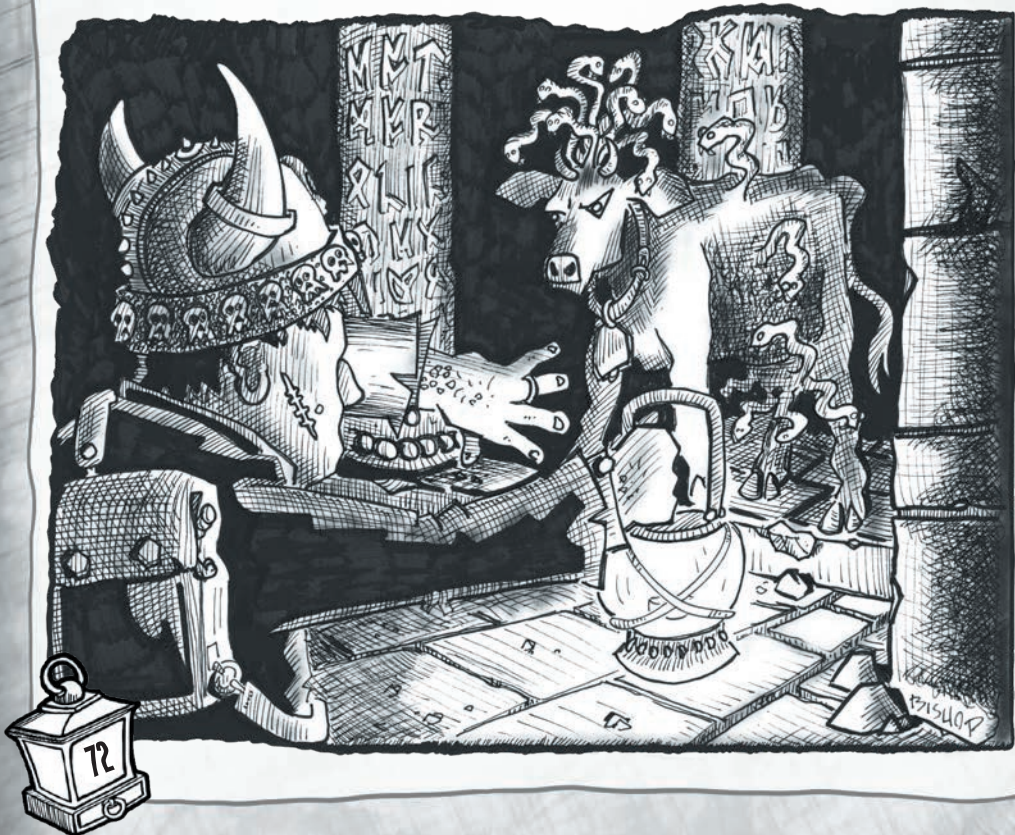


- The scroll in Egad's clenched fist was a transference spell created by Dagon: the halfling used it to entrap the creature inside the less intimidating bovine. Arcane forces have kept the cow alive these many years. It does not speak, being no more intelligent than an ordinary cow. It will likely become spooked and make inadvertent attacks when discovered.

Medusa Cow: Init +2; Atk snake bite +2 melee (1d4+2) and petrification (DC11 Will save to resist); AC 13; HD 3d8; hp 17; MV 25'; 4d20; SP petrifying gaze (DC 12 Will save); SV Fort +2, Ref +2 Will +0; AL N.

The startled Medusa Cow (or "Moodusa" for judges who prefer the outlandish!) can make up to four snake attacks each turn (no more than two against one target). A successful bite attack that delivers damage forces the victim to make a DC 11 Will Save or begin the metamorphosis of petrification. Such victims suffer an immediate -2 penalty to attack rolls as their muscles begin to seize up.

Any attack, melee or ranged, made against the cow requires looking at it, unless the attackers eyes are closed (-4 melee; -4 ranged penalty to



such attacks). Any attacker looking at the cow must make a DC 11 Will save after the attack or begin the process toward permanent petrification, as if they had been bitten.

Affected PCs must make an additional save to shake off the effects on their next round; failure results in complete paralyzation. If the poor PC fails a third and final save on the following round, they are turned permanently to stone. (Success frees them from the paralyzation).

A character brandishing a mirror as an action can force the medusa cow to make the same DC 11 Will save. The process for the cow is the same as with the PCs to avoid petrification. (Looking at the creature through the mirror offers no protection — a PC must make the same DC 11 Will save as if they looked on it directly).

The far wall sports a weapon rack holding two short swords (d6), a long sword (d8), and two fine ebony throwing daggers (d4/d10). The table nearby holds a suit of studded leather armor (+3 AC bonus), an Ardokk shield (+1 AC bonus) and a rabbit's foot on a chain (extra roll on a death saving/roll under Luck throw, one-time use).

Due to their proximity to the amulet, anyone who uses magic in this encounter or strikes the Moodusa has a 50% chance of seeing a vision regarding Dagon and the hourglass (see **Appendix C on page 108**).

Area 1-2C: Ardokk Treasury

A hundred bejeweled chests line the walls and shelves of this vault. Though cobwebbed and dusty, their resplendent design reveals the great craftsmanship of the Ardokk dwarves. One chest lies open in the center of the room, spilling over with more gold pieces than you could imagine could exist in one place!

Adventure Notes

- If the players enter the treasury, as in the hallway, they feel the room grow suddenly cold as the braziers upon the walls come to life with green flames. A ghostly Ardokk dwarf will appear over every chest, each peering intently at the PCs. If any character should approach one of the chests, the ethereal dwarves will begin to tighten their grips on the deadly looking pick-axes in their hands.



- Gruin Ardokk will step forward to plead before the dwarven spirits that he promised the party 50 gold each for helping to destroy the medusa. They will honor this vow, but nothing more.
- Should the adventurers attempt to steal the gold, they will meet almost certain death as they face the wrath of the three-hundred Dwarven Ghosts of Ardokk (minus any that were defeated in the Hall of Remembrance.)

Dwarven Ghosts of Ardokk (1d6 each new round): Init +2; Atk special (see below); AC 10; HD 2d10; hp 12; MV fly 40'; Act 1d20; SP undead traits, half damage from non-magical weapons, ethereal mining pick +2 melee (1d4 dmg, and the attacked creature must make a DC 12 Will save to resist overwhelming fear accompanied by 1d4 rounds of uncontrollable weeping as they see a vision of the dwarves' demise: -2 to all attacks); SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +4; AL N.

After the PCs reach the end of the Mines of Ardokk, read or paraphrase the following:

The stairs that lead upward through the chamber of pillars eventually exit on the north side of the mountain onto the Barren Road. Snow is falling at this higher elevation and the air is bitterly cold. From here, you can continue westward toward the peaks and what appear to be overgrown stairs cut into the steep sides of the mountain, or head north-east towards what looks to be a derelict windmill.

If the party decides to continue via The Devil's Stairs, proceed to **Area 1-4**. If they decide to head toward the abandoned windmill, proceed to **Area 1-5**.

Area 1-3; Boulder Bridge

The rain has turned to snow as biting chill air envelopes you. The rooftops of distant Neverthawes have long disappeared into the mists below. You hear what sounds like thunder, then realize that another chunk of the earth mote has broken off, falling onto the hapless village. Levi Fangred says a quick prayer and quickens his step. Ahead, you hear the murmur of a mountain stream as a stone bridge comes into view. "Boulder Bridge" mutters



Gruin Ardokk. On this side of the bridge you see a small, blue-skinned man poking at a campfire. A goat sits nearby, a long horn seemingly strapped to its head.

The goat is named **Doranthel** and is actually a cursed elf with what can only be described as a *unicorn complex*. He commands the blue-skinned, runaway ugnoid (see sidebar) named **Klaklak** and a mummified yeti named **Tarr**. Doranthel is one of the missing bridge-builders. While constructing the rope bridge to Dagon's castle many years ago, he and the other workers were captured by the ugnoids and forced to pilfer the mining rails from the Ardokk mines, re-laying the tracks atop the mountain. After that, he and the others were subjected to depraved black magic rituals by the tribe's shaman. Many perished, while others cast themselves from the high cliffs to find escape.

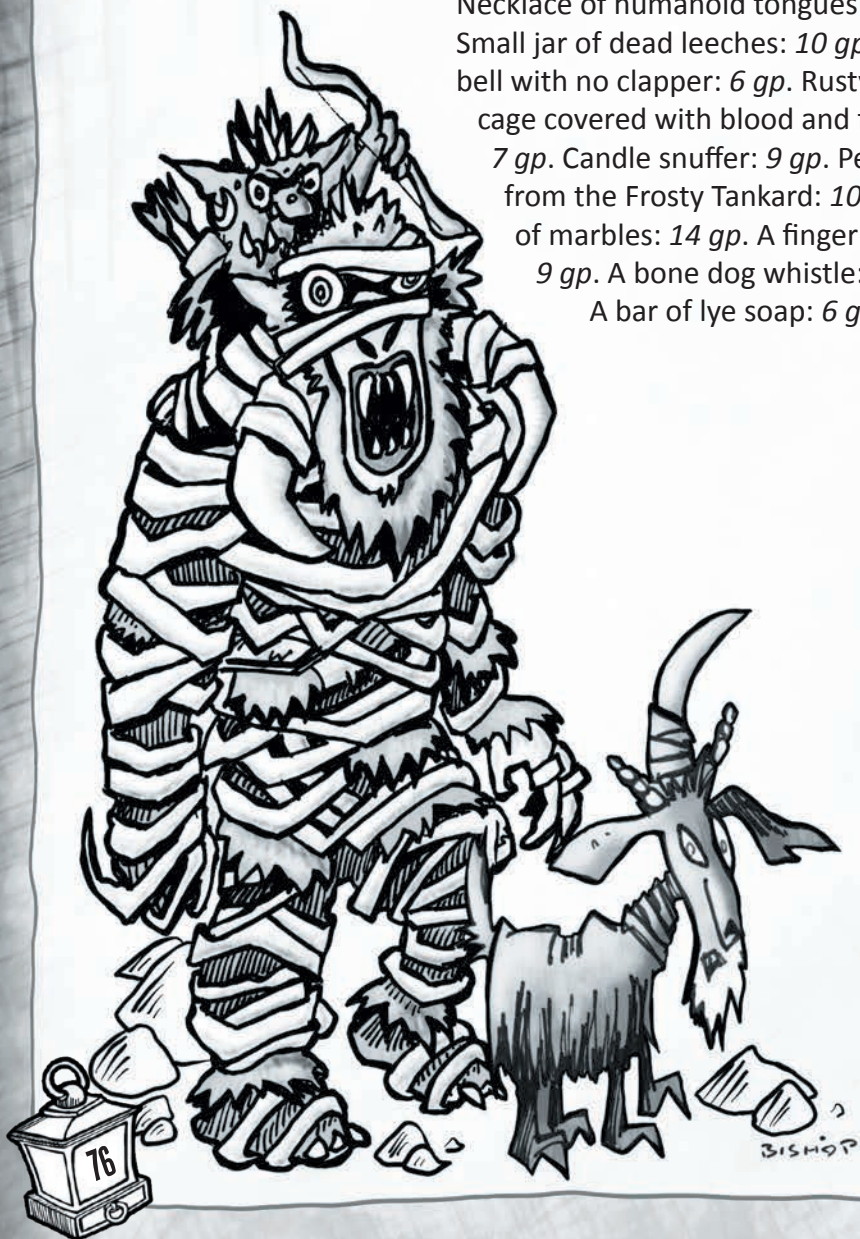
Adventure Notes

- Doranthel wears the horn on his head, somewhat madly believing himself to be a unicorn rather than a goat. He is unable to quell his goat voice when he speaks. *"Hello baaaannddd of travelers. What haaaaave you to trade with us today?"*
- Doranthel intends to extort the expedition by selling them a few less-than-valuable items from his campsite, making it clear that none shall pass who do not participate in the charade.
- The stream's current is swift, freezing, and dangerous. Swimming across requires a DC 14 Strength or Agility check on 3 successful rounds; Failure results in 1d4 damage each missed roll until crossed.
- Gruin Ardokk will remind the party that this could have been avoided if they had taken the shortcut through the mines. Levi Fangred will tell them that every path is fraught with its own peril.



The giant Tarr will ominously receive the payment for each transaction. He will pass each coin to Klaklak, who will climb on his back, bite the coin, and then drop it into a pouch. The prices are obviously over-inflated; such is the business of extortion. Dorantheil will only allow the party to pass if they each purchase one item listed in the possessions inventory below:

8' of singed rope: 8 gp. Skull of a cat: 9 gp. Ukulele with no strings: 10 gp. Necklace of humanoid tongues: 12 gp. Small jar of dead leeches: 10 gp. Small bell with no clapper: 6 gp. Rusty bird-cage covered with blood and feathers: 7 gp. Candle snuffer: 9 gp. Pewter cup from the Frosty Tankard: 10 gp. Bag of marbles: 14 gp. A finger in a box: 9 gp. A bone dog whistle: 12 gp. A bar of lye soap: 6 gp.



Tarr the Mummified Yeti (9' tall 800 lbs.): Init -2; Atk claw +4 melee (1d8+2) or hurled stone +4 missile fire (1d8+2, range 60'); AC 14; HD 5d10; hp 28; MV 30'; Act 1d24; SP vulnerable to fire (x2), crit on 22-24, undead traits, immune to *sleep*, *charm*, and *paralysis* spells; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +2; AL C.

Doranthel the "Unicorn": Init +1; Atk hoof +1 melee (1d4) or spell +2 (see SP); AC 11; HD 2d8; hp 12; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP *mirror image* (DCC pg. 182), *Scorching Ray* (DCC pg. 192); SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +4; AL C.

Klakkak the Ugnoid: Init -1; Atk dull sword -1 melee (1d3) or short bow -1 (1d6) missile fire; AC 8; HD 1d6; hp 5; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP infravision 60'; SV Fort -2, Ref +0, Will -2; AL C.

Possessions: Doranthel: A key to the chest dangles around his neck. Klakkak: A short bow, six arrows, and a short sword.



A medium-sized locked chest (DC13 to pick without key, DC 15 to smash) rests near the campfire.

When opened a Shrieking Dodo erupts from the chest, erratically flying around the campsite, emitting an ear-piercing scream (DC 12 Fort Save or 1d3 damage and character is deaf for 1d6 rounds). The bird will fly away after one round (DC 20 to catch and subdue). Items inside the chest include: 82 gp, 1 set of hide armor (+3 AC bonus), 1 set of scale armor (+4 AC bonus), carved bone blowgun with five needles (1d4 dmg) with vial of poison (extra 1D6 damage, 5 uses), **Scroll of Feather Fall** (1 use), 3 small clay pots, each filled with oil, a short wick and a flint igniter (1d6+2 and ongoing fire damage). If the chest is smashed, there is a 50% chance that one of the clay pots will explode, destroying all but the scale armor and the gold. Roll damage for all within 5'.

From this location the PCs may choose to travel up the steep stairs carved into the mountain in **Area 1-4**, or bypass that area and instead make their way to the abandoned windmill in **Area 1-5**.



Brief History of the Ugnoids

In their early days, the Ardokk dwarves faced starvation and near-extinction as they began to delve into the bowels of their frozen mountain, seeking to claim its abundant gold deposits and raise their clan to prominence.

While conducting their obsessive search for gold, the first Ardokks discovered a series of tunnels that led down to the underground village of a tribe of blue-skinned goblins. The two factions warred for over a decade until the arrival of a new malevolent enemy caused them to set aside their agendas long enough to ensure their own preservation. The evil medusa **Helgathia Myrr** terrorized the two clans, indiscriminately laying waste to any in her path, goblin or dwarf. A fiendish trap was laid by the Ardokk dwarves, using the unknowing goblin clan as bait. A series of tunnels around the goblin village were collapsed, imprisoning the beast in a chamber that would remain closed another thousand years (until inadvertently opened by the ascent of Dagon's earth mote).

But unbeknownst to the clever Ardokks, many dwarven families they believed had been killed by the medusa were, in actuality, trapped by the tunnel collapse in the lowest levels of the mountain along with their goblinoid enemies. Whether forced into slavery by the goblins, or coaxed into action by their own realization that rescue would never come, the gene pools of the two species were eventually mixed. Generations of interbreeding passed before Dagon's earthquake freed them all (including Helgathia Myrr) a hundred years ago. The inbred aberrations (part goblin; part dwarf) eventually made their way from the mountain's core to the bitterly cold pinnacle of Frost Fang Mountain.

The blue-skinned, bug-eyed creatures—that some have referred to as “ugnoids”—have learned to survive in the harsh environment of the icy mountain's peak. Their speech is a strange mixture of goblin and dwarf, and both those races find the dialect at the same time familiar and foreign when heard. Twisted by their long years trapped in the heart of the mountain, the repulsive and primitive ugnoids of Frost Fang are as ferocious as feral wolves, determined to guard the peaks where they live against all comers.



Area 1-4: The Devil's Stairway

The Barren Road continues to climb through the heavy snow of the Frost Fang Mountains, meandering ever closer to the ominous earth-island above you. Suddenly the rough-hewn cliff reveals a granite stairway carved into the mountain, leading upward toward the summit. Almost hidden by tangled brush, trees, and snow, the stairs would be impossible to traverse with horse and cart, but on foot, it may serve to save valuable daylight.

Adventurers that take the stairs will climb for nearly an hour before the judge should have them make a DC 10 Stamina check. Any PC that purchased special cold-weather gear at the adventure's start may be granted a +1 or +2 bonus to their check, at the judge's discretion. Anyone who fails the check will lose 5' off their speed until their next extended rest.

Adventure Notes

- Determine the party marching order (there is room for two PCs side-by-side on the stairs) and ask the lead character(s) for an Intelligence check as they progress (DC 15 to notice that a section of the stairs appear to be moving slightly). A 10' gap in the stairway has been filled by millions of Frost Gnats that blend in with the natural color of the granite, forming an illusion of steps where none exist. The first step onto the Frost Gnats will lead to a nasty 20' plunge down onto a rocky ledge (2d6 damage) unless the character makes a DC12 Reflex save and grabs the lip of the previous stair.
- The skeletal remains of a long dead adventurer lay on the lower ledge. He wears dwarf-sized studded leather armor in some disrepair (+2 AC bonus), and grips a warhammer fashioned as a ram's head (1d8 dmg). He wears an amulet similar to the one that Levi Fangred bears, though rusted and broken beyond repair.
- Whether a character falls or not, the Frost Gnats will swarm the party when they attempt to cross the breach, attacking until the party reaches the top of the stairs. To proceed, PCs must succeed on a DC 13 Strength or Agility check to leap across the gap. If a rope is secured, party members can be hoisted to the other side with a DC 10 Strength or Agility check by those already across (up to four PCs on the far side can





participate in this check). Once across the chasm, it is 60' to the top of the stairs. The characters may move their normal speed in one round up the steps (remember any Stamina penalties incurred earlier on the stairs).

- Due to the proximity of Dagon's amulet, anyone who uses magic in this encounter has a 50% chance of seeing a vision regarding Dagon and the hourglass (see **Appendix C on page 108**).

Frost Gnats: Init +4; Atk swarming bite +2 melee (1d4 plus sting); AC 8; HD 4d8; hp 26; MV 40'; Act special; SP bite all targets within 40'x40' space; half damage from non-area attacks, double damage from area attacks, sting (DC8 Fort save or 1d3 allergic reaction. 1: Face swells and target is blinded for 1d4 rounds. 2: Feet swell and target loses another 5' speed for 1d4 rounds. 3. Bleeding from ears and fingernails, 1d4 added damage); SV Fort +0, Ref +6, Will -2; AL N.

At the end of this encounter, read or paraphrase the following:

From just above you, a thunderous screech echoes across the mountain peaks, but you see no sign of what made it. The wind howls and the bitter cold bites at your exposed skin as your fingers and toes grow numb. You suddenly glimpse a momentary burst of flame on Frost Fang's peak. You have almost reached the top!

Continue on to **Area 1-6: The Tunnels of Frost Fang**



Area 1-5: The Abandoned Mill

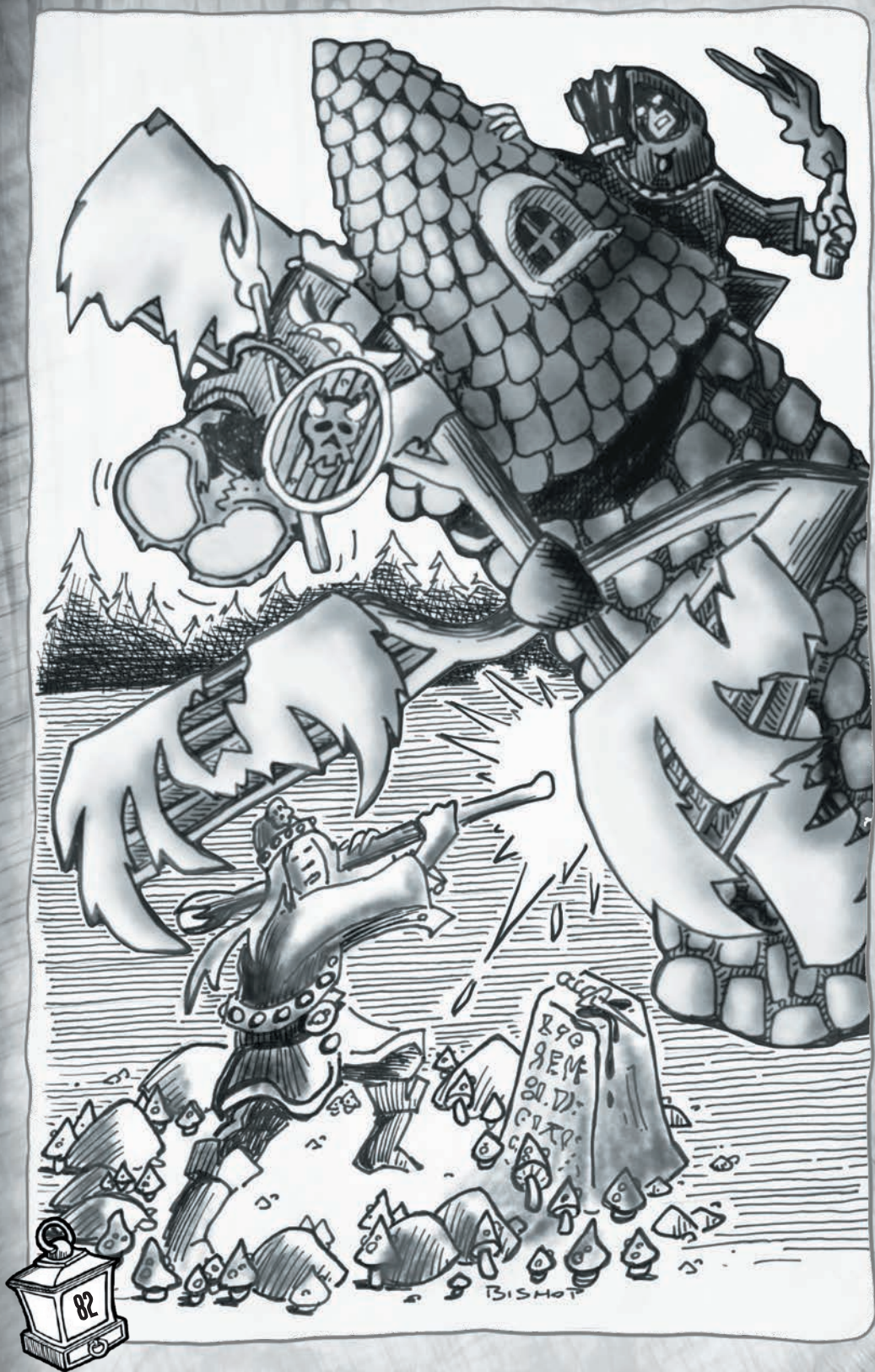
The cold winds and swirling snow have reduced visibility to twenty feet in front of you. From somewhere up ahead, you hear the repetitive mechanical groan of the turning of what sounds like a derelict windmill. When the pathway at last levels off, just beyond a crusty snowbank you see the windmill's slowly turning sails, tattered and neglected. (Should the party approach) As you draw nearer, the sound of snoring fills your ears. Suddenly, there is a tremendous series of pops and creaks as the windmill stretches, and then turns to face you!

The windmill is actually a trapped demi-patron of Azi Dahaka named **Seleeshara** who longs to be free of her prison. Immediately upon seeing the party, she will lumber toward the adventurers and ask each in turn *"Are... you... a wizard?"* (For added interest, start with a character who is *not* a wizard.) If someone answers in the affirmative, she will use one of her sails to point to a runic circle nearby, comprised of smooth boulders and large mushrooms. *"Release... me..."*

Adventure Notes

- The windmill stands 25' tall and possesses limited speech abilities, only able to form the most rudimentary phrases. She will continue to point to the circle until someone steps inside. If players attempt to bypass the windmill, she will become aggressive. Actual attempts by anyone to pass her will enrage the giant creature: roll initiative!
- When someone enters the circle, the windmill will utter, *"Sacrifice... of... blood."* Any letting of blood will cause an inscription to magically appear on the largest stone in the circle, invisible to anyone outside the runic circle. Reading the inscription aloud with the letting of blood is tantamount to performing the ritual. (See **Ritual of Thralldom Dissolution on page 83**).
- Gruin Ardokk will voice support for the idea of releasing the "spirit". Levi Fangred will oppose such thinking, citing that there was a reason that the "creature" was imprisoned in the first place, and that it could be evil. Levi will appear increasingly agitated and eager to move on to the top of the mountain, clutching the amulet to his chest.





Ritual of Thralldom Dissolution

Casting Time: 3 attempts to succeed before ritual can no longer be completed. Caster must be in runic circle with the letting of blood as evidence to Azi Dahaka that the circle is inhabited. At least one point of spell burn must be expended during the first attempt. The judge may request a finger, toe, ear lobe, or scoring of the left arm to awaken Azi Dahaka.

General: Any soul who calls upon the desert prince of storm and waste invites the archfiend to measure his or her worth as a follower. Successfully casting the ritual gives the caster an opportunity to attempt a patron bond (DCC pg. 148) with Azi Dahaka. (Any magic user immediately recognizes the chaotic nature of the patron).

Manifestation: Roll 1d4. 1: Small snakes begin to writhe, squirm, and fall from the caster's sleeves. 2: Heat from the runic circle begins to melt the snow around you. 3: The caster's tongue elongates and forks. 4: The caster's eyes grow large and bulge for the duration of the ritual.

1-3: Failure, and caster vomits a squirming mass of small rattlesnakes, taking 1d4 damage.

4-6: Failure, and a finger on the caster's non-dominant hand turns into a snake. If not severed from the hand before the next round, it will attempt to bite the caster (+4 melee, 1d4 ongoing poison damage, DC 8 Fort Save). Severing the finger causes 1 hp damage.

7-9: Failure. The caster's ears and nose disappear as their head morphs to resemble that of a cobra for the next 1d10 days before slowly returning to normal. The caster becomes susceptible to cold for the duration as well, suffering a -2 to resist cold checks.

10-12: Failure, and the caster's skin takes on the appearance of a green cactus with needles and yellow flowers for 1d6 days.

13-15: Success! The spirit is freed from her windmill prison. The structure rattles violently and explodes (all in area must succeed on a DC 10 Reflex save or take 1d4 damage). She manifests in her true form as a giant glowing dragonfly, and quickly darts off into the clouds.



16-18: Success and the windmill implodes upon itself. Emerging from the rubble, the freed creature appears as a giant glowing dragonfly. Grateful, it grants you a boon of +2 should you ever decide to form a patron bond with her master, Azi Dahaka. She tells you that it was Dagon the Doleful who imprisoned her and that the wizard is not to be trusted.

19 or higher: Success and Azi Dahaka himself manifests before you in the clouds to free the spirit from her prison. He tells you that it was Dagon the Doleful who captured his servant and hid her in this place behind the cold winds of winter, away from his searching eyes. He grants the caster one use of the spell *snake trick* (DCC pg. 333) with a +4 boon. Azi Dahaka also recognizes the caster's pluck and says that he will reveal the secrets of the universe to them if they destroy the wizard who bound Seleeshara (forming a patron bond).

Seleeshara the Demi-Patron (Windmill Form): Init +4; Atk sail slam +4 melee (1d8+2) and stone hurl +2 missile fire (1d8+2) or spell (see SP); AC 14; HD 4d12; hp 42; MV 50'; Act 2d20; SP spells (+4 spell checks) *sleep* (pg. 155), *magic shield* (pg. 146), *snake trick* (pg. 333); SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +2; AL C.

At the conclusion of this encounter, the PC closest to Levi Fangred will be briefly blinded by the sun's reflection on Dagon's amulet and will see a vision (see the table in **Appendix C on page 108**). Once resolved, read or paraphrase the following:

From just above you, a thunderous screech echoes across the mountain peaks, but you see no sign of what made it. The wind howls and the bitter cold bites at your exposed skin as your fingers and toes grow numb. You suddenly glimpse a momentary burst of flame on Frost Fang's peak. You have almost reached the top!

Proceed to **Area 1-6: The Tunnels of Frost Fang**.



Area 1-6: The Tunnels of Frost Fang

Before reading the following flavor text aloud, have each of the PCs roll 1d20 modified by their Fortitude bonus and compare the results on the following table. (If the players took the shortcut through the Ardokk Mines, they receive a +2 to their rolls. If they purchased cold-weather clothing, they receive another +2 to their rolls).

1-3: Extreme frostbite and fatigue. Take 1d6 damage; lose 1d10 toes.

4-7: Extreme frostbite. Take 1d4 damage and lose 1d6 toes.

8-11: Frostbite. Take 1d3 damage and lose one toe.

12-14: Shivering, -2 to attack rolls until warmed up.

16-17: Cold, but no other ill effects.

18 or higher: The cold invigorates you. Add a +2 to your next initiative roll.

At long last, the crest of Frost Fang stands before you. The Barren Road ends in the darkness of a tunnel that old timers have told you leads through the mountain's peak to the floating earth-mote on the other side. As snowflakes swirl around you and the rest of the expedition, caked blood from earlier challenges has frozen to your skin and coats. From this vantage point, you spy two small blue-skinned humanoid figures perched on a ledge overlooking the tunnel. They seem distracted, unaware of your presence as they shout at each other in some unknown gibberish, squabbling over a game of cards being played on a small boulder between them. A set of rails like the tracks for a mining cart protrude from the mouth of the cave, ending at the edge of the precipice.

The ugnoids speak a primitive amalgamation of the goblin and ancient dwarven languages. Anyone familiar with either of these dialects will pick up bits and pieces of information, but not the whole. Each of the ugnoids guards are armed with shortbows and short swords. They will not initiate combat, instead demanding (in their own language) that the interlopers lay down their weapons outside the mouth of the cave and submit to having their hands bound before being allowed to enter. If attacked, they will retreat into the tunnel on the ledge to seek reinforcements.





Adventure Notes

- There is ample rock and tree cover for any character to attempt to sneak to the front of the tunnel entrance (DC 12 Agility check), and/or to climb the sheer rock wall (DC 12 Agility check).
- The main tunnel at the end of Barren Road leads to the communal living area of the ugnoid tribe. The smaller tunnel from the ledge where the two guards are posted leads to the back of the cave and into the “dragon” holding room. If the party manages to silence the guards before they sound an alert, it’s possible to enter the cave on the ledge undetected by the tribe.
- If the PCs enter the larger main tunnel, they will immediately feel warmth and hear the crackling roar of a distant fire. A DC 8 Intelligence check will detect subtle movements in the dark alcoves and side tunnels, and an awareness that the party is being watched. Proceed to **Area 1-6A**.
- If the PCs enter from the tunnel on the ledge, they will come to the dragon holding room. Proceed to **Area 1-6B**.

Frost Fang Ugnoids (50): Init -1; Atk club, spear or dull sword -1 melee (1d3) or sling -1 (1d3) missile fire; AC 8; HD 1d6; hp 3; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP infravision 60'; SV Fort -2, Ref +0, Will -2; AL C.

Area 1-6A: The Ugnoid Encampment

As you enter the mouth of the cave, you are greeted by rapturous warmth, the crackle of a fire echoing in the distance. The rails that ended on the precipice outside disappear into the darkness of a large chamber ahead, the wooden ties beneath the silvery rails branded with the Ardokk crest. As the cave widens out, you feel a hundred shining eyes staring at you from behind the rocks and from within shadowy alcoves of the cave.

The party is surrounded by the ugnoids, hovering at a safe distance as they brandish crude spears and shields in the shadows. If allowed, they will urge the PCs forward down the widening cave until they find themselves in the heart of the encampment. There the party will be forced to their knees as an ugnoid Shaman (leading several long-toothed penguin-like creatures on leashes) will emerge from a tent structure to shamble forward slowly before stop-



ping before the party. Behind him an ugnoid Chieftain leads an old bearded man in shackles. The prisoner's back is crooked, his skin is dotted with sores. The frail man's milky gaze indicates that he is blind as he stumbles along clumsily behind the chieftain.

Adventure Notes

- The chieftain uses the old man (the last remaining survivor of the captured bridge workers of yore) as an interpreter. Long ago, his name was **Thilas Evergood** (great-grandfather to Chauncey Evergood of the Mountain Merchant Hall), but he now answers to **Blugdonk**, meaning “eye-saliva of the infected hyena”. (*See History of Thilas Evergood*).
- Communicating through Thilas, the ugnoid chieftain will demand to know why the PCs are trespassing. He will deny passage through the tunnel unless the party agrees to give him half of what they find in the castle after the “demon stone worm” is destroyed. He will refuse any request to send his own people to face Dagon.
- The ugnoid chieftain can be mollified (helping negotiation checks) by offering him raisin bread if any party members procured some from Chauncey Evergood.
- If provoked, the ugnoids will attack viciously until half their numbers have been slain or the shaman and/or the chieftain are defeated. At any of these moments, have the remaining ugnoids make a morale check (DCC pg. 94), and continue to make morale checks each round on their initiative. On a failure, the creatures will retreat into the dark alcoves and tunnels of their mountain compound.
- An important quest item, the **Ritual Scroll** required by Dagon, is kept in a chest inside the Shaman's tent. The PCs may appropriate it in a variety of ways, through negotiation, thievery, or skirmish. (If the players have forgotten about the scroll and its importance in completing the ritual, Gruin or Levi could remind them).
- As a reminder, any character that calls upon other-worldly powers such as magic or prayers during the encounter will find themselves experiencing “phlogistonical feedback” during the attempt. Roll on the table provided in **Appendix C on page 108** for results.

The northern exit of the encampment leads to **Area 1-7: The Bridge**.



History of Thilas Evergood

After suffering as a prisoner for so many years, poor blind Thilas Evergood is a broken man, nearly devoid of any remaining humanity. Pale-skinned and gaunt, his hair and beard are now wispy gray strands. His fingernails are long and dirty, his teeth stained yellow and ground to a point to more closely resemble those of his captors.

Thilas will obediently translate any dialogue between the two parties. If the chieftain suspects that he is not accurately relaying everything being said, he will viciously lash the captive human, driving him to his knees.

If freed and questioned, Thilas will relay to the PCs what he can remember, adding that he no longer trusts his own memory to be accurate. He recalls that while a few of the workers attempted to breach the castle's gates when work on the bridge began, none ever returned to camp, so that effort was abandoned. He can remember an occasional puff of green smoke or ringing of a gong from behind the walls. As the discussion continues, his memory strengthens, recalling that the ugnoids were friendly up until the construction of the bridge was finished, only then turning upon the workers. Some of the workers were killed outright, but most were forced into slavery, pressed into raiding the Ardokk mines for supplies to build the "dragon" in Area 1-6b. When their usefulness was expended, they were subjected to cruel, deviant experiments by the shaman.

If questioned too intensely, Thilas will collapse into tears, crying out that he wished he had never been born. There are a multitude of ways the PCs might respond to the captivity of Thilas Evergood!

Ugnoid Shaman (The **Chieftain** also uses these stats minus the spells): Init +2; Atk clawed staff, +1 melee (1d6) or spell +4 (see SP); AC 12; HD 2d6; hp 10; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP Spells: Mirror Image (pg.182), Scorching Ray (pg.192); SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +2; AL C.

Possessions: A locked chest (DC 10) inside the Shaman's tent contains the **Ritual Scroll of Dimensional Resonance**.

Subterranean Attack Penguins (4): Init +1; Atk claws and teeth, +1 melee (1d4); AC 10; HD 1d6; hp 5; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP infravision 60'; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +0; AL N. *These penguins have claws, teeth and bad attitudes.*





Area 1-6B: The Ugnoid Dragon Room

(If the party approaches from the outside) A tunnel burrows into the mountain on the backside of the ledge which housed the guards you first encountered. (Should they enter) Your progress through the winding darkness of the tunnel proves uneventful, the passage eventually gives way to a large chamber with rails upon the floors, much like what you have seen outside the mines. The rails end near the eastern wall of the chamber, where a panoramic opening beckons, offering an incredible view of the valley (and even occasionally of Neverthawes far below) through the clouds. With a start you notice you are far from alone in this chamber: crouching in the shadows of a rough alcove carved into the far wall, the still silhouette of an enormous serpentine creature looms, leathery wings tucked in at its sides!

(Assuming the party is sneaking in from outside) If the Ugnoid guards on the ledge were taken out before sounding any alarm, the PCs will find a clear path to the Dragon Room. If a noisy confrontation took place, the PCs could meet 1d4 Ugnoid warriors in the tunnel, at the judge's discretion. The dragon is a mobile, mechanical furnace, created by the ugnoids. The contraption was designed to intimidate trespassers and scare off unwanted company. Covered in leather, the apparatus is packed with crude gears, pulleys and ropes. It travels on the rails that run to the eastern opening, allowing it to access the precipice where it can shoot goutts of flame and sound its gigantic alphorn.

Adventure Notes

- If the PCs decide to appropriate the mechanical dragon, a DC 12 Thievery Check will be required to unlock the chains that hold it in place. A DC 28 Strength Check is required to move it along the tracks (up to four PCs can participate in this check). If the PCs should predictably attempt to figure out how to shoot



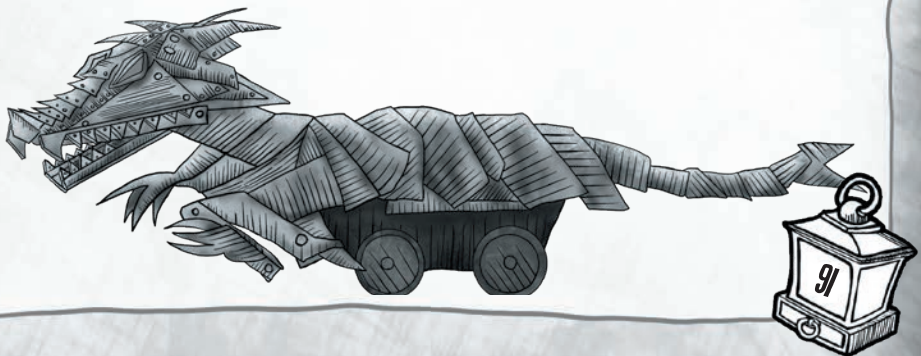
flames from the dragon's mouth, a DC 10 Intelligence Check is required to understand how to fire the weapon (3 uses). Thief characters are likely predisposed to understanding the creature's mechanics, receiving a +3 bonus to the check.

Again, assuming the party has penetrated the chamber by stealth, if they should fail any of the checks mentioned above, an ugnoid guard will arrive to investigate what's going on; roll initiative! If any ugnoid is still standing at the beginning of the next round, they will call out, summoning an additional 1d8 ugnoids.

- Due to the proximity of Dagon's amulet, anyone who uses magic in this encounter has a 50% chance of seeing a vision regarding Dagon and the hourglass (see **Appendix C on page 108**).
- The rails and the tunnel in this room lead back to the Ugnoid encampment (see the Tunnels of Frost Fang map). Should the party venture this way, use the descriptions found in Area 1-6A.
- The tenor of possible negotiations with the chieftain in Area 1-6A can vary wildly depending on what happens in this room. Using stealth, the party might achieve total surprise, catching the chief off-guard. If the party has noisily dispatched a sizable number of guards, the chief might be intimidated by an aggressive approach. Conversely, if the party has struggled, he might respond with aggression himself. Be prepared to be flexible!

Frost Fang Ugnoids (8+): Init -1; Atk club, spear or dull sword -1 melee (1d3) or sling -1 (1d3) missile fire; AC 8; HD 1d6; hp 3; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP infravision 60'; SV Fort -2, Ref +0, Will -2; AL C.

Frost Fang Mechanical Dragon: Init (that of driver); Atk flamethrower +4 (3d6) 50' cone; AC 10; HD 3d8; 17hp; MV 25'; Act 1d20; SP 3 uses of flamethrower.



Area 1-7: The Bridge

As you exit the warmth of the mountain's interior, you are slapped by the icy winds of the summit, starry skies shining above through whipping tendrils of snow. Before you swings a precarious, weather-worn bridge comprised of frozen ropes and ice-encrusted wooden treads. Through the driving snow you can just make out the silhouette of Dagon's castle in the distance against the moonlit night sky.

Adventure Notes

- The rope bridge to Dagon's castle is 90' in length and dangerous even if the PCs are not being pursued by the blue-skinned ugnoids. Crossing requires a DC7 Agility or Strength check to cover its length without slipping on ice or falling through a rotten board. If the party is escorted by friendly ugnoids, add +2 to checks to make it across safely. If being chased, unless the party has set a rear guard the ugnoids will sever the ropes to the bridge when the adventurers reach the halfway point, requiring each party member to succeed on a DC10 Agility or Strength check to hold on as the bridge collapses.
- Since the consequence of falling is a one-thousand foot drop onto Neverthawes below (100 d6 damage), it is good to remind PCs that they can augment rolls before or after by burning Luck points.
- Upon any fail, have the PC roll 1D10 on the table below.

Falling From Bridge

1. Your feet become entangled in the dangling frozen ropes. Climbing back to the bridge requires two rounds and two DC7 Agility checks.
2. An icy gust of wind slams you into the cliff walls, inflicting 2 hp damage but allowing you the opportunity to make a DC8 Strength, Agility, Stamina or Luck check to grab the craggy surface. (Friends from above can lower ropes to fashion a rescue).
3. On a lower ledge, Ugnoids armed with crossbows shoot a bolt through your upper thigh. An attached chain causes you to swing and dangle on the cliff beneath them. Take D6 damage. Your move.
4. Your fingers latch onto a frayed rope covered in frozen rain. DC10 Agility, Strength, or Luck check to hang on until help arrives.



5. The trajectory of the falling treads and ropes sends you cliff side where you land on a narrow ledge, taking d4 damage. DC12 Agility required to climb the frozen walls. The ledge will crumble in two rounds.

6. There is a loud roar and a chain lasso catches you in mid descent. Through the falling snow, you feel yourself being hauled up to a cliff-side cave by an amorous white-furred yeti. Think fast!

7+. The PC plummets to the village 1000 feet below.

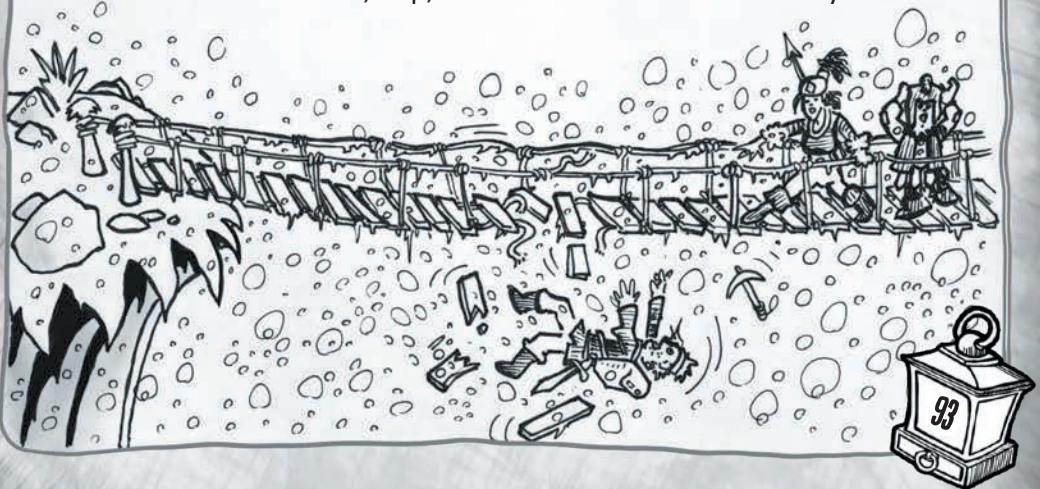
Should an adventurer fall or fail any of these checks, all is not yet lost. There is still a very small chance that the unfortunate PC can survive the fall. Roll a d4 on the following table.

1. The PC plummets down the stone fireplace of The Frosty Tankard, triggering an explosion of internal organs, blood and projectile embers, setting the tavern on fire.

2. The PC slams through the roof of The Gilded Griffon onto a second floor bed, and then crashes through the floor to the first level onto another bed. There is a 50% chance the PC survives with 1d10 broken bones and a single remaining hit point.

3. The PC is impaled upon the steeple of Levi Fangred's temple of Ulish. Immediately a murder of carrion crows swarm down onto the warm carcass. There is a 50% chance that the corpse will be resurrected by Malotoch to serve some nefarious whim for the dark god (judge's discretion).

4. The PC falls a thousand feet through the frozen rain and snow, their body becoming entombed in ice before landing in Neverthawes Lake. There is a 50% chance that the body is recovered and revived with 1d8 broken bones, 1hp, and no recollection of who they are.





Area 1-8: Dagon's Castle, Outer Walls

On the bridge, the frozen winds had relentlessly burned your exposed skin, but as you step onto Dagon's floating earth-mote you are greeted by an unimaginably humid summer climate and a lush emerald lawn. The outer walls of the castle glimmer in the bright moonlight, constructed of smooth river granite some twenty feet high. A gate looms fifty yards to the right of the bridge, its closed portcullis visibly rusted even from this distance. Sparse, knotted evergreen trees surround the entire circumference of the outer wall in even spacing, the ground about them chewed up as if by some enormous rodent. The limbs of many pines are adorned like insane festival trees; decorated with bits of armor, weapons, and what appears to be shredded coats, cloaks, tunics, and bones.

Adventure Notes

- The outer walls of the castle compound can be scaled with a DC 14 Agility check, though approaching the wall will trigger an attack from a nearby “guardian tree”. The portcullis can be lifted with a DC 40 Strength check: up to four PCs can contribute to the task.
- As mentioned, whether the party attempts to scale the wall or lift the front gate, one of the trees will attack the party. The **Evergreenk** is actually a single earth elemental, stationed by Dagon to act as a castle guardian to ward off trespassers. It can burrow underground to inhabit any of the trees surrounding the castle walls. The creature can only inhabit one tree at a time, deforming the tree into a mutated version of itself, lashing about with branches festooned with weapons, shields, and broken bones. The swirling branches churn the ground around it, siphoning up the rotting carcasses of victims past, their appendages joining the lethal whirlwind. If defeated, the elemental will simply move to another tree, though its reach is limited to that of the tree it inhabits.
- The first PC to deliver a successful melee attack to the bark of the Evergreenk will experience a vision of a thousand carrion crows erupting skyward from the trunk, forming briefly into the silhouette of a caped lady. The menagerie will then quickly shift into the form of an hourglass, its sands running out. The vision ends abruptly in a gale of ghostly laughter.



Mutated Evergreenk (1): Init +5; Atk short sword, spear, battle-axe, claw, bite +2 melee (1d6): AC 12; HD 5d8; hp 34; MV (from tree to tree); Act 4d20; SP the Evergreenk makes four attacks, utilizing any weapons it acquires from its victims; SV Fort+4, Ref+5, Will+2; AL C.

Possessions: A satchel hangs from the carcass of an armored warrior lying at the feet of the tree. **Inside are the components requested by Dagon in his letter to Levi Fangred;** thirteen crow's feet, 2 lbs. of sycamore bark, and one pint of porcupine blood. In addition there are 4 enchanted roots that heal 1d6 dmg each. The same note that Levi the Cleric carries is clutched in the warrior's hand: evidence that over time Dagon has reached out to others beside Levi for help! Judges can use the encounter's scattered detritus to re-fortify the party with weapons lost or destroyed during the course of the adventure.

Area 1-8A: Dagon's Cloud Castle

As you enter the grounds, Dagon's castle looms dark and ominously quiet across the courtyard. Near the westernmost wall, a glowing hourglass hovers above a stone wizard's circle in the garden. Strange plogistonian pulses and colorful vibrations emanate from it, the sands inside the top cylinder sparse and running out fast. Broken furniture lies scattered about the courtyard.

Note: It's very important that the players have received enough clues through visions, Dagon's note, and the words of Gruin and Levi that they can understand what needs to be done in the final encounter. Otherwise they will almost certainly die in confusion!

When the expedition members approach either the castle or the hourglass in the garden, they will be greeted by an immense, yet calm voice that seems to come from every direction. The judge can use this role-play opportunity to have Gruin Ardokk and Levi Fangred expound their positions in response (Levi hoping to save the wizard; Gruin to destroy him). The PCs can likewise choose a side or remain ambivalent.

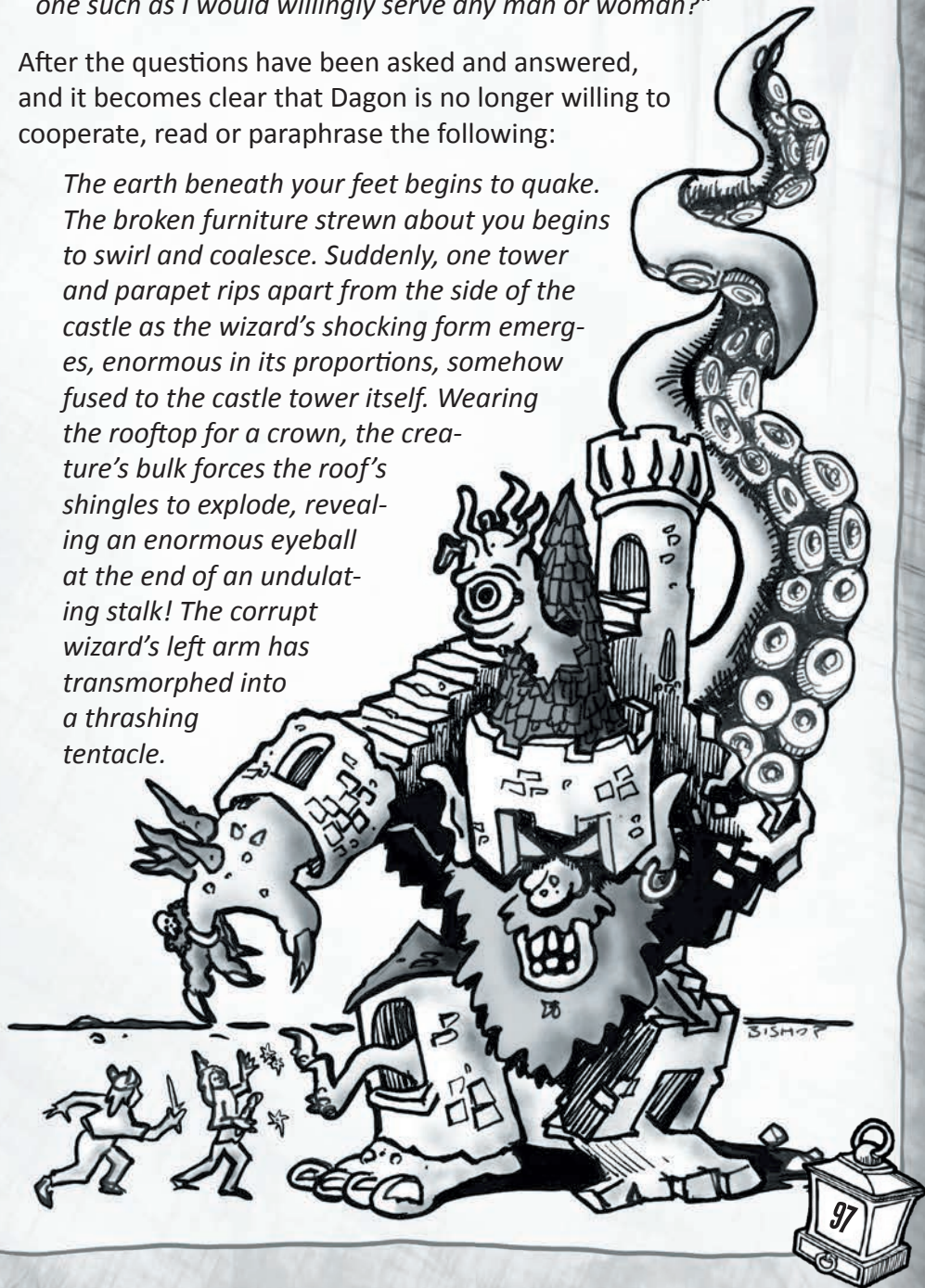
The booming voice is that of Dagon the Doleful. He will question the party, and attentive PCs will discern that his questions reveal that he no longer has any intention of sacrificing himself to Malotoch.



- *“What is the purpose of those who dare cross my bridge?”*
- *“Your valor is offered in vain. Would you place your very soul into the hands of such an evil, malicious creature as she?”*
- *“I am more powerful than ever! Do you believe that one such as I would willingly serve any man or woman?”*

After the questions have been asked and answered, and it becomes clear that Dagon is no longer willing to cooperate, read or paraphrase the following:

The earth beneath your feet begins to quake. The broken furniture strewn about you begins to swirl and coalesce. Suddenly, one tower and parapet rips apart from the side of the castle as the wizard’s shocking form emerges, enormous in its proportions, somehow fused to the castle tower itself. Wearing the rooftop for a crown, the creature’s bulk forces the roof’s shingles to explode, revealing an enormous eyeball at the end of an undulating stalk! The corrupt wizard’s left arm has transmorphed into a thrashing tentacle.



As the monstrosity steps forward, his thunderous voice greets you. "Mortal mushrooms, you are too late. I will not serve her, nor will any of you! She is the apocalypse! She is death! Better that all souls in Neverthawes perish than to sacrifice my strength or yours in obedience to her!"

The Final Confrontation

In his waning moments, and in an effort to thwart the carrion crow goddess, Dagon has madly reasoned that if he does not turn the hourglass on this 100th year, he can avoid his pledge of eternal servitude to Malotoch. Corrupted beyond capacity to reason or to be reasoned with, he babbles incoherently if questioned, *"There are strange rainbows bleeding into long black cats"* and *"I have seen mountains for fingers and entire thimbles on fire!"*

Adventure Notes

- At this moment the true power of Dagon's Amulet will be revealed. At the beginning of every turn, whoever wears it must succeed on a DC 16 Will Save or be compelled to join the wizard in his rampage against the expedition. The PC will attack Guin first, followed by the PC with the lowest Luck if the dwarf is slain. The PC can only remove the amulet if their Will Save roll was 18 or higher.
- If Levi Fangred still wears the amulet, barring a failed Will save, he will immediately attack Guin Ardokk.
- Before initiative is rolled, Dagon animates four **Scroll Golems** to aid him in eradicating the party.
- The castle is kept afloat by the magic in the ethereal hourglass. In six rounds the earth-mote will fall from the sky as the last grain of sand drops. This can be avoided if the ritual is completed inside the wizard's circle, allowing the hourglass to be turned. To add to the tension of the encounter, place a d6 in the middle of the table, turning it to the appropriate number at the top of each round!
 - **Completing the ritual:**
 - **Round One:** The porcupine blood must be poured in the crevices of the circle. (This and the other steps require one action).

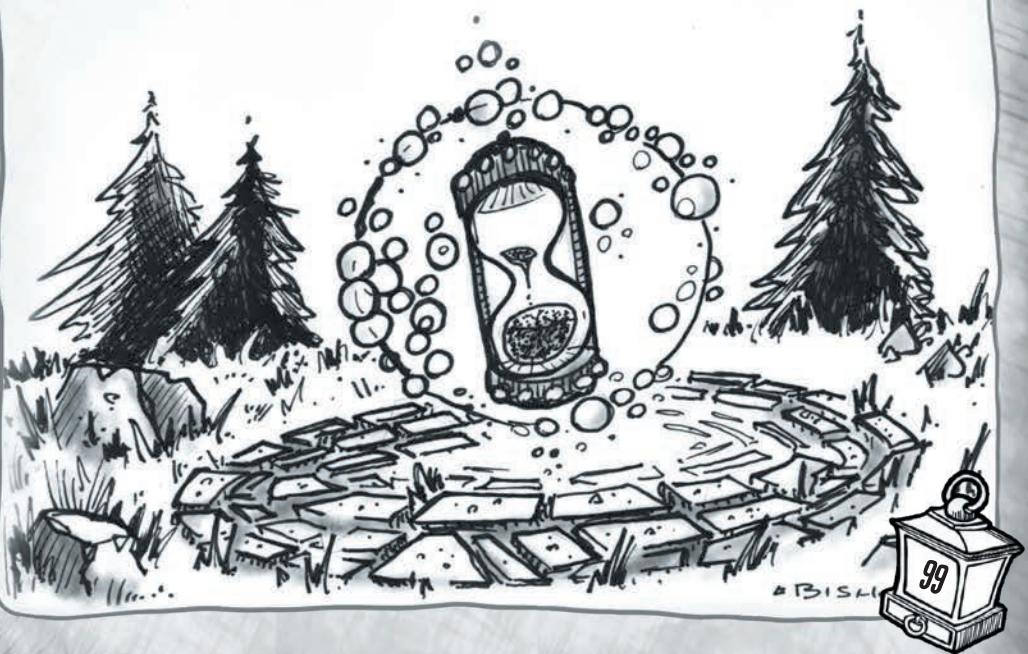


- **Round Two:** The sycamore bark and the crow's feet must be burned together inside the circle.
- **Round Three:** The scroll of Dimensional Resonance must be read aloud.
- Once each of these actions has been performed, the ethereal hourglass will become corporal long enough to be turned, keeping the earth-mote aloft another year while dooming Dagon to eternal servitude.

When the ritual is completed, the carrion crow goddess **Malotoch** will appear as an ebony shadow in the dark night, a true carrion crow dragon as large as the mountain itself. Wrapping Dagon in her wings, she will restore the deranged wizard back, in part, to his original state (a second-level wizard more appropriate to the PCs ability to defeat). The wizard will retain his disfigured, corrupted body, but shrink in size, losing power and strength. If the scroll golems are still standing, they will rush to form a semi-circle around the weakened mage as Malotoch rises skyward to observe the battle's completion.

Roleplaying Dagon the Doleful

Dagon begins the encounter as a powerful 5th level sorcerer who, if in his right mind, would likely lay waste to the party with a few good rolls. To even the playing field, judges should play him as an illogical





mad-man not fully aware of his presence inside this realm. Judges can also use the health of the party to decide how ferociously Dagon will attack the expedition. If the party has limped into this final climactic encounter, you may prefer to allow Dagon's dice to land where they may with his tentacle and eyeball attacks, but skip the wizard's spells and impressive spell bonuses. (These he will save to thwart the completing of the ritual or to use as defensive spells in case another magic user engages him in a spell duel).

If on the other hand, the party has easily thwarted every danger met thus far, amping up the challenge with a barrage of Dagon's spells will complicate the completion of the ritual, inflict some delicious damage, and prolong the drama.

Dagon's strategy for thwarting the ritual's completion: Dagon will make an eye attack and a tentacle melee attack on his turn in the initiative order, holding his second spell action until a PC attempts to complete any of the ritual steps.

- When the blood is about to be poured, he will attempt to cast *control ice* (pg. 239) and *freeze the blood only* (d6 damage to all in circle).
- When the bark and the crow's feet are about to be burned, he will attempt to cast *gust of wind* (pg. 219) to snuff out the flame and disperse the components.
- When the scroll is about to be read, he will attempt to cast *forget* (pg. 170) on the character reading the scroll. Should he somehow be pushed from the mote's edge, he will attempt to cast *feather fall* (pg. 140).

Dagon the "Deranged": Init +4; Atk tentacle +5 melee (1d8+2) and scorching eye +5 (1d6+2 and target must succeed on a DC 12 Reflex save or catch fire, ongoing) and spell +7 (see SP); AC 14; HD 5d4; hp 33; MV 40'; Act 2d20+1d14; SP Spells: *control ice*, *gust of wind*, *forget*, *enlarge*, *feather fall*, *flaming hands*, *magic shield*; SV Fort +4; Ref +4; Will+5; AL C.



Dagon the Doleful (after Malotoch “demotion”): Init +2; Atk tentacle +2 melee (1d4+2) and scorching eye (1d4) and spell +2 (see SP); AC 12; HD 2d4; hp 7; MV 25'; Act 2d20+d14 Spells: *control ice, gust of wind, forget, enlarge, feather fall, flaming hands, magic shield*; SV Fort+2; Ref+2; Will+5; AL C.

Scroll Golems (4): Init +0; Atk table legs +1 melee (1d4+1); AC 10; HD 1d6; hp 3; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +1; Ref +0; Will -1; AL C.

Dagon's Fall

The scroll golems collapse if Dagon is defeated. Malotoch, in dragon form, will swoop down and snatch the fallen wizard in her jaws, flinging the limp body into the air and swallowing the carcass with a satisfying crunch. What happens next depends upon the actions of the PCs and the judge.

If The Party Should Fail

If the PCs failed to turn the hourglass by the sixth and final round, the story need not end in total catastrophe unless the judge deems that to be the right outcome. The judge could decide to have Malotoch, in a grotesque demon-bird form, appear in the dark clouds above the party in time to claim the old wizard as her prize. Discovering the party meddling in her affairs, she might be persuaded to keep the earth island afloat: the cost of course being an unholy pact requiring the completion of some other treacherous new quest! Judges should tailor the new pact to best meet the unique characteristics of the party.



Adventure's End

If the resourceful party has defeated Dagon and saved the earth mote, after the dust settles read or paraphrase the following: *"Dagon the Doleful has proved a wretched victim of his own thirst for power. Somehow, the village has been saved and the hourglass turned. A ray of morning light shines upon the bloodied faces of your expedition as a new day begins. Before you most of Dagon's castle stands intact, a symbol of one man's aspirations and eventual everlasting nightmare. What secrets have been hidden in that castle for the last century? The castle door hangs on one hinge, beckoning you to enter the dead wizard's sanctum..."*

Treasure

The party is free to explore the sections of the castle that remain standing. The place is full of interesting oddities accumulated by the reclusive wizard over the decades. Depending on the style of story/campaign the Judge is pursuing, important decisions will need to be made regarding the parsing out of magical items. Feel free to modify the adventure's treasure to fit what works best for your campaign.

Dagon was a man of simple tastes before he lost himself within the darkest corners of magic. His castle is decorated with tapestries in need of dusting and sparse furniture. The kitchen looks more like a laboratory than a place to prepare food. In an upstairs room, across from a portrait of the old wizard stands a wooden door inscribed with runes. If opened, the door appears to cover a solid brick wall. If the magic runes are decrypted (DC 12 Intelligence check), however, a portal is discovered that transports PCs directly to the upper room of the Gilded Griffon. (Granting the party easy access to the village below, especially important if dozens of angry ugnoids are waiting beyond 90 feet of open air!)

Various arcane treasures are scattered throughout the castle, adorning mantles, hanging on wall mounts and gathering dust upon shelves:

- A knotted hickory staff that glows with green phosphorous veins, allowing the magic user to learn the appropriate number of spells each level, as the green tendrils creep up the user's arm.
 - Enchanted mithril goggles (+2 to detect magic).
 - Dwarven shield of magnetism (50% chance that a foe's metal weapon sticks if they miss on their attack).



- A small bejeweled chest containing 532 gp, 5 mithril bars (of incomparable worth to the right buyer, but dangerous to possess for that reason!), and a rolled nautical map to an unknown island off the coast. Written in the margins are the words “It exists! Dantafar’s sword of glass!”.
- A strange metal tube that flares at one end like a trumpet, with a piece of wood attached to the other end. Near it is a pouch containing a fine ebony powder and a handful of lead pellets. (*A blunderbuss, black powder and ammunition!*)
- A set of leather armor engraved with a dragon (*resist 3 fire*).
- Hanging on a coat rack, a cape and cowl comprised of long black feathers (*ignore the first ten feet of falling damage when worn*).
- A dragonscale kilt. Engraved upon the belt, a scene of an angel and a devil locked in combat (*negates deity disapproval once per day*).
- Ruby-encrusted duel miniature scimitars with a criss-cross back sheath (*+2 to initiative when using in combat*).
- A smaller wizard’s circle near a north facing stained-glass window. An open book on a nearby pedestal details strange incantations, each apparently associated with a point on a fold-out map.

Malotoch

There is also an implied opportunity for someone in the party to form a patron bond with Malotoch, the chaotic carrion crow goddess. She might be willing to make the same offer to one of the PCs that she made to Dagon the Doleful, providing the PC is willing to turn the hourglass once each year for a hundred years and face the certainty of eternal servitude! (See **Appendix D: Malotoch as a Patron on page 110** for more info).



If the earth-mote is not saved...

If the party has been unable to come to some agreement with Malotch after failing to turn the hour glass, read the following:

A great shadow begins to grow as the poor citizens of Neverthawes Township look up for the very last time. Mothers hold their children and farmers remove their caps as the darkness descends quickly from the sky. There is no time for goodbyes or lament. In one catastrophic moment, the township of Neverthawes and all who lived beneath Dagon's castle are smashed into dust. For generations, even full-grown warriors will weep for the innocent village's grisly demise.

The end.

Where do we go from here?

As the adventure draws to a close, Judges will find themselves contemplating if this Level 1 adventure can act as the beginning of a longer campaign. Fear not! If the castle has been saved, seeds have been planted from which the thoughtful judge can nurture further plots, exploits, and explorations. Here are some kick-off points for your consideration:

A tiny portion of the Mines of Ardokk may have been traveled through, but the mines are far from reclaimed. Gruin Ardokk might beseech the PCs to help him recover his birthright by descending deeper into the darkness, where the Ardokk crown still lies buried. What else will they find during their descent?

Emboldened by the expedition's success, opportunist and mercenaries mount an attack upon the newly-claimed castle. Rumors of rare artifacts have reached the ears of jealous wizards. If a pact was formed with the ugnoids, they too may come calling to claim their share.

Found among the castle's treasure is a map to an unknown island... mentioning something about a glass sword? Is it possible that with proper masts and sails that this entire earth mote may be moved and guided with the winds to new locations? What sort of crew would have to be recruited to man such a massive "vessel"?



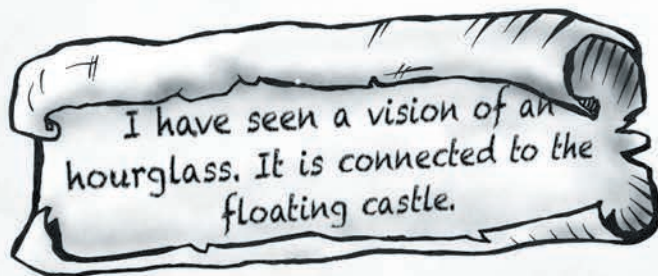
Appendix A: Levi & Gruin

DCC is a game that respects the judge's discretion at the gaming table, and so, there is no right or wrong way to approach The Frost Fang Expedition. We have endeavored to provide a colorful landscape filled with fantastic situations and characters for you and your players to do with as you will. That being said, here are a few tips regarding the adventure that may prove helpful.

Along with adjudicating the rules, the judge also shares (through the often opposing viewpoints of Levi Fangred and Gruin Ardokk) important information about adventure topics. This can be useful for when the players come to an impasse or a hard decision. Have the two NPCs speak their minds and let the chips fall where they may. In general, Levi will support pushing on no matter what, intent on saving the wizard. Gruin will wonder aloud why Levi is willing to imperil the party, and his desire to exact his revenge upon Dagon is clear. The PCs can weigh what they have heard and make up their own minds.

The Game Within The Game

Depending upon the tastes of the judge and the players, allowing both Levi Fangred and Gruin Ardokk to pass secret notes to the players can sow seeds of distrust among the PCs. Where Levi might lean toward alliances with lawful or neutral characters, Gruin would tend to search for support among chaotic or neutral PCs. Notes could be delivered with something along the lines of: *"The cleric Levi whispers this to you as he passes by in the corridor"*. If each person at the table at some point receives a note, then all will wonder what the others know that they do not. (Sample printable notes can be found in the **PDF appendix** included with the adventure).

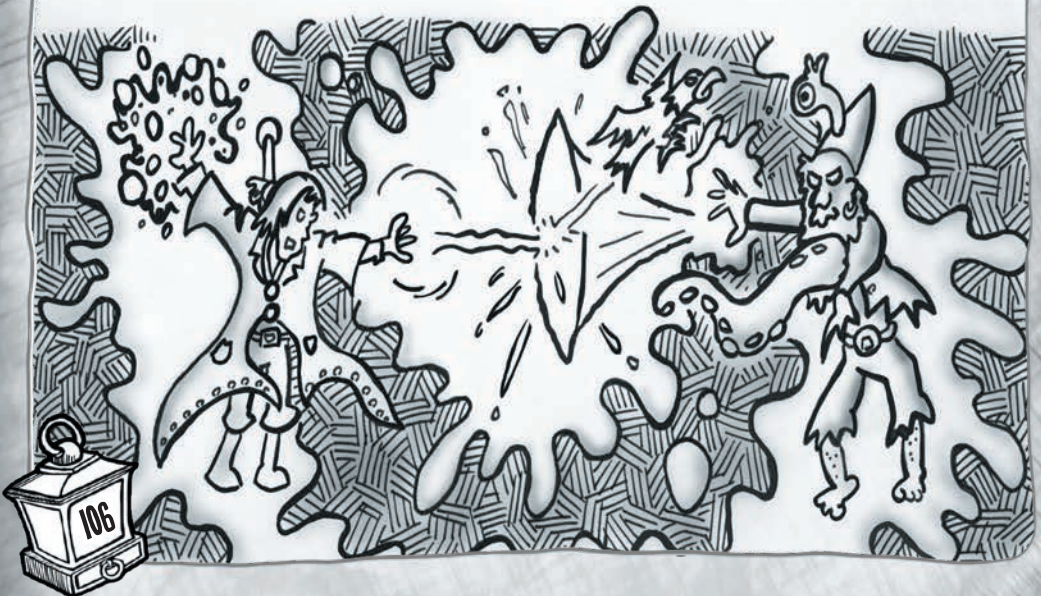


Notes from Levi Fangred might say:

- *“If I should perish, make sure that Dagon’s Amulet makes it back to him safely.”*
- *“No matter what, do not allow the dwarf Gruin to keep us from our mission.”*
- *“I have seen a vision of an hourglass. It is connected to the floating castle.”*
- *“The dwarf Ardokk will betray us. He gathers sympathizers even now.”*

Notes from Gruin Ardokk (rightful heir of Ardokk Mines) might say:

- *“Levi Fangred cares not for you or I. He will betray us all to the wizard.”*
- *“We should take the cleric’s amulet. It has power over his mind.”*
- *“I have seen the cleric whispering to the others. Watch your back.”*
- *“We cannot trust Levi simply because he holds to some simple-minded faith!”*
- *“Just as I can smell gold, I can smell trouble. This wizard we seek is beyond saving. And the cleric Levi Fangred knows it!”*



Appendix B: Spell Duels Simplified

The climactic final confrontation in *The Frost Fang Expedition* could easily lead warring wizards into a spell duel. Don't be daunted! You can find the full explanation of rules beginning on page 98 of the *Dungeon Crawl Classics* rulebook. Here are the bare bones of quickly resolving a spell duel:

- A spell duel begins when a caster decides to “counter” a spell attack with a spell attack. That person moves in the initiative order to just behind the original caster. Both casters set a D20 on the table with a 10 showing to track momentum.
- The attacker declares a spell and makes a spell check. The defender does the same. The high roller wins, and sets their d20 momentum die to 11. Failed spells have no other effect. If both spells succeed, their normal effects are applied simultaneously, unless otherwise stated in the spell description.
- Cross-reference the two spell checks on table 4-5 (DCC page 100) to determine the die to roll on table 4-6 (DCC page 101). The number rolled on this table is modified by the difference between the two momentum trackers. For example, if the attacker's momentum is set at 13 and the defender's at 10, the counterspell on table 4-6 would be at +3 if the attacker won, or at -3 if the defender won. Then read the results of either an attacker or defender victory.
- If the two spell checks are identical, refer to table 4-7 (DCC page 103).
- Resolve spell actions, return to the initiative order and proceed with the actions of other PCs.
- Rinse, repeat... and have fun!



Appendix C: Dagon's Amulet and Ritual

Throughout the adventure text, judges have been reminded that certain actions, such as the use of magic, prayers, or the striking of magical beasts in melee, when performed near the magically imbalanced amulet worn by Levi Fangred can trigger preternatural visions. Judge should use these opportunities to prepare the PCs for the final ritual and confrontation with Dagon at the adventure's end. Although the judge will be familiar with Dagon and his pact with Malotoch, the PCs will only know what has been revealed to them through these visions and other interactions with NPCs during the expedition!

Whenever an encounter's *Adventure Notes* remind you, or when you feel the PCs' actions make it appropriate to do so, roll 1d10 on the table below. Recurring visions are fine. Each vision begins and ends in a flash of light, lasting only a few seconds. At the judge's discretion, the vision may impair the recipient for one round, with a -1 to attack and defense as a result of the distraction.

1. "You are in a green field, watching as a young red-haired boy waves a stick at a butterfly. The butterfly suddenly turns into a bat! The boy turns to you, his eyes as red as coals, his voice becoming as coarse as thunder. 'The hourglass must turn or the village is doomed. The blood, the bark, the crow, the scroll.'"
2. "You awaken in a forest, bare sycamore branches overhead. A crow caws from some distant perch. Suddenly a tiny porcupine waddles past you, and then another. Soon a dozen or more creep past your prone body, marching through the autumn leaves. One of them stops and looks deep into your eyes. 'Our blood awakens the circle. It would be best to remember that. We are first.'"
3. "All is darkness except for the wizard's circle you stand upon. The grooves beneath your feet fill with blood. There is the smell of burning sycamore and then a flaming crow lands upon your shoulder. Everything inside the circle is aflame. As the smoke thickens, you find yourself inside an immense hourglass. A vortex appears beneath you. Your throat fills with sand as you, the crow, and the flaming wizard's circle are sucked into the void."
4. "There is a tap upon your shoulder. You turn to see a young, red-haired wizard smiling behind you. 'You are brave indeed!' he says. 'But someone in your own party will be-



- tray you... be wary of the amulet. It has a mind of its own! Remember: red, brown, black, then white!
5. "A little peasant girl reaches through a rusted portcullis and begs for freedom. Blood begins to seep from her eyes. You try to answer but find your mouth is grotesquely sewn shut. Her eyes meet yours. 'The blue-skins have the scroll. Without it, all is lost!'"
 6. "You are lost in the forest. Up ahead, the crows feast upon a decaying corpse. As you approach the body, you realize the rotting face that stares back at you is your own. The decomposed jaw begins to move. 'I burned the bark before I poured the blood! What a fool! Hear me! The blood, the bark...' The jaw suddenly turns to dust as evil laughter reverberates through the dim wood."
 7. "A beautiful priestess places a familiar medallion around your neck, gently brushing her fingers against your skin. 'You are chosen by Malotoch herself, who tires of withered wizards. I desire a new conqueror. Remember, to defeat the wizard, the order of things matters. Dagon shall no longer come between us!'"
 8. "You find yourself aboard a ship, storm-tossed and buffeted by the crashing waves. A red-haired wizard rises from the sea, as large as a mountain. His eyes are like fire as tentacles wrap themselves around the vessel. 'So eagerly you approach your doom! Blood always comes first, aye... but what is next? Ha! Wet wood does not burn! I am not ready to submit to her just yet!'"
 9. "You are seated at a corner table in the The Frosty Tankard, across from a seemingly crazed, red-haired wizard. 'You will fail and you will die. All of you!' he cackles. Suddenly his eyes come into focus as his cracked lips and yellow teeth broaden to a smile. 'Are you really here or is this all a dream?' He turns over an enormous hourglass before brandishing a knife and driving it with lightning speed through your hand and into the table. He leans toward you. 'The blood, the bark, the crow, the scroll. It is the only way.'"
 10. "You approach an hourglass, hovering above a stone circle. The carved runes at your feet begin to fill with blood. You toss sycamore bark into the circle, followed by thirteen crow's feet, both bursting into flame. The smoke from the circle causes the symbols on a scroll in your hand to morph into words you recognize. As you read them, the symbols lift from the page and swirl around you. A huge shadow begins to grow, filling the sky..."



Appendix D: Malotoch as Patron

The goddess Malotoch is the lord over ruin, delighting in the aftermath of war, famine and disaster. Much as the carrion crow pecks at the eyeballs of the dead, Malotoch scours the various planes, looking for the wretched consequences of man's evil against man, basking in the aroma of spilled blood and fetid flesh.

To garner patron favor from the carrion crow goddess is to make a deal with a chaotic scavenger who is aloof and subject to whim. She demands from her servants a lifetime of devotion to her unholy tenets: show no mercy to the weak, never bury the dead, taste the blood of your foes so that she may savor its flavor, and to never, ever, receive healing from a disciple of Justicia, whom she loathes.

Malotoch forms a patron bond with mortals only in the knowledge that she will one day feast upon the flesh of the soul who served her in life.

Invoke Patron Check Results

12-13: Malotoch is engaged at some distant battlefield, feasting upon the carcasses of the fallen. She prefers to not disengage, but your petition finds favor as she shares the life force she dines upon. You receive 6 additional HP for the rest of the day.

14-17: A murder of crows arrives to swirl around you, an impediment to all foes. All attacks against you take a -4 penalty for the next 1d6 rounds.

18-19: Your pleas have awakened the sleeping goddess. She spitefully morphs your body to that of a large crow for the next 1d4 rounds, but in so doing, your vision improves (+2 to attacks), your agility improves (+3 to AC and initiative), and you have the ability to fly 50' per round until the spell ends.

20-23: Malotoch hears your voice and sends 1d6 vultures to do your bidding. Vultures act on your initiative; Atk bite +4 melee (dmg 1d4); AC 8; HP 1; MV 10', fly 40'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +0; Ref +2; Will +0; AL C. They remain with the caster for 1d4 days, following basic commands.



24-27: The ground around your opponents erupts with the rotting carcasses of the dead who attempt to drag 1d6 foes underground. Each foe must succeed a DC 15 Reflex save or suffer 2d8 rending damage. Regardless, targets are immobilized for 1d4 rounds.

28-29: Malotoch sends an enormous raven in 1d4 rounds. The bird is large enough to be ridden as a mount. It acts on your initiative; Atk bite and claw +6 melee (dmg 1d10); AC 14; HD3d8; HP18; MV 20', fly 60'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +3; Ref +4; Will +0; AL C.

30-31: The same as 28-29 results, but 1d6 ravens to do your bidding.

32+: Malotoch recognizes your rising power and grants you and each ally +5 to all attacks, saving throws, spell checks, and damage rolls for 1d8+CL rounds. The caster and all allies also automatically succeed on any Recovering the Body checks made before the next sunrise.

Patron Taint

Since Malotoch appropriates spell knowledge from those she devours, the goddess favors her followers with arcane knowledge pecked from the dead brains of fallen sorcerers. Patron taint (and any other effects) occurs whenever a natural 1 is rolled on a spell check. Roll 1D6 on the table below. Whenever a caster has acquired all six taints and all effects, there is no longer a need to roll.

1: The first time this taint appears, a murder of crows will follow the caster for 1d4 days, keeping their distance but always in shouting distance. The second time they appear, they will flock around the caster, pecking around his feet and perching on their shoulder for 1d10 days. The third time, the crows will accompany the caster the remainder of his days.

2: The caster will lose his appetite for anything other than meat. If rolled a second time, the caster will only be able to consume raw meat, which he always craves. A third time and the caster must consume some part of his victims or suffer Malotoch's disfavor in the form of a -5 to all spell checks for 1d4 days.



3: The caster begins to sprout feathers on his back and arms, making tight clothing uncomfortable. On the second taint, the casters nose will elongate, taking on the characteristics of a beak. On the third, the caster will sprout black feathers over the entire body, along with short, deformed wings upon their back. These will not enable flight but will make the wearing of any shirt or armor nearly impossible.

4: Seeing your spell attempt and failure as a sign of weakness, Malotoch will curse you with the stench of death for 1d4 days. On the second taint, the stench will return and your skin will be covered with boils and puss for 1d6 days (-2AC). A third time will result in the stench proving unbearable for all in a 30' radius for 1d6 days, causing everyone's eyes to water (-3 to all attacks inside radius).

5: Frustrated by your failure, the Carrion Crow Goddess resurrects the nearest corpse to follow you around for 1d3 days, commanding it to whisper "I am you, by and by". On the second taint, 1d6 corpses will follow the caster for 1d4 days, whispering the same. On the third taint, the caster will cause corpses to rise and follow him every time he passes a cemetery, barrow, or battlefield.

6: The caster immediately falls asleep, drawn into a dream where he or she will converse with Malotoch herself. She will toy with the caster's mind, revealing the secrets of the universe, though the knowledge wreaks havoc on the caster's brain. This sadistic exercise delights Malotoch to no end. The caster awakens in 1d4 rounds with a permanent -1 to personality, +1 to intelligence. This result can be duplicated two more times.

Patron Spells

Malotoch picks through the brains of dead wizards and tosses arcane knowledge to her followers like raw meat to hyenas.

Level 1: Feather Fall (Page 140 DCC Rulebook)

Level 2: Scare (Page 191 DCC Rulebook)

Level 3: Fly (Page 217 DCC Rulebook)



Spellburn

Malotoch revels in the caster's foolish use of spellburn. When a caster sacrifices ability score points, roll 1d4 on the table below.

1: The caster must carve the mark of the crow's talon into his own forehead (expressed as Stamina, Strength or Agility loss). The spell is cast when the blood reaches the caster's eyes (blind for 1 round).

2: Malotoch craves the taste of flesh. The caster can expend spell burn without feeling the effects of the drain if he or she consumes two pounds of flesh from any human or humanoid creature before the next sunrise. It must be raw and offered up to Malotoch in tribute and veneration in an hour long ritual. If the ritual is not offered up before the next sunrise, Malotoch will exact the point amount (abilities at judge's discretion) +1d4 additional points.

3: A murder of crows begins to swirl above the caster. For every ability point spent, a crow lands upon the caster, pecking at any exposed skin, cawing and drawing blood (expressed as Stamina, Strength or Agility loss). If the caster is able to succeed at a DC14 Fort Save, he or she will regain the burned points at twice the normal speed.

4: A pack of hyenas form a circle around the spellburner. An ally may join the caster in the circle and also expend ability points at a rate of two for one, chanting "Take what is thine oh Malotoch!" The burner(s)lose five pounds for every point sacrificed, growing gaunt and weak (expressed as Stamina, Strength and Agility loss). The caster also gains a +4 boon to all spell checks until the next sunrise.



Appendix E: Linking To Nebin Pendlebrook

If you and your party are coming directly to **The Frost Fang Expedition** from Mark Bishop's DCC funnel adventure **Nebin Pendlebrook's Perilous Pantry**, the following tips can help make the zero-level to first-level transition for the PCs a natural progression.

The Frost Fang Mountains, Neverthawes, and the Ardokk Mines lie just north-east of Nebin Pendlebrook's home in Bitterwood Barrow near the edge of the Ebon Wood. As survivor's of the funnel adventure emerge from the underground pantry at the conclusion of the adventure, they will be greeted by the townsfolk, either immediately or during their trip back to Bitterwood and the Bloody Bullfrog Tavern. There they will learn of the exciting opportunity to gain riches and glory to the north in Neverthawes.

Here are some "strings" that the judge can use to tie the two adventures together:

- At the conclusion of NPPP, amongst the treasure is a deed to a building in Neverthawes, along with a map to its location. Notes on the map might indicate that the property is the nicest home in town; perhaps even a deed to the Frosty Tankard itself! (A tavern of their own!). Of course when they arrive they will quickly learn that their new property is in grave peril.
- Among the other treasures are many valuable jewels, none of which could be bartered in the small village of Bitterwood Barrow for anything of any worth. Nearest large village? Neverthawes.
- Also among the treasure is a polished silver mirror. It's not a plot hook, but it could come in handy inside the Ardokk Mines!
- The funnel survivors learn from Bitterwood's villagers that a mad wizard to the north has recently passed, leaving all his magical possessions unguarded. "It is a secret not known to many." Of course when the party arrives, they learn that the story is common knowledge and getting to the castle is the real adventure.



- If freed and still amongst the living, Varooth Moss (the captive wizard in NPPP), might give the PCs a hastily scribbled note to deliver to his old friend Dagon the Doleful in Neverthawes. “He is in my debt. He knows the way to control the winds around him. Present this and he will impart to you that knowledge as payment of his age-old obligation.”
- Lastly, the mirror portal in NPPP can be accessed from Dagon’s wizard’s circle inside his sanctum. It is marked “beneath Bitterwood” on the fold-out map. It is unfortunately a one-way trip and can not be re-entered from the Bitterwood side.





ARE WE
THERE
YET?



THE CRYPT IN CADAVER CANYON

AN INSTANT ACTION DUNGEON CRAWL CLASSICS RPG ADVENTURE
FOR 4-8 2ND LEVEL ADVENTURERS

BY MARK BISHOP

Introduction	119
Quick Start	124
Random Encounters, Rumors, and Scuttlebutt	126
Locations in the City of the Cliffs	128
The Disciples of Buldakatak the Burning Warthog	131
The Council of 13	132
Beginning the Journey/Encounter Table	135
Area Map	136
Encounter Descriptions	137-165
Appendix A: Continued Adventures	166
Appendix B: Desert Encounters	167
Appendix C: Judges Notes	169

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THE CRYPT IN CADAVER CANYON

"The blood-soaked sands are my lips. I will hear the music of your dying breath. My nostrils will rejoice in the stench of rotting flesh."

- **Buldakatak the Burning Warthog**

JUDGE'S INTRODUCTION

This Dungeon Crawl Classics RPG adventure is intended for a party of four to six 2nd level adventurers. The party is tasked with saving a hidden desert city, along with its cursed inhabitants, from the wrath of a devious and chaotic god. This module assumes a well-rounded party containing a mix of classes. Since PC's will need to cast a spell from a scroll near the climax of the adventure, having an elf, a wizard, or (at the very least) a thief in the party will prove greatly advantageous.

THE HOOK

Many generations ago, a covenant was forged between a dying desert clan and a chaotic god named **Buldakatak the Burning Warthog**. After two-hundred years of blessing the **City in the Cliffs**, Buldakatak's true intentions have been revealed: all along his desire has been to see the city and its inhabitants thrive and grow until the glorious day when he could finally feast upon their smug and complacent flesh. It will be up to the player's heroes to save the men, women, and children of the city by returning the missing "chosen-one" to the city before the sun has set on the upcoming **Day of the Warthog**, thus quelling the old god's wrath. Returning the candidate will bind the great beast to his word, averting the cataclysmic deaths of two thousand innocent inhabitants of the city!



BACKGROUND

Beyond the **Bleaklands Desert**, hidden from the sun's unrelenting gaze in the shadows of the Crimson Canyon, lies the remarkable wonder known as the **City in the Cliffs**. Here in this otherwise desolate landscape, two-thousand souls thrive in a bustling, robust community alive with commerce, music, and revelry. They truly have been blessed: blessed unnaturally by a long-forged covenant with an unholy creature known as Buldakatak the Burning Warthog.

Two hundred years ago the bond was forged between a dying desert clan—its final thirteen survivors clinging to life in the scorching environment— and the opportunistic desert god. Somewhat desperate himself, and scavenging for followers (for the gods draw power from their prayers), Buldakatak offered the thirteen not only shelter and sustenance, but abundance if they would build statues in his image and offer a sacrifice every thirteen years from the original tribal bloodline. The time of the sacrifice has come to be known as **The Day of the Warthog** and only one who bears the birthmark of the bull horn (which only pure descendants might bear) is fit to hold the honor of being placed on the sacrificial altar that day.

True to his word, Buldakatak prospered the clan and their numbers began to grow inside the Crimson Canyon where the **Deep Scratch River** flows. Soon, a village began to thrive, then grew into a town. Now the City in the Cliffs rivals almost any other community on the continent. The town's ruling council, **The Council of Thirteen**, has insured that the ancient pact is respected, seeing to it that the old god is appeased every thirteen years by way of sacrificing an appropriate "candidate". Unfortunately, of late those marked by the bull horn have become increasingly rare. Unbeknownst to the council, Buldakatak has been marking fewer and fewer candidates before birth, in essence stacking the deck against his followers. The Great Warthog has grown tired of his pact with mortal men, and seeks to see the city "default" on the contract. As chaotic gods are wont to do, he longs for the day when he can completely and utterly destroy by fire his now-glorious creation.

In fact, there has been only one cliff-dweller in recent times marked by the sign of the bull horn: a frequently-caught thief named **Guldava Tick**.





Unfortunately, she was tried and executed six months ago by The Council of Thirteen who, through some clerical error, knew not that she represented the last of the birth-marked candidates. After she was hanged, her body was sent unceremoniously down the Deep Scratch River (like all the dead of the city) to float to her final resting place in an underground cave known to the locals as the **Crypt in Cadaver Canyon**.

The PCs should arrive at the City in the Cliffs on the eve of the Day of the Warthog, the day when the sacrifice ritual must be performed before the sun has fully set. The Council of Thirteen will attempt to enlist the help of the heroes to do what they themselves cannot: to journey down the perilous Deep Scratch River, retrieve the body of the executed thief Guldava Tick, then return her corpse to the Monolith Stone atop the city. There it will be resurrected long enough to be offered as a sacrifice to Buldakatak the Burning Warthog.



The stakes are high, and the chaotic desert god will be working against the party at every step. The first challenge is that the PCs will have no way of knowing at the start of the adventure that Buldakatak has been setting his followers up for generations. Secondly, along with the very unnatural creatures they may encounter throughout the journey, the party will also come face-to-face with Buldakatak's agents, enablers in his long con of "fattening the calf before the slaughter".

Will the PCs be able to find Guldava Tick and preserve the covenant? Let the dice fall where they may!

Judges Notes: Adventuring parties can be a capricious lot. Some days they take the hook and run with it, other days they don't. For one-shot games, most players accept the premise and say, "let's roll some dice!". But if the judge is introducing this adventure thread into an ongoing campaign, it would behoove him or her to use organic plot threads to lead the party to the Bleaklands. Look for elements in your player's histories to motivate them to action beyond the requisite promise of fortune, fame and glory.

- Perhaps the party's thief has been summoned here by their guild to reach the Crypt in Cadaver Canyon not really to save the city, but to retrieve an important ledger sewn into Guldava's coat (perhaps naming corrupt council members and why she was really executed?)
- The party wizard has come to have corruption removed by a reclusive shaman known as **Agragar the Queasyzy3** who lives somewhere down the Deep Scratch River.
- The god of the party cleric has foreseen the brutality to come and has called the cleric to thwart the warthog's nefarious plan, or the party warrior owes a life-debt to someone on the Council of Thirteen.
- The gods are playing chess. The party elf has heard from The King of Elfland (or any other patron who considers themselves to be adversarial to Buldakatak) and sends a disciple to make sure Buldakatak keeps his word to the mortals when the ritual is completed.



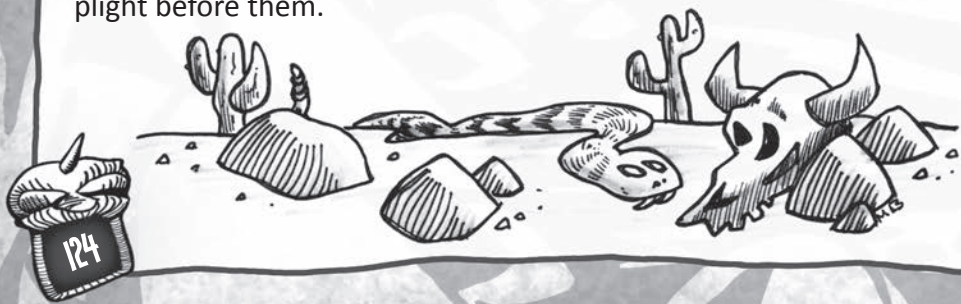
QUICK START

The Crypt in Cadaver Canyon is an **Instant Action Adventure** designed to be accessed quickly for a session or two of danger-filled derring-do. If you and your players just want the briefest of summaries and are ready to roll some dice, read the following description to the players and proceed directly to **Beginning the Journey** on **page 135**.

You've arrived at the City in the Cliffs, a magnificent city carved into the canyon walls of the Bleaklands Desert. Every thirteen years, a birth-marked chosen one is sacrificed to a desert god known as Buldakatak the Burning Warthog, so that he will not destroy the city along with the two-thousand men, women, and children who live there. But six months ago, the last known birth-marked candidate was accidentally executed as a thief by the Council of Thirteen, her body unceremoniously sent floating down the Deep Scratch River to the Crypt in Cadaver Canyon. The Council intends to resurrect the thief long enough to sacrifice her to Buldakatak and save the city's two-thousand innocent souls, but first, someone must retrieve the body. You have been tasked with steering a boat down the Deep Scratch River, entering the subterranean crypt to retrieve the body of Guldava Tick, and using a magic scroll to return her to the Monolith Stones before the sun sets on the following day. There is ample gold coin to be won, and the gods will surely favor those who use their might to save the innocent!

CONNECTING TO YOUR CAMPAIGN

The flavor text from the preceding section is all the information your players need to know to begin play. If, on the other hand, you and your players desire a richer environment to host an ongoing campaign, the following sections can provide information that the judge can use to create a deeper connection to the city, its people, and the plight before them.



The PCs may arrive in the Bleaklands Desert by whatever means the judge sees fit within the ongoing campaign. Feel free to set the scene by reading or paraphrasing the following:

The Bleaklands Desert is an unforgiving wasteland. Burning sands and craggy sun-bleached rocks greet your eyes in all directions. The path before you winds down a sheer cliff wall into a canyon that at least offers some shady respite from the oppressive sun. Soon, the reflection of water at the bottom of the canyon catches your eye, but you are simultaneously greeted by the offensive smell of rotted meat. Before you a small boat decorated with small bells is washed up on the shore, bearing burned-out candles and a corpse wrapped in graves clothes. The eyes of the corpse have been picked clean by the crows that vault away at your arrival. Moments after your discovery, another small boat drifts past you downstream carrying a similarly decorated corpse.

*The sound of a voice draws your attention. Upstream you see a sheep herder with his flock drinking at the water's edge. You become aware that you have walked deep into the ravine, as the canyon walls now tower above you. Gazing upward, the **City in the Cliffs** suddenly reveals itself to you. As far as the eye can see, layer after layer of pathways, doors and facades have been carved into the canyon walls, from top to bottom. An entire city of neighborhoods, storefronts, establishments and homes has been created! Every walkway is busy with the hustle and bustle of life. Children play on perilously steep ledges, scurrying from one level to the next. Laundry lines span from one side of the canyon walls to the next. The sounds of commerce fill the air, as beggars, vendors, and city guards pay you no mind. You can scarcely take it all in, such is the size and scale of the City in the Cliffs.*

No doubt your players are arriving at the City in the Cliffs after finishing some other adventure, likely looking to replenish supplies, regroup, and perform other general housekeeping duties. There are taverns, dry goods shops, blacksmiths, inns, and temples for the PCs to explore. Use those interactions as an opportunity to help the players understand the dilemma that the city is facing.



RANDOM ENCOUNTERS, RUMORS & SCUTTLEBUTT TABLE (D12)

As the PCs explore the city, feel free to have the players roll on the following table for information. Alternately, the judge may simply choose to share tidbits of information through organic roleplay.

1. You notice that many doors, walls, and posts are marked with a strange symbol: an eye with rays radiating from top and bottom. Any local will tell you that it represents the all-seeing eye of Buldakatak the Burning Warthog. It was *He* who blessed the city with prosperity long ago.

2. You overhear two city guards talking. Guard 1: *"Rumors are that there is no sacrifice for the Blood Moon tomorrow night. The priests are wailing that Buldakatak's fury will destroy us all."* Guard 2: *"Bah... superstition... the priests are always wailing about some prophesy."*

3. You notice people greeting each other with an unfamiliar gesture. They use both hands to form an eye by touching their index fingers and thumbs together along with a slight bow. Any local will explain that they are forming the symbol of Buldakatak's all-seeing eye as a tribute to the city's deity.

4. At the top-most level of the city, a corpse hangs from a gallows high above the Deep Scratch River. Soon, a well-appointed dwarf walks to the edge of the cliff and cuts the rope. The cadaver plummets over two-hundred feet to the river below and begins to float downstream. Almost immediately, a pair of robed figures fish it from the water, wrap it in burial cloth, place it in a ceremonial canoe-like vessel, and release it again into the water's current.

5. (In any conversation) *"You should leave this city traveler... this city is cursed. Every thirteen years a ritual is performed at the Monolith Stones and a horn-marked candidate is sacrificed to the god known as Buldakatak the Burning Warthog. But this year, there is no one who bears the mark. Rumors say that the last to bear the mark was a thief named Guldava Tick and her corpse was sent down the river, along with all our hopes to appease the great one."*



6. You notice many families packing their belongings to join a caravan in the hot desert above. You overhear: *"Better to die in the desert than to face the wrath of the Great Warthog tomorrow night!"*

7. (In any conversation) *"Welcome strangers to our fair city. May the blessings of Buldakatak be with you. And double blessings to you should you bear His birthmark... the mark of a horn. Do you perhaps have such a birthmark?"* (Trying to trick the PCs into revealing that they would be a candidate for sacrifice.)

8. You overhear two merchants whispering. Merchant 1: *"Aye, the Council of Thirteen botched things good. That red-headed thief, Guldava Tick, bore the birthmark but they knew it not until her dead body hit the water."* Merchant 2: *"They are pompous windbags, the whole lot of them. And now our last hope to appease the Great One floats somewhere downstream in that underground crypt. Curse them all."*

9. (In any conversation) *"Have you not noticed the stench? It is the aroma of death. This great city is built upon it. But you are heroes, no? Perhaps you know some way to appease an angry god. If not, you should leave this place my friends."*

10. You overhear two gongfarmers as they cart their wheelbarrows down a steep walkway. Gongfarmer 1: *"Perhaps the last time we shall bear such foul stench, aye? For tomorrow night we will all die."* Gongfarmer 2: *"Have faith dear brother. The Council searches for heroes to navigate the river and to bring back the thief who was marked. We should apply. They offer gold enough that we'd have servants carting our dung should we live to be a hundred!"*

11. Priests with robes adorned with the Eye of Buldakatak pass by as locals shun them. They chant over and over, *"Agragar, beloved of Buldakatak and Master of the Keepers, spare us our deserved fate."*

12. The ground beneath your feet begins to shake as mothers scream and shelter their children from tumbling rocks. The growl of distant thunder sounds eerily like course, mocking laughter. A large eye appears in the sky and moves its gaze about the city. In a moment it is gone as the children begin to weep.



LOCATIONS

The Devil's Demise: A raucous taproom that can be found simply by following the sounds of drunken revelry. Best to keep your hands on your purse in this shadowy gathering place. Owned by **Evana Coor**, a member of the Council of Thirteen. Evana will remember the thief Guldava Tick as a frequent "customer", always looking to pilfer trinkets from unsuspecting marks.

The Iconic Eagle: The more refined may seek comfort and information at this upscale tavern and inn. Renowned for the priceless art collection amassed in its lobby, the Eagle is one of several businesses owned by Council of Thirteen member **Penwhall the Pale**. It costs two gold pieces a night to stay.

Evergood Goods: A fine place for general supplies (see **DCC Rulebook page 73** for available equipment and prices). The store was only recently established by **Chauncey Evergood** who fled the Frost Fang Mountains to escape danger, only to find that he has opened shop to a whole new peril *"If it isn't a castle falling from the sky, it's a giant warthog threatening to rain down fire and brimstone... can an Evergood ever find peace?"*

The Wasp's Tail: Party members can purchase weaponry, armor, and shields from the dwarf **Thal Braank**.

Grok's Hooves and Harnesses: Mounts and custom gear are available from **Grok Gristlebeard**.

The Temple of the Three Sisters: Any cleric can find solace and blessed supplies in this sanctuary.

Alcove Alchemy: Rare and common herbs, unexpected curiosities and alchemical ingredients from distant lands are available. Council member **Ala Leann** opens the doors at midnight for only one hour. She will also provide a map of the river and canyon should the PCs accept the council's proposal.





Deep Scratch Inn: Straw mattresses and dirt floors can be purchased at 5 copper a night. Any PC must make a DC 8 Fort Save on the following morning or wake up swollen and ill-tempered from various insect bites (-2 to Personality checks for 1d6 hours).

The Opulent Opal: Have those rare gems assessed and valued here. Foppish proprietor **Ogden Gourdey** will offer 75% of the value here to party members, saving them the trouble of trying to sell them themselves.

Steadfast Hall: Overlooking the city at its highest point, a gallows hangs high above the Deep Scratch River. Inside, the Council of Thirteen serves not only as city officials, but act as judge, jury and executioners enabled to mete out justice at their whim. Any death sentence can lead to an immediate hanging outside the hall's front doors.

After a few minutes, the deceased is cut loose to fall into the Deep Scratch River far below, where their body will float downstream to the crypt in Cadaver Canyon. There the gods can sort out their own.



THE DISCIPLES OF BULDAKATAK THE BURNING WARTHOG

In the pantheon of gods and patrons, Buldakatak the Burning Warthog would be considered a minor deity at best. His province is limited to the barren wastelands of the Bleaklands Desert mostly because no-one else cares to inhabit such a lifeless landscape. How he came to be or where he first began is long forgotten now, but his power in this desert has grown.

It's true that his first selfless act of aiding a dying desert clan those many generations ago engendered warm feelings from the more lawful gods and goddesses. Thirteen there were in that starving clan, and all have long since died, save one. That one Buldakatak favored the most, bestowing upon him otherworldly knowledge, making him a powerful, enduring shaman. He is now known as **Agragar the Queasy**. Unfortunately, the unnatural magic that has occupied his brain has also corrupted his reason, leading him down the darkest paths. He was driven from the city many years ago because of his reckless dabbling in the most foul aspects of the black arts, all encouraged ceaselessly by his overlord, the great desert warthog.

Agragar, now high priest of Buldakatak, leads the **Keepers of the Crypt** in **Cadaver Canyon**, a subterranean final resting place where the Deep Scratch River flows underground. The Keepers are a race of Deep Earth humans who have lived so long in the darkness and foul magics of the caverns that they are no longer born with eyes. They are tasked with guarding the tomb and carrying the bloated corpses to a furnace at the top of a subterranean tower where smoke unnaturally *descends* down through the tower deep into the earth, offering the dead's decaying flesh to Buldakatak.

Within the City in the Cliffs, priests and disciples offer veneration to Buldakatak daily. Statuary, engravings and tapestries to his likeness can be found across the Crimson Canyon, but few people know the true heart of Buldakatak, and fewer still the depths of his depravity. None of his worshipers know his long game: to fatten the city with prosperity through the long years only to enjoy their apocalyptic destruction... and soon!



CHALLENGING THE PCS TO ACTION!

At some point in their explorations, the PCs should be summoned to Steadfast Hall. News travels fast of the visiting adventurers. If up to this point the PCs have kept a low profile, have 1d6 Bleaklands Bandits (**Appendix B: Desert Encounters, page 167**) surprise the party at the first opportunity. The ruckus will draw the attention of the guards and thus the Council of Thirteen who will see them as worthy candidates to make the expedition down the river to recover Guldava Tick's dead body.

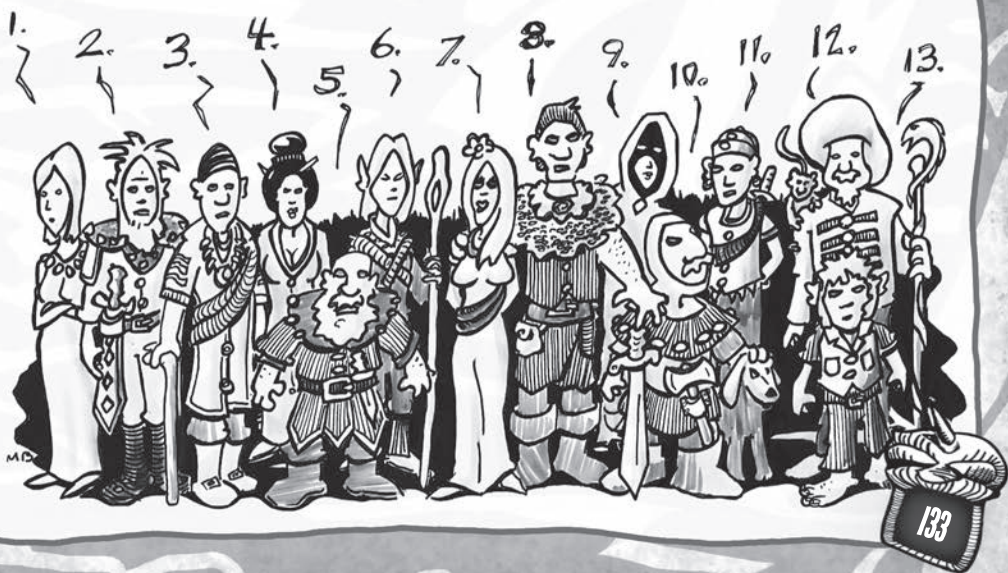
THE COUNCIL OF THIRTEEN

The governing body of the City in the Cliffs is the Council of Thirteen. Members of the council keep the post until they die or voluntarily pass on the position to someone else. The thirteen council members represent the original clan of thirteen survivors found and blessed by Buldakatak generations ago. When news of the PCs' heroic exploits reaches the ears of the council, they will summon the PCs to Steadfast Hall. There they will be asked, begged, blackmailed, bribed, cajoled, or shamed into helping the city recover the body of Guldava Tick before the sun sets on the following night. The council believes that fate has sent the PCs as their one final hope.

1. **Agata Thorne** (human female): *"The blood moon rises tomorrow night and our only chance of appeasing the great Wart-hog is a bloated corpse adrift somewhere downstream in the underground crypt."*
2. **Bedrich of the Orphan Clan** (human male): *"It's true we acted in haste and executed our only candidate. Who could have known that there wouldn't be another who bore the birthmark of the horn?"*
3. **Penwhall the Pale** (human male): *"She was an unrepentant thief. Her execution was in keeping with our laws. The gods are having their fun with us by providing no more candidates. How can we be blamed, we didn't know she bore the mark of the horn until she was already dead?"*



4. **Tynesia Stroom** (human female): *“That she is dead matters little. Melandrach can make her heart beat once again. She only needs to live long enough for the ceremony to be completed tomorrow night, before the moon reaches it’s apex.”*
5. **Hagre the Red** (dwarven male): *“Aye, she was a thief. And even though it sounds a harsh fortune to resurrect her only to kill her again, she can at least recover her honor. She died the first time as a criminal; she’ll die again as a hero redeemed. I will put up 300 gold for each of you who return her body to us before the sun sets on the morrow.”*
6. **Castian Woolhaven** (elven male): *“Strangers, we are subject to the whims of a cruel master, our desert god. It is true that we brought this upon ourselves, but should every innocent man, woman, and child in the city perish for the foolishness of this council? Search your hearts. It is no accident that fate has brought you to us.”*
7. **Arun Gulfrock** (half-elf female, expecting child): *“Castian speaks a simple truth... our sins can be addressed once we have done all we can to save the people who have entrusted us to lead. We must save our children... all of them.”* (Melodramatically rubs her stomach).
8. **Gore Gulfrock** (human male; husband of Arun): *“I ache to go and do the job that must be done, but I am cursed by a sorcerer who lives downstream and it is he that stands as a guardian*



of the crypt. I need only hear the voice of Agragar the Queasy to fall under his power. I would have no choice but to become his weapon against you."

9. **Ala Leann** (human female): *"To travel the river in darkness is suicide so you must leave at first light. If you will help us, visit me at my shop at midnight. I can aid you to quickly return Guldava's corpse to the Monolith Stones where the ceremony is performed, once she is recovered."* (Ala Leann will give the PCs a scroll containing the spell *Lesser Planar Step* which will aid the party to immediately travel to the sacrificial altar at the Monolith Stones.)
10. **Thal Braank** (dwarven male): *"We are fools to trust the fates of our women and children to strangers, but Buldakatak has us by our throats. I am reluctant to trust you... but my bones are old, and so, the glory must go to someone else. Remember...we must have her body before the sun fully sets tomorrow or our flesh, and your gold, will be consumed by fire."*
11. **Evana Coor** (human female): *"Here... this is a map. It will show you the way, more or less. Though it cannot show you the dangers along the journey. The girl, Guldava Tick, her hair was red as fire and the birthmark was on her right arm. The left side of her face is tattooed, though it's been months now... who knows what's left of her."*
12. **Melandrach the Mesmerizing** (human male): *"Use the scroll when you have her. I have magic to resurrect her, if only for awhile, but it will be enough. We shall await you at the peak of the Monolith Stones where the scroll will bring you. There Buldakatak the Burning Warthog shall be appeased, and your names will become legend forever. Songs of your exploits will brush the lips of our most fair maidens!"*
13. **Grepin Lambshank** (halfling male): *"I have nothing to offer dear friends but this: Politics are a poor pairing with the sensibilities of the small folk. I wish for none to die. Return with the girl who died a thief and my seat at this table and all that goes with it is one of yours. On my word as a Lambshank, this I do vow."*



BEGINNING THE JOURNEY

If the PCs undertake the quest, at midnight Ala Leann will gift a party wizard, elf, or thief with the **Scroll of Lesser Planar Step** needed to quickly return to the Monolith Stones. (Hopefully with the body of Guldava Tick and in time to appease Buldakatak before he razes the city.)

On the following morn, the dwarf Hagre the Red and Evana Coor will meet the party at the Deep Scratch River docks where a keelboat waits well equipped for the party's mission: it contains 100' of strong rope, a long pole for steering and propulsion, two iron harpoons w/25' rope each (d8 damage), a grappling hook, four iron spikes, three wooden buckets, and a day's rations for the party. If Evana Coor has not yet given the players a map, or described Guldava Tick to the PCs (red hair, tattooed left face, birthmark on right arm), let her do so before the party leaves. As the party departs, read or paraphrase the following:

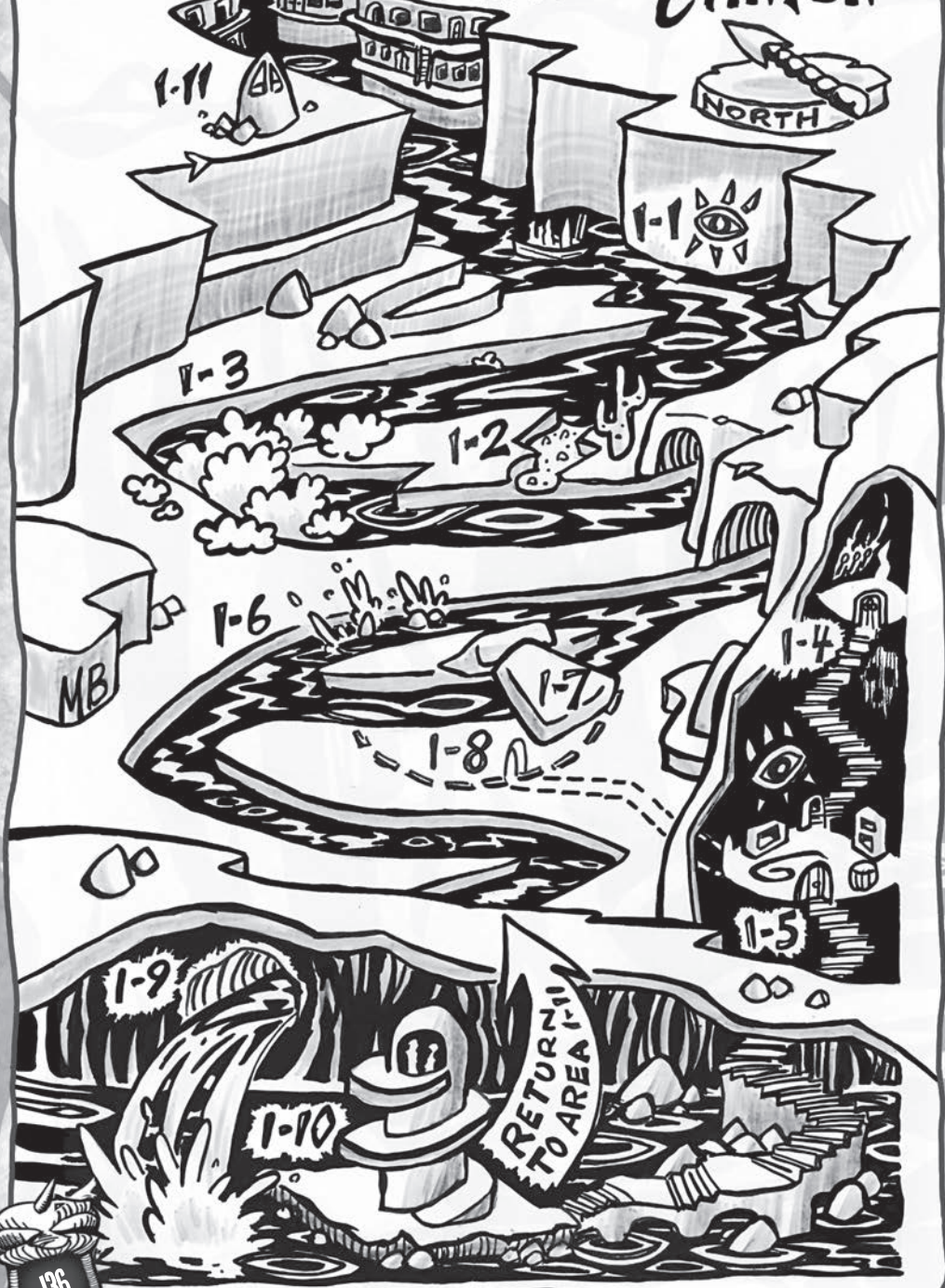
As you push the keelboat from the dock, above you solemn faces stare from every window. An unnatural hush falls across the city as the desperate folk of the city watch from every ledge: all hope is pinned upon your success. A small boy runs down the long canal, waving until the pathway ends at the lapping water's edge. In a few minutes, the city is behind you as the current pulls you forward. Steep canyon walls loom above you on both sides.

ENCOUNTER TABLE

AREA	TYPE	ENCOUNTER
1-1	T	Eyes of Agragar
1-2	C	Cactipus
1-3	C	River Wraiths
1-4	P/T	Door of Seasons
1-5	C	Agragar the Queasy/ Gawk Fiends
1-6	T/C	Rapids/ Mer-rams
1-7	P/C	Mantis Folk/ Hyena Mounts
1-8	C	Divine Intervention
1-9	T	Waterfall
1-10	C	Guldava Tick/The Keepers/ Dead
1-11	C	Hagre the Red/ Red Clan Dwarves



THE CRYPT IN CADAVER CANYON



AREAS OF THE MAP

AREA 1-1: DOWN THE DEEP SCRATCH RIVER

An hour into your journey the noise of the city has fallen far behind you. The river runs smooth and steady. As you drift between the high canyon walls, you see large eyes similar to the symbols you noticed in the city, carved into the cliff walls on either side. The longer you float beneath their stare, the more cloudy your thoughts become. You feel as though you've drifted into a dream.

The shaman **Aragar the Queasy** uses the carved eyes to spy upon the river from his sanctum (**Area 1-5**) and to channel an aberrant form of the cleric spell **Lotus Stare**. Each PC must make a DC13 Will Save or be forced to roll 1d7 on the table below. Wizards, Elves and Clerics may add intelligence modifiers (or personality for clerics) + their level to the roll. The judge should not simply read the results, but rather paraphrase what the PC is seeing as a real experience, not an illusion. Because to them, it will be.

Aragar's Corrupting Eye Table: (1d7)

1. The PC suffers from the illusion that they have been whisked from the boat by a sudden whirlwind carrying them far over the desert to land before the cloven-hooved Buldakatak, large as a sphinx. He commands the PC to kneel before him and offer veneration. If the PC refuses, the warthog will engulf the PC in flames. The PC will awaken on the boat's deck, blistered and burned for 1d4 damage.
2. The PC's allies appear as humanoid warthogs closing in on the character. The PC will immediately make a basic melee attack against the nearest party member before awakening.
3. The PC becomes lost in one of the eye's hypnotic gazes and begins chanting loudly in an ancient unknown tongue, calling forth a very real swarm of flying scorpions that will attack all but the enchanted PC. (**See Bestiary page 167**).



4. The PC's eyes roll back in their head and their body goes limp as they slowly rise to hover two feet above the deck in mid-air. Suddenly a raspy voice issues from their lips, *"I am Agragar! Melter of minds... taster of thoughts! Chosen of Buldakatak the Burning Warthog! Turn back... let Guldava rest in peace..."* Afterwards, the PC will fall to the deck and remember nothing.
5. The PC begins to see snow falling from the sky. Quickly the river appears to freeze over as ice glistens upon the veneer of the boat. The PC sees nothing but a winter landscape for the next 1d4 hours, shivering uncontrollably and going last in any encounter requiring rolled initiative.
6. The PC sees an eye forming on their forearm. When the eye opens and peers at the PC, they begin to scream and gnaw at the aberration, doing 1d4 damage.
7. The PC sees through Agragar's illusion spell and is momentarily linked to the spellcaster, innately knowing the location of Agragar's inner sanctum. Knowing the shaman's name, if the PC is a magic user or a cleric who can call upon divine aid of any useful sort, they may immediately attempt a casting of any useful spell they have against Agragar as though they were in his actual presence. After this event happens, the shaman will immediately break his bond with the Seeing Eyes and "disconnect" from the location.

After the encounter, read or paraphrase the following:

The sun continues to rise as you travel further down the river and beyond the carvings in the cliff walls. An opportunity presents itself. According to the map, you could continue down the river, or you could carry the boat a short distance across a dried-up river bed. It's a shortcut that could save valuable time. Either way leads to Cadaver Canyon, though each path presents its own perils and rewards.

Depending on their decision, proceed to either **Area 1-2** or **Area 1-3**.





AREA 1-2: THE DRIED RIVER BED

Approaching the beach, it would appear that this river bed carries the current only when the river is in flood. Carrying the boat and traversing the short rise should be possible without much trouble. At the summit of the rise, a gleam catches your eyes. A sun-bleached skeleton is caught in the limbs of a large cactus along with a damaged canoe and other debris, perhaps trapped there the last time waters overflowed these banks. A gold tooth glints in the sunlight, as does an amulet around the skeleton's neck. It is the symbol of the all-seeing eye of Buldakatak. The skeleton also wears a short sword in a dry-rotted hilt.

Approaching the skeleton awakens the multi-armed **Cactipus**, though it will not turn its one large eye toward them until the most PCs are within its reach. Then, the large leathery tentacles of the Cactipus will rise writhing from the sand. If the PCs were surprised, the creature receives 3 free attacks before initiative is rolled.

Cactipus (1): Init+4; Atk +4 melee (1d4 damage +special) and bite +2 melee (1d8); AC 14; HD 6d10; hp 46; MV 20'; climb 20'; reach 25'; Act 6d20; SV Fort+8; Ref+4; Will+4; AL C.





Special: When a target is successfully attacked, that target is “grabbed” and has the option to use an action to succeed at a DC12 Strength check to escape on their turn. On a failure, the creature tightens its grip immediately for another 1d4 damage (on that PC’s turn). The creature will not use a tentacle that has a PC grabbed to attack again on its initiative, resolving instead to keep the PC held captive. Any PC held on the creature’s turn is vulnerable to its bite attack. The Cactipus can make only one bite attack per round. The attack rolls of entangled PCs are moved one die down the dice chain.

The gold tooth is worth a single gold piece. The pendant itself is worth 10 gp and signifies the wearer is a disciple of Buldakatak. The short sword is silvered and worth 20gp. From this location, the river’s edge can be reached where the party can now skip ahead to **Area 1-4**.

AREA 1-3: THE RIVER WRAITHS

As you pilot the boat away from the cliff walls carved with Seeing Eyes, you feel the temperature begin to drop. The canyon walls seem to disappear behind a shroud of mist as every creak and groan of the vessel echoes strangely around you. Soon, you can scarcely see the front of the boat from the back. You hear scraping from beneath the boat as suddenly the vessel comes to a stop in the middle of the fog-enshrouded river, caught on a dam of twisted branches and limbs.

Inspection reveals that the recently formed dam of twisted branches is grotesquely filled with ceremonially-garbed corpses previously sent down the Deep Scratch River. Dozens of skulls float and bob in the water, staring silently at the adventurers in the boat.

A section of the dam can be broken through after 50 hit points of damage. The dam can be walked upon until it reaches the 10 hp mark, at that time, anyone still standing on it falls into the water and has a 50% chance of losing the weapon they brandish.

When the PCs begin to make an effort to break through the dam, they will hear shrieks and whispers echoing around them in the fog. “Free... free... us... us...free..free...us...us...” but soon after, will hear, “join...join...us...us...join...join...us...us...”



Roll initiative as four wraiths swoop through the mist to attack the party! Theirs are the bodies trapped without absolution in the dam. When the dam is dismantled and the corpses float along downstream with the rest of the debris, the wraiths will re-enter the corpses in search of their final resting place downstream. The gods smile upon this merciful act by bestowing a boon to the Lesser Planar Step Ritual Scroll of an additional +1 (making it now a +5 scroll) and returning up to two points of Luck per PC absorbed by the wraiths with their Chill Touch attack.

River Wraiths (4): Init+2; Atk Chill Touch +2 melee (1d4 damage and drains 1 luck); AC 13; HD 2d10; hp 16; MV fly 40'; Act 1d20; SP undead traits, immune to non-magical, non-silvered or non-mithril weapons; immune to critical hits, poison, cold damage and mental effects spells such as sleep, charm, and paralysis; SV Fort+2; Ref+4;Will+6; AL C.

AREA 1-4: THE RIVER TUNNELS

The desert sun has risen high since you left the city hours before, and the glimmer on the river's surface nearly blinds you. Ahead, the cavern walls close in around the vessel and a cave entrance greets you. The shade offers a welcome respite from the heat and glare. As you enter the tunnel, you hear water sloshing against the tunnel's walls, then suddenly you are engulfed in complete darkness...

If no light source is produced and the party lacks a character that can see in the dark, the boat will drift along the current, eventually exiting the tunnel and continuing on to **Areas 1-6** and **Area 1-7**. If this is the case, read or paraphrase the following:

Soon the current takes your boat through the dark tunnels and back into the sun's oppressive heat. The river forks ahead: the northern river-passage disappearing into a thick mist; the southern route passing beneath a massive stone land-bridge.

Depending on their choices, proceed to **Area 1-6** or **Area 1-7**.





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If the PCs produce a source of light, they see an occasional bat hanging on the cave ceiling, eventually spying a series of all-seeing eyes rendered in charcoal on the tunnel walls. An old wooden dock stands beneath an opening to a tunnel tucked into the cave's eastern side. Read or paraphrase the following:

On the eastern wall of the underwater cave, a wooden dock stands beneath a large crevice. Inside, darkness. Above that opening, an all-seeing eye has been carved into the rocks.

If the PCs decide to explore the crevice, they discover a tunnel that leads to a small chamber. Distribute **Handout A-2** and read or paraphrase the following:

In this small chamber, torches line the southern-most wall, seemingly dusted with some strange alchemical powder to glow unnaturally. One torch burns red, one yellow, and the last, blue. A stone altar sits in the middle of the room where three unlit torches are placed in hollowed-out cavities. The altar faces a thick wooden door with three clear crystals deeply embedded into its aged face, as if the sinew of the wood has grown around them. Beneath the dust, the flickering light catches the faint outline of something etched into the altar's face.

If examined closely, the characters etched upon the altar are in Elven script, reading:

*Alight in order, these hues to pass,
The grass, the plum, and pumpkin last.*

This puzzle requires the PCs to light the three torches on the altar to glow (in order from left to right) green, purple and orange. Since the three lit torches are the primary colors of red, yellow and blue, it will require combining two torches to light each altar torch. The PCs must figure out which combinations make which colors.

*Yellow and Blue = Green
Blue and Red = Purple
Red and Yellow = Orange*

If the torches are not lit in the proper order, every flame will be snuffed out and will not re-manifest until the next day at sunrise. If the torches are lit in the proper order, the embedded crystals will "awaken" and glow with their corresponding color. With each



correct lighting, the metallic crack of an iron bolt sliding from within the door will be heard. When the last bolt is thrown, the thick wooden door will creak open, revealing a stairway that descends into further darkness.

Any attempt to remove the embedded gems will cause the crystals to glow purple before crackling to life with brilliant electric energy. Every living creature within 30' must make a DC14 Reflex save or receive necrotic burn damage (1d6 for chaotic PCs; 1d8 for neutral PCs; 1d10 for lawful PCs) and will be struck blind for one turn (10 minutes).

One small block in the chamber walls is marked with the **Eye of Buldakatak** (visible in **Handout A-2**). Should a PC inspect the block they will notice that the mortar is loose. If it is pulled forward, a secret cavity contains a leather dagger frog (a "frog" is an inexpensive way to carry a weapon that is normally sheathed, which can be tailored to better suit the fighter's preferred style of drawing the weapon). This dagger frog is loaded with four ornate mithril throwing daggers and can be worn on the back or across the waist. There is also a small sack that contains a ceramic fish and 1d10 gold coins. The ceramic fish returns one luck point when it is smashed and broken.

When the door is opened, the PCs can proceed to **Area 1-5**.

AREA 1-5: THE SANCTUM OF AGRAGAR THE QUEASY

The stairwell from **Area 1-4** leads down a staircase into darkness. Any light sources glimmer on stone walls hewed in a distant time. If the PCs descend, read or paraphrase the following:

The stone stairwell leads downward into further darkness. Primitive hieroglyphs are painted on the walls, and as you descend and pass the various scenes, the story of Buldakatak and the City in the Cliffs is revealed from the very beginning: a small clan grows into a great city. Funeral-garbed bodies flow down the river. A great horned beast hovers above a sea of dead bodies. Faceless priests carry the bodies to the top of an altar and pitch them into a flaming pit. Every scene is more sickening than the last. When you finally reach the bottom of the stairs, a wafting torch alerts you that you have come to another door.



If the party has taken care to be somewhat stealthy, when they arrive at the locked door (DC 7 to unlock) they will hear chanting from the other side (DC14 Int to recognize the chanting is in Abyssal; DC18 to understand it. Clerics receive a +4 to the check). The source of the chanting is the shaman **Agragar** in his sanctum intoning:

“Oh great one, the hour is at hand. Tonight your city shall weep and burn. Glory to Buldakatak! Awaken thy agents and bid them come to me. Arise soldiers! Arise!”



If a PC was cursed with a **“Seeing Eye of Agragar”** in their forearm in **Area 1-1**, Agragar will know the PCs are outside the door. Otherwise, Agragar will have seen the party and will know they are on their way to thwart Buldakatak’s plans, but will not know which way they’ll come.

The first two PCs through the door have the advantage of surprise should their actions warrant it. Inside, they’ll find Agragar the Queasy, a bald, yellow-toothed shaman surrounded by a thick blue haze, hovering cross-legged in mid-air above candles and skulls laid out in a runic circle. He is surrounded by four newly-manifested bird-headed creatures.

Agragar is the oldest and most loyal disciple of Buldakatak the Burning Warthog, and this is his sanctum, its shelves and tables filled with age-worn scrolls and bones, bottles and mildewed books. Another door exits the room on the side opposite the entrance. If not immediately attacked, Agragar is confident enough in his own power to engage the adventurers in conversation, ever curious and seeking knowledge.

"You are noble. A worthy trait if only the noble died not so poor. Why deny Buldakatak that which he has earned? The city would already be dead if not for his great benevolence. He gave them 200 years of prosperity and peace. These are not your people. Why risk your lives for strangers? Take this with the blessing of Buldakatak and leave while you have breath left to do so!"

With that, Agragar will throw a bag of **50 electrum pieces** (valued at 500 gold) on the floor just in front of the runic circle. It's the party's if they simply return the way they came. Of course, if they do so, the party will not have enough time to reach the crypt to find the body they seek before it's too late to enact the ritual. If the PCs deny Agragar's offer, he will simply intone: *"So be it..."*.

Agragar the Queasy (shaman): Init +3; Atk curse (one use; see special) and Searing Eye Ray +3 missile fire (1d6, +ongoing fire); AC 15 (13 without magic shield); HD 7d8; hp 44; MV 10' fly 20'; Act curse + 1d20 attack; Special- DC12 Will save, all within room, see table on **page 148** for result); SV Fort +4 (+0 without magic shield); Ref+3; Will+5; AL C.

Agragar's Tactics: Agragar's first action will be to utter the chant that will beseech Buldakatak to smite his enemies. Proceeding attacks will focus on ranged missile-fire attacks with the searing ray from his staff.

Gawk Fiends (4): Init +2; Atk claw or bite+3 melee (1d8+1); AC 12; HD 2d8; hp 9; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP when the fiend reaches 0 hp, the carcass melts and the rising vapor flies to inhabit the weapon that destroyed it. The weapon is now possessed. (**See Gawk-Possessed Weapons sidebar on the next page**); SV Fort+3; Ref+3; Will+2; AL C.



AGRAGAR'S CURSE TABLE: (DC 15 WILL SAVE)

The PC's Save roll will also act as their result roll on the following table:

1 or lower: The PC will begin to sprout black feathers and turn into a Gawk Fiend. On their turn in the initiative, they must meet a DC 12 Will Save or attack their nearest ally. The effect lasts 1d4 rounds.

2-5: The PC's arms turn into black wings. Brandishing a weapon incurs a -2 penalty to attacks. The effect lasts 1d4 rounds.

6-9: The PC sees the Gawk Fiends split into two (now appearing as eight instead of four creatures). The effect is an illusion, but the PC has a 50% chance of attacking a Gawk Fiend that isn't there. The effect lasts 1d3 rounds.

10-14: The PC's eyes bulge as those of a bird. Sores and lesions develop on their flesh, causing 1d4-1 damage. The physical changes last 1d8 days. In that time, the PC has dark vision for 30' and incurs no penalty when being attacked from behind.

15 and higher: no effect.

GAWK-POSSESSED WEAPONS

Gawk Fiends are aberrations from the abyssal realms where Buldakatak resides. They cannot truly perish in this realm and so when one is destroyed it will find residence in the weapon that felled it as a penance for its failure. A PC of any alignment can brandish the now-cursed weapon. For Lawful PCs, the imprisoned creature grants an increased chance to deliver a critical hit against undead (range increases by one, e.g. 19-20). For neutral and chaotic PCs, the PC can draw blood from themselves as one action to call upon Buldakatak. He will hear the prayer and increase inflicted damage in the following way: for every hit-point that the PC is willing to sacrifice of their own, they may inflict an additional 1d4 damage on the next successful attack with the weapon.

If a lawfully aligned opponent is killed by the cursed weapon, the Gawk Fiend is freed and will return to the Abyssal Realm.



Inside the sanctum are various items of note. Aside from the 50 Electrum in Agragar's pouch, the PCs may find: a **+4 Scroll of Spiderclimb** (DCC pg. 156), a **+4 Scroll of Magic Shield** (DCC pg. 146), a **book on Elven alchemical lore** (judge's discretion, to learn future spells?), a **mithril longsword**, a **tusked-helmet** in the visage of Buldakatak, **two flasks of oil**, and **Agragar's staff** (judge's discretion; should require questing to master).

An unlocked door in the south wall of the chamber opens to a stairway descending to **Area 1-10** (see judge's map). If the PCs state that they are searching the room for hidden alcoves or other secret doorways, they may discover the painting of a doorway behind a curtain on the western-most wall. Agragar was never able to discern the magic that opens the portal. But if industrious PCs find a way to open it, the tunnel beyond leads to **Area 1-8**. If opened, however, the tunnel will be suddenly filled with rushing waters from the river, immediately flooding the sanctum, bursting the southern door and washing the PCs down the stairs that lead to **Area 1-10** (DC 16 Fort Save or 1d6 damage), and there is a 50% chance that the PCs will lose any treasure they just acquired!



AREA 1-6: THE RAPIDS

As you steer the boat from the tunnels toward the northern passage of the river, you find it no longer necessary to propel yourself with the pole as you begin picking up speed. You need the pole now to steer yourself away from the treacherous rocks and foaming rapids! As the current swings the boat about wildly, you see the river drops just ahead. Suddenly a creature leaps from the turbulent water. It has the head and body of a ram and the tail of a large fish. You're doused in spray as its leap carries it over the boat and back into the water.



Roll initiative! The Mer-Rams will attempt to bull rush the adventurers from their vessel. It will take three rounds for the party's boat to traverse the rapids (use a d3 to count down the rounds). At the top of each new round, have each PC roll a d20 applying their Reflex modifier, checking the results on the following table:

1-4: fall out of the boat.

5-9: fall prone on deck.

10-16: steady-footed.

17 or higher: steady and save any one nearby comrade from falling out of the boat in the same round.

Any PC in the water at the top of each round must make either a Fortitude or Reflex check (DC12) thereafter until either the rapids are traversed or they are back "safely" on the boat. A failed check results in 1d4-1 damage that round.

Climbing back into the boat in the swirling waters requires a DC 14 Strength check. If a drifting PC is willing to hold their action until an ally's turn in the initiative, two PCs can combine their action to make that check.

The Mer-Rams have no motive beyond sport, so the judge should make a morale check after any one of them has met his demise (d20+ Will mod; 11 or higher means the attacks continue). After two creatures are defeated, the rams will definitely break off the attack.

Once the river has calmed and the danger has passed, the judge should proceed to **Area 1-9**.

Mer-Rams (4): Init+2; Atk bull rush +3 melee (1d4+special); AC 12; HD2d6; hp8; MV run/swim 30'; Act 1d20 (special: on a successful attack, target takes damage and must make a DC8 Strength or Agility save or be knocked overboard); SV Fort+3; Ref+2; Will+1; AL N.



AREA 1-7: THE MANTIS-FOLK

Emerging from the tunnels, you notice that the sun is well into its downward trajectory from the sky. The southern branch of the river carries you beneath a stone arch that spans the river. Suddenly you hear a loud warble that echoes around the canyon walls, followed by a chorus of shrill chirps as bug-eyed creatures rise from concealment near the canyon walls. Some of the bipedal insects seem to be astride hyenas, using them as mounts! They race to reach the archway over the river before you pass beneath it.

The Mantis-folk range anywhere from two to three feet tall. Each is equipped with a small primitive bow, a quiver of arrows, and a bone dagger. They communicate by way of clicks and warbles, understanding no tongue but their own. An unfortunate byproduct of Agragar's reckless plundering of ancient magic beneath the open desert skies, the creatures manifested many years ago and hold no allegiance to their creator. Every humanoid they have ever encountered has been adversarial to their existence.

It will take the PCs and their boat 3 rounds to reach the archway where the Mantis-folk will be waiting overhead.

On the first round, three of the mounted insects will send a volley of arrows that will strike the front of the boat and embed in the wood.

Though the PCs won't know it, this serves only as a warning shot. The Mantis-folk will not fire again as long as the party does not respond in kind. **If the PCs return fire, roll initiative.**

On the second round of approach to the archway, the PCs will notice an inscription carved into the stone bridge, chiseled in Elven script. If anyone in the party is capable of reading it, and recites the inscription aloud, proceed immediately to the description in **Area 1-8**. (The judge may prefer to jot down the inscription and pass it to the player who recognizes it. It reads *"I seek audience with the master of the verdant realms. Hear my voice oh king!"*)



On the third round, if the inscription has not been read aloud nor any confrontation with the mantis-folk provoked, the party will float past the watching creatures in tense silence, but no violent altercation will be triggered.

If there is an altercation, the PCs will not escape beyond the creature's arrows until they have survived two rounds beyond the bridge. In a fight, two of the brave mounted mantis-folk will leap with their mounts onto the boat as it passes beneath. If a PC wears the **All-Seeing Eye Pendant** found in **Area 1-2**, they will be targeted first as the mantis-folk have no love for those disciples.

Mantis-folk (8): Init+3; Atk dagger+2 melee (1d4+1) or bow +3 missile fire (1d6-1); AC 11; HD 2d6; hp 7; MV 25'; Act 1d20; SV Fort-1; Ref+3; Will-1; AL N.

Hyena Mounts (2): Init+2 (if mounted, the hyena will attack on the mantis-rider's initiative); Atk bite +1 melee (1d4+1); AC 9; HD 1d6; 4hp; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort+1; Ref+2; Will+1; AL N.

Should the PCs disembark for any reason to search for or visit the mantis-folk camp, they will soon find an encampment near the cliffs holding 1d24+6 additional mantis-folk.

A mud hut in the heart of the village contains treasures obtained in past skirmishes: **two mithril daggers**, a **shield bearing the image of Buldakatak** on its face, **4 Vials of holy water**, a **+4 Scroll of Spider Web** (DCC pg. 196), and an **amber stone** with a single eyeball peering from inside. (An elf or wizard that meets a DC14 Intelligence check will know that the amber stone offers a one-time +3 boon to any single spell check. After that use, the eye will close inside the clear amber and the stone will turn opaque.) The mantis-folk would gladly barter these items for equipment or baubles more useful to their way of life.

Leaving the area by continuing down the river brings the party to **Area 1-9**.



AREA 1-8: DIVINE INTERVENTION

This encounter only happens if someone has recited aloud the bridge inscription in **Area 1-7**. Read or paraphrase the following:

As the inscription is read aloud, the skies grow suddenly dark and the mantis-folk begin to scatter. The waters before you begin to churn as your vessel begins to sink. But instead of the water pouring over the sides of the boat, a bubble of protection forms around you and you descend en masse through the water line. In moments you miraculously comes to rest on a dry cavern floor, the river somehow continuing to flow above you, defying gravity! The sandy chamber is approximately 60' long by 30' wide, about the width of the river. At the far end, on a throne of gnarled branches, an old white-bearded elf leafs through an ancient leather-bound tome that rests upon his lap.

Though it is unlikely the party recognizes him, the old man is a manifestation of the **King of Elfland**. Not usually concerned with the affairs of humankind, he nonetheless has heard the prayers of his devoted followers within the city. He holds no fear nor regard for the minor desert god Buldakatak, but does see the warhog's intended breach of promise as an attack against the cosmos. Though he chooses not to directly intervene (upsetting the balance of nature/anti-nature, etc.), he does see the adventurer's quest as the best chance to "fairly" thwart the Burning Warhog.

The judge may roleplay this interaction as they see fit, even substituting the patron of any of the players to better fit an ongoing campaign. But this interaction will give the judge an opportunity to **A**: bolster the party with some healing, returned luck, and spell check assistance before the final encounters, and **B**: remind the players that the gods are in a constant chess match using mortals as pawns.

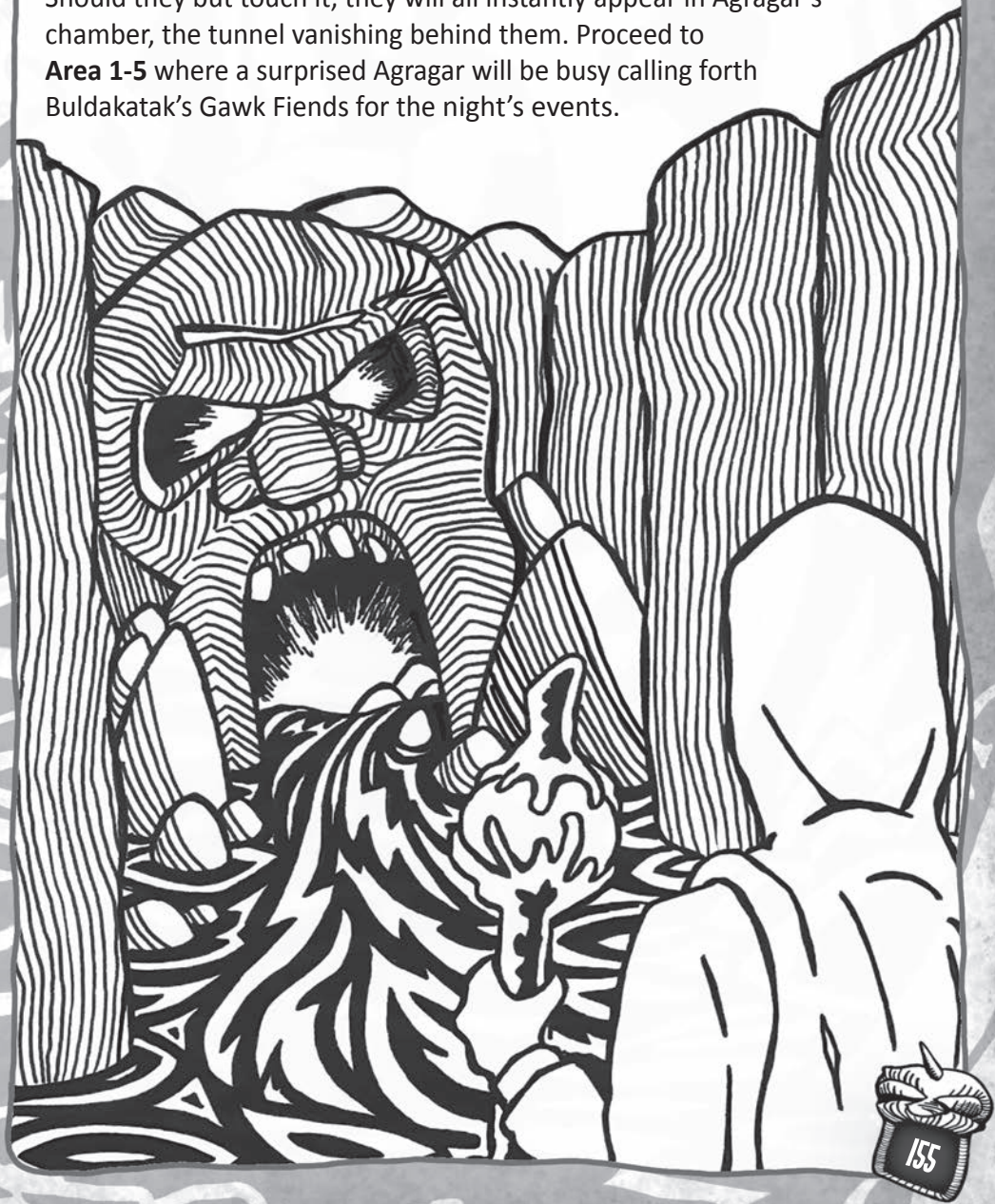
The King of Elfland may make one or more of the following offers:

- "I shall place fortune's winds upon your back." (1d4 Luck returned)
- "Thy wounds be touched by the mists of Elfland." (1HD hp returned)
- "May this laurel aid thy incantations made in service to Elfland." (A twig-woven wreath to be worn on the head of a spell caster that adds +2 to a spell check, one-time use).



Should the judge use the patron of any party member in this encounter, that PC may also receive a bonus of +2 to any patron spell for the remainder of the adventure.

An open tunnel on the south-eastern wall leads to the sanctum of Agragar the Queasy in **Area 1-5**. As the party traverses the tunnel, the stone will form solidly behind them and they will hear the river rushing to fill the previous chamber. At the end of the tunnel they reach a red curtain. Should they but touch it, they will all instantly appear in Agragar's chamber, the tunnel vanishing behind them. Proceed to **Area 1-5** where a surprised Agragar will be busy calling forth Buldakatak's Gawk Fiends for the night's events.



AREA 1-9: THE RIVER ENDS

Just ahead, the river disappears, swallowed by an enormous gaping stone mouth carved to look like a tormented face in the cavern wall. The boat continues to pick up speed, and you hear the roar and rush of breaking water ahead in the darkness.

Once beyond the mouth, the river spills 60' down into an enormous underground lake. If the PCs fashion a preemptive attempt to avoid the drop, the judge may allow them to lasso or steer toward a stone landing near the river's edge. A steep, damp, and narrow stairway descends from here to the subterranean lake's edge. If they take no such precautions and ride the boat over the falls, the drop will require a DC14 Fort Save or the PC will receive 2d6 damage and will be rendered unconscious for 1d6 rounds. Any unconscious PC left in the water for more than three rounds is drowned. The boat will be destroyed in the fall.

Proceed to **Area 1-10** for a description of the underground lake.

AREA 1-10: THE CRYPT IN CADAVER CANYON

The PCs can arrive at the underground crypt in two different ways. If they enter through the river inlet via **Area 1-9**, they will most likely have descended the narrow stairway or spilled over the falls. Or they may have descended the stairway from **Area 1-5**. In either case, when the party arrives at the subterranean lake, read or paraphrase the following:

Murky waters lap at algae-covered walls for as far as the eye can see. Above, the Deep Scratch River spills into the enormous underground lake set before you. When your eyes finally adjust to the dim light, you recoil as you realize that what at first seemed to be swells on the surface of the lake are in reality a veritable sea of bloated cadavers bobbing in the wormy ink. In the center of the lake a coarse stone platform rises as an island some 60' square. In the center of the artificial island a tower of smooth black onyx rises 40' above the platform, a sloped walkway winding around the ominous spire up to an open doorway near the tower's peak. From your vantage, you see robed figures moving on both the island platform and the sloped walkway.



If the PCs have the means to take a closer look or decide to approach the island, read or paraphrase the following:

The robed figures are human in size, some carrying golden censers wafting incense; others carry or drag corpses up the smooth ramp before disappearing into the darkness of the open doorway at the top of the tower. Each carries a twisted wooden staff capped by an enormous moving eyeball, either in their hands if possible, or on their backs. Each robed figure seems intent upon their part in this solemn and gruesome ritual, murmuring to themselves as they go about their work.

The underground lake varies in depth from 5' to 20' deep. The Deep Scratch River finds its way out of the chamber via smaller ducts and crannies on the southern-most walls. The island platform is 60' square, rising mere inches above the lake's waters in most places,

but never more than a couple of

feet. The robed "Keepers" may or may not notice the party, depending upon the PC's actions.





They are busy “feeding” Buldakatak the unclaimed souls by carrying the bloated worm-infested cadavers up the tower ramp and dumping them into the furnace. When the players have a good sense of the scene before them, read or paraphrase the following:

As one of the robed figures emerges from the top of the tower, she is revealed as a woman when she lowers her hood to uncover an unruly mop of red hair. The left side of her face is covered in tattoos. After she wipes the sweat from her brow, she lifts the hood to cover her head once more, and begins the trek back down the tower ramp.

Players will hopefully discern that the robed figure matches the description of **Guldava Tick**, very much alive and working alongside the Keepers. Although it isn’t immediately apparent, she bears the scars around her neck from being hanged, along with the birthmark of a bull’s horn on her right arm. If the PCs wait for a more opportune time to make their move to grab her, she will eventually walk to the water’s edge to retrieve a corpse for the trek back up the tower ramp.

How Guldava came to join the Keepers is quite simple; assumed to be dead, her body was cut loose to fall into the river running through the city. There, her body was intercepted by priests, dressed in graves clothes, and sent down the river as is customary. When found by the Keepers, they alerted Agragar the Queasy when they discovered that she was not only (barely) alive, but marked with the bull horn! Agragar has promised her that she may go free (a promise he may or may not keep) or even become his apprentice if she agrees to stay with the Keepers until after the Day of the Warthog ritual has passed and Buldakatak has freed himself from his covenant.

Should the PCs engage Guldava Tick in conversation, her responses should show her utter disdain for the people that condemned and “put her to death”.

- *“I am the thief you seek, shamed and executed. Why should I return to save the city that tried to murder me?”*
- *“Perhaps the Great Warthog is correct? The City in the Cliffs is overdue for a great purging. It’s a shame that so many innocents must die, but all great reincarnations come at some cost.”*



- *“Let Buldakatak destroy the city... they deserve no less! Join us! When the people have been burned and the city razed, we can scour the ashes for all their precious gold and jeweled treasures.”*

Should the PCs decide to fulfill the original quest and overpower her to take her back to save the city, Guldava will call for (and receive) the aid of the Keepers to help her resist. All melee damage inflicted upon Guldava may be considered subdual if the PCs wish to take her back alive. **The ritual scroll Lesser Planar Step can be used on Guldava at any point in the conflict, though if she is conscious, she receives a Will Save vs. the spell check to resist.**

Guldava Tick: Init+1; Atk necrotic staff +3 melee (1d6+poison) or scorching eye beam +3 missile fire (1d6+ongoing fire damage); AC 12; SP necrotic poison DC10 Fort save or ongoing 1d4 damage; HD 3d6; hp 14; MV 25'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2; Ref +1; Will +3; AL C.

Guldava's Tactics: If she is near the water, Guldava will touch the eye of the staff to the surface and resurrect 1d6 cadavers to fight for her. If she can, she will fire scorching eye beams from a distance and retreat to the top of the tower ramp with each movement.

The Keepers (6): Init -1; Atk necrotic staff +3 melee (1d6+poison) or scorching eye beam +3 missile fire (1d6+ongoing fire damage); AC 11; SP necrotic poison DC10 Fort save or ongoing 1d4 damage; HD 3d6; hp 12; MV 25'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +1; Ref -1; Will +4; AL C.

Keeper Tactics: Any Keepers near the water's edge may also dip the surface with a staff to resurrect 1d6 cadavers, who will arrive on the Keeper's turn in the initiative on the following round. Any PC attempting to use a Keeper's staff will learn that it is powered by fervent devotion to Buldakatak with secrets only unlocked after proving oneself to be a dedicated disciple.

Resurrected Cadavers: Init -3; Atk bite +1 melee (1d4); AC 8; HD 1d6; hp 3; MV 15'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2; Ref -3; Will -2; AL C.



LESSER PLANAR STEP: (+4 RITUAL SCROLL)

Range: target(s) chosen by the caster with various ranges are transferred to predetermined destinations (the Monolith Ritual Site).

Duration: Permanent transfer of location.

Casting time: 1 round (effect happens on caster's initiative on the next round)

Save: unwilling targets receive a Will Save vs. spell check DC

General: a one-time use scroll that when incanted, will burst into flame. As the smoke rises, so too will the target(s) evaporate into smoke and reappear at the Monolith Stones Ritual Altar at the top of the City in the Cliffs. Any magic user who has cast "Read Magic" on the scroll and succeeded at any level receives another +3 (along with any other modifiers) to the roll.

Corruption: Roll 1d4: (1) caster's appearance ages nearly 100 years. Body does not suffer any degenerative effects but appears wrinkled and ancient for 1d6 weeks. (2) caster is unhinged from the material plane, flickering out of existence for 1d4 rounds, returning with no memory of where they have been, smelling of sulfur and cabbage. (3) Caster suddenly develops a tattoo of an hourglass on the back of their hand, the ink moving as though the hourglass is counting down. In 1d4 days, the hourglass will disappear and an actual eyeball will appear. (4) Arcane energy surges through the caster's body, turning all hair bright white. Caster receives immediate and permanent additional 1d4hp then immediately receives 1d6 damage.

Misfire: (1) caster and 1d4 of intended targets are accidentally transported to Agragar's inner sanctum in Area 1-6. (2) the caster disappears for 1 round and reappears next round on initiative covered in snow, suffering 1d4 frostbite. (3) The caster doubles in size each round over the next 1d4 rounds before returning to normal. With each "spurt", the caster's AC gains an additional +2. (4) Caster's arm catches fire (1d4 damage).



RESULTS

1: (natural) Failure, misfire, and corruption.

2-6: Failure and corruption.

7-10: Phlogiston disturbance slows time for the caster. Roll again next round.

11-12: Caster appears alone in the predetermined destination for 1d3 rounds as an ethereal projection while the corporal body remains behind. In this time, the PC is unable to defend their corporal body or interact with the environment. The spell cannot be attempted again until the caster returns.

13-14: Caster and 1d4 targets appear in predetermined destination.

15-18: Caster and 1d6 targets appear in predetermined destination.

19-22: Caster and up to eight chosen targets within 50' of the caster appear in the predetermined destination.

23-27: Caster and up to ten chosen targets within 75' of the caster appear in the predetermined destination.

28+: Caster and up to twelve chosen targets within 100' of the caster appear in the predetermined destination and an open portal remains between the two locations for 1d6 days thereafter.

JUDGE'S NOTE

While this spell can fail, misfire and cause corruption to the caster, **it cannot be lost**. Since this spell is integral to the completion of the quest, the PCs need to be able to attempt castings from the scroll until achieving some sort of activation, be that weak or strong. The scroll is a +4 magic reading of an already prepared spell. Wizards and elves will add their intelligence modifiers and caster levels to that roll. Thieves may roll a d10 or a d12 to attempt a casting and add their more copious luck (see **Appendix C: Judge's Notes, page 169**). Halflings may lend double the Luck; magic-users may spell burn. There are many ways that the adventurers may work together to see that the phlogistical energies of the universe conspire in their favor. Help the players understand how critical this roll is, and they should naturally take these steps!



When the spell is cast, those favored by the cosmos will appear in smoke back at the **Monolith Stones** and ritual altar. There the Council of Thirteen, bedecked in ceremonial robes, await their fate: either the flames of death, or the hoped-for return of their birth-marked sacrifice. The sun is setting! The hour of **Buldakatak's** grim return is at hand!

AREA I-II: THE NIGHT OF THE WARTHOG

The author of this adventure makes no assumptions about the whims of an adventuring party. The PCs may have arrived at any number of possible decisions by journey's end. In the immortal words of Paul McCartney, the judge must "let it be". The PCs may have decided to claim the Council's gold by returning **Guldava Tick**, just as they promised. They may have decided to take **Aragar's** offer to abandon the quest. Or the PCs may decide that the **City in the Cliffs** really does deserve its fate and may side with **Guldava Tick** in the end.

If the PCs fail to deliver Guldava Tick for whatever reason, within the hour, the skies will grow black as unnatural clouds twist and writhe in the twilight above the desert city. The earth will quake and the **Deep Scratch River** will burst into flame. The **Great Warthog** will breathe fire that completely fills the chasm, two-thousand souls will perish, and a new war will begin between the gods of light and darkness. The loss of so many innocents will not go unheeded. Depending on the PC's alignments, and the nature of their gods and patrons, the character's roles in the city's apocalypse will be duly noted.

If the PCs return Guldava, they will arrive at the **Monolith Stones** as the sun sets, without a moment to lose. The Council of Thirteen will be waiting amidst lightning flashes and howling desert winds. Armed guards of the **Red Dwarf Clan** will seize **Guldava** from the party and wrestle her to the stone altar. As the impossibly large face of **Buldakatak** appears in the turbulent clouds above, Council of Thirteen member **Hagre the Red** will raise the ceremonial dagger high to run **Guldava** through...



Plot Twist!

With Hagre the Red's arm raised high to strike, his sleeve slips down suddenly, revealing that he too bears the birthmark of the bull horn! The Red Clan dwarf has been a viable candidate all along!

The PCs will need to make a swift decision: they can remain silent, allowing Guldava to be sacrificed so they can collect their reward, or they can challenge Hagre the Red, the Red Clan dwarves and the Council of Thirteen for their deceit.

Judge's Note: The PCs should be given a moment to assess the situation, then give them a surprise round to initiate any actions if they choose to set a plan in motion. Hagre the Red will be guarded by four Red Clan Dwarves. Regardless of how the party acts, the moment of ultimate annihilation is upon everyone. Buldakatak will begin his terrible scourge in one minute, or six rounds. **At that time, if neither Guldava Tick nor Hagre the Red have been sacrificed upon the altar, the covenant is broken and the city is doomed.**

If triggered, Buldakatak's fiery assault will last for four rounds. Each round a character is in the blast area they must make a successful DC24 Fort Save or they suffer 3d6 damage. A desperate plunge into the river far below requires a DC18 Fort Save to escape 4d6 damage. The PC must then remain submerged for the remaining rounds, requiring a DC10 Fort Save each round (suffering 1d4 damage with each failure).

Hagre the Red: Init +1; Atk ceremonial dagger +3 melee (1d4+3); AC 14; HD 3d10; hp 18; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +3; Ref+1; Will +2; AL N.

Red Clan Dwarves (4): Init +0; Atk spear +2 melee (1d8); AC 12; HD 2d10; hp 12; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +1; Ref +0; Will +0; AL N.

Should the PCs draw any other council NPCs into the fight, the following stats will help the judge handle things on the fly...

Human foe: Init +0; Atk short sword +2 melee (1d8); AC 12; HD 2d6; hp 8; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +1; Ref +0; Will +1; AL L.



CONFRONTING BULDAKATAK THE BURNING WARTHOG

Attempting to challenge and harm the ancient desert god is largely an act of futility. Any direct attack on his person would be met with the coarse thundering laughter of a god that would shake the very heavens above the city. Though he is immune to anything the party can throw at him, if the PCs do make such overtures, Buldakatak will be impressed by the party's moxie, dispatching four eldritch lions to test the party's faith in their own might. Should the PCs prevail, Buldakatak may in the end decide to decimate the entire Council of Thirteen and install the PCs as the new leadership of the city!

Eldritch Lions (4): Init +3; Atk bite +3 melee (2d6) or claw +4 melee (1d6+2) and mind roar +4 missile fire (1d8 damage and DC12 Fort Save or fall unconscious for 1d6 rounds); AC 15; HD 3d8; hp 18; MV 35'; Act 2d20; SV Fort +3; Ref +3; Will +5; AL C.

In the end, regardless if the party faces catastrophic defeat, or triumphant victory, whether the City in the Cliffs survives, or is destroyed in a baptism of flames, the party has played a key role in a mighty tale. The lore masters of the desert will record and retell the deeds of those who faced grave perils within the Crypt in Cadaver Canyon!



APPENDIX A: CONTINUED ADVENTURES

To connect this adventure to the 0-level funnel **Nebin Pendlebrook's Perilous Pantry**, and the 1st level adventure **The Frost Fang Expedition**, consider the following plot threads linking those adventures to the desert setting in The Crypt in Cadaver Canyon.

- If any PC possesses the whispering stick from NPPP, the stick may begin to whisper a new phrase, "save us... the City in the cliffs... save us..." Evanna Coor has manipulated its weak magic from afar.
- Anyone lost in the "Realm Beyond the Mirror" in NPPP may suddenly emerge from one of the underground tunnels in the Bleaklands desert, unaware of where they are, having experienced terrible dreams of a giant warthog!
- If the PCs appropriated the flying castle from Dagon in TFFE, their journey could carry them over the Bleaklands Desert. There the skies will grow dark, grounding the earth mote by the will of Buldakatak until the Day of the Warthog has passed.
- If any PC formed a patron bond with Malotoch in TFFE, she may command them in dreams to find the desert city in order to aid a fellow servant, Evanna Coor. By merely reaching Evanna, Malotoch rewards the follower with complete renewed Luck and a +3 bonus to one Invoke Patron roll during the quest (**pages 110-111 in *The Frost Fang Expedition***).
- The Ugnoid captive Thilas Evergood in TFFE asks you to return him to his childhood home before he dies... a place in the Bleaklands Desert called the City in the Cliffs.



APPENDIX B: DESERT ENCOUNTERS

For the judge's convenience, here are a few adversaries and creatures the PCs may encounter in the Bleaklands Desert.

Bleaklands Bandits: Init +3; Atk scimitar +3 (1d8+2) or dagger(2) +3 missile fire (1d4+2); AC 12; HD 2d8; hp 11; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +1; AL C.

Bleaklands Bandits are outcasts who prey upon any who wander too far from the safety of the city, ever watching the roads and the river for unwary travelers. They too fear the impending wrath of Buldakatak upon all desert dwellers, which might be exploited by the party.

Phlogi-snails: Init -4; Atk acidic touch +3 melee (1d4 ongoing; DC14 Fort Save ends) or mind warp +4 missile fire (see SP); AC 13; HD 2d6; hp 9; MV 10'; Act 1d20; SP dream haze causes PC to see the snail as the person they love the most. PC will use their full move speed to embrace the snail on their next turn; DC 16 Will save ends.; SV Fort +4; Ref -5; Will +6; AL C.

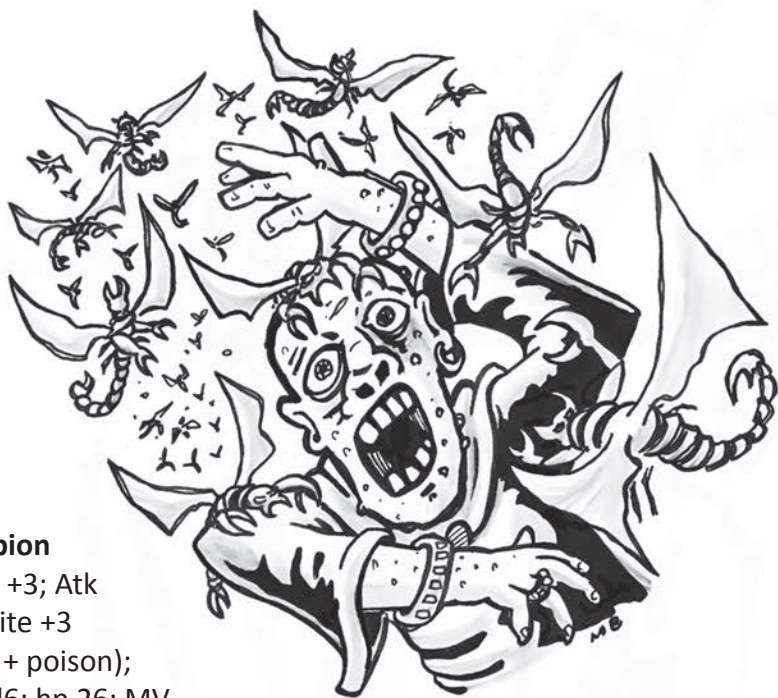
Phlogi-snails dwell in the underground caverns that weave throughout the Bleaklands and the Deep Scratch River. They can grow to the size of full-grown pigs, and by some strange mechanism possess the ability to absorb the residue of the deep earth's elemental energies.



Giant Pangolin: Init +0; Atk claw +4 melee (1d6+4); AC 16; HD 2d10; hp 16; MV 35'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +6; Ref +2; Will +0; AL N.

The burrow of a giant pangolin looks like another desert cave. Giant pangolins are ambush predators, waiting for unwary PCs to explore their tunnels. When the moment is right, they curl into large armored balls and roll down their tunnels to squash their quarry in the confined space. (Similar to a peril faced by a somewhat famous big screen adventuring archaeologist!) A DC14 Reflex save is required to avoid 1d10 damage.





Flying Scorpion

Swarm: Init +3; Atk swarming bite +3 melee (1d4 + poison); AC 9; HD 5d6; hp 26; MV 40'; Act special; SP bite all targets within a 20'x20' space; half damage from non-area attacks; double damage from area attacks; poison- DC 10 Fort save each of 1d4 more rounds or 1d4 more damage; SV Fort +1; Ref +3; Will -2; AL N.

Flying scorpion swarms move quickly across the Bleaklands, most often in the early morning and at dusk when they can more easily see the movement of their intended prey. With poor eyesight, the swarm can be fooled simply by standing still. (A PC with desert lore would know this).

Burrowing Baboon: Init +2; Atk claw +3 melee (1d6) or bite +3 melee (1d6+1) or poo sling +4 missile fire (target blinded for 1d4 rounds); AC 10; HD 2d6; hp 9; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP infravision 30'; SV Fort +0; Ref +2; Will -1; AL N.

These crafty creatures reside beneath the desert's many rock formations and outcroppings, adept at burrowing beneath the Bleakland's shifting sands. Standard tactics are to distract the party by aggressively flinging their own filth, while other burrowing baboons pilfer the party's untended campsite!

APPENDIX C: JUDGE'S NOTES

The Dungeon Crawl Classics RPG is by design a rules-light game system, harkening back to the “good-ol’-days” of gaming. This makes judging DCC adventures an exercise in creative, seat-of-the-pants game mastering. Embrace the madness, have fun, and roll with it. Keep the following in mind as you run this adventure.

- **Magic casting from scrolls:** PCs other than wizards and elves may attempt to cast magic from a scroll, albeit with less natural ability. A 2nd level thief of lawful and chaotic alignment uses a $d10 + \text{Int modifier} + \text{the scrolls built-in modifier}$ to attempt the casting. A neutral thief may use a $d12$ dice to do the same. Other untrained classes will use a $d10$ with no other modifiers other than the scrolls built-in modifier, unless they are burning luck. Depending on the character’s race/class, other options to modify spell-casting rolls also exist, such as sharing Luck, and spellburn for magic-users. There are also several opportunities throughout the adventure for the players to add other bonus modifiers to the roll. In a desperate situation, the party will need them!
- **The Plot Twist:** Many adventuring parties will consider the matter closed as they return Guldava Tick to the Council of Thirteen. Experienced players are often adept at sensing the close of an adventure, and tend to push the limits of their abilities by expending points of Luck or Spellburning on what they perceive as the final encounter. (This may be especially true in one-shot games like in a convention setting or game store demo.)

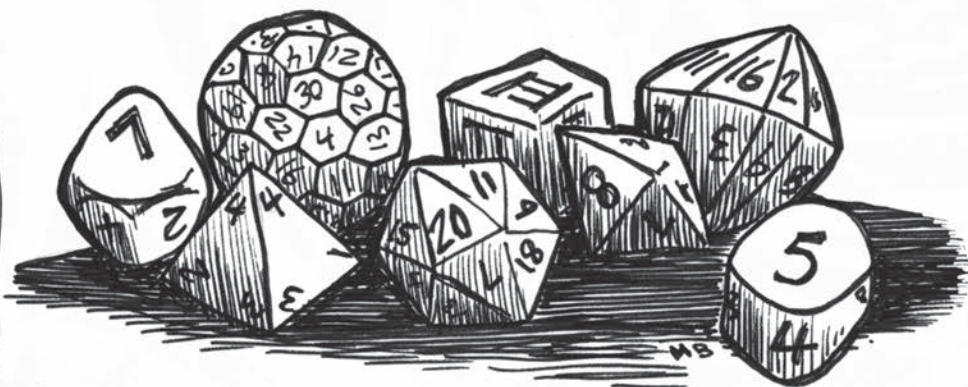
Your players may get that sense from the climactic battle with Guldava Tick and the Keepers of the Crypt. Great! Let them burn those points! Just make sure you have left plenty of time to play out the final sacrifice ritual back at the City in the Cliffs and the reveal that Hagre the Red could have saved the city all along. He and the Red Clan will not go down without a fight and could provide an intense challenge to a depleted party.



- **Make failure interesting:** Players will whiff rolls at important times. Remember in these situations that your game doesn't have to collapse, in fact it has likely just become a whole lot more interesting! Allow the failure to move the game forward in an unexpected direction. Epic moments don't just happen on critical hits; they happen on fumbles too.

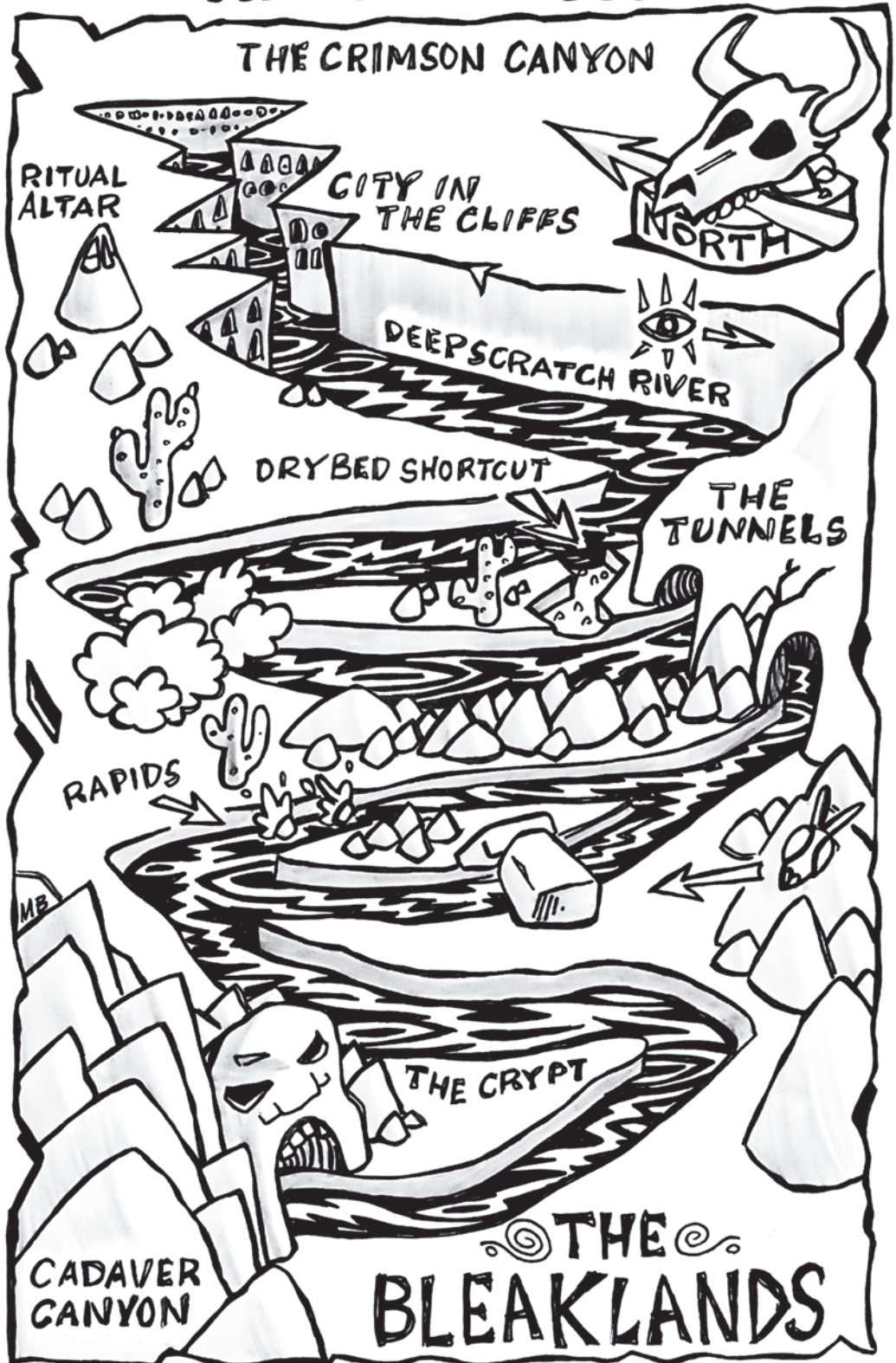
- **If you need a four-hour game:** This module has enough background material and encounter areas to easily fill a couple of sessions or more in your home campaign. For a store demo or convention slot game, hit the ground running by beginning at the Quick Start section. **Run the encounter areas that most appeal to you until you reach the one-hour/one-and-a-half-hour mark, then proceed to the subterranean crypt.** This should allow you to complete the adventure in the time available: ending with a bang instead of a whimper!

- **Adjust this module to your players:** No two groups beginning this adventure will be alike so feel free to adjust difficulty levels to fit your party's play style and power. Seasoned players may cruise through the encounters while newcomers to the game might forget the abilities available to them and have a rougher time. The stats in this module have been play-tested to fall somewhere in the middle of this spectrum. **In the end, the legend of the Crypt in Cadaver Canyon is no-one's story but the one told at your table.**

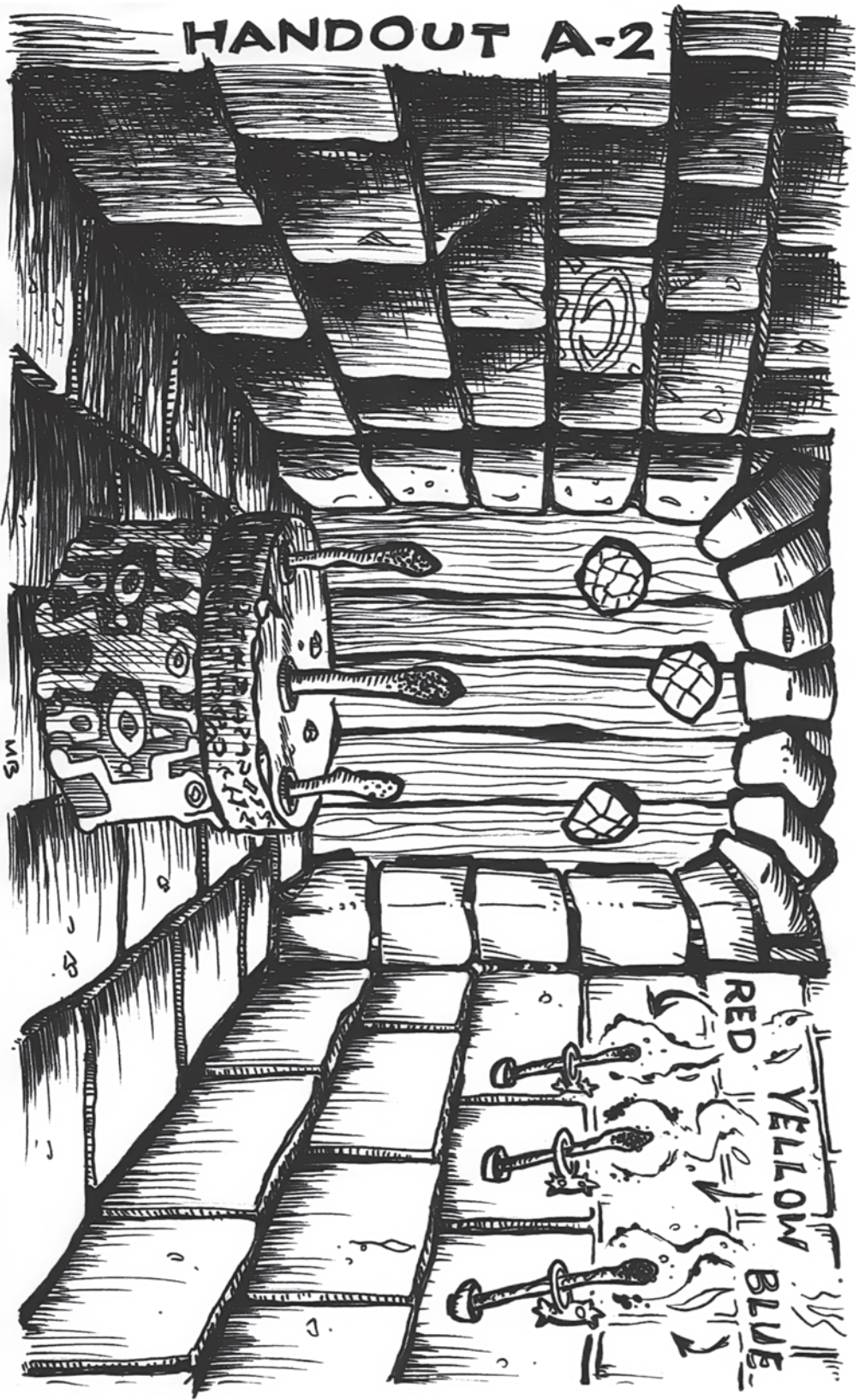


HANDOUT A-1

THE CRIMSON CANYON



HANDOUT A-2



M3

RED
YELLOW
BLUE

LESSER PLANAR STEP: (+4 RITUAL SCROLL)

Range: target(s) are transferred to predetermined location (Monolith Stones Ritual Altar).

Duration: Permanent transfer of location.

Casting time: 1 round (effect happens on caster's initiative on the next round)

Save: unwilling targets receive a Will Save vs. spell check DC

General: a one-time use scroll that when incanted, will burst into flame. As the smoke rises, so too will the target(s) evaporate into smoke and reappear at the Monolith Stones Ritual Altar at the top of the City in the Cliffs. Any magic user who has cast "Read Magic" on the scroll and succeeded at any level receives another +3 (along with any other modifiers) to the roll.

Corruption: Roll 1d4: (1) caster's appearance ages nearly 100 years. Body does not suffer any degenerative effects but appears wrinkled and ancient for 1d6 weeks. (2) caster is unhinged from the material plane, flickering out of existence for 1d4 rounds, returning with no memory of where they have been, smelling of sulfur and cabbage. (3) Caster suddenly develops a tattoo of an hourglass on the back of their hand, the ink moving as though the hourglass is counting down. In 1d4 days, the hourglass will disappear and an actual eyeball will appear. (4) Arcane energy surges through the caster's body, turning all hair bright white. Caster receives immediate and permanent additional 1d4hp then immediately receives 1d6 damage.

Misfire: (1) caster and 1d4 of intended targets are accidentally transported to Agragar's inner sanctum in Area 1-6. (2) the caster disappears for 1 round and reappears next round on initiative covered in snow, suffering 1d4 frostbite. (3) The caster doubles in size each round over the next 1d4 rounds before returning to normal. With each "spurt", the caster's AC gains an additional +2. (4) Caster's arm catches fire (1d4 damage).

RESULTS

1: (natural) Failure, misfire, and corruption.

2-6: Failure and corruption.

7-10: Phlogiston disturbance slows time for the caster. Roll again next round.

11-12: Caster appears alone in the predetermined destination for 1d3 rounds as an ethereal projection while the corporal body remains behind. In this time, the PC is unable to defend their corporal body or interact with the environment. The spell cannot be attempted again until the caster returns.

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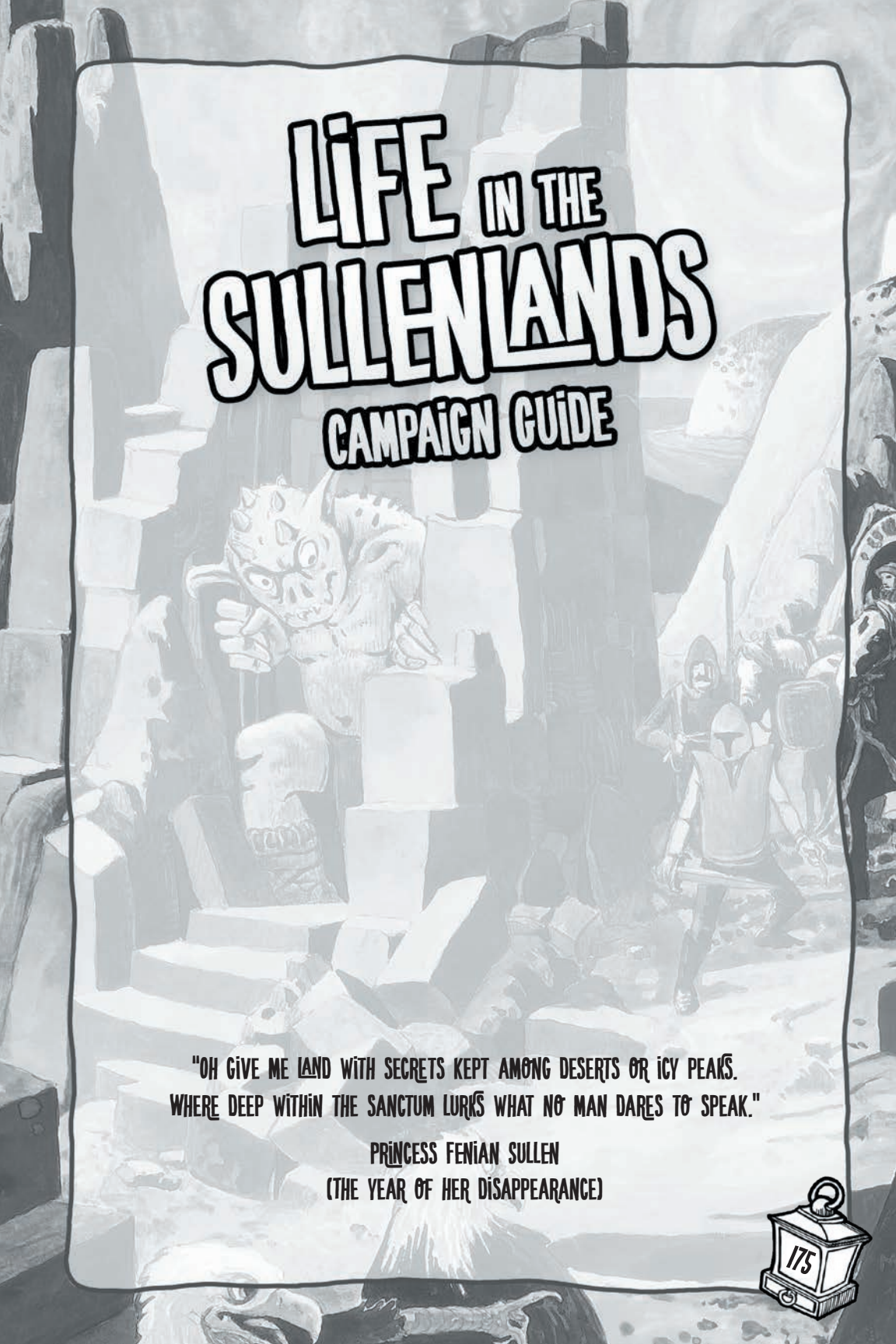
19-22: Caster and up to eight chosen targets within 50' of the caster appear in the predetermined destination.

23-27: Caster and up to ten chosen targets within 75' of the caster appear in the predetermined destination.

28+: Caster and up to twelve chosen targets within 100' of the caster appear in the predetermined destination and an open portal remains between the two locations for 1d6 days thereafter.

JUDGE'S NOTE

While this spell can fail, misfire and cause corruption to the caster, **it cannot be lost**. Since this spell is integral to the completion of the quest, the PCs need to be able to attempt castings from the scroll until achieving some sort of activation, be that weak or strong. The scroll is a +4 magic reading of an already prepared spell. Wizards and elves will add their intelligence modifiers and caster levels to that roll. Thieves may roll a d10 or a d12 to attempt a casting and add their more copious luck (see **Appendix C: Judge's Notes**). Halflings may lend double the Luck; magic-users may spell burn. There are many ways that the adventurers may work together to see that the phlogistical energies of the universe conspires in their favor. Help the players understand how critical this roll is, and they should naturally take these steps!



LIFE IN THE SULLENLANDS

CAMPAIGN GUIDE

"OH GIVE ME LAND WITH SECRETS KEPT AMONG DESERTS OR ICY PEAKS.
WHERE DEEP WITHIN THE SANCTUM LURKS WHAT NO MAN DARES TO SPEAK."

PRINCESS FENIAN SULLEN
(THE YEAR OF HER DISAPPEARANCE)



The Sullenlands



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	178
The Sullenlands and Dungeon Crawl Classics	179
Brief History of the Sullenlands	181
The People of the Sullenlands	183
About the Map	184
The God Mist	186
The Dark Chorus	190
Cities, Villages, and Locations	194
Neverthawes.....	194
Bitterweed Barrow.....	195
Eldercliffs.....	196
The Ruling Classes.....	199
Embergulf Bay	200
Ishlachyren	205
The Bleaklands	206
City in the Cliffs	207
Bromforge	208
The Dwarven Cleric	210
Greythaak the Bearded Anvil.....	215
The Judge's Toolbox for the Sullenlands	225
Thieve's Guilds	226
The Traveling Bard	228
Alchemical Herbs	231
Additional Equipment	232
The Treasure Trove.....	233
Let's Go This Way (Random Names)	237
Character Death Table	238
Sullenlands Bestiary	242
Random Tables	255
Tips on Tying the Adventures Together	270
More Shops in the City in the Cliffs.....	274
The Bellows of Bromforge Adventure	284
Make the Sullenlands your own.....	304



INTRODUCTION

The world is flat. That is all that anyone knows for sure.

Any practitioner of sorcery who says that they have seen the world shaped like a round stone in some nebulous vision is either corrupted in the mind, or a drunken sot. Only a chosen few have seen the true maps of these lands. Those maps are flat. So it must be with the world.

Not that anyone here has ever seen the whole of the world: the idea of a map large enough to contain its vastness would be truly mad. Yes, there are drawings of this city here, or of that valley there, but maps that encompass entire lands and regions are as rare as perfect pearls, the prized possessions of monarchs, emperors and kings. They are locked fast in guarded vaults, for the wise know that the knowledge etched upon those hard-earned scrolls grants leverage and power as great as any spell.

That being said, the information that you hold in your hands is without question the most comprehensive gathering of knowledge ever collected regarding life in the Sullenlands. As the keeper of this tome, you now possess the power to oversee a vast wilderland, entrusted with its history, secrets, and lore. When you master the contents of this tome, you will become the supreme authority of the region, a loremaster who may, at your whim, parse out the information to those exploring her mysterious and mighty wonders in any way you see fit!

So let your exploration of this mysterious realm begin! The history of the Sullenlands (and the reasons they are called so) rests in your hands. Explore the diverse geography of its many lands, and unlock the mysteries of its hard-living (and often foolish) people. And yes, you need not worry: you'll have a glorious map to guide your every step!



JUDGING THE SULLENLANDS

But remember, as judge, it is your world, and your world alone! This mini-campaign setting strives to stay true to the most basic tenant of the Dungeon Crawl Classics philosophy: that the common folk have very limited knowledge of the world they live in, and that “most everyday peasants in a medieval setting never travel more than a few miles from their places of birth” (*DCC rulebook page 306*). By beginning with a world both small and mysterious, encountering each new mountain vista or dark forest becomes an exciting adventure into the unknown.

However, while your players might begin in the dark, as the all-seeing judge, it’s clearly in everyone’s interest that you know who and what lies over that next hill when the PCs do go exploring. The campaign elements contained in this omnibus will help you respond when your players ask “who’s in charge here” and “why are there so many elves in this town?”

But always remember that the campaign map and the resources you possess do not exist in the living world of your player’s characters: such comprehensive knowledge is simply not available. If your players desire to know what lies beyond yon distant mountain, they’ll need to discover it for themselves! (Or at the very least bribe their favorite traveling bard with flagon after flagon of mead!)

THE SULLENLANDS AND DUNGEON CRAWL CLASSICS

This mini-campaign setting is based upon the medieval-ish world that players of DCC are already familiar with. Wizards and magic are real, though wildly unpredictable and extremely dangerous. Other-worldly patrons tempt the hearts of men and women with powerful sorceries and spells, but they mainly work to further their own goals. The gods of the Sullenlands play chess with their followers in a never-ending battle to thwart the schemes of chaos.

Merely traveling from one town to the next can be tremendously risky! Death from terrifying diseases, unnatural beasts, and heartless rogues threaten at every turn. To live in the Sullenlands is to lead a hard life. There are no heroes in this world; only survivors who use their pluck and resolve to scratch out enough to live another day.



This book assumes a familiarity with the world-view of the DCC rule-book, and its unique perspectives regarding the scarcity and danger of magic. The Sullenlands cultures are presented with a light hand, so that judges and players can easily blend their campaign content with this world's unique locations, history, and motivations.

A quick glance of the campaign map will reveal that some locations are named and others are not. This is designed to make it easy for the judge to freely drop any locations that the party has already explored right into the Sullenlands, quickly intertwining what has come before with what is about to happen. Have a module that you are wanting to run? No problem...pick a spot, make a few adjustments to names and geography, and drop it right in.

Please make the Sullenlands your own. In play, your players have the capacity to transform these campaign elements into something magical. By the time you and your players are through with these lands, we hope you are able to craft a unique campaign world born of tragedy, triumph, and legendary feats that resembles nothing that has come before!

THE THEMES OF THIS SETTING

The continent of **Zyl-Kaduun**, aka **Kaduun**, aka “the Sullenlands” has recently been impacted by a distant cosmic event known as **The God Mist**. This power has rippled forth to wreak havoc upon the ethereal planes, the gods, and their followers. This celestial event only happens every seven generations, and unfortunately, your heroes have been chosen by fate to see its manifestation firsthand!

Primarily because of this God Mist (which will be explained in detail later), the Sullenlands setting has three distinguishing ongoing world-logic ideas that judges should keep in mind as they weave the disparate adventures contained in the Omnibus together into one exciting whole.

- The Gods and Patrons have lost sight of their followers. The God Mist has made magic even more unpredictable than usual, and this unpredictability will continue for the next seven years!



- The once-beloved king of Kaduun (the Sullenlands) is dead and the heir to the throne, a princess, is lost somewhere within the wilderness of the continent. Because of this, there is no unifying power over the kingdoms, and each province governs as it sees fit.
- Because of the chaos introduced by the God Mist, and the Sullenlands' lack of unifying leadership, the **Dark Chorus**— a union of three powerful chaotic beings— seeks to gain a foothold in the mortal realms by subverting and destroying the virtuous among both mankind and the sub-human races. Their plans are only just beginning...

These three themes should be lurking in the background of all your adventures within the Sullenlands. Whether your campaign is comprised of favorite adventures converted to work in the Sullenlands, your own home-brewed adventures, or you are specifically following the 'official' path outlined in *Nebin Pendlebrook*, *The Frost Fang Expedition*, and *The Crypt in Cadaver Canyon* (or a mix of all three options), running your game with knowledge of the God Mist, the lost king, and the Dark Chorus will help you bind everything together. The big baddies in any adventure can become mere pawns in an epic struggle to decide the fate of the Sullenlands!

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE SULLENLANDS

For generations this region has been known as **Zyl-Kaduun**, named after the gods who formed it during their ceaseless warring. The violent dance of the gods is said to have formed the valleys, mountains, deserts, and lakes of the region as a byproduct of their wild footsteps. Generations later the name was shortened to Kaduun as the worship of Zyl faded, the old god eventually all but forgotten.

Kaduun is bordered by seas to the west and south, and a vast cold wilderness to the north. Years ago, the great king **Redgold Sullen**, a half-elf, half human, brought together the separate realms and kingdoms into a unified realm, even collecting the fay and faer-folk under his banner! Sadly, when his reign came to an end each faction retreated into their own part of the wilderness. Yet despite this dissolution, Redgold was so beloved that the name of his realm: "The Sullenlands" was adopted for the entire continent, and remains to this day.



During his reign, Redgold bore a daughter, **Princess Fenian Sullen** who showed early signs of greatness, exhibiting the same benevolence as her father as she grew. Driven by curiosity and a consuming desire to explore all the reaches of her father's realm, Fenian vanished in the wilderness during one of her many quests. Heartbroken by the loss of his beloved daughter, Redgold organized one expedition after another to uncover her fate, but the princess was never heard from again. Just a few years after the loss of his daughter, Redgold himself passed away under mysterious circumstances, and the kingdom was left without a true heir to the throne. "The Sullenlands" is now an unfortunately apt description for this land, as the general mood of the common folk who live here is full of sorrow and uncertainty.

CURRENT LEADERSHIP

There is a human king who reigns in name only over the continent's kingdoms (see side-bar *The Ruling Classes*), though the diminished **King Ravianwhurst** has such a loose grip on even his own province that the rest of the Sullenlands are practically ungoverned. Royal proclamations rarely touch the daily lives of those who live beyond the City of Eldercliff's borderlands.

TRAVEL IN THE SULLENLANDS

Distant travel can be a risky venture across the wilderness, as the Sullenlands are rife with banditry, mystical dabblers, and beasts unknown. Life spans are short in this world even if you never wander



off beyond the next river's border. A common saying holds that "as deadly as our own forest is, it's worse in someone else's!"

Travel is of course impacted by the region's diversity of environments: the geography of the continent is a study in contrasts. Snowcapped mountains rule the north, while a barren desert dominates the southern-most tip. Deep forests and heady mountain ranges dominate the lands between.

THE PEOPLE OF THE SULLENLANDS

The Sullenlands are home to various dwarven clans, elven tribes, human and halfling communities, and a myriad of beastly creatures great and small.

The forests are so deep, and the mountain ranges so vast, that many communities live in near isolation. It is easily possible for a dwarf to grow to maturity without ever seeing any race but dwarven-kind. The same can be said for the elves in their hidden communities, and the halflings who choose to never venture beyond their own hollow or vale.

The villages, towns, and cities found along the main roads possess a broader range of inhabitants, with folks of every shape, size, and race interacting in commerce and living side by side. Even here, deep-seated and ancient prejudices between the races often lie just below the surface. But for the most part, these more cosmopolitan inhabitants have learned to at least tolerate one another, despite their cultural differences.

In the northwest, elven tribes still remember King Redgold Sullen and his wisdom, but most have since sequestered themselves from the affairs of humans, retreating across the northern borders of the Sullenlands into lands not tainted by human presence. Not all elven folk have departed, however: clans still remain in the deep forests to the west of **Eldercliffs**, and most notably, in **Ishlachyren** to the south.

The **Ardokk Dwarves** live beneath the northern **Frost Fang Mountains**, and are much more likely to interact with their human neighbors than their Elven neighbors, though they



too regard the current self-proclaimed ruler as an impostor and an imbecile. The **Red Clan Dwarves** in the south are desert-dwellers, one of the three main clans to inhabit the vast underground city of **Bromforge**. In the western forests, small halfling communities keep to their own.

Other species live uneasy lives near the humans, elves, dwarves, and wee folk; subhumans lurk in shadowed woods and caverns deep. Goblin-folk, hobgoblins, bugbears, gnolls and the like prefer to keep to themselves, seldom mingling with their neighbors. But in a realm as mysterious as the Sullenlands, there is no telling who a band of adventurers might encounter: altogether, the realm provides a rich tapestry of life in all its varied forms!

WORSHIP AND WISDOM IN THE SULLENLANDS

The folk of the Sullenlands inhabit a superstitious world: all peoples look to the gods and the ascended for wisdom, inner-strength, and as a means to derive arcane power from the mysterious cosmos. Every god has their followers, but the variety of believers is almost endless. Clerics and zealots worship alongside mystical dabblers seeking audience with other-wordy agents! Elves are often masters of these arts, observing the traditions of the elders, seeking to channel their power.

Magic flows like a river in flood throughout the Sullenlands, making it an especially dangerous place during the **God Mist**. There is great opportunity for those seeking unbridled arcane power in these lands, but with that opportunity comes unimaginable danger!

ABOUT THE MAP

As a reminder, the map included here is for the Judge's eyes only, to inform him or her of the whereabouts of important locations. This map is based on **Sir Anthar Gilliam's Surveys and Plats of the Forty-eighth Bloodmoon**, which is safely locked in the library vault beneath the castle in **Eldercliffs**. Remember that this knowledge is largely unknown to most folk in the Sullenlands: outside of a few scholars and priests, precious few understand how the various cities and communities of the land fit together in the larger world. (Beyond their knowledge of what lies beyond the nearest set of hills or thick stand of trees!)



The Judge should first notice that the world map is highly stylized and the art rendered upon it is not to scale. Cities, villages, mountains and rivers are but a pin-prick on the map compared to how they are expressed here.

The mileage key is located at the bottom right-hand side, with increments shown at fifty and one hundred miles. As the crow flies, there are over seven hundred miles of rugged terrain between the northern-most tip of Kaduun and its southern-most shores.

Two cities exist in the middle of the Sullenlands at the continent's most narrow width. Traveling north-east from **Embergulf Bay** to the city of **Eldercliffs** is approximately fifty leagues, or one-hundred and fifty miles. Healthy individuals can cover between 25 and 30 miles a day walking and nearly double that on horseback. Caravans move closer to walking speed, and so can plan on a five or six day trip from Embergulf to Eldercliffs.

Roads are not expressed on this map, but the most traveled and maintained highways exist between Embergulf (being a port city), Eldercliffs, Ishlachyren, and Neverthawes. Other roads and trails may come and go based on season and need. River travel may be considered the most expedient mode of transport in the north.

To the north and the east of the Sullenlands is a rugged wilderness, its nature largely unknown to locals. Rumors abound, however, with tales of ancient elven tribes in the forests to the north dominating many fireside chats. Ships that dock at Embergulf Bay mostly come from ports reaching up and down the coastline, though once every winter a large vessel arrives from the mysterious land of Wormtryll. Not much is known of this distant land or its people: the sea voyage is said to take many weeks.

In the end, the map of the Sullenlands should consist of whatever you as Judge need it to contain! Within this land are vast mountain ranges, impenetrable deep forests, expansive deserts, and a choice of wide-ranging climates where the thoughtful Judge can easily drop in the module or adventure of their choosing. After a few game sessions, the Sullenlands map will likely become as unique as the adventurers who plunder its many secrets!



THE GOD MIST

The magical energies of the Sullenlands are difficult to control at the best of times, but of late there is an even greater complication: every seventh generation the thirteen moons above align across the obsidian eternities to create an impenetrable haze called the **God Mist**. So incomprehensible is the magic created by the cosmic confluence that all powers — the demigods, the gods, the supernals, and supernatural patrons — are blinded from the mortal realms by the dazzling glare.

The moon's orbits are synchronized for the course of seven winters and within that long reckoning season, those who depend upon the gods and the patrons may find themselves in and out of phase with the sponsor of their knowledge and power, resulting in even more chaotic unpredictability in their castings.

As the judge, you and the PCs have arrived in the Sullenlands at the dawn of the God Mist, the first in seven generations. To those who are less connected to the mystical planes, nothing seems out of the ordinary. But those tuned to the ethereal experience a dizzying queasiness, accompanied by a distant recognition that someone, or something, is eavesdropping on their cosmic conversations.

While spells and incants succeed just as they did before the God Mist reappeared, failed rolls may now lead to results as interesting and complex as successful spells! In short, chants and gesticulations have a chance of falling upon ears of ill-intent who have the power to interpret the spells in their own way.

Spell checks are made as normal: there is no need for the wizard, elf, cleric or thief to roll more than once. If the spell-check roll succeeds, the effects are applied as usual based on the roll. If the spell roll fails, however, compare the failed roll (without modifiers) to the number on the following table.

Note: If the caster's roll would cause the spell user to suffer corruption, misfire, patron taint, and/or spell loss, that normal effect supersedes this table. If none of those effects are applicable to the caster's spell roll, consult the table. Clerics still receive disapproval on any failed roll, in addition to the table's result (unless otherwise stated in the results that follow).



During the seven-winter's God Mist, every spell roll produces some effect, be it ill or sublime! (You can also find a copy of this table in the printable appendix).

THE GOD MIST FAILED CASTING TABLE

1. An unknown foreign god or patron has intercepted the spell, attempting to wrest its power from the inept caster. The spell's incantation symbols are jumbled and burned into the skin of the caster's face, forever to remain as a reminder of the botched meddling with cosmic forces.
2. The smell of sulfur fills the air as 1d24 of the caster's gold turns to coal. If the caster is a cleric, this sacrificial act removes 1 disapproval.
3. The spell channels through the nearest ally's melee weapon, the mocking taunt of an eaves-dropping demon. The spell now emanates from that vantage point and manifests at the spell's lowest result. The caster receives 1 disapproval if he or she has no disapproval; a magic caster rolls 1d4 on the minor corruption table.
- 4-5. Bobugbubilz intercepts the caster's spell. Fungus and toadstools grow to cover the caster's left arm while 1d30 frogs spill from the caster's sleeves. There is no disapproval for the casting cleric as the faithful's prayer was never heard.
- 6-7. A distant clap of thunder causes an avalanche in the Frost Fang Mountains. The caster's boots are somehow filled with enchanted snow causing 1d4 points of frostbite damage.
- 8-9. The caster suddenly feels a void in their soul, experiencing the vast emptiness of space. They grow immensely despondent over the insignificance of mortal-kind. -2 to the next attempted spell casting.
- 10-11. A chaotic demon catches the ribbon of an unknown incantation as it travels through the netherworlds. All metal weapons within 30' burst into flame. Each combatant must make a DC14 Fort Save or drop their weapon. On a successful save, the flaming weapon deals 1d6 additional fire damage on a hit for the bearer until the end of the caster's next turn.



12-13. An unknown patron or god intercepts the spell and substitutes a random 2nd level spell. For magic casters, roll 1d24 on the 2nd level spells page (**DCC rulebook page 127**); for clerics roll 1d10 on the 2nd level clerics spells page (**DCC rulebook page 128**). Apply the lowest successful result for that spell. The caster, regardless of class, must roll 1d6 on the Minor Corruption table (**DCC rulebook page 116**).

14-15. A thousand distant voices fill the head of the caster. The caster must succeed on a DC14 Will save or suffer temporary madness, manifesting as a -2 to all spell checks for 1d6 rounds.

16-17. The Sisters of Fate intercept the spell casting and decide to turn back time for three seconds. This allows the caster to reattempt the casting. All other actions between the castings remain the same.

18-19. A hollow darkness swallows the attempted casting. The spell and the memory of it are gone.

THE MIST GAZER

Some gods create opportunity from the chaos of the God Mist. **Umakah Yee-esh the Unseeing Earthworm** anticipates each new God Mist season as a chance to “turn the soil” and to “disrupt the roots” that her fellow gods have planted in the mortal realms.

The Cult of Umakah Yee-esh has passed down through the generations the custom of sewing the eyes shut of the firstborn of every union in order that their inherent “far-sight” may be preserved in purity. Umakah Yee-esh gives these chosen disciples the gift of seeing the essence of magic in the world around them, at the cost of physically seeing the mortal realms to which the rest of their senses are enslaved.

At sixteen, the initiate’s long hair is woven into elaborate frames adorned with holy symbols, channeling the power of the Unseeing Earthworm, never to be removed, all in anticipation of the next God Mist and the feast of astray magic to be gobbled up by Umakah Yee-esh.

Pockets of these cultists exist in the most desolate areas of the Sullenlands, from the northern mountains to the southern deserts. Their tribes are mostly welcoming of strangers and



pose little danger to outsiders, unless that visitor possesses arcane knowledge or a connection to a higher power. In this case, the Mist Gazer will quickly see beyond the mortal shell to places unseen, absorbing that ethereal stream of magic as if drawing a breath. Sometimes, the opposing wizard or the cleric will not only lose their spells, but even the memory of ever having the spell in the first place.

To encounter a nomadic Mist Gazer in the wild should be an intimidating and fearful confrontation. Mist Gazers have no desire to physically destroy another creature (seeing themselves above trifling with mere mortal destinies). But with Umakah Yee-esh working through them, a Mist Gazer can quickly deplete a party's wizard, cleric, or elf of any essence of magic, feeding off of that ethereal energy and devouring spells whole.

In other words, it's best to give a wide berth to any followers of Umakah Yee-esh, unless it is your wish to be completely purged of any magical essence. (Kindly judges might help the party understand the paralyzing fear most spellcasters have about the very idea of encountering a Mist Gazer!)

Mist Gazer (acolyte): Init +2; Atk +4 mind blast (1d4 damage all enemies in 50' range; paralysis, ongoing damage; DC 10 Fort Save ends) and +4 secondary attack; AC 14; HD 4d6+10; MV 30'; Act 2d20; SP the Gazer will use their first mental action to paralyze would-be attackers; the second mental attack will be chosen from the list at the bottom; SV Fort +4, Ref +2; Will +8; AL C.

Mist Gazer (apostle): Init +4; Atk +6 mind blast (1d8 damage all enemies in 75' range; paralysis, ongoing damage; DC 14 Fort Save ends) and +6 secondary attacks; AC 16; HD 8d6+20; MV 30'; Act 3d20; SP the Gazer will use their first mental action to paralyze would-be attackers; the subsequent mental attacks will be chosen from the list at the bottom; SV Fort +6, Ref +4; Will +12; AL C.

Mist Gazer (high priest): Init +8; Atk +10 mind blast (1d12 damage all enemies in 100' range; paralysis, ongoing damage; DC 18 Fort Save ends) and +10 secondary attacks; AC 20; HD 10d6+30; MV 30'; Act 5d20; SP the Gazer will use their first mental action to paralyze would-be attackers; the subsequent mental attacks will be chosen from the list at the bottom; SV Fort +10, Ref +8; Will +16; AL C.



Special Traits: Mist Gazers cannot normally be surprised and have perfect perception of their environment including invisible targets within 100'. Physical attacks against them are actually attacks against the force field surrounding them until arriving at the final 6 hp. Mist Gazers are immune to mental effects such as sleep, charm, and paralysis. They also do not lose a spell that fails to meet any minimum, nor do they suffer corruption, misfire or disapproval.

Mist Gazer Mental Attacks:

Spell Absorption: The Mist Gazer attempts to absorb knowledge and spell-memory from an opponent's mind. The absorption works within a 30' radius of the Mist Gazer. Spell check (d20+appropriate bonus) vs. target's save roll (d20)+ intelligence (wizard/elf) or Personality (cleric). On a success, the target loses one random spell forever as its essence is fed to Umakah Yee-esh.

Spell Shift: The Mist Gazer attempts to steal the caster's most coveted spell and replace it with a random 1st level spell. The Mist Gazer must be within a 50' radius to make the attempt. Spell check (d20+appropriate bonus) vs. target's save roll (d20)+ intelligence (wizard/elf) or Personality (cleric). On a success, the target's favorite spell is pilfered and replaced with another spell.

THE DARK CHORUS

Gods and goddesses pick through the chaff of mortal-kind for the brave and virtuous like a merchant inspects rotting apricots. Mankind would regard their own thoughts and actions with deep introspection if they knew of the many celestial eyes gazing into their souls at any given moment. Some in the Sullenlands are attuned to the greater existence beyond this one, and avail themselves of that power. Clerics, wizards and elves know that the mortal planes are a mere shadow of the ultimate reality, coming to rely heavily on their gods and their patrons. When those bonds are severed, it is as though an appendage has been removed.



Anticipating the imminent God Mist, three chaotic beings have formed a tenuous alliance in order to subvert the human and sub-human species of earth. **Kreathorne the Boiler of Souls**,

Vlox of Between Things, and the carrion crow goddess **Malotoch** each see an opportunity to grow their ranks and ascend beyond their current cosmic perch to a place of greater power in the pantheon of gods.

While the world is lost in the God Mist, the Dark Chorus and their minions will be hard at work intercepting spells, incantations, and prayers, prying them from the fingers of the intended deity or patron, and seeking to steal unguarded souls.

Magic-users and clerics will likely find themselves on the razor's edge during the God Mist, teetering above a dark abyss. The God Mist can affect them in various ways:

- Failed spells and prayers may be seized by other entities and reinterpreted (See the God Mist Failed Casting Table).
- If a caster of any class perishes during the God Mist, there is a 75% chance that they will become an eternal slave of one of the three gods in the Dark Chorus. Roll 1d4 (1.) Kreathorne the Boiler of Souls (2.) Vlox of Between Things (3.) Malotoch the Carrion Crow goddess (4.) their own deity receives them.
- Because of the unpredictable and hazardous side-effects of magic during the God Mist, normally tolerant rulers and communities may shun and outright ban the use of magic within their province, in essence making magic-casters outlaws of a sort.

But magic-users are not the only ones affected by the God Mist...

ALL ARE LOST IN THE GOD MIST

Indeed, magic users and clerics are not the only ones affected by the Mist's separation of mortals and their patrons and gods. Warriors, thieves, dwarves, and halflings can also be impacted by it. Ascended beings meddle in the affairs of all the living, whether those mortals consort with the mystical powers or not.



Each morning every PC of the non-spellcasting variety must choose a “favored” number from within the range of their main action die (i.e. if their action die is 1d24, choose number between 1-24). Write the **Favored Number** at the top of the character sheet. If that number is rolled on any attack roll before sunrise the next morning, whether successful or not, roll 1d10 on the God Mist Table for Heathens. This table roll cannot be modified by Luck or any other means. It represents the randomness of preternatural eyes falling upon the adventurer at that moment.

God Mist Table for Heathens (1d10):

1. The ground shakes. An unknown dark shadow crosses yours, intersecting briefly with your soul. If PC is of lawful alignment, lose 1 Luck; a chaotic PC gains 1 Luck.
2. A fly buzzes around the PC’s head, alighting on one shoulder. They hear a buzzing voice asking for the name of the party’s wizard, elf, or cleric. If the PC gives them a real name, Bobug-bubilz gains brief power over that named character. The named PC (wizard, elf or cleric) must make a DC12 Will Save or lose the ability to speak for 1d6 rounds as their tongue forks. If the PC gives the fly a false name, they suffer 1d4 poison damage as pustules break out on their face, hands and arms.
3. Ithha, Prince of Elemental Wind hears the sibilant whoosh of the PC’s weapon and sends a spirit to inhabit the air around it. The PC’s next attack gains a +2 before the breeze is diverted to more urgent matters.
4. Cthulhu, Priest of the Old Ones becomes briefly lost in the God Mist and finds his way out by following the PC’s anguish. His despairing grip upon that heart must be met with a DC14 Will Save or the PC’s skin will turn black for 1d4 weeks and any metal touching the PC (armor, weapons) will rust, permanently losing one point of AC (for armor) or one point of damage potential (for weapons).
5. The PC’s skin turns to tree bark as YDDGRRL, the World Root mistakes the adventurer for his own disciple. Roots will erupt from the ground and entwine the PC’s limbs and torso, providing a +4 to AC until the beginning of the character’s next round when YDDGRRL will recognize the lack of affinity, and retreat back into the cosmos.



6. Azi Dahaka, Demon Prince of Storm and Waste briefly crosses the sacrosanct boundaries of Justicia, Goddess of Justice and Mercy and is rebuked on a distant plane by a mighty clap of thunder. One thousand random mortals around the world, including this PC, are caught in the cross-fire and are thrown 10' backwards. If an object is impacted before the PC reaches the 10' distance, the PC takes 1d6 damage.
7. Vlox of Between Things wanders through the God Mist to come upon the fray. The creature measures the PC's essence by parsing his or her soul into six separate pieces, searching for the unknowable crux of being. The PC will appear in six nearly-similar forms to all nearby witnesses. This effect lasts until the beginning of the PC's next turn in the initiative. Any attacks made against the PC in that time has a five in six chance of causing one of the attacker's allies to receive the damage instead. (Or any other suitable bystander if no enemies are nearby).
8. The PC's valor is glimpsed by Obitu-que, the Lord of Five who believes that the adventurer's blood-thirsty nature would serve his conquering intentions. The five-eyed pit fiend will aid the PC with unnatural strength for 1d6 rounds (+2 to attacks), after which, the PC must meet or exceed a DC 16 Will Save or attack the nearest ally in a blood rage each round until the Save is met.
9. A sense of overwhelming transcendence washes over the PC as Ulesh, the God of Peace drifts through the mortal realms. The character must overcome a DC12 Personality Save each round for 1d4 rounds before attacking, such is the joyous euphoria they feel. On a failed save, the PC cannot bring themselves to attack, instead weeping and smiling at the sky.
10. Greythakk the Bearded Anvil is drawn to the warmth of newly-shed blood. The PC feels a nearly overwhelming desire to sheath any edged weapon and wage war with the nearest blunt implement. If the PC follows this "intuition", the attacks will gain an additional 1d6 damage until the end of the encounter.



CITIES, VILLAGES AND LOCATIONS

There were once great kingdoms and civilizations existing side by side within the unmarred wilderness of Kaduun. The humans, the dwarves, and the elven-kind created matchless cities before the convergence of the first God Mist eons ago. Corrupted magic eventually took its toll. Within a few generations, as the Gods abandoned Kaduun, the grandeur was swallowed up and reclaimed by the unfettered wilderness. Now the civilizations of the past have been largely forgotten, their crumbling remains holding no significance for the hard-living people of the Sullenlands. With each generation, memories of the glories of old dwindle, now existing only as stories muttered by the aged and doddering around flickering hearths at night.

While the entire continent is ostensibly ruled from the throne at Eldercliffs, the further from that seat one wanders, the more one realizes that the authority exists in name only. Travel more than a hundred miles north or south, and the King's proclamations are barely worth the parchment they have been etched upon. As little regard as such missives possess amongst the human races and towns, they are even less respected by elves and dwarves, who maintain (and jealously guard) their own sovereignty. Notable habitations in the Sullenlands are listed below.

NEVERTHAWES

The northern village of Neverthawes lies nestled at the base of the Frost Fang Mountains, the last bastion of humanity before entering the wilderness of the great north. Neverthawes was once a prosperous town, on the verge of becoming an important city, when the thriving **Ardokk Mines** ceased their operations. A local wizard named **Dagon the Doleful** had unwittingly released an ancient terror upon the dwarves who mined the mountains, closing the mine and crippling the local economy. (More on this can be found in the 1st level module, **The Frost Fang Expedition**)

The village itself is fairly unremarkable, save that visitors will quickly notice that the village has seen better days, with many of the storefronts of the town boarded up. The skies are perpetually



gloomy and the cold mist that descends from the mountains settles like a frigid and moist curtain upon the town. The sidewalks are elevated along the two main streets, as the roads are often quagmires of mud and slush.

The one truly remarkable exception to the blandness of Neverthawes is the earth mote that floats near the highest peak of the Frost Fang Mountains, hovering precariously above the village. A castle sits upon it and legend portends that the old wizard Dagon himself still lives within those cold stone walls. A rope bridge can be seen spanning from the mountain peak to Dagon's floating castle, but rumors abound that the trip to that summit is danger-laden. The locals whisper of a dragon that guards the mountain's peak: they have heard it. They have seen the flames.

Local establishments include **The Frosty Tankard** (a tavern owned by one-eyed local **Lemeth Strunk**), the **Mountain Merchant Hall** (a general goods establishment owned by foppish proprietor **Chauncey Evergood**), **The Gilded Griffon** (a modest inn maintained by an elven couple, **Erlathan and Elora Duskmere**), **Ardokk's Axes and Shields**, and **Irongate's Moonlight Smithy**. Local cleric **Levi Fangred** serves the town's only holy sanctuary, a **Temple of Ulish**.

Local legend holds that there is an encampment of strange creatures above Neverthawes, somewhere in the higher elevations of the mountains. A mysterious clan of short, stout creatures with blue skin have been spotted by locals who venture up the alps. These creatures keep to themselves.

BITTERWEED BARROW

Bitterweed Barrow is a small village just to the south of the Frost Fang Mountains, resting not far east from the banks of **The River Grey**. The river is dotted with other settlements at regular intervals up and down its length, but these small hamlets often come and go. Bitterweed Barrow, on the other hand, is among the oldest encampments to have survived the occasional flood, drought, or raids by river pirates. Helped in part by the flourishing halfling community in the woods and meadows to the south-east of the village's outskirts, the docks at Bitterweed Barrow are a frequent stop for barges and ferry-boats that navigate the journey from Eldercliffs to ports in the north.



The Bloody Bullfrog Tavern, run for years by **Solomon and Sarah Gruth**, and daughter **September**, serves as both an inn and an ale-house. There is also a general goods store, simply named **Dire's Dry-goods**, owned by a shrewd old halfling named **Dire Grimbleshucks**. Dire's first cousin, **Thimble**, owns the stables.

There is little road traffic, but some caravans do head north to Neverthawes on occasion, most likely in the summer months when the roads are dry and free of snow. A road trip to Neverthawes can be made in four days if conditions are favorable. Eldercliffs, though twice the distance, can be arrived at by river in the same four days.

As indicated, fully half of the citizens that reside in Bitterweed Barrow proper are halflings, and that percentage would be higher if most didn't choose to live in the valleys and hills south-east of town. There are three predominant clans: the **Grimbleshucks**, the **Lambshanks**, and the **Pendlebrooks**. Humans make up most of the village's other inhabitants, but a few elves and dwarves (less so) can be encountered as well.

ELDERCLIFFS

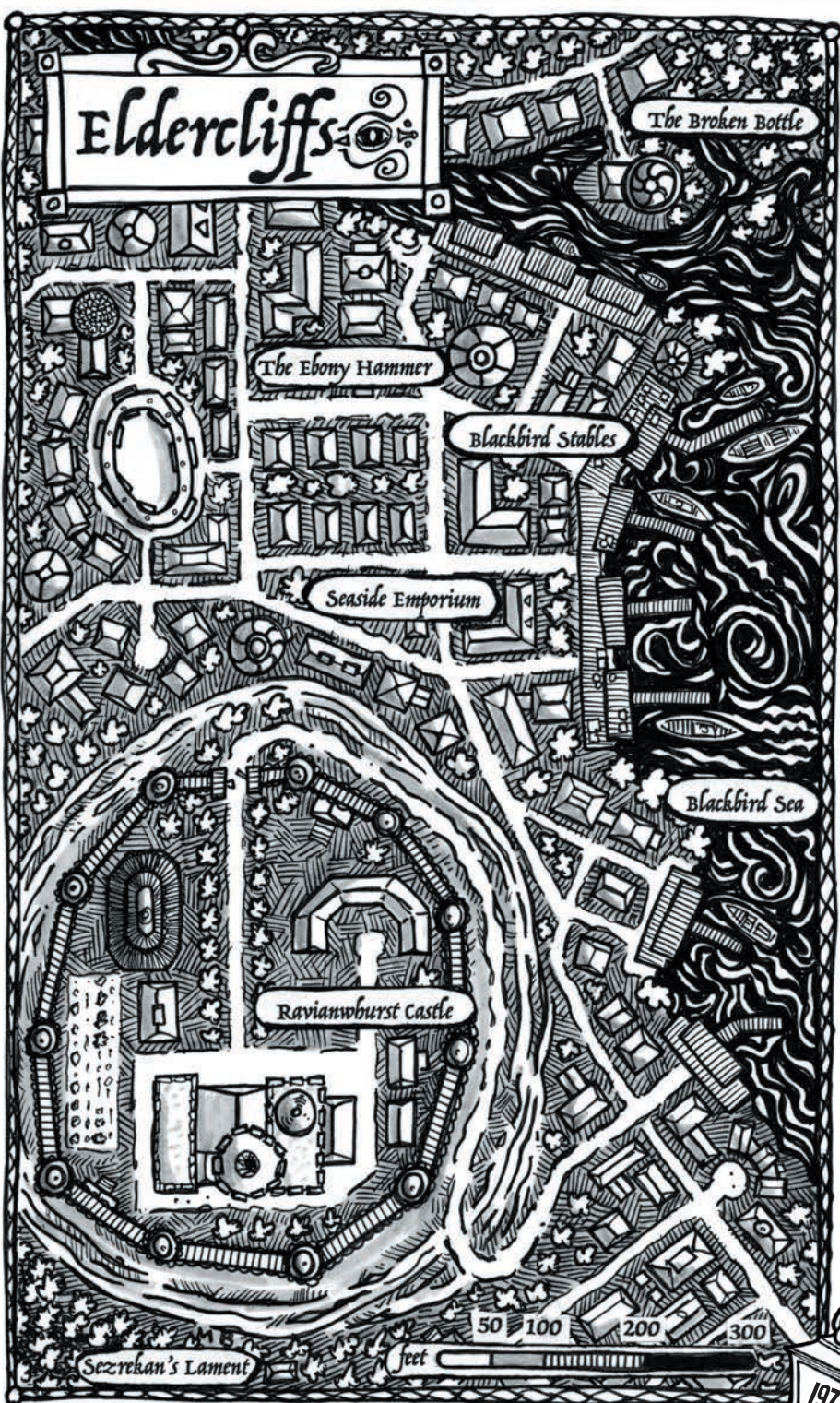
King Ravianwhurst rules the kingdom from his throne at Eldercliffs. The castle sits on a mountain plateau overlooking the city. The eastern cliffs of the plateau face the docks and **Blackbird Seas**, providing enough of a grade for a narrow road to rise to the gates on the castle's north side. This terrain makes the castle and its keep easily defensible, though its fortifications have rarely been tested: the last major attack was by **Greaveheart's Goblin Hoards** nearly two centuries ago.

There are three sets of docks: the northern-facing docks serve smaller vessels that travel **The River Grey**; the larger docks on the eastern coast serve the larger vessels visiting from across the seas. The south-eastern-most docks carry on the king's business.

Eldercliffs is a mercantile center. The visiting dwarven cleric **Theis Rainblott** once said of the Eldercliffs, "Surely Greythakk would strike me dead for partaking one quarter of what is offered on these shores." A few of the notable establishments and business that your PCs may wish to visit are:



Eldercliffs



The Broken Bottle

The Ebony Hammer

Blackbird Stables

Seaside Emporium

Blackbird Sea

Ravianwhurst Castle

Sezrekan's Lament



The Broken Bottle- a waterfront tavern north of the docks. Here passage to distant lands may be scheduled, work can be found, and scuttlebutt overheard. It's also a good place to interview hirelings for caravans, expeditions and sea journeys.

The Blackbird Inn and Stables- At two gold a night, a traveler can find a warm bed, a hearty meal, and fresh straw for one's horse.

Gabriel's Lavish Appointments- a clothing store for the affluent.

Sezrekan's Lament- an alchemy shop in the woods below and outside the castle, run by self-proclaimed mystic **Alanon of Leander**. For a fee, he may attempt mystical charms such as Detect Magic or Mending just to keep himself attuned to the ways of magic. Lately though, with the God Mist in play, he is hesitant to tempt fate.

Captain Balor's Seaside Emporium- many have been surprised to learn that Captain Balor is a retired dwarven female sea captain (some say pirate) who has managed to "acquire" oddities from shores near and far. **Balor Copperbraid** is always on the lookout for hardy adventurers willing to throw caution to the wind in the pursuit of distant treasure.

The Ebony Hammer- blacksmithing and metal-work by the human metal-master **Eli Baor of the Hill Country**. He remembers meeting Princess **Fenian Sullen** as a child, and will never forget her great kindness. In fact, he belongs to a secret guild that has sworn a vow to find the long-missing heiress to the throne.

As the PCs wander the city's streets, they will find many more ale houses, inns, jewelers, spice dealers, tailors, glass blowers, leather-workers, armorers, scribes, brothels, and potteries. There are also temples and sanctuaries to many gods, along with open air markets near the docks and on the greens outside the coliseum.

Humans make up the bulk of the city's population, but elves and dwarves are well represented too. (Halflings less so). Visitors to the city may catch their first glimpse of the mixed-race descendants of humans and elves, and may also be surprised to see bugbears and other goblin-like humanoids working the docks. These factions largely keep to themselves in encampments along the beaches, and are usually careful not to venture into the city.



THE RULING CLASSES

In the absence of Princess Fenian Sullen, the kingdom's true heiress, the king's cousin, **Lord Tarysyt Ravianwhurst** has claimed the throne. Immediately upon his crowning, many of the old king's court were dismissed, exiled, or found dead, with new advisors loyal to Tarysyt quickly named to replace them. Ravianwhurst's chief advisor is an oracle named **Thinah Ebsolann**. Many note her striking appearance: with skin as pale as winter, eyes of the lightest blue, and a cold, whispering voice imparting wisdom into the new king's ears that soon becomes a kingdom-wide proclamation.

Having now fully consolidated his power, unless and until Princess Fenian Sullen is found alive, King Ravianwhurst's rule is absolute, though he leads with a detached hand: most of the perfunctory duties of the kingdom are carried out by the king's cabinet, led by oracle Ebsolann.

The dukes and barons of the hereditary nobility once held substantial power, but are now all but ignored by the new king, their influence usurped by newly appointed lords hastily knighted by the king. These "new lords" have been dispatched to towns, villages, and keeps across the kingdom, to appropriate much of the land and holdings of the continent's far-flung wealth. Previously, many townships and villages outside of the direct control of a baron or duke were governed by constables or (more rarely) citizen councils. These former leaders (those who haven't been hanged by the new regime!) have been driven underground, often forming disjointed, but passionate cabals bent on somehow returning Princess Sullen to the throne.

Resistance among the human communities closest to Eldercliffs has been minimal, however. The sword of the king is simply too close: within striking distance of towns like Embergulf Bay and Bitterweed Barrow. On the other hand, settlements on the outskirts of the kingdom are just as likely to ignore the new king's rule as to cower in submission.

Elven tribes and dwarven clans ignore the dictates of the new king completely, rejecting the very concept that he has jurisdiction over them. The relationship between humans, dwarves, and elves has grown tenuous at best!



EMBERGULF BAY

If Eldercliffs is the diamond of the Sullenlands, then **Embergulf Bay** is the jeweler who made her shine. Imports from northern and southern ports of call, as well as from lands unseen, find their way into the Sullenlands via this centrally located city. Although Embergulf is only half the size of the capital city of Eldercliffs, its importance to the economics of Ravianwhurst's kingdom cannot be overstated. Perhaps that is why the king's army has a greater presence here than in any other city throughout the kingdom.

It's not also coincidental that there are more secret guilds and agents of mischief here who both openly and covertly oppose the new king (**see section: Thieve's Guilds**) than in any other city in the realm. The belief that Ravianwhurst had something to do with King Sullen's death and his daughter's disappearance runs very strong in Embergulf Bay. As the bard once sang, "Tis' still a polecat, though bedecked with rosy laurels".

The city's daily operations are overseen by a mayor who is chosen by a council of 22 freemen, who are themselves the elected leaders of the various craft guilds throughout the city. The election takes place every year during the winter months (after the harvesting season has been assessed) and the week of the election has evolved into a spirited holiday festival for the citizens. (While also providing cover for a variety of seditious acts!)

The current mayor is a peg-legged dwarf named **Erkwild Stormgravel**. Some consider Erkwild a patsy of the new king, placed into power by freemen who were paid or threatened to do so by agents of the king.

Embergulf possesses many sites of interest. PCs may visit **The Lapping Mongrel**, a bayside tavern, or venture into the heart of the city to the more posh **Truella's Winery and Exotic Teas**. Lodgings may be found for 3 gold a night (includes supper and a bath) at **The Broken Antler Lodge**. Less appointed rooms may be found at the docks, where an old barge has been converted into temporary lodging for sailors and those wishing to keep a low profile. Those accommodations run a scant 8 coppers a night but patrons often complain of morning bites and painful lesions after enjoying the hospitality of **The Bilge by the Bay**.



With a bit of searching, general goods may be purchased straight from the ships at generally good prices, or in town at **Major Percival's Dry Goods, Storage, and Haberdashery**. PCs may also want to check out **Cromwell's Smithy**, **The Better Disposition** (an apothecary), or **Water-side Gemstones** (which offers 75% of the value of precious stones).

For those in desperate need of gold coin, **The Hiring Tree of Embergulf** may provide unique opportunities for adventure, but only if the candidate possesses a stout heart, a quick mind, a keen sword... and a dull conscience.

THE HIRING TREE OF EMBERGULF

Just outside the seaside city of Embergulf, a glowing lantern hangs in the branches of the mysterious **Hiring Tree**, its flickering flame dancing in the darkness of the night. Adventurers know that this eerie signal is a sign to all that a job is now available, a task that likely requires the special talents of those who live for adventure. Candidates need only check the contents of the small drawer fitted to the base of the lantern to find the particulars of the request.

Strangely to those new to the Hiring Tree, the drawer also contains the coin bounty offered as reward for the job's completion, free for anyone to take. Potential applicants, after reading the request, may accept or decline the offer. But there are always new jobs: some weeks, as many as a dozen lanterns might blaze beneath the canopy of the large old oak.

But beware... those who accept the challenge must fulfill the request in a timely manner, or the ancient tree's curse will follow them until the contract has been satisfied in full. Those few who have tempted fate, and purloined the reward while neglecting their duty, have inevitably repaid their debt in regret and misfortune many times over!

Those both brave and foolhardy alike have visited the renowned Hiring Tree of Embergulf. Over the years, the entire enterprise has grown into legend: the mysteriously ever-burning lanterns, the "employers" who utilize the anonymity of the process to meet their shadowy ends, the legend around the cursed tree... all these facets have added up to create one of the most bizarre local landmarks in all of the Sullenlands.





THE HISTORY OF THE HIRING TREE

There are many stories of love and betrayal, but none sear the heart of Sullenlanders like that of **Galena Ashmore** and her betrothed **Augustus Whipple**. Their love affair was a portrait of gaiety and sunshine, with Galena adoring the young man, who in turn worshiped her and labored to fulfill her every whim and desire. With their union day set, the future of the young couple looked bright until Galena stumbled upon a hidden love letter from some unknown competitor for the affections of her fiancé Augustus. The young man denied the charges, but as far as his bride-to-be was concerned, he was caught red-handed in his subterfuge. Despite the accusations and threats of Galena, he refused to yield the name (or the existence) of his alleged mistress.

With time, Galena's temper cooled to a low boil, and Augustus' power of persuasion gradually settled her suspicions. She eventually agreed to keep the wedding date, and all appeared to have returned to its prior normalcy. The two love birds would soon be united as one. The squabble was forgotten! Or so Augustus thought.

The wedding was beautiful, the bride and groom radiant. It wasn't until the night of the honeymoon, when Augustus could not find his blushing bride, that the true motive of her acquiescence was revealed. As Augustus searched the fields with lantern in hand just outside their quaint cottage, the flapping of linen in the wind caught his ear, directing him toward a large tree at the edge of the woods.

The glow of the lantern revealed a most morbid and ghastly sight: there, hanging from the large old limbs of the mammoth black oak were the bodies of a dozen women: every unbetrothed and available lass in the village. Galena had poisoned and hung them all, not knowing who among them might have been the culprit vying for the affections of her husband.

"Thy duplicitous heart shall know no love Augustus! I take from thee all prospects, including myself!" And that night, with a noose around her own throat, Galena had leapt from the highest branch and snapped her own neck.



Soon thereafter, lanterns were hung in the tree in memory of the innocent. Over time, locals began to notice that lies, deceptions and deceits spoken beneath the tree's branches seemed to elicit ill and untimely bad luck. An enterprising thief eventually realized that he could maintain both his anonymity in the hiring of assassins, and the fulfillment of all contracts, by utilizing the old oak's curse. And so the Hiring Tree was born.

THE CURSE OF THE HIRING TREE

One would think that the temptation to appropriate free unguarded gold would be too much for the drunkard in need of coin, or the unbelieving rogue who scoffs at the locals for their superstition, but such is the tree's reputation that none will now tempt its curse.

Anyone who has a job, and the gold to offer for its completion, is free to fill a lantern's drawer with the particulars of the task, and then light the wick within the dome that never dims. Anyone with a courageous heart is free to open the drawer, read the request, count the gold, and judge whether the task is equal the payment. If the job is accepted, and the gold removed, the wick flickers out and the laborer has until the appointed time of the contract to fulfill the request. The responsibility of the contract will follow the laborer to the ends of the world: the tree knows all!

If the promise is broken, the spirit of Galena (or one of her victims) will haunt the thief until the gold is returned, or the deed is fulfilled.

CURRENT TASKS

One of the notes currently tucked in a lantern drawer reads:

Leamon McKensley is a horse thief in Neverthawes, at least that's where he was last seen. That horse is mine, a gift from my father. Bring it and leave it at the stables three weeks from the dimming of this wick and keep the 100 gold within. We care not what happens to Mr. McKensley.



Another reads...

That cave to the north of town by the broken oak? We've counted three spiders that come at night to steal our cows. Aye, they're big. 40 gold here for their eradication; 2 days from dimming wick should be plenty.

THE CURSE OF THE HIRING TREE EFFECTS

First hour after the contract defaults: the PC loses 1d4 Luck for the day and a murder of crows follows the offender, intentionally betraying his position.

2nd day: the PC's Luck fails to return, the crows remain and a heavy rain follows the PC. If indoors, a leaky roof will always find him.

3rd day: As above and the PC develops lesions and sores equaling 1d4+CL damage.

4th day: The PC fails to regain his or her lost Luck, the crows are so familiar now that they look to perch upon the head and shoulders of the cursed. The rain continues, the lesions worsen for another 1d4 damage and any cleric attempting to heal the PC automatically receives 2 points of disapproval.

5th day: As the 4th day, and the PC must meet a DC10 Will Save or they will attempt to hang themselves at the first opportunity (such is the morose nature of their disposition). Each day hereafter, that DC10 Will Save will increase by 2 with each new sunrise, with one additional Luck point subtracted from the PC's total!

ISHLACHYREN

In the south where the **Ebon Elysian Tables** (or plains) rise above the 100 mile **Forests of Amberlight**, the elf-folk have maintained a heritage of customs that predate the human communities by thousands of years. Outsiders know little about these woods or the many elven communities within them. Each tribe views outside intrusion with different levels of hostility; some are



more welcoming to travelers (generally those on the outskirts of the forest), but others deep within the Amberlight consider any visit an act of aggression, going so far as to seed the woods with traps such as naturally aggressive vegetations, pits, and snares.

The elven city Ishlachyren can be found in the heart of the forest, an ancient place constructed after the primordials settled their differences at the dawn of creation (or so the legends say). There is no formal government in Ishlachyren, at least not as far as humankind might recognize it. Instead, a group of elders consult with **The King of Elfland** directly, receiving individual instruction on matters of the heart. Forums may convene to discuss important matters, but those instructed are in the end left to their own wisdom in how to resolve the issues faced.

Some of the elven tribes which encircle Ishlachyren are the **Quiren**, the **Doliths**, the **Woolhavens**, and the **Zirth**.

The elves within Ishlachyren have dealt with the God Mist since its very inception, and have learned focus techniques to circumvent its disruptive power. Worthy elven PCs who manage to reach the great city might be able to convince the elders that knowledge gained through arcane means can be put to prudent use, without the fear of it contributing to the chaos. (And by doing so, perhaps acquiring valuable knowledge about overcoming the God Mist).

THE BLEAKLANDS

The Bleaklands Desert accounts for fully one quarter of the Sullenlands continent, stretching well over three-hundred miles from east coast to west. The desert's desolate mountain ranges and vast expanses of rolling dunes provide an inhospitable barrier between the Bleaklands and the rest of the Sullenlands. Entering the emptiness of the southern regions means challenging a vast and dangerous wasteland.

This is not to say that the hardy folk who live here have not found a way to survive in this barren place, since desert villages dot the landscape. In the south-east, the dwarves of the



region have chosen to avoid the desert's unforgiving climate altogether, establishing a host of underground cities and communities that stretch for hundreds of miles beneath the burning sands. Collectively these cities are called **Bromforge**.

In the western mountains, **Gloomdusk Lake** twists and runs between the peaks for over 75 miles, sustaining life for numerous tribes and villages. South of Gloomdusk, the **City in the Cliffs** defies logic by its very existence, as the spare resources of the region hardly seem capable of supporting a city of over two thousand souls!

CITY IN THE CLIFFS

Long ago, a great gash was cut into the surface of the Bleaklands desert by an unlikely power from distant realms. Now a magnificent **City in the Cliffs** sprawls in the sunken shadows of this great crevice, hidden and protected from the desert winds and searing heat. Created by desert nomads a mere two-hundred years ago, the city and its people flourish, all because of a deity they worship named **Buldakatak the Burning Warthog**.

The city is governed by the **Council of Thirteen**, made up of humans, elves, dwarves, and a lone halfling. The city buzzes with robust commerce. Travelers who happen to discover this hidden oasis in the middle of the Bleaklands will certainly be made to feel welcome by its citizens. That being said, as a visitor's stay continues, they will undoubtedly detect an undercurrent of dread and fear that permeates the city and its people. One strange and disturbing custom will prove impossible to miss: with great ceremony the dead are dumped from the highest cliffs of the city into the Deep Scratch River that races through the heart of the chasm, floating downstream, seemingly to appease and feed the god they serve.



NOTABLE PLACES OF BUSINESS

- **The Devil's Demise:** a raucous taproom owned by Council of Thirteen member **Evana Coor**. Best to keep your eyes on your purse in this establishment.
- **Evergood Goods** for general supplies.
- **The Wasp's Tail:** weapons, armor & shields from dwarf **Thal Braank**.
- **The Iconic Eagle:** an upscale tavern and inn with priceless art, tapestries and sculptures adorning the opulent corridors. An establishment owned by Council of Thirteen member **Penwhall the Pale**.
- Other places of note include **Grok's Hooves and Harnesses**, **Alcove Alchemy** (only open from midnight to 1:00am), and the **Temple of the Three Sisters**. You can learn more about the City in the Cliffs in the adventure **The Crypt in Cadaver Canyon**.

BROMFORGE

A labyrinth exists beneath the southern-most deserts of the Sullenlands continent. For thousands of years, the dwarves have shaped the under-mountain, fashioning their homes in miles of subterranean tunnels, caverns, and vaults they have named **Bromforge**.

Many generations of dwarven-kind have spanned birth to death without ever seeing the skies above Kaduun. Immense cities thrive deep within the earth's hidden cathedrals. The defenses of Bromforge are legendary, as there are resources enough to equip massive armies. Copper, silver and gold seams abound, and the dwarves are fiendishly clever in finding ways to exploit them!

Beyond the sunken halls, Bromforge's proximity to the southern coasts makes sea travel possible, which they frankly prefer to the difficult land routes. Dwarven ships make frequent trips along the coastlines to both Embergulf and Eldercliffs.

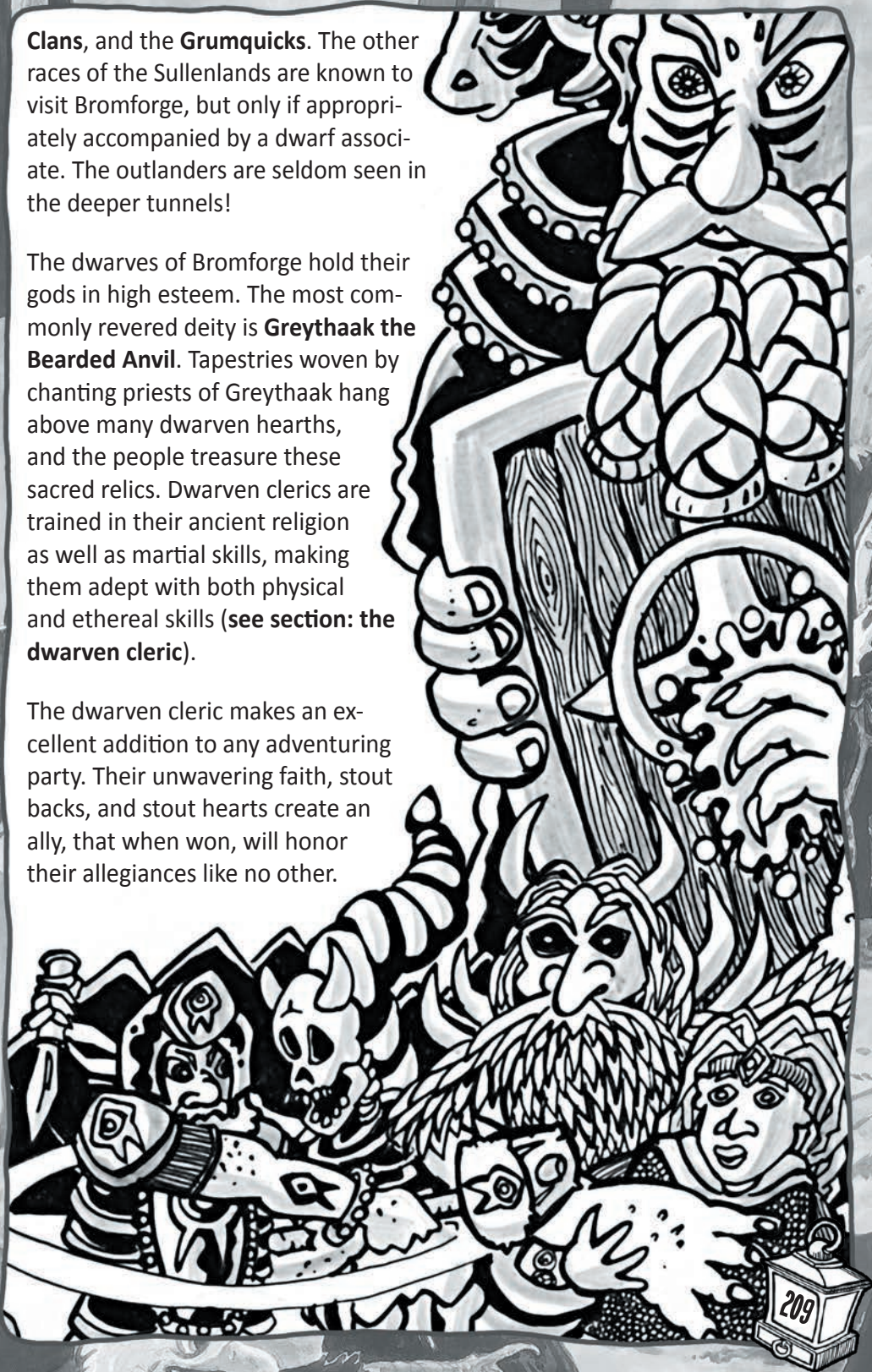
The dwarven clans appoint voices for the annual forums in **Glimmer-vault**, the economic and geographic center of all their communities. Titles in Bromforge are usually inherited. The largest clan communities can be found amidst the **Duskflayers**, the **Braanks**, the **Red**



Clans, and the Grumquicks. The other races of the Sullenlands are known to visit Bromforge, but only if appropriately accompanied by a dwarf associate. The outlanders are seldom seen in the deeper tunnels!

The dwarves of Bromforge hold their gods in high esteem. The most commonly revered deity is **Greythaak the Bearded Anvil.** Tapestries woven by chanting priests of Greythaak hang above many dwarven hearths, and the people treasure these sacred relics. Dwarven clerics are trained in their ancient religion as well as martial skills, making them adept with both physical and ethereal skills (see section: the dwarven cleric).

The dwarven cleric makes an excellent addition to any adventuring party. Their unwavering faith, stout backs, and stout hearts create an ally, that when won, will honor their allegiances like no other.



THE DWARVEN CLERIC

In the Sullenlands, every culture and race embraces their own gods. The dwarves are no different, be it the subterranean clans beneath Bromforge to the south, or the clans of the northern mountains near Frost Fang. Dwarven clerics are stalwart disciples whose devotion is considered a sacred bond that cannot be broken. If the priests of mankind are steadfast in their faith, then the zealotry of dwarven clerics is surely twice that of their human counterparts!

Dwarven clans are typically allegiant to one god, giving rise to large sects within larger cities. As a result, great temples are constructed, and a hierarchy develops. At the top of the ecclesiastical order is an Elder (who may or may not preside within a council of Elders). Elders set the by-laws of the faith, assign the priests who presides over the individual temples, ordain the monks who travel and proselytize, and finally bless and provide guidance to the nomads who have chosen to honor their god without the official recognition of title.

Dwarven gods are as proud and unflinching as their followers, and actively communicate with their elders to guide the lives of their devotees. Monks and nomads may be sent on quests to prove their faith or to thwart the schemes of rival gods. A dwarven elder might be granted a vision of the imprisoned, seeing it as a call to abandon their lofty post and return to a life of direct action. Perhaps a priest will be chosen to represent her god at the next Blood Moon gathering in the deep woods.

Followers who cross a dwarven god will face immediate reprimand! Wayward clerics will be exiled altogether from their order, and will be barred from returning until they find a way to prove their innocence, or have suffered the full vengeance of their angry god!

Hit Points: the dwarven cleric spends as much time honing their physical skills as they do poring over ancient manuscripts, gaining 1d8 hit points at each level.



Weapon Training: The lawfully and neutrally aligned dwarven cleric uses only blunt weapons and shuns the blade. A dwarven cleric using forbidden weapons receives 1 point of disapproval for each attack, whether it is successful or not! The gods of chaotic dwarven priests lack such worries, and their clerics suffer no weapons restrictions.

Attack Modifier: The dwarven cleric receives a deed die (at 1st level this is a d3) instead of a fixed modifier, adding the number to attack and damage rolls each round. The deed die escalates at higher levels. The deed die can incorporate the regular dwarf's Mighty Deed of Arms (encouraging called actions before the roll) though for the dwarven cleric, this is considered a prayer for aid from their god.

If a "1" is rolled on a deed die, the number is used to modify the roll, but also adds a point of disapproval to the cleric if an action was called for but fails. Conversely, rolling the highest number on the deed die removes 1 point of disapproval. (Along with providing the normal benefits while making the Mighty Deed roll).

Sword and Board: The dwarven cleric receives a d14 shield bash attack in combination with any melee attack. The shield bash is not available as an action in a round while casting a cleric spell (though the shield attack can be affected by any melee/touch spells that may have been applied).

Alignment: Like their human and elven counterparts, dwarves serve an array of gods that criss-cross the spectrum of peace and chaos, darkness and light. Dwarves who uphold the customs of their communities and clans usually fall within lawful alignments with rigid adherence to that rule of law. Lawful deities include **Breen of Tidefall** (the dwarven sea-farer's saint), and **Zyrethekeque** (god of the underground sky).

Neutral gods include **Greythakk the Bearded Anvil** (see Greythakk section for details), and **Drogarth the Bold** (maker of the warrior's heart).

Chaotic dwarven gods do exist, though such gods connection to dwarven-kind are likely tenuous at best. To serve a chaotic god is to serve a deception. For generations, dwarven druids



pledged allegiance to **Illidiumn the Seventh Beseecher** only to discover in the end that he is actually a soul-swallower who merely enjoys the crunch of dwarven bones. For this and other reasons, chaotic dwarves receive a +1 penalty to their own roll-under-luck check when their allies try to “roll the body over” to see if they’re dead or not. Feel free to add to the pantheon of dwarven ‘trickster’ gods!

Casting Spells: The dwarven cleric makes a spell check just as the human cleric: 1d20+personality modifier+caster level. Much as a magic-user calls upon ethereal powers, the dwarven cleric beseeches his or her god for other-worldly favor.

Dwarven clerics can make spell checks for: Turn Unholy; Lay on Hands; and the number of spells allotted them according to the section **Dwarven Cleric: Spells Known By Level**. With each new level a dwarven cleric may pick up one or more spells from the cleric spell list (see **DCC rulebook page 128**). The dwarven cleric will accumulate a modest library of spells, as they must invest a great deal of time maintaining a level of physical prowess.

Disapproval: A natural roll of 1 on a spell check means automatic disapproval and the dwarf must roll on the Disapproval Table found on **DCC rulebook page 122**. The disapproval range expands with each new failure and normally resets at sunrise the next day (see disapproval rules **DCC rulebook page 29**). If the Judge deems it appropriate, or the cleric is a faithful follower of Greythakk the Bearded Anvil, they may roll on the **Disapproval table provided on page 217** (see section: **Greythakk the Bearded Anvil**) instead of the table found in the DCC book.

Dwarven clerics stride a precarious path between the earthen and the ethereal planes, so Disapproval affects them in strange ways as it is gained and lost. The dwarven cleric’s disapproval modifies his or her ability to make martial/physical attacks, until it resets the next day. The dwarven cleric’s melee or ranged attacks are penalized by the amount of the dwarven cleric’s disapproval. (d20+ deed die (and other modifiers) - disapproval amount= attack).



The disapproval value can be reduced by one point by offering 1/4th of the cleric's gold. The act must make the gold irrecoverable, such as smelting the coin, covering an appropriately-sized stone with the precious metal, and hurling the stone into a moving river.

Turn Unholy: 1d20+personality modifier+caster level (see page 96-97 of the DCC rulebook)

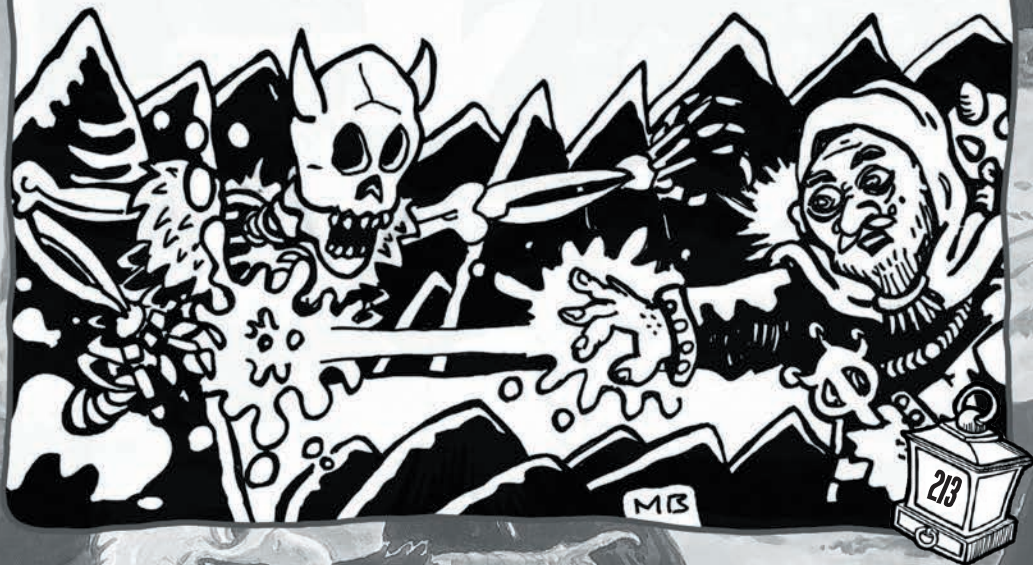
Lay on Hands: 1d20+personality modifier+caster level (see page 30-31 of the DCC rulebook)

Alignment rules apply to dwarves as with the human cleric, with one exception: if the dwarf beseeches his god to heal an elf, the dwarf receives 1d4 disapproval per caster level immediately following the act, whether the attempt succeeds or fails.

Divine Aid: Dwarven gods cannot be bothered on a whim.

Luck: The dwarf's Luck modifier applies to Turn Unholy spell checks and to one specific type of weapon.

Dwarf Skills: the dwarven cleric can see in the dark up to 60'; has a base movement of 20'; receive a bonus to underground checks such as detecting traps, slanting passages, and smelling gold or gems. The dwarven cleric knows Common, the dwarven racial language, plus one more randomly determined language, plus an additional language for every point of Int modifier.



DWARVEN CLERIC TABLE

Lev	Deed	Atk/Crit	Action Die*	Ref	Fort	Will
1	+d3	1d10/III	1d20	+0	+1	+1
2	+d3	1d10/III	1d20	+1	+1	+1
3	+d4	1d12/III	1d20	+1	+1	+2
4	+d4	1d14/IV	1d20	+1	+1	+2
5	+d5	1d16/IV	1d20	+2	+2	+3
6	+d6	1d20/V	1d20+1d14	+2	+3	+4
7	+d8	1d24/V	1d20+1d16	+3	+4	+4
8	+d10+1	1d30/V	1d20+1d20	+3	+4	+4
9	+d10+2	2d16/V	1d20+1d20	+3	+4	+5
10	+d10+3	2d20/V	1d20+1d20	+3	+5	+5

The dwarven cleric's attack modifier (deed die) is rolled anew with each attack, adding to both attack and damage rolls.

* In addition to this die, the dwarven cleric also receives a shield bash attack using a d14. The shield bash is not available on rounds while spellcasting.

Dwarven Cleric: Spells Known by Level: The dwarven cleric knows Lay on Hands and Turn Unholy (**DCC rulebook pages 30-31**).

The dwarven cleric also learns a 1st level cleric spell at 1st level; an additional 1st level spell at 2nd; a 2nd level spell at 3rd, an additional 2nd level spell at 4th; an additional 1st and 2nd level spell at 5th; an additional 2nd and 3rd level spell at 6th; a 4th level spell at 7th; an additional 3rd and 4th level spell at 8th; a 5th level spell at 9th; and an additional 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th level spells at 10th level.

If the dwarven cleric serves a specific god who endows the faithful with patron spells, those spells will be in addition to the numbers previously stated. Such spells are of course not available until the caster reaches the appropriate level to "know" that level spell.



DWARVEN PATRON: GREYTHAKK THE BEARDED ANVIL

The ancient eyes of Greythakk gaze through the mountain's spire, peering deeply into the darkness of the earth where the stout-folk live. He is the measurer of dwarven resolve, courage, and valor. Stubborn determination is born within him. Faithful adherents to his long-abiding traditions have glimpsed his power and might, for he hears the cries of the devout. His wrath can be channeled by dwarven-kind who uphold his tenants by way of prayers, spells and curses. Disciples of the Bearded Anvil give witness to thunder and lightning, brisk winds and other-worldly manifestations by his invocation.

Greythakk is a god who desires symmetry and balance, rewarding those souls who seek justice for this eternal purpose. Greythakk shuns the blade, for it whispers to the grim reaper. Better the hammer or mace which announces its judgment with a clarion call, and is a more pleasing sound to the Bearded Anvil.

INVOKE PATRON CHECK RESULTS

12-13: Greythakk stirs from some distant plane but his granite heart is not roused. His brief glance does imbue the disciple's weapon with an additional 1d6 lightning energy for the next 1d4 rounds.

14-17: The sky darkens as boiling clouds descend upon the battlefield. Soon the whole of the area takes on the appearance of being in some underground rocky cavern black as pitch. The disciple and all allies can see despite the darkness, while enemies without a form of dark vision are blinded for 1d4+ caster level rounds.

18-19: Greythakk's symbol of the coiled descent glows brightly on the disciple's weapon. Any melee attack can also be accompanied by a casting of Turn Unholy on the same action with an additional +2 modifier (along with other modifiers).

20-23: The old god is engaged on another plane of the cosmos but recognizes the fervent prayers of the devout. An ominous dark cloud appears in 1d3 rounds and crackles with lightning above the fray as Greythakk picks up and flings through the portal at the disciple's enemy a (1.) Windmill for 4d6 damage (2.) Light-house for 4d8 damage (3.) Mule and cart for 3d6 damage (4.)



A large broken statue of the King of Elfland 3d8 damage (5.) A crewed barge filled with potatoes for 5d6 damage (6.) A flaming asteroid for 6d6 and ongoing 1d6 fire damage. The target takes half damage if succeeding at a DC14 Reflex save.

24-27: Greythakk's symbol of the coiled descent appears on the ground beneath the disciple and begins to climb up the faithful's body like roots with an other-worldly glow. Any enemy that attacks the dwarf cleric for the next 1d6 rounds receives in kind lightning damage equal to 1d6x the dwarf disciple's level.

28-29: Greythakk's disciple sees their skin become as iron. For the next 1d6 + caster level rounds, the dwarven cleric is completely impervious to the blade or any piercing attacks. Blunt weapon damage is reduced by half.

30-31: At the beginning of the next round, events freeze in time as Greythakk himself appears to the faithful disciple in the clouds. He offers to whisk the dwarf and his or her allies to a distant location of the cleric's choosing. To accept the withdrawal is to incur 1d6 disapproval until sunrise the next day.

32+ Greythakk the Bearded Anvil lifts the dwarf ten feet above the ground as the earth begins to quake. Earth and stone begin to lift and form a hardened shell around the cleric, turning the disciple into a 15' stone golem for the next 1d4+ caster level rounds. Atk slam+10 melee; 1d10+10 damage, AC+6; hp+20; MV 40'; and an additional +8 Fort.



DISAPPROVAL TABLE FOR GREYTHAKK

To seek the divine will of Greythakk is to also invite his chastisement. To the old gods, the universe is a precariously balanced scale where rebuke and boon are given in thoughtful measure. A cleric's folly may be frowned upon by Greythakk in the following ways: This roll is 1d3 for every point on the spell check. For example: if the dwarf rolled a natural 1, he would roll 1d3 and read that result. If he rolled a natural 3 and his current disapproval was at 4, that falls within his range and would require the rolling of 3d3s to arrive at the appropriate result. Unlike human clerics, the dwarf's Luck modifier does not effect this roll.

- 1:** Greythakk has seen weakness in the disciple's faith. The spell is lost for the day until the dwarven cleric can publicly and colorfully dishonor the King of Elfland in the presence of elven-kind, friend or foe. After being absent for one round, he returns on the following round.
- 2:** The dwarven cleric has failed to venerate the old god in a way befitting his might and so must chant the sacred texts aloud for the next hour. This distraction from tasks at hand will penalize all spell checks at -1.
- 3:** Greythakk's blessing is momentarily lifted and the dwarf's weapon is weighed down by the weight of his own spiritual failings. All melee attacks suffer a -1 penalty for the next 1d4 rounds.
- 4:** The dwarf must humble himself immediately after the present danger has passed by chanting sacred verses in meditation. During the penitent prayer, the cleric must smelt 10% of his gold until the whole of it has boiled away. The spell is lost until the tithe is paid.
- 5:** The cleric incurs a -1 penalty to the spell that the disapproval occurred on until he or she successfully smites a foe of opposing alignment with a blunt weapon.
- 6:** The dwarf must spend the next round withdrawing from battle to tie a scarf over his eyes. Faith is displayed by returning to battle on the following round blinded, at a -2 penalty to attacks and a -2 to AC. This penitent act lasts for one hour.
- 7:** The cleric suffers a -1 penalty to Lay on Hands on allies of opposed or adjacent alignment for the day.



- 8:** The dwarven cleric must display selfless valor by sheathing his weapon and allowing himself to receive a single melee attack by a foe. The spell is lost until this penance has been observed.
- 9:** The cleric suffers a -2 penalty to Lay on Hands for the next 1d6 rounds.
- 10:** The cleric's pleas fall upon distant ears. All spells suffer a -2 penalty until the next sunrise.
- 11:** The cleric has dishonored god and clan. He or she loses Turn Unholy until the next sunrise.
- 12:** The stars have aligned in an unfavorable way as Greythakk is momentarily blinded from all earthly followers. The cleric loses access to all spells for the next 1d4 rounds.
- 13:** Greythakk withholds healing virtue. The disciple loses Lay on Hands until the next sunrise.
- 14:** Greythakk shows disappointment in the cleric by sending a murder of crows to follow the dwarf for 1d3 days. The crows will attempt to disrupt spellcasting by the cleric and any other magic-using allies, resulting in a -1 penalty to all attempts.
- 15:** The old dwarven god is sullen. If the disciple is successfully attacked before his turn in the initiative next round, he is struck blind by Greythakk for one hour.
- 16:** The spiritual connection with Greythakk the Bearded Anvil has been corrupted by strange encroaching magic. The cleric must roll on the Minor Corruption table (**DCC rulebook page 116**).
- 17:** Greythakk whisks the cleric's spirit away while their glassy-eyed corporal shell stands dormant for the next round. To the cleric, the journey seems to last a day as he walks the sacred fields with his forefathers in solemn reflection. He returns on the following round.
- 18:** Unseen by mortal eyes, the cleric's body is burdened with heavy spectral chains, Greythakk's encumbrance for showing a lack of faith. It results in a -1 to all attacks and appropriate physical skill checks for 1d4 hours.
- 19:** The light of Greythakk grows dim within the dwarven cleric. All spells suffer a penalty equal to the cleric's caster level for the next 1d4 weeks or until the dwarf smelts 50% of his or her gold, forms it into a holy symbol and donates it to the nearest dwarven temple.
- 20:** The cleric has failed Greythakk. The disciple's disapproval range becomes the spell check penalty for the rest of the day until the next sunrise.



CLERIC SPELLS: GREYTHAKK THE BEARDED ANVIL

Greythakk imbues unique powers to those stout-folk who serve the Bearded Anvil.

Level 1: Hammer of the Gods (available at 1st level)

Level 2: Battle Cry (available at 3rd level)

Level 3: Might of the Bearded Anvil (available at 6th level)

HAMMER OF THE GODS

Level: 1 (Greythakk the Bearded Anvil)

Range: varies

Duration: varies

Casting Time: varies

General: The dwarven cleric's weapon is his holy symbol. The power of Greythakk is channeled through the implement as the warrior priest calls upon the Bearded Anvil to join him in battle. Normal melee attack modifiers apply (unless otherwise specified) though the cleric may choose between strength or personality modifiers while the weapon is imbued, whichever is higher.

Manifestation: The holy symbol of Greythakk begins to glow upon the weapon as distant thunder rumbles.

1-11: Failure. Disapproval.

12-13: The cleric's weapon burns with the fires of the elder dwarven furnaces, adding 1d6 fire damage, ongoing. Weapon is imbued for 1d4 rounds.

14-17: The cleric receives a +1 to the attack (plus normal modifiers) as the weapon is imbued with electrical energy. On a successful attack the target receives an additional 1d6 lightning damage and all enemies within 20' of the target must make a DC8 Reflex Save or receive 1d3 points of lightning damage. Weapon is imbued for 1d4 rounds.



18-19: The cleric receives a +2 to the attack (plus normal modifiers) as the weapon takes on a spectral appearance three times the weapon's normal size. The cleric may choose to sweep in a 10' diameter, targeting all enemies within the radius with separate attack rolls. Any allies within the reach radius of the cleric's normal weapon (i.e., the normal reach of a war hammer) are subject to the attack. The weapon is imbued for 1d4+ CL rounds.

20-23: The cleric and all allies (each elf adds a point of disapproval) in a 30' radius receive healing virtue from Greythakk equal to 1HD each. All enemies within a 30' radius must make a DC12 Fort Save or receive 1d8+CL lightning damage.

24-27: Same as previous effect but DC16 Fort Save for enemies.

28-29: The cleric may use any melee weapon in a ranged attack against up to 1d6+CL enemies. The cleric receives a +3 to the attack(s). The weapon will fly to the cleric's hand after the attacks are completed. Successful attacks deal an additional 1d6 lightning damage. If even one attack is successful, the cleric and his allies receive the virtue of 1d6 HP each (on the first round the spell manifests only). The weapon is imbued for 1d4+CL rounds.

30-31: Same as previous effect but successful attacks deal 2d6 lightning damage.

32+ Action is immediate. Greythakk himself embodies the weapon. When slammed against the ground, all enemies within a 50' radius must make a DC14 Fort Save or take 3d6 lightning damage. Successful saves still take 1d6 lightning damage. The cleric also makes a Turn Unholy spell check with a +6 bonus (plus normal modifiers) against all creatures inside the 50' radius.



GREYTHAKK'S BATTLE CRY

Level 2: (Greythakk the Bearded Anvil)

Range: varies

Duration: varies

Casting time: instantaneous

General: The battle cry of the charging dwarf is a fearsome sound whatever the courage of the opponent. The dwarven cleric calls upon Greythakk with a bellow that shakes the mortal foundations. The timbre is measured in cosmic places as the dwarven god responds.

Manifestation: The voice of the dwarf roars as that of a hundred lions in unison.

1-13: Failure. Disapproval.

14-15: The cleric's primal scream calls forth a duo of spectral dwarven ancestors to fight by his side. The apparitions may attack on the dwarf's turn in the initiative, but will always flank him. If he charges, they charge. If he swings, they swing. The cleric's Personality modifier is the only attack bonus for the spectral dwarfs. All other stats match the dwarf cleric's. The apparitions remain for 1d4 rounds.

16-19: The dwarf cleric's battle cry issues as a mighty rushing wind. The gust emits as a cone shape from the dwarf with a range of 15' and a final width of 10'. All creatures within the cone must make a DC 14 Strength check or be forced back to the furthest edge of the affected area. If a target being forced back collides with an obstruction before hitting the edge of the cone, it takes 1d6 damage.

20-21: The cleric's cry manifests as a large bear. The ethereal bear charges and rends one target for 1d12+CL damage. After the first attack, the target attempts a DC12 Will Save. On a success, the manifestation ends; on a failure the bear attacks (+6 melee; 1d12+CL damage) again next round. The attacks continue each round until the Will Save succeeds.



22-25: The dwarf's cry summons a small tornado from the heavens. Its path can be directed by a series of dramatic arm movements. The tornado travels in any one direction, doing 1d12+CL damage to every creature within a 20'x75' swath. Each creature (friend or foe) must also meet or exceed a DC16 Fort save or be thrown 1d4x10', amassing an additional 1d6 damage for each ten feet thrown.

26-29: The dwarf cleric's battle cry proceeds as an icy blast. The ice storm rushes forth from the cleric's mouth in a cone shape with an eventual width of 10' and a reach of 25'. All creatures within the cone receive 1d14+CL piercing damage and are frozen in place until they succeed at a DC 14 Strength check to break free. Each round that the targets remain encased in ice results in an additional 1d4 frost damage.

30-31: The cleric's battle cry, accompanied by the impact of his weapon upon the ground sends out a fiery blast in all directions where all creatures within a 25' radius receive 1d16+CL firestorm damage. The cleric is unharmed by the effect. By inhaling deeply, the dwarven cleric can withdraw the flames from allies within the blast radius, mitigating any ongoing damage. While enemies within the radius continue to receive 1d6+CL damage each round until a DC 14 Reflex Save is met. Enemies on fire attack at a -4 penalty and suffer a -4 to AC until the flames are subdued.

32-33: The dwarf thrusts his or her weapon into the air and with a mighty bellow summons lightning from the heavens that channels through the implement. The cleric can choose up to a dozen targets within a 30' radius to receive 1d20+CL lightning damage. Any lightning-struck target must succeed at a DC14 Fortitude save on their turn to perform any physical action, as the lightning will continue to arc until the beginning of the cleric's next turn.

34+ The dwarf's battle cry channels the voice of Greythakk himself and the prolonged cacophony is an anathema to all of the cleric's enemies within a 100' radius. All 1HD enemies within the radius melt instantly in the blast. All 2HD enemies receive 1d20+CL damage; all 3HD enemies must meet a DC 16 Will save or receive 2d20+CL damage. 4HD enemies and levels above instantly recognize the voice of the dwarven god and reluctantly retreat for 1d6 hours.



MIGHT OF THE BEARDED ANVIL

Level 3: (Greythakk the Bearded Anvil)

Range: Varies

Duration: Varies.

Casting Time: Immediate unless otherwise noted.

General: The dwarven cleric has found favor in Greythakk's eyes and has earned the privilege of invoking his might. A series of ancient phrases have been revealed to the priest that unlock the might and fury of the anvil in various manifestations.

Manifestation: Ethereal sigils illuminate and encircle the cleric in a constantly moving ribbon.

1-15: Failure. Disapproval.

16-17: As sigils swirl around the cleric, her skin hardens and shimmers as copper, giving a +2 to AC, a +5 to Fort Saves and 1d6 temporary hp. Fire damage is reduced by half for the duration of the blessing. The effect lasts for 1d4+CL rounds.

18-21: The cleric's skin hardens to steel, giving a +4 to AC, a +10 to Fort Saves and 1d12 temporary hp. Fire damage is completely muted for the duration of the blessing. The effect lasts for 1d4+CL rounds.

22-23: The same as 18-21 results and the cleric's healing virtue flows to all allies within a radius that equals 10' x his CL (e.g. 4th level=40'; 5th level=50', etc...). Allies within the radius receive 1HD permanent healing.



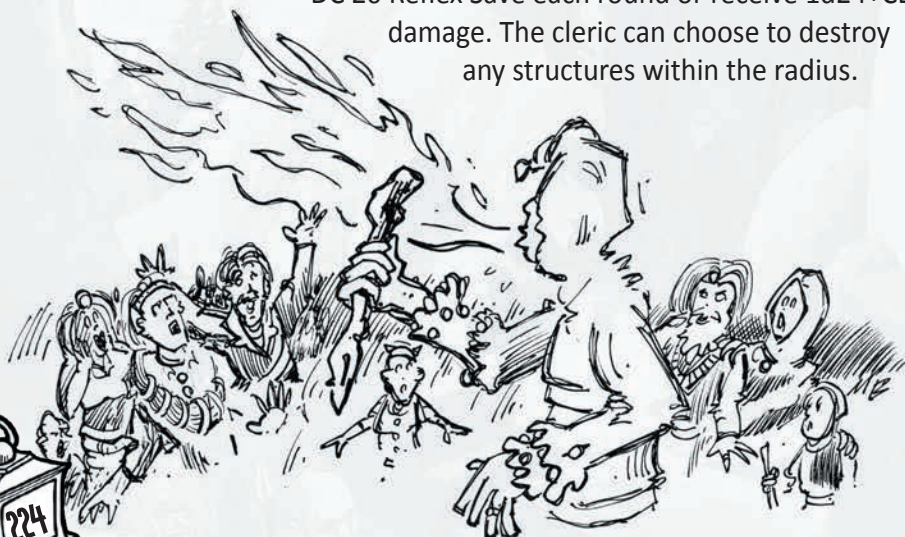
24-26: The same as 18-21 results and the cleric receives an immediate casting of Turn Undead. Also, an aura around each enemy within 100', visible only to the cleric, reveals which foes are most gravely wounded (which enemies are below 1/2 hp).

27-31: The same as 18-21 results and the cleric's metallic body becomes magnetized. All iron and steel weapons within a radius of the cleric's CL x 10' immediately fly to the dwarf. No harm befalls the dwarf though he or she loses all movement for the duration of the blessing.

32-33: The same as 18-21 results and the dwarf's fists manifest as heavy anvils. The cleric drops his weapon upon transformation. The anvil fists become weapons, each doing 1d16+CL damage. The cleric receives two attacks each round. On a successful attack, the target must succeed at a DC 18 Fort Save or be thrown for CL x 10' in a direction the cleric chooses. If the target collides with any solid structure before reaching the end of the distance, it receives an additional 1d6 per 10' of distance.

34-35: The same as 32-33 above (and result 18-21) but the cleric immediately grows two additional arms, also affixed with anvils, increasing the attacks to four each round.

36+ The same as 18-21 results and the cleric summons a storm that produces a whirlwind of flying anvils. The radius of the whirlwind centers on the cleric and equals CL x 25'. Each enemy within the radius must succeed at a DC 20 Reflex Save each round or receive 1d24+CL damage. The cleric can choose to destroy any structures within the radius.



THE JUDGE'S TOOLBOX FOR THE SULLENLANDS

You've been armed with a continental map, a unique and mysterious backdrop for your campaign, cities, villages, a new class, a new god, and more! Judges know that it's often these small bits of esoterica that stick in the player's memories. The following pages will provide context to help the Sullenlands come to life in the minds of your players, with info about thieves guilds, new treasure options, alchemical herbs, additional equipment, new monsters, a unique character death table, and more!

FESTIVALS AND HOLIDAYS

Even the intolerant King Ravianwhurst knows the value of the many local celebrations to stave off the humdrum weariness of medieval existence. Without the occasional release provided by the various holidays, bitter attitudes could lead to outright revolt. Here are a few of the festivals celebrated throughout the kingdoms:

LAMENTATION OF THE CRIMSON WAVES

Once a holiday honoring the brave soldiers who fought and died battling Greaveheart's Goblin Hoards two centuries ago, the celebration has been co-opted by detractors of King Ravianwhurst. The common folk enjoy dismissing the new regime in thinly-veiled nightly dramas which play out over the course of a week. In the guise of celebrating the events of old, a town fool usually dresses as the new king, and in the end is pelted with rotten eggs and cabbages! The king's attempts to ban the celebrations have only created deeper resentment towards his authority.

FEAST OF THE REDGOLD RIBBON

Commemorating both the day of King Redgold Sullen's ascension to the throne, and the love he held for his queen, the men of the town all wear a red kerchief, the women a gold. During the evening festivities, all of the kerchiefs are tied together to make a rope. After the tying, each marriage-ready maiden dances around the fire, wrapping herself in the kerchief rope until



she reaches the end. At that location, the nearest eligible bachelor is obligated to dance with the maiden and learn of her family's available dowry.

Thus the ritual provides a way for all of the townspeople to feel they have played a roll in pairing off the unmarried men and women of the village, and each will brag if their kerchief was the one that found true love!

THE BURNING ELDERS FESTIVAL

A northern festival that heralds the coming of spring and the renewal of the crops. Old wood is burned; new is nurtured and celebrated with laurels, boughs and wreaths of budding limbs. The gods are beseeched to bless the farmers with favorable weather and prosperous yields. As is tradition, all windows are opened for the three days of the festival to allow winter spirits to depart, making way for new friendlier spirits to take their place. It is whispered in disgust that the northern-most tribes of "near-men" still offer the burning sacrifice of an elder at the apex of the festival!

THIEVES GUILDS OF THE SULLENLANDS

The thieves guilds of the Sullenlands are most prevalent in the cities of Eldercliffs and Embergulf Bay, but their tentacles stretch out across the entire continent. Savvy folk understand that the guilds have their fingers in the pockets of every venture from the northern forests to the southern sands, and plan accordingly. The burglar, the urchin, and the cut-purse are but foot soldiers in an army of sergeants, lieutenants, and generals. Thieves and assassins can be found upon every rung of the social hierarchy. Here are a few of the guilds of note within the Sullenlands.

BROTHERHOOD OF THE LONG-TAILED RAT

Soon after an unsullied halfling's bare feet hit the docks at Eldercliffs, his virtue is put to the test by the seedy recruitment tactics of the "Rats". One tactic is for the visitor to conveniently witness an orchestrated drama where a store-keeper catches a fellow halfling stealing a couple of apples, or perhaps a half-loaf of



rye. The actor is beaten, or so it appears, and limps away to a dim alley. Soon a wee-halfling appears asking the tourist if he has seen his father (or mother) who left the family to find food before his little sister starves to death.

Before long, the visiting halfling is coaxed into participating in the theft, which escalates the next day into a grander affair, and so on. Soon, the poor soul is convinced he is a wanted man, and his only refuge comes in the safety of the brotherhood, for who else understands the plight of the little folk more than other little folk, especially those far from the hills and vales once called home? By the time the halfling realizes it was all a ruse in a week or two, he is too indebted to the brotherhood to leave.

Some eventually accept the new life thrust upon them and rise in the ranks of their new sordid career, while others spend years trying to reclaim their lost good name and their freedom. But most find it is much easier to join the **Brotherhood of the Long-tailed Rat** than it is to ever leave it.

THE ORDER OF THE UNFETTERED ETHIC

Once they were believers... faithful followers of either a sect, a denomination, a social doctrine, or a political faction. And then they were let down hard. Many in this order were devotees of the old rulers before King Ravianwhurst appropriated the throne. Blade in hand, they have sworn to snip the stitches of that purloined mantle one-by-one-by-one until they reach the throat at the top of the cape!

Be it burning ships at Embergulf, hijacking caravans in the hill country, or wrestling the king's couriers into shadowed alleys, thieves belonging to **The Order of the Unfettered Ethic** seek to make life miserable for King Ravianwhurst until his traitorous claim to the throne is exposed. Perhaps that's why the "unfettered" never have time to etch a name on their prison walls before the hooded man drops his axe.

THE THIRTEEN ENIGMA

There are notorious and prominent ladies of society who primp and preen for all to see, and then there are the thirteen who truly wield power behind the scenes. Spread across the



Sullenlands, the thirteen remain in the shadows, setting in motion the machinations which guide the continent to the fate they desire. Each “enigma” has two hands (lieutenants), each hand has five fingers (soldier assassins), making thirteen within each “sect”. Each sect has its own hidden brand behind the left ear lobe.

The **Thirteen Enigma** live a life of subterfuge and deception. One never knows where to find them: they may be a high-ranking Lord’s Lady, or the peasant laundress in that back alley. But all their schemes are deadly long cons, and they lust for position and power above all else. Every finger aspires to be a hand; every hand aspires to be an enigma; and every enigma sleeps with one eye open!

THE TRAVELING BARD

The Sullenlands contains thousands of miles of deep forests, towering mountains, vast barren deserts, and boundless surrounding seas, and the distances between isolated pockets of civilization are often great. Most common folk are too concerned about carving out a meager and hard-earned existence in the wilds to worry about discovering what other folk are doing in places they’ll never see. Thus most communities can rely on only one source to bring news from villages beyond their fields and forests: the traveling bard.

Infrequent supply caravans may bring scraps of gossip and news from distant vistas. Some outlying villages may employ the use of carrier pigeons and ravens for important news. But the most common and sure source of scuttle-butt, rumor, and legend remains the tavern minstrel strumming his lute before the evening fireplace, spinning lyrics and melodies into trenchant commentaries on the state of the kingdom.

Once the musician’s library of tunes and tales has been exhausted (and the patron’s tips have gone as dry as a summer creek) the bard moves on to begin again at the next village or town. Here are a few of the ballads that may be heard over the crackle of a roaring fire any given evening.



THE TROUBADOUR'S PLEA

*"Do you have a coin for the troubadour weary?
Have thee a coin for my purse?
I took up the lute instead of the cutlass.
My father says now I am cursed!
My father says now I am cursed..."*

MADNESS AT SEA

*"Fair maidens; sweet flowers come listen to me
and I'll tell you a tale of a ship lost at sea.
Loaded with treasure tucked safe in her womb.
Her galley sat empty, her decks as the tomb!
She drifted the high seas in search of a crew.
But no sailor boarded could see the thing through.
They n'er saw their children again, nor their wives,
each cursed with madness they took their own lives.
Each cursed with madness, they took their own lives..."*

BLESS THE RED DRAGON

*"The peaks of ol' Frost Fang are bitterly cold.
The younglings who scale it n'er live to be old!
For you' lives a dragon where snowbanks are swept.
He thrives on the foolhardy, daft, and inept.
Bless the red dragon, oh bless the red dragon!
Too hideous are thee for words!
Bless the red dragon, oh bless the red dragon!
At least he can scatter the birds."*



THE BALLAD OF GROM

*“The ballad of Grom, ’tis a sordid affair,
but lend me thine ear and his story I’ll share.
Twas born with brass knuckles in each little hand,
and those numbered four from what I understand!
Grom was so handy, oh Grom was so handy...
he sounded like ten when he cheered.
Grom was so handy, oh Grom was so handy...
more fingers than days of the year.
Conceived in corruption they say was his curse,
and every year hence it would only get worse.
For every new winter he grew a new arm;
could milk every cow the same time in the barn.
Grom was so handy, oh Grom was so handy...
he sounded like ten when he cheered.
Grom was so handy, oh Grom was so handy...
more fingers than days of the year.
A pity he died at just eighteen years old,
stabbed in his sleep by his right arm I’m told...”*



ALCHEMICAL HERBS

An old halfling proverb goes something like, “Mother Nature may steal a life and return it, all before breakfast.” In the wilds of the Sullenlands, it is certainly true that nature provides all the ingredients a skilled practitioner needs to create potions, salves and even poisons. Here are a few of the rarer concoctions brewed up from local ingredients.

Quick-Root: Also known as “Death Stave”, this yellow-flowering plant is renowned for how quickly the root ball expands upon contact with liquid (even blood) making it especially effective at quickly sealing open wounds. During combat, an application of quick-root to a PC adds one additional round before “bleeding out”. A 2nd level character would normally have two rounds in which they could be healed before passing on, but an application of quick-root would extend that to three rounds. The flower is found almost exclusively in the forests and plains of Ishlachyren.

Bloodshrooms: Dwarves have discovered two uses for this deep-cave growing fungus. First, the crimson puss squeezed from the pulp creates a potent hallucinogenic poison that can be applied to any blade (DC 12 Fort Save or target “sees” their limbs bubble and stretch into a rivulet of mercurial orbs and droplets that float away with no way to gather them in. This effect lasts 1d6 rounds). Second use? It’s good in gopher stew.

Clot-Moss: Like quick-root, clot-moss is a good coagulant to seal open wounds. But within the blue moss are blood-enriching minerals that also spike the adrenal glands of anyone introducing the chemicals into their bloodstream. This effect allows the recipient to gain back 1d4 hp. A second application of the moss during the same day reduces the second application to only 1hp of healing. The full potency returns the following day.

Lizard Bark: “Lizard Trees” (or “Whisper Elms” as the elven-kind call them) are found in the northern forests of the Sullenlands, and derived their name from the way the bark resembles shed snake-skins or lizard-skins. When boiled, the potion fortifies the mind to resist outside control from powerful magical suggestions. The potion adds an additional +1 to Will Saves against such spells as Sleep, Charm Person, and Scare.



ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT AND SUNDRIES

Whether an adventurer is shopping in the emporiums of Eldercliffs, or in humble trading posts in distant villages like Neverthawes, survivors know that getting the job done prudently requires the right equipment. Almost any item can be found in the Sullenlands, if you know where to look.

(Along with the equipment listed on **DCC rulebook pages 71-73**, here are a few other odd and sundry items to be found across the Sullenlands.)

WEAPONS

Boomerang	3gp	1d6 dmg (returns on a miss)
Halberd	22gp	1d8 dmg
Morning Star	10gp	1d8 dmg
Rapier	8gp	1d6 dmg
Scimitar	10gp	1d8 dmg
Scythe	6gp	1d6 dmg

ITEMS

Beartrap	8 gp (1d6 dmg; DC14 Strength to escape)
Bedroll	3 gp
Climbing Cleats	2 gp
Ear Trumpet	5 sp (+1 to pick locks)
Etching pencil	8 cp (with parchment)
Firefly Lantern*	8 gp
Hourglass	6 sp
Ladder (wood 6')	5 gp
Magnifying Glass	6 sp
Pick	3 gp (d4 damage)
Shovel	3 gp
Silver Bell	2 gp
Tent	5 gp/12 gp (2 person/6 person)

*Add fresh moss every-other day and the fireflies will last up to two weeks. Shake to initiate light. 10' area illuminated.



THE TREASURE TROVE

Treasures are hidden throughout the Sullenlands, and one never knows where they might be found, or what will be uncovered! A dragon's hoard has much more than just gold coins. The mighty drake **Zyligreed the Imponderable Flame** has been skewering adventurers for hundreds of years, amassing an astonishing collection of forgotten treasures. Perhaps closer to home, a dying elder might wish to gift a young adventurer questing for the glory of their god with something he invented while apprenticing to the king's armorer? Here are some cool prizes that might help your PC's without breaking the game.

WEEPING CLOAK

Made from the silk of a rare northern dusk-worm which continues to secrete a fire-resistant ooze long after its harvest, this cloak grants the wearer a DC8 Reflex Save to halve the damage of any fire attack or effect. Ongoing fire damage lasts no longer than one more round. Also, anytime the wearer is grabbed, bound or otherwise restrained about the cloak, the PC receives a +2 to any escape checks.

IMPACT SLIME

Created by **Ezgadz the Pestiferous**, this two-layered glass orb's inner-most shell contains the powder of a dehydrated slime; the outer layer contains the solution to bring it instantly to life upon breaking!

Green Slime: Init -6; Atk pseudopod +4 melee (1d4+ SP); AC 10; HD2d8; hp 11; MV 5'; climb 5'; Act 1d20; SP on a hit, the target must make a DC 14 Fort Save or suffer paralysis for 1d4 rounds, half damage from slicing and piercing weapons; SV Fort +5; Ref -6; Will -6; AL N.

LØDAK'S SPEAR

A spring-loaded spear that ejects a flammable oil upon impact. Two flint and magnesium plates ignite the spray. 1d8+1d6 fire damage (fire damage ongoing until suppressed). The oil reservoir holds enough oil for 3 strikes. On a natural 1, the spearhead detonates, consuming all the oil in the head, and delivering 1d6 damage to both wielder and target!



WINDCHIME OF DETECTION

Made of bones, leaves, or the husks of cracked nuts, and shaped from the small branches of elven trees, this wind chime can act as a focus for a specialized detection spell. Roll 1d6 to determine its type: (1) Undead (2) Giants (3) Goblins (4) Elementals (5) Trolls (6) Dragons.

The wind chime must be steadied first for 1d4 rounds before it can begin to detect the appropriate creature. It normally hangs limply, but will shift in the direction of any detected creature(s) within 100'.

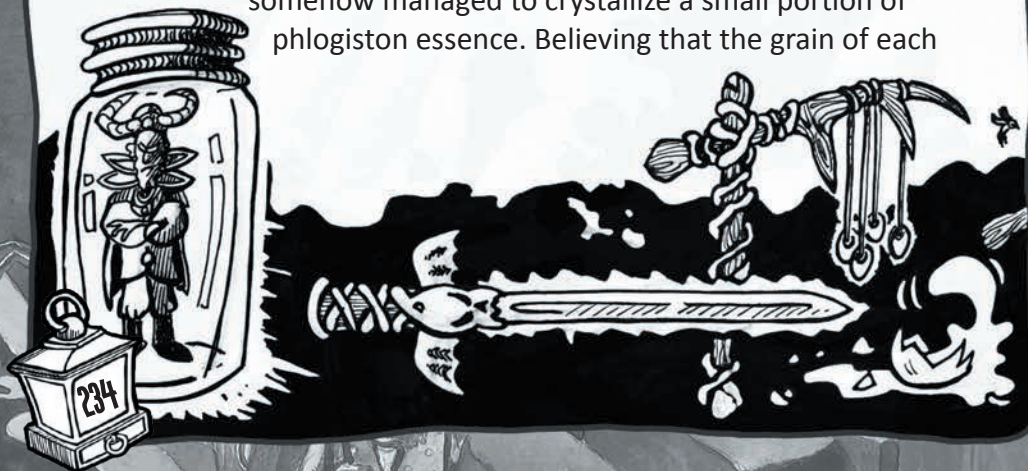
HOLY HORNET'S NEST

Believing that nature provides the best defenses against evil, the western monks have taken to nurturing their gardens with blessed holy water from which the bees and hornets imbibe. This produces a hornet's nest infused with the power of the gods. Bagged or boxed, this living "bomb" inflicts damage to undead/unholy creatures within a 20'x20' area. One-time use.

Holy Hornet's Nest: Init +5; Atk swarming bite +2 melee (1d4); AC 11; HD 4d8; hp 24; MV fly 40'; SP bite all targets in 20'x20' space, all 1HD undead/unholy must meet a DC12 Will Save or disintegrate, hornets receive half-damage from non-area attacks; SV Fort +0; Reflex +10; Will +0; AL N.

DAGON'S PHLOGISTON SHIELD

A unique creation of the rogue wizard **Dagon the Doleful** who somehow managed to crystallize a small portion of phlogiston essence. Believing that the grain of each



piece of wood is the universe reading its own spells, he rubbed the phlogiston powder into the grain of three elemental Ardokk shields while incanting Gryzhuld's Dubious Axiom backwards, to astounding result. One who bears the **Earth Shield** receives a +4 bonus to any strength check against attempts to forcibly move the PC. The **Water Shield** will effortlessly "swim" its bearer in any direction it is pointed while in a body of water. The **Flame Shield** burns with blue flame when struck, adding an additional 1d4 damage to any subsequent shield bash attack.

WIZARD IN A JAR

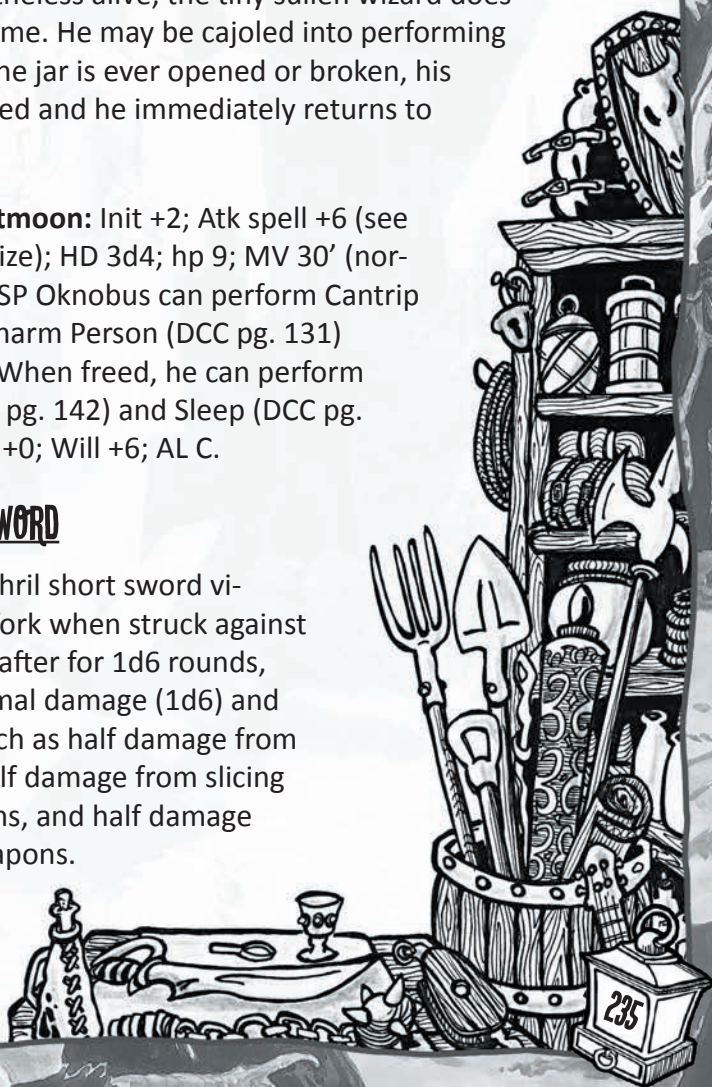
This 'wizard in a jar' was found in the caves of a long-dead cyclops. Shrunken, but nonetheless alive, the tiny sullen wizard does not surrender his name. He may be cajoled into performing some deeds, but if the jar is ever opened or broken, his captivity spell is ended and he immediately returns to normal size.

Oknobus of the Firstmoon: Init +2; Atk spell +6 (see SP); AC 13 (normal size); HD 3d4; hp 9; MV 30' (normal size); Act 1d20; SP Oknobus can perform Cantrip (DCC pg. 130) and Charm Person (DCC pg. 131) while inside the jar. When freed, he can perform Flaming Hands (DCC pg. 142) and Sleep (DCC pg. 155); SV Fort -1; Ref +0; Will +6; AL C.

FLOX'S RESONATING SWORD

This elven made mithril short sword vibrates like a tuning fork when struck against a hard object. Thereafter for 1d6 rounds, the sword does normal damage (1d6) and ignores penalties such as half damage from non-area attacks, half damage from slicing and piercing weapons, and half damage from non-magic weapons.

The sword also emits a low hum when it's within 100' of a harpy.



RANDOM TREASURE TABLE (IDIO)

(To Inspire Players to Try Weird Things...)

1. An ebony candle. When lit, it curses all sheathed weapons within a 20' radius to remain sheathed until the flame is extinguished. (e.g. sword in scabbard; arrow in quiver; dagger in frog, etc...)
2. A leather pouch containing six garnet acorns. When planted in suitable soil, each will grow to become a mature 40' tall oak tree within five minutes.
3. An emerald ring, shaped as a chameleon wrapped around the finger. It masks the wearer's alignment from the gods. (If worn too long however, the ring can begin to play with the bearer's sense of self, triggering emotional instability!)
4. A jar of "rust roaches". When released into a confined space such as a chest, sheath, or quiver, the roaches completely corrode all metal contained within in 10 minutes.
5. A human skull with all the teeth removed. The teeth are collected in a small pouch alongside. If the teeth are inserted back into the proper places (DC14 intelligence check), the skull will animate and utter a spell that grants a +2 to the inserter's next spell check or attack. (3 uses)
6. A piece of green chalk. If a circle of any size is drawn on any suitable surface, lush green grass will grow and fill the circle within one minute. The grass will wither in 1d4 hours. In that time, no chaotic creature will be able to enter or penetrate the circle.
7. A small urn with the ashes of a slain cleric. Add a drop of holy water and the cleric's spirit will manifest briefly to attempt a casting of Food of the Gods (pg.262). Spell check: d20+6. Three uses. (The food, while nourishing, sadly tastes as dry as bones...)
8. A boar's tusk wrapped in burlap with an elven inscription etched into it. When read aloud, a clap of thunder sounds from true east. (If recited more than once in a day, the thunder is accompanied by a tiny lightning bolt that inflicts 1d3 points of damage to the reader).



9. A fist-sized chunk of amber with a severed finger inside. A ring with the face of a cat is wrapped around the finger: if the amber is cracked open, and the ring is removed and worn, the severed finger turns into a mangy black cat that will follow the wearer of the ring. If the ring is taken off, the cat turns back into the severed finger.
10. A small gray porcelain horse. The word 'enlarge' (in the language of gnomes) is painted on its belly. If the spell of that name is attempted on the horse and the minimum result is achieved, the porcelain horse will come to life and grow to the size of a normal horse, disregarding the spell checks normal results. While 'alive' and capable of acting as a normal mount and obeying the caster's commands, the horse will remain porcelain (AC 12; HP 6). The horse can be reduced by attempting the same spell backwards to achieve the minimum result.

LET'S GO THIS WAY: RANDOM NAMES

It's bound to happen: the plot lies to the east, and the players decide to go west. It's a test of every judge's ability to game on the fly. When you need to be spontaneous, here's a quick reference source of random names and locations that you won't find on the map, but due to your quick thinking, it soon will be!

RANDOM TOWNS, VILLAGES, AND LOCATIONS:

Dusklight Village, Murgle's Crossing, Tuskertown

Mudstone Keep, Black Ash Forge, Drizzletown

Hollow Worm Hamlet, Gladfield Gully, Gatherdale

RANDOM INNS, TAVERNS AND MORE:

The Parched Gullet (tavern), Beedle's Drygoods

Saddlebag Inn, The Devil's Tail (ale house)

Brahm's Barrelworks, The Lost Princess (tavern or inn)

Raven's Retreat (inn), Mogg's Moonlight Smithery



RANDOM GUILDS, SECTS AND SECRET ORGANIZATIONS

Seekers of the Crescent Moon, Daughters of the First Talon

The Whisperer's Guild, Herald of the Lost King

Brotherhood of the Severed Thumb

RANDOM NAMES WITH A SULLENLANDS FEEL

Male:

Grenwald Beechum	Elias Loog	Shadwell Limberfoot
Kaduun Ardokk	Terrin Algwyn	Galan Fara
Radford Whittle	Camus Lox	Dren Humbleleaf

Female:

Allianna Moonsliver	Jalana Doske	Meradith Tussle
Primrose Gimple	Lilium Mourn	Beruth Ingot
Gwyndal Drohen	Nialdra Reef	Rylian Elagolar

CHARACTER DEATH TABLE (D24)

Even heroes die. Life spans are short in the Sullenlands, where savage beasts lurk in the shadows and treachery stalks dark alleyways. But death can be particularly strange in the Sullenlands. When the final blade finds purchase in the hero's heart, and all healing attempts have failed, each intrepid adventurer deserves one last hurrah before heads are bowed and the corpse is buried in the cold, cold ground. When fate comes calling, allow the player one final roll (1d24) on the following table, modified by character level. (Zero level PCs roll 1d6).

- 1) A small black snake emerges from the PC's mouth and wriggles away quickly, whispering, "Free at lasssssst" before disappearing.
- 2) The air grows cold as a heavy frost begins to form on the deceased hero's skin. Anyone who touches the body for up to 1d6 turns receives 1d4-1 frostbite as distant sprite-like laughter echoes around the party.
- 3) Inexplicably, the deceased's teeth turn to gold. If collected, they value at 1d6 gold pieces.



4) The skin of the deceased begins to pulsate and quickly rot. In 1d4 rounds the body will collapse into a mass of blood and puss as a million small spiders emerge to run amok.

5) Exactly 1d4 rounds after the character dies, the PC's obsidian eyes open. A raspy foreign voice sputters, "I know which one of you is next..." After this, the spirit departs.

6) The dead PC's hair turns to a flowing white. An ethereal female appears over the corpse, reaches in to gather the glowing heart. With a wistful glance at the party, she whisks it away into the heavens.

7) The deceased's jawbone begins to contort as a full-sized raven emerges, slick with sputum, from the PC's mouth. The raven will follow the party for 1d6 days, cawing a warning if it sees a perceived danger before the PCs do. After 1d6 days, the raven will fly away.

8) The corpse's shell will collapse into a moldy black pudding in 1d3 rounds, attacking any living creature within 5'. **Black Pudding:** Init -6; Atk pseudopod +3 (1d4); AC 10; HD 1d8; 6hp; MV 5', climb 5'; Act 1d20; SP half damage from slicing and piercing weapons; SV Fort +5; Ref -6; Will -8; AL N.

9) With the hero's last breath, a harp strums somewhere in the distance and the deceased's left boot turns to gold. Its value is 1d4 electrum.

10) The air chills as an apparition appears above the dead body. It is the deceased, but in a younger form. He or she has time to leave one last bit of important wisdom for the party before completely evaporating.

11) The ground quakes as the ground around the deceased collapses and falls. A fissure opens to swallow the body in fire and smoke, quickly re-coalescing as though the person was never there.

12) The fresh corpse begins to shine with an unbearably bright light. Every ally within the cascade receives healing virtue in the form of 1 hit point, if below their maximum. Then, the light dims and the boon is gone.



13) The body is appropriated by a passing spirit. On the next round, it will reanimate and attack the nearest ally. The possessed body has 1d4 hp, moves at half speed, and will continue to attack (using the PCs normal melee attack modifier -2) for 1d4 rounds or until it is defeated.

14) The PCs notice something about the deceased that they had never noticed before. There is a map tattooed on the forearm with a sealed chest drawn at the final destination.

15) The gods were watching. If the party cleric is of the same alignment as the deceased, the cleric receives one point of disapproval for failing to protect a comrade. If oppositely aligned, the cleric can benefit by having one point of disapproval removed. Adjacent alignments have no effect.

16) For a week, the dead PC's ghost will come to the party each night at midnight, shivering and stuttering, "I'm so c...c...cold... so c...c...cold!"

17) The deceased's right eye turns to stone, the pupil now a glowing sigil! The smooth stone absorbs phlogistical disturbances. The sigil will nullify the effects of corruption on the magic user's next failed spell attempt that induces corruption (if in possession of this stone). This effect happens once, at which point the stone turns to dust.

18) The deceased has been nicked by a tainted weapon. In 1d7 days the cadaver will rise from the grave, seeking out the party in their sleep. With milky dead eyes and decaying flesh, the fallen comrade will attempt to employ a silent blade against the party, one by one...

19) The flesh of the fallen takes on the appearance of bark as roots and branches sprout from finger and toes. In a matter of minutes, a deformed tree stands where the body once lay, the face of the deceased clearly seen in the twisted trunk.

20) The dead hero's soul is banished into the weapon they carried in life. The weapon takes on a cerulean glow, and occasionally distant screams of the fallen's anguish are heard. The soul will not be freed until the weapon has vanquished either: (roll 1d4): (1.) 3 animated skeletons (2.) 5 goblins (3.) 1 elemental (4.) 2 ghosts. (Foes can be altered to fit the judges campaign). This enchanted weapon inflicts normal damage against undead creatures.

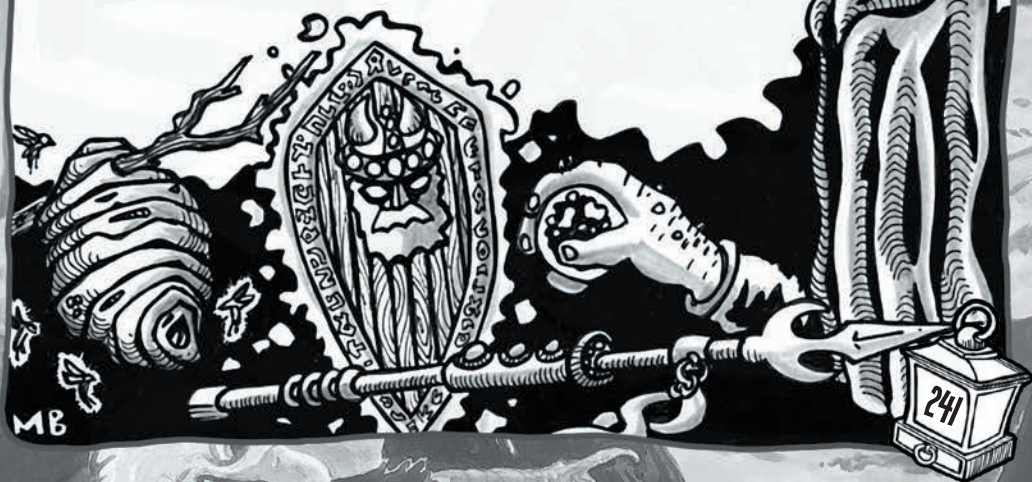


21) Bobugbubilz comes to claim the deceased after the battle has subsided, honestly declaring that he intends to pickle the cadaver and serve it at a great banquet in his own honor, upon the next full moon. If the party fails to yield the body, Bobugbubilz will summon a giant lizard (DCC pg. 420) to challenge the PCs, winner taking the deceased.

22) The King of Elfland appears in the form of a giant great elk, bells hanging from every tine of his antlers. He paws at the ground of the recently deceased. If the dead PC fell with courage, every member of the party receives one Luck point. If the PC fell in dishonor, each loses one Luck point.

23) Greythakk the Bearded Anvil appears as an ethereal 20' tall dwarf. With his large hand hovering over the deceased, he draws the remaining life force from the shell. The skin of the fallen withers and shrinks. The god turns and blows the essence from his hand over the party. Each ally present receives 1hd healing.

24+. The Three Fates arrive offering an uncharacteristic mercy. The party may attempt to resurrect the deceased one more time by uniting their combined wills. But instead of "rolling the body" and determining success by rolling under the deceased's Luck total, the party may add their own luck modifiers to the dead's Luck score (upon death) to increase the target number. If the new roll is under the adjusted target number, the deceased will cough back to life with one hp and no other impairment. If the roll is not a success, the Three Fates take away one Luck from each PC and will summon a storm to follow the PCs for the next 1d7 days.



SULLENLANDS BESTIARY

Unique creatures abound in the Sullenlands! Most are quite regional: the cactipus found in the Bleaklands Desert certainly couldn't survive in the cold north, no more than the frost gnats could withstand the blistering heat of the south. When one adds the recent aberrations created by the effects of the God Mist, the truth is that no one really knows what now haunts the woods, mountains, and deserts of the land, and judges are encouraged to let their imaginations run wild. Here are a few creatures that we do know about!

ABANDONED DISCIPLES

The God Mist creates unlikely monsters. A zealot who loses their connection to a patron or a deity may suddenly find themselves defenseless against the charms of mischievous spirits. Driven mad, these abandoned disciples wander the dark alleys of cities, the isolated valleys of the mountains, and hidden vales in the deep woods, surviving as maniacal hermits and outcasts. Where such hermits congregate (as in larger cities) entire brotherhoods can form, often formed into secret and fanatical armies under the direction of those with the guile to exploit them!

Abandoned Disciple: Init +0; Atk dagger +4 melee (1d4+2) or corrupting touch +2 melee (see below); AC 10; HD 2d8; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2; Reflex +0; Will +4; AL C.

Corrupting touch: The disciple merely needs to seize the target to transfer their corruption and madness. The PC must meet a DC15 Will save or roll 1d4 on the following table: (1.) The affected area receives 1d6 necrotic burn damage. (2.) The touched area burns with a



strange arcane symbol, inflicting 1d6 damage, but providing a +1 boon to any chaotic-aligned spell casting within 10' of the target from now on, until the brand is marred or removed. (3.) The target's eyes grow black, granting 40' of infravision, but causing -1 to any attacks in the daylight for 1d4 hours until the corruption subsides. (4.) The target and the attacker both grapple with lightning energy encasing them. Both must make a Fort save; the lowest result takes 2d6 lightning damage.

Encounter Seeds

City Encounter: As the PCs go about their business engaging in commerce, meditating at a temple, or enjoying the atmosphere of the local tavern, they notice that the crowd begins to slip away hurriedly. Soon they hear an accusing voice from a robed man in the shadows. "The gods have abandoned mankind to test us, to see if we can execute judgment upon the heathen and the heretic. Abandon your belongings and follow us, or on this day you shall cross the threshold into eternity." With that, another 1d8 sunken-eyed disciples will emerge from the shadows, their expressions gaunt and strangely *hungry*...

Forest Encounter: The PCs stumble upon a campsite with two wagons, each with a team of four horses. 1d6+2 bald zealots in bright yellow cloaks and capes hum in unison as one man stokes a fire. Another lifts a branding iron from the embers and approaches a peasant girl tied to one of the wagon wheels. The humming turns into a chant: "Join us! Join us! Join us!"

THE GAHNGATOOK

First encountered in the southern desert regions of the Sullenlands, the Gahngatook are a form of evolved camel spider, gangly with long spear-like arms and legs. They were first discovered in the desert sanctum of Lycrix the Inimitable after his Fourth Ascension, or so his disciples evangelized. The creature itself has the sentience of a cunning wolf, with an appetite for flesh to match. Gahngatook have learned that by appropriating layers of garments from past victims, they can more easily draw in their prey. Each year, they migrate further and further north.

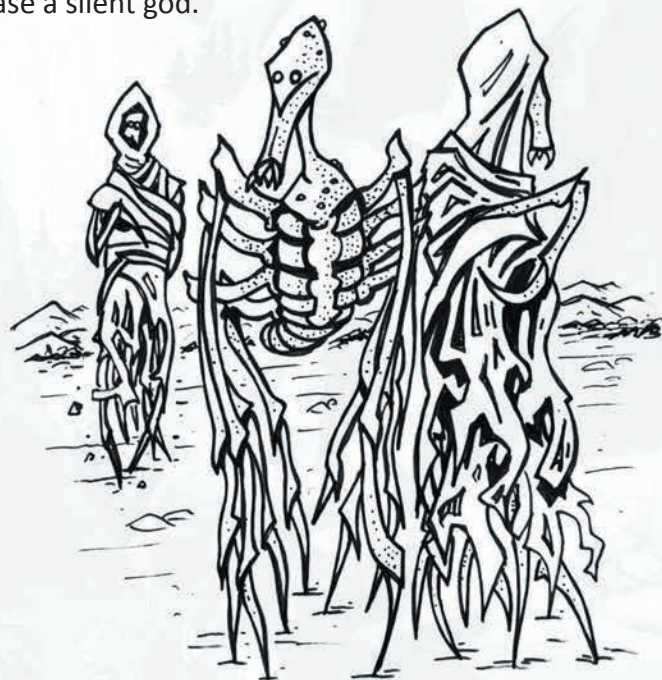


Gahngatook: Init +3; Atk spear +2 melee (1d8); AC 10; HD 2d6; MV 30'; Act 2d20 clothed/4d20 unencumbered; SP (the creature can spend one round discarding its disguise to become unencumbered); SV Fort+3; Reflex+3; Will+0; AL N.

Encounter Seeds

Desert Encounter: Beneath the scorching desert sun, the PCs spot a distant caravan of sorts crossing a high dune. Though somewhat indistinct at this distance, it's clear the figures protect themselves from the sun and the sand by wearing layers of loose wraps from head to toe. After further travel, the party notices that no matter which path they follow, the others seem to pursue a parallel path, always watching from a distance. If approached, the strangers will tuck their heads and keep their true appearance obscured until an opportune time to attack. Otherwise, the Gahngatook will wait until nightfall to ambush their prey.

Ship Encounter: The PCs encounter a ship that passes too-closely to their own in open seas (or as they occupy some relatively lonely waterside dock). Once within striking distance, the Gahngatook will shake off their loose disguises and leap from the ship's decks to confront the PCs. This Gahngatook band of pirates may be lead by a zealot Abandoned Disciple (see above) who has taken to piracy in order to appease a silent god.



GULF HARPIES

Usually encountered within fifty miles of any coastline, gulf harpies have little in common with harpies of legend other than their name. Resembling more a hawk with a spiny



tail than a fantastical beast, gulf harpies acquired their name because their song has a human quality that is often described as voice of a singing child.

While their song holds no threat, their talons do secrete a mild poison that can paralyze smaller creatures and even humans if enough damage is inflicted. The secretions of this hawk are collected by some hunters to create poison for blades and arrows.

Gulf Harpy: Init +3; Atk claw or bite +2 melee (1d4+poison); AC 9; HD 1d6; MV 10', fly 60'; Act 1d20; SP poison DC 6 Fort or paralysis on affected limb for 1d4 rounds, DC escalates by 2 for each successful attack; SV Fort+1; Reflex+3; Will+0; AL N.

Encounter Seeds

Beach Encounter: Anytime the PCs are within a few miles of any coastline, a chance encounter with gulf harpies is possible. Be it at sea, scaling cliffs or exploring rocky shores, travelers should always beware the pilfering fingers of this hawk-like creature.

On any beach, the PCs may hear the shrieks of a mother losing her grip upon the leg of a small child, fighting with a gulf harpy grasping the child's arm in an attempt to carry it away. 1d10 additional harpies swarm about, harassing the mother and any nearby onlookers who attempt to help. Afterwards, the PCs may learn that the child is the sole heir of a local lord who has been threatened for his allegiance to the old King Sullen and his heiress.



Ship Encounter: While resting, the PCs are awakened by the whimpers of a crying child in the Captain's cabin. Upon inspection, they see the captain lying dead upon the floor, his eyes now empty sockets. Beneath the covers on the bed, the blankets rise and fall with each whimper and cry. The PCs will discover 1d4 gulf harpies beneath the covers, feasting on the captain's eye balls and another 1d4 gulf harpies near the cabin's open window.

LONGFISH

The long fish is actually an eel, commonly found in the gulfs of Embergulf Bay or Eldercliffs. They travel in schools and are most noted for having creepy faces with vaguely human characteristics. Legend portends that they are mere shards of a long-dead demi-god whose name has been forgotten by the ages. They are eagerly sought for their meat, which fetches high prices within the cities as a delicacy. Their eyes are also known to have healing qualities when consumed.

Longfish: Init +4; Atk bite +1 melee 1d4-1; AC 5; HD 1d4; MV swim 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort -1; Reflex +4; Will -4; AL N. Tactics: attack in schools of up to 30 fish. **Healing qualities:** the eyes of the longfish, when eaten raw can double the amount of healing received by a night's rest or bed rest. This includes hit points and ability score loss.

Encounter Seeds

River Encounter: As the PCs take river passage, a mysterious flash of light beneath the water peaks their curiosity. Within seconds, they feel an odd "thump" against the bottom of the boat, and soon another. The water begins to thrash wildly as hundreds of Longfish pummel the boat in a frenzy. Each PC needs to succeed on a DC8 Agility check to remain standing. Any check of 3



or less results in the PC falling completely out of the boat, where they are immediately attacked by 1d6 Longfish.

City Encounter: A dangerous cult of abandoned disciples stalk the darkened streets of a coastal city, looking for victims suitable for sacrifice. The PCs may become the targets, or may witness a kidnapping from a distance. In the king's wharf warehouses, the cult meets to appease their absent god by chaining their sacrifice upside down and lowering the bleeding victim slowly by crank into a chummed pool where starving Longfish churn and writhe.

NORTHERN ELM WITCHES

Found in the north-western forests of the Sullenlands, these formidable tree-creatures are the by-product of the dissolution of trust between the original Coven of the Natural Order and their patron mother **She of the Woods**. There were originally 100 witches in the coven, before they abandoned their patron's authority: in a fit of rage she cursed them all to "devolve" to slowly rejoin the earth and merge with its soul. Sentient only in the sense that they retain distant ingrained memories, elm witches now wander the woods as shadows of their former selves. Encounters with an Elm Witch can proceed in any number of ways (see the table below), for the long-dormant personality of each witch lies beneath the surface, impossible to discern at a glance!

Northern Elm Witch: Init +2; Atk claw +4 melee (1d6+1) or spell or curse (see below); AC 16; HD 8d12+24; MV 40'; Act 4d12; SP familiar, spell, curse (the witch can make up to four melee attacks or, two melee attacks and an attempt at a spell casting or a curse); SV Fort +8; Reflex +2; Will +10; AL C.

Curse of the Earthroot: An elm witch can utter a curse as an attack action. This curse can be uttered but once a day and effects up to 1d6 targets within sight of the witch (DC 16 Will Save to resist). On a failed save, the target(s) will feel the earth erupt under their feet as root tendrils rise and immobilize them.

The roots will completely entangle and wrap the target, preventing attacks or spell checks that require movement or gestic-



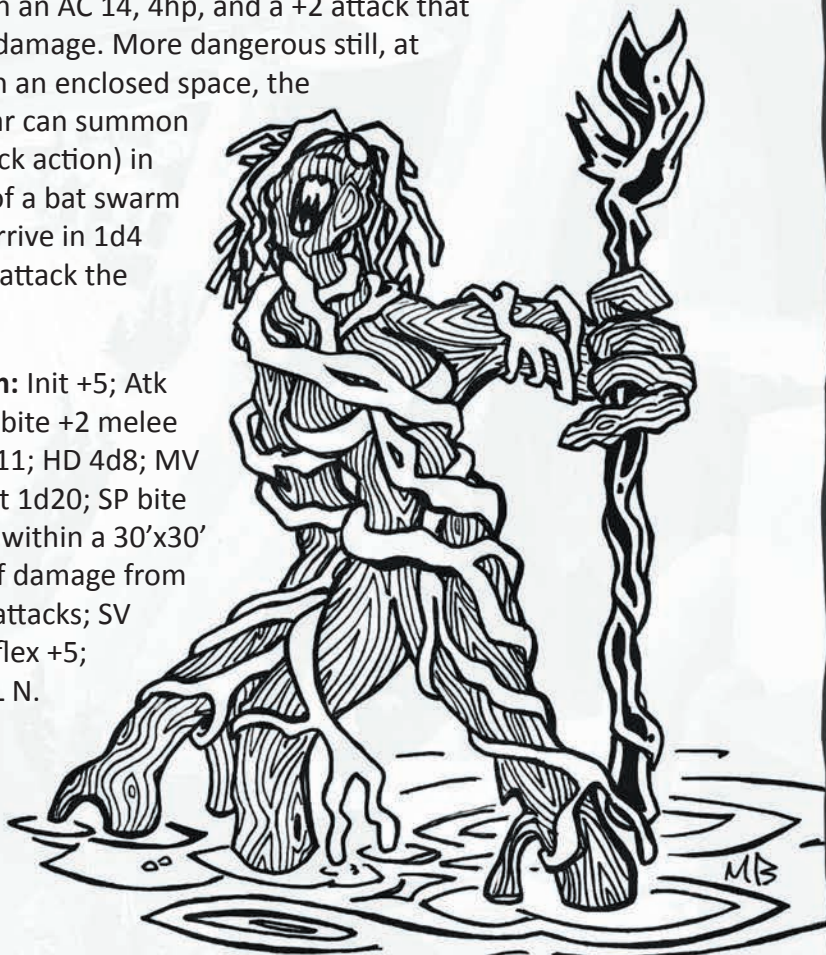
ulation. If immobilized, the target can reattempt the Will Save in place of an attack action each round. The curse is actually a trick of the mind (thus the Will Save) but the PCs are unlikely to pick up on that. If they do, lower the Will Save to DC 12 to reflect that knowledge.

Known Spells: While the Northern Elm Witch has the ability to inflict formidable melee damage with her tree spikes, her arcane knowledge is made up mostly of defensive and target nullifying spells.

The Northern Elm Witch receives a +9 on the following spells: Charm Person (pg.131), Chill Touch (pg.133) Sleep (pg.155), Detect Invisible (pg.165), Fire Resistance (pg. 169), Nythuul's Porcupine Coat (pg. 186), and Scare (pg.191).

Bat Familiar: The bat familiar will act on the same initiative as their witch, with an AC 14, 4hp, and a +2 attack that does 1d3 damage. More dangerous still, at night, or in an enclosed space, the bat familiar can summon aid (1 attack action) in the form of a bat swarm that will arrive in 1d4 rounds to attack the target(s).

Bat Swarm: Init +5; Atk swarming bite +2 melee (1d4); AC 11; HD 4d8; MV Fly 40'; Act 1d20; SP bite all targets within a 30'x30' space, half damage from non-area attacks; SV Fort-1; Reflex +5; Will +0; AL N.



NORTHERN ELM WITCH PERSONALITY TABLE (DI2)

1. Predatory and sadistic
2. Treacherous and scheming
3. Aggressive and territorial
4. Cruel and demented
5. Scornful and resenting
6. Suspicious and power-hungry
7. Sanctimonious and intolerant
8. Deceptive and insincere
9. Absentminded and noncommittal
10. Preoccupied and irritable
11. Sedentary and uncaring
12. High-minded and benevolent

Encounter Seeds

Forest Encounter: Encounters with this creature are so rare that most believe their existence to be a myth. But it must be also taken into account that anyone who meets this aberration face to face will rarely live to tell the tale.

While traveling in any deep woods (especially in the north), the PCs may stumble upon a coven of $1d3+2$ elm witches torturing a band of gypsies, along with their horses. The humans are stretched and tied to trees, forced to watch as the horses are skinned alive. There is a good chance the PCs will arrive upon the scene undetected, as the witches are focused on their task. With observation, it's clear that within the hour, no man, woman or beast within the captured party will remain alive. To increase the party's chance for survival, the judge should roll a personality trait for each witch, and role-play the encounter accordingly. Without some sort of benevolence (or apathy) from at least one of the witches, low-level PCs may find themselves in over their heads.



Mountain Encounter: In remote hill country, 1d6 Abandoned Disciples wail and rend their clothes as they perform a chaotic dance before a large wooden totem. After the party stumbles upon the rite, the disciples will demand that the PCs leave all earthly possessions at the foot of the totem as penance for disturbing the ritual. In short order a swarm of bats will encircle the PCs, forming a 40' radius circle, trapping the adventurers inside. To attempt to leave the circle prompts an attack from the bat swarm. The totem is actually an elm witch and the disciples will be adamant that the PCs worship her. If the party refuses, they will have to fight their way out!

OAK IMPS

Oak imps live amongst the rocks and boulders that stretch along the long miles of river shore to the west and south of Bitterweed Barrow. They possess a primitive language, displaying basic sentience. They often camouflage themselves as driftwood, lashing out with their long limbs to entangle passersby, wrapping the victims and constricting them to the point of asphyxiation. Once dead, the victim is pulled into a hole amongst the rocks of the shore, providing weeks of fertilization. Oak imps almost always achieve a surprise round before initiative is rolled.

Oak Imps: Init (after surprise round) -2; Atk claw +3 melee (1d4+ SP entangle); AC 14; HD 2d6; MV 15'; Act 1d20; SP entangle, target is immobilized by various limbs, DC16 Strength to break. Each round of entanglement causes an additional 1d4+1 damage; double damage from fire attacks; SV Fort +4; Reflex -2; Will +3; AL N.

Encounter Seeds

Graveyard Encounter: Any shortcut taken by the PCs might take them through a forgotten and abandoned graveyard in the woods. The adventurers will notice the desecration of many grave sites, with opened graves, burst caskets and strewn bones. The violators are not grave robbers, however, they are oak imps! The creatures will attempt to drag the PCs into the open graves, where they work furiously to bury the poor PCs alive!

River Encounter: On any trip up or down the rivers within the Sullenlands, the PCs may come upon the stacked debris of a log jam in the waters ahead. Any attempt to clear the detritus reveals that among the floating refuse live 1d6+2 oak imps, who will lash out, attempting to pull the PCs overboard.





SOUL SCUM

Named by terrified wizards, Soul Scum are made from the essence of the unclaimed dead, lost in the God Mist and swirling around the ethereal planes. With no deity to bar their entry, Soul Scum reclaim any piece of the mortal realms that they can latch onto, attempting to recreate a twisted semblance of their previous forms. They seek only to devour the living, incorporating their host's parts into their own foul shapes.

Soul Scum: Init+1; Atk bite +3 melee (1d8) and pseudopod +2 melee (1d8+ slime); AC 12; HD 3d8; MV 25'; Act 2d20; SP undead traits, half damage from piercing and slashing weapons; SV Fort +1; Ref +1; Will +2; AL C.

Slime effects: Roll 1d6 (1.) The affected area turns black with rot, causing an additional 1d4 damage. (2.) The essence of the soul scum enters the wound, creating a mental bond. The creature anticipates the PC's every move, gaining a +4 to AC against that PC. (3.) Pieces of the soul scum attach to the PC. The character is fixed in place until succeeding at a DC 14 Strength check.



(4.) DC 10 Fort check or the slime causes temporary paralysis for 1d3 rounds. (5.) The slime attaches, creeping toward the PC's weapon. On the PC's next turn in the initiative he or she must try to shake the slime with a DC14 Reflex save or the weapon is covered, causing a -2 to attacks.

If the weapon is not uncovered by the PC's next turn, the rusted weapon receives a permanent -2 to its attacks. (6.) The essence of the soul scum enters the wound. The PC must make a DC13 Will save or on his next turn in the initiative, he will yield to the creature's attacks, allowing the assimilation (additional 1d4+2 damage). This process repeats every round until the PC is either completely consumed or breaks the mind control.

Encounter Seeds

Inn Encounter: As the PCs seek rest and safety in their rented rooms, an eerie light awakens them in the wee hours. The swirling form of dozens of fire-flies turns into the grotesque face of the rotting dead. Perhaps the soul scum is drawn to some recent spellburn by the party's wizard or elf, or the aura surrounding a cleric who is slightly separated from their god by disapproval, opening themselves up to outside spiritual influences.



Whatever the reason, the soul scum has found their prey, and seeks to absorb them while they struggle in their weakness.

Treasure Encounter: At long last, the party's quest to find the treasure chest of legend has come to an end! But once opened, the treasure is there as foretold, but also present is the ancient evil of primeval soul scum. A thousand lost souls now seek to enlarge their numbers by absorbing the PCs into their collective consciousness. The primeval soul scum is certainly the most dangerous of all these swirling aberrations.

Primeval Soul Scum: Init+4; Atk claw +3 melee (1d4) or pseudopod +5 melee (1d8+ slime; see bestiary description); AC 13; HD 4d8; MV 25'; Act 2d20; SP undead traits, half damage from piercing and slashing weapons; SV Fort +3; Ref +3; Will +6; AL C.

WILDERGRUNTS

While native to the forests surrounding Ishlachyren, these small woodland boars (fierce in disposition like their cousins the mongoose) can be found as far north as Bitterweed Barrow. They travel in "packs" or "broods" of up to fifty; they will attack if they feel their territory has been invaded, usually overcoming quarry by their sheer numbers. They live underground in small burrows, and despite their ferocious nature are sought by trappers for their fine pelts. Brave hunters also find them satisfactory on a roasting spit above the evening campfire.

Wildergrunt: Init +1; Atk claw or bite +1 melee (1d4); AC 8; HD 1d4; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SV Fort+0; Reflex+1; Will-1; AL N. Tactics: a pack of wildergrunts will usually attack when defending their territory in one surge and will quickly disperse to their burrows when one fourth of their number are injured or destroyed.

Encounter Seeds

Woodland Encounter: Wildergrunts are as popular as venison and rabbit for the hunter whose rations have run low, since the creatures are as plentiful as wild mushrooms in the many forests of the Sullenlands. On one such hunt, a pack of wildergrunts will lead the hunter into the deep forests. Only when they are ready will the rabid creatures turn on the party, revealing that the PCs



are now surrounded by $1d20+4$ ravenous wildergrunts who have now become the hunters!

Swamp Encounter: “Who thought this shortcut was a good idea?” But it’s too late now to turn back. Ahead, beyond the murk, fog, and dead trees, a fire burns within a clearing that rises just above the muddy water’s edge. A peculiar sight greets the party as they approach the clearing: an albino wildergrunt atop a tree stump, chittering at an entire brood of his brethren.

From behind the lead animal, a tree begins to rise, taking on a vaguely humanoid form. It towers over the creatures, who have now entered a frenzy. The creature is an elm witch, and eventually she turns to face the party, pointing a long twisted finger in their direction! All of the animals turn as one to face the party, their red eyes gleaming in the darkness...



RANDOM ROADSIDE ENCOUNTERS

When the party wanders the backroads of the Sullenlands, anything can happen.

All of the creatures represented in these scenarios can be found in the DCC core book with the exception of the Deep Elves which are found in the Bellows of Bromforge mini-adventure. (Feel free to modify the monsters with foes of your own creation!)

1. As you travel along the road, a sudden and strange bolt of green lightning lashes out into the forest ahead. As you proceed down the road, you discover a tree has been knocked down, trapping an enormous ugly manlike creature beneath it. The creature is bleeding, and appears too weak to fight. A pale woman dressed in layers of dirty, torn rags places candles in a pattern around the creature's body. (Witch enslaving an ogre)
2. As you crest a small hill, you see three small men sitting on a flat rock above the road, tending a small fire. One of the men is turning a spit above the flames. The three pay you no mind, but as you pass by you spy that the meat on the spit is a small arm and hand! You then notice with alarm that one of the men around the fire has no left arm, only a bandaged stub. (Deep Elves first time above ground)
3. The wind picks up as the sound of distant thunder rumbles to the west. Off the road, a man can be seen through the boughs, his hands chained to two separate trees, and a gag tightly tied around his head and mouth. The campsite around him appears to have been trampled and pilfered; his belongings scattered hither and yon. (A traveling bard has had his valuable fiddle stolen. He will pay 100 gp to get it back. If retrieved, he will promptly utter a spell that will transform the fiddle back into his young wife, who he had transformed to keep her safe from the bandits).
4. Three halflings have dismounted from their ponies to allow them to drink from a roadside trough. As you



approach, a group of bandits emerge from a cave to rush the halflings. As the attack commences, a mighty winged creature swoops down and gores one of the halfling's horses with its vicious claws. Even the bandits freeze as the creature turns its gaze to you. (Griffon interrupts a robbery in progress).

5. A waft of distant smoke fills your nostrils, and soon you see a burning, over-turned wagon on the road ahead. Four soldiers lie on the ground. Three of them appear dead, but one clings to life. "Ambush..." he whispers. "Eight little gut-eaters who came to free Krug the Impatient on his way to trial. North... they headed n...". The soldier gasps out his final breath and dies. (A famous, and wanted, bugbear thug has been freed by a band of eight goblins).
6. Many miles from the nearest town, you hear a distant voice shouting. As you move closer, you discover the source is a lady in fine apparel running across a field toward you, her hands holding up her long gown as she runs. Behind her, a hill rises, full of ancient grave markers. Amongst the stones and mausoleums, a funeral party screams as they attempt to fend off the attacks of a gaggle of winged creatures roughly the size of humans. Suddenly, one of the horrid creatures spots the lady running across the field, and takes flight in pursuit. (1d6 Harpies harassing a funeral).
7. You pass a party of dwarves who are clearing large boulders from a side road that branches from the way you are traveling. As you move by, they talk merrily amongst themselves, singing to the rhythm of their picks and shovels striking the ground. After you have passed, however, you feel a gust of wind, and the air grows suddenly silent. As you look back, you notice all of the dwarves now lie unconscious upon the ground. The hard-packed earth appears ripped open, and two bald humans crawl up from the darkness, dressed in black robes. They both produce twisted daggers, and each kneels above a dwarf, poised to strike! (Two Hollow Ones disturbed from their sanctum).



8. On a distant field, a farmer plows with his mule and offers a friendly wave from afar as you approach. Suddenly, one hundred yards to his east, an explosion of green and purple smoke disintegrates his barn in a massive pillar of dust. The farmer drops his harness and dashes across the field toward the barn, pulling a short stick from his pockets and waving it at the dust plume as he runs. When he draws near, a serpent-like head emerges from the dust, and then another, and another, all seemingly attached to one lizard-like body! (Captured Hydra escaping a novice wizard charged to guard him).
9. To the north, your gaze is drawn to an abandoned keep that has fallen to ruin, its crumbling castle walls overgrown with vegetation. Three horses are tied to a fallen tree nearby, accompanied by three elven women. They seem unaware of your presence as they pull a thick tapestry, rolled and bound, from the back of one horse. Without ceremony, they begin to dump it into a nearby well. But as they lift it over the lip of the well, it's clear that something is squirming inside the tapestry! After it has vanished into the depths of the well, the women quickly re-mount and ride off away from you. (An accidentally summoned Hell Hound has been dumped into a dry well. Unbeknownst to the elves, the dry well leads to an underground burrow occupied by three vagrant mining families, recently dispatched from their jobs.)
10. The woods to the east have encountered the woodman's axe and have been cleared of their lumber. The road before you seems recently widened, and a small wooden outpost has been constructed, seemingly to serve the needs of the lumberjacks and workers of the forest that mill about. As you water your horses, you are startled by sudden loud cracks and snaps where the forest still stands, the tree tops swaying to reveal a one-eyed giant arriving to survey the scene. After a moment, he picks up a nearby log and begins to pummel the outpost, the stable, and anyone he sees scampering within reach. (Cyclops lamenting the loss of the natural beauty he loved, looking for a sentient tree that was once his friend).



THE JUDGE'S RETORT!

Your player rolls for an attack. They call out a number. You respond, "That's a hit. Roll for damage."

But you don't have to leave it there! Every thrust and parry can be different. Use the following phrases as guides to antagonize your players, and bring them to action! Or to magnify their epic victory, and reward their daring. It all depends on a roll of the dice!

EVEN MISSES ARE EXCITING

1. Your blow bounces harmlessly off the thick hide/armor/scales/ etc. of your foe.
2. Your opponent deftly dodges your clumsy attack.
3. Your clumsy strike triggers mockery: "Ha! You are obviously no warrior! Perhaps you should take up haberdashery or dress-making!"
4. Your foe easily deflects the blow and casually spits on the ground.
5. Sparks fly as the two weapons meet in mid-air. Steel against steel sends a shiver down your arm!
6. Your attack lands far too softly as your foe laughs at your feeble attempt.
7. Your opponent sneers: "The Gods are not with you today interloper. Consider surrender!"
8. There is a loud clang as your foe counters your blow with fierce resistance. You do no harm.
9. Your strike is deflected as your skilled foe steers your weapon neatly into the ground. Perhaps you are in over your head?
10. You deliver a mighty blow, but your foe seems to absorb the damage with little effect!



YOU CALL THAT A BLOW?

1. Your foe seems surprised as you deliver a glancing blow.
2. After your strike, the edge of your blade is stained with a small amount of blood. Victory is near!
3. Your foe appraises you with new respect: "Perhaps this scuffle will be more interesting than I first thought."
4. You have angered your foe by drawing blood and ruining his shirt.
5. Your blade finds a weak spot in your foe's armor, and a trickle of blood now leaks through the gap!
6. Your foe staggers as they feel the quick sting of your weapon.
7. You manage to inflict a flesh wound: not deep, but blood is flowing!
8. Your foe snarls with (false?) bravado: "I have experienced more troublesome bites from a mosquito!"
9. You foe covers the small wound you've delivered with their hand and glares at you menacingly.
10. A small spray of blood shoots out to form a thin streak across your opponents face.

THAT'S A SOLID HIT...

1. Your aim is true and your weapon finds purchase. Your foe gasps in alarm.
2. The sound of your blade piercing flesh and bone is music to your ears.
3. Your foe staggers, but finds their feet once more: "Skilled as you may be, this day you shall die by my hand!"
4. Your weapon now glistens with a thick layer of fresh blood.
5. Your foe reels briefly before issuing a primal scream in your direction.
6. If your enemy lives, he will bear a great scar to remember this battle!



7. Your foe's eyes flash in anger and surprise: "Curse you and your lucky blow! You shall not repeat it!"
8. Your foe staggers and takes his deity's name in vain.
9. Your foe eyes you warily: "I shall tell your widow that you were a worthy opponent!"
10. Your opponent issues a garbled curse as they spit out a volley of teeth.

YOU HAVE THE UPPER HAND...

1. Your assault delivers a grievous wound. Your foe's skin is growing more gray by the moment!
2. The ground between you and your foe is soaked with blood, and it doesn't appear to be your color!
3. Your foe's voice is shallow and strangled: "I shall be waiting for you in the Nine Hells!"
4. Your foe's artery spurts blood as they clumsily attempt to hold the wound shut with one hand.
5. Your enemy staggers and curses you, your lineage, and your bastard offspring.
6. Your opponent's face shows fear for the first time.
7. Your foe staggers but renews their assault: "If it's my day to die, then I shall take you with me!"
8. You wonder how your foe is still standing: no one can lose this much blood and stay on their feet!
9. Is that a death rattle you detect in your enemy's ragged breath?
10. Your foe stands and sneers, though hemorrhaging blood at a deadly pace.

THE FINAL BLOW...

1. Your foe crumples and falls to their knees, before slumping in silence to one side.
2. Before falling your foe manages to gasp: "Tell my mother... I am sorry."



3. Your weapon delivers a final and fatal blow.
4. There is first a sharp snap, then a grisly crackle, and finally a gruesome pop as your enemy staggers and falls limply to the ground.
5. As your foe wallows in a pool of blood, you can almost sense them beginning their journey across the river of death.
6. With their last breath, your foe whispers: "I am defeated... deliver my weapon to my family... please."
7. Your enemy's weapon clangs to the ground as they fall. They whisper a final prayer before the end.
8. Your fallen foe's eyes are full of hate: "May my death be a curse upon your name, and your children's name"
9. It would seem after a long and unproductive life, your foe has at last met their well-deserved doom.
10. Your foe seems shocked as the blood pours out of their body: "It was not supposed... to end... this way."



RANDOM ITEMS PILFERED BY A PICK-POCKET (D30)

1. A pet scorpion (1d4 damage).
2. A piece of chalk and two copper pieces.
3. An apple core and two rusty nails.
4. A half-burned candle, three matches, and a raven feather.
5. A damp handkerchief and five copper pieces.
6. Three fish hooks (1hp damage) and a turkey call.
7. A small hour glass and an ornate brass key.
8. A small pouch of raisins and cheese; two silver pieces.
9. A compass and a glass eye.
10. A scrap of paper with five names on it. Three are marked out. You happen to know that those three people recently died in "accidents".
11. A small bottle of perfume and a dainty pouch with 5 gold pieces.
12. A bronze padlock and key from King Ravianwhurst's royal armory.



13. A bar of soap and a bag of live crickets.
14. A pouch with sealing wax and a constable's signet ring.
15. An engraved silver flask and a snap case containing spectacles.
16. A scrap of fabric with a crude map drawn upon it. At the bottom, in Elven is written: "two here have seen Redgold's daughter".
17. A bag of marbles and a very slender jade dagger.
18. A small spyglass and a goatskin pouch of 12 gold pieces.
19. A holy symbol of Greythaak the Bearded Anvil etched upon a silver bar (worth 10 gold pieces).
20. A whetstone, a deck of playing cards, and a locket of the moon goddess. (worth 15 gold pieces)
21. A smoking pipe and a pouch of tobacco; a hearing cone.
22. A money belt containing 20 gold pieces and a flask of mercury.
23. A thieves kit wrapped inside a rabbit pelt.
24. A small skull carved of gold (worth 25 gold pieces), and a vial of blood.
25. An emerald broach with King Redgold's crest engraved upon its back.
26. A sheriff's badge and a ring of four iron keys.
27. A parchment wrapped around a copper fetish. The parchment contains a one time spell scroll Comprehend Languages (**DCC rulebook page 136**).
28. A leather pouch of odd dice carved from precious gemstones (worth 80 gold pieces).
29. A piece of sapphire wrapped in linen. Oddly, the sapphire glows whenever storm clouds gather and thunder begins to rumble.
30. A magistrate's small satchel, inside a pardon signed by King Ravianwhurst.



RANDOM QUESTS FOR THE HIRING TREE (D16)

When your players dare to open the lantern drawer and tempt the tree's curse, here are a few quests they might find worth pursuing. Feel free to adjust the quests payments to fit the economy of your campaign. Also, take the liberty to complicate each quest with moral quandaries and unexpected challenges along the way.

1. "Deliver this pouch to my cousin Yalrak in Bromforge, he of the Braanks clan. He awaits it, and will double what gold you find with this request." Inside the drawer is a leather pouch containing four cursed coins of silver. The carrier of this pouch must endure the temporary loss of two Luck points until the pouch is delivered. Also in the drawer is a payment of 100 gold (with the promise of 200 more upon delivery).
2. "Our daughter was jilted at the altar by that scurvy bilge rat Garrad Petard who works the docks in Eldercliffs. He took the dowry and did run. Bring his worthless hide to this tree, alive, and tie him to it. Once you've done it, 'tis all upon us. Your hands are clean of the matter." The drawer contains 50 gold.
3. "I am perplexed by unseemly dreams. A remarkable gentleman appears to me like a whisper in the night and now, two slight marks are upon my neck. I fear the worst. I crave raw meat. I am known in this town and cannot reveal myself, but if you can destroy him, perhaps I might be free once again. He lives in the derelict keep beneath the lighthouse. I will know immediately of his demise. I shall provide 100 gold and thrice more upon success. I will find my champion." The drawer contains 100 gold and the promise of 300 more.
4. "That foul Yarylgritch is upon us. He searches for the phylactery herein. It is not clear whether it is his, or that of some rival. It is cursed, we know that. Something lives within. Convey it safely to the alchemist at Eldercliffs who lives beneath the shadow of the castle. He has ways of hiding it from a mystical gaze." 300 gold pieces in drawer.



5. "We would be indebted to you if our cousin Guldava Tick were found in the City in the Cliffs. She has not written in two full moons; 'tis not her nature. It be a long journey from Embergulf, so here are 200 gold for you to quell our worries. Send a raven or a pigeon back here by the next full moon, or we will figure you to be derelict in our concerns." 200 gold pieces in drawer.
6. "Ma and papa are gone. They are dead I think in the woods behind our house. Will you tell grandpa in the mountains north of town? He may come to me. His house abides near the old black rock. I remember it as a day's ride. He smokes a crooked pipe and laughs a lot." Six copper pieces and a small carving of a frog. The note is written in a child's scrawl. This can be played straight, or the frog could be a needed component for an evil necromancer.
7. "There is a black goat, one white ear arriving on The Damsel next Tuesday. Buy it, take it to the thatch house at the end of Mulberry at midnight that night, tie the goat and knock thrice. Job done." 30 gold are in the drawer (it will require 5 gold to buy the goat).
8. "Convey this ledger to Ravianwhurst's man at Eldercliffs. It is sealed, as he expects to receive it. Break the seal and risk the curse of the tree. Maintaining your commitment to discretion is advised." Inside the drawer is a small leather-bound ledger (sealed by wax and the signet of the king's crest), and 50 gold.
9. "That troubadour who strums the lute at the docks at twilight? His satire against the new king has marked him for an assassin's blade. I know not who or when, but overhearing hints of the plan, I need to clear my conscious. I cannot challenge whatever lurks in the shadows; perhaps you can." There are 75 gold pieces in the drawer. Completion of this quest returns all Luck to the party.



10. "Straightforward this be... I am the regent seller on the southern docks and need lizard bark from the elms of Ishlachyren. I grow too old for travel, and too impatient to test the whims of elven-kind. No curse upon you... just the offer of 10 gold per pound. The elves in the south woods can be more accommodating." No gold within: just the promise of payment.
11. "We toil under a great burden. Ravianwhurst is a tyrant and the borrowed throne only fattens his coffers. The usurper's caravans leave with our hoarded goods every fortnight after the waning crescent. Burn the wagons; keep the spoils; spare the civilians. Join the people's revolt!" 50 gold pieces in the drawer.
12. "I am lost in this cursed God Mist, for my bond with Bobug-bubilz wains. I fear my paranoia has overtaken me. I am sure I will kill again. I am found deep in my cups each night at the tavern near the northern docks (the one with the coal wagon out front). A few drops of this should do it when I am distracted. Three moles have I on my left cheek. Would you have courage where I have none?" 40 gold pieces and a small vial of poison in the drawer.
13. "I have heard of a town in the north where a castle rests on the clouds. It is said that a great wizard performs miraculous generosityes for the pure of heart. Would you take my petition



to him? I know that it is far, but I ask nothing beyond placing the parchment in his benevolent hands.” There are 43 gold pieces and a rolled parchment in the drawer. Completion of this quest also removes any corruption effects acquired within the last month.

14. “We have found and hanged eleven of the pirates who looted The Gallant Goose last winter. One more there be, hidden in Bromforge. Being not a dwarf, but a wicked elf, he should be not hard to suss out. Belethren he’s called, though other names could he be using. Bring at least his head to the constable at the docks here in Embergulf. Bring him alive that we may see him hang and triple shall be your reward. We think a month should suffice before the curse takes ye.” There are 200 gold pieces in the drawer. Return Belethren alive and receive another 400.
15. “Ask not the first question that leaps to your thoughts. I seek a hair or perhaps a fingernail clipping from our beloved king. A brush filled with strands would be better. I am old and slow... in body, not of thought. But benefit the Sullenlands you would. Acquire it how you will. Return to me before the winter solstice: that time should be sufficient. Remember the tree’s curse before you abandon your wits. Throw this pouch in the fire of the blacksmith near the bay. I will see the green smoke and find you.” There are 175 gold pieces and a small fabric pouch wrapped in string in the drawer.
16. “Our ransacked temple has lost its symbol of hope, the totem of the enthralling beetle. It stands the height of a grown halfling, carved of ivory. It is beloved and sorely missed. The authorities have dismissed the theft, and though we despise this recourse, we are found without resources to reacquire it from the Brotherhood of the Severed Thumb (that guild of thieves and ill-bred thugs), whom we suspect since we resisted their extortions. Return it before the Festival of the Wandering Mongrel. If you fail, return the ransom to our temple so that we may seek hands elsewhere, and the curse will be forgiven. There are 400 gold pieces in the drawer and a list of known Severed Thumbs operatives. (Gracy Gilwater, Benthall Lathum, Ned the Blade Breaker). Completing this quest removes all disapproval from any Lawful or neutral cleric.



DIO RANDOM HIRELINGS AND HENCHMEN

So your adventuring party needs a few good hands to carry supplies, navigate the wilderness, or man the oars? Here are a few colorful characters that might be coaxed into service with the promise of coin. The higher the roll, the better quality of the servant. See **DCC rule-book page 310** for helpful information regarding the payment and upkeep of hirelings.

1. **Ivan the Truly Terrible:** A northern gypsy-turned-adventurer. He is an inept swordsman looking for extra coin to support his twelve children scattered across the Sullenlands. Init -3; Atk rusty shortsword -1 melee(1d6-1); AC 8; HP 3; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort -1; Ref -3; Will +0; AL N. Equipment: 1 rusty sword, a deck of cards, a pouch containing 3 copper pieces.
2. **Barticus Tinker:** A one-eyed halfling sporting an eye-patch and a wooden peg leg. He's a retired sailor who carries a pet frog in his breast pocket whom he claims speaks to him in times of dire stress. Init +0; Atk dagger +0 melee (1d4); AC 8; HP 4; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +0; Ref +0; Will -1; AL N. Equipment: 1 dagger, 1 frog, 1 pipe and tobacco; 4 copper pieces.
3. **Juanita Pratt:** A loud and brash mountain of a woman with a mouth full of rotting teeth. She can out drink the stoutest dwarf. Init -1; Atk club +0 melee(1d4+1); AC 9; HP 4; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2; Ref -1; Will +0; AL N. Equipment: 1 club, 1 lantern, pouch with 8 copper pieces.
4. **Gordo the Mute Bard:** Once a member of a traveling troupe, Gordo fell victim to an offended sheriff who had the bard's tongue removed for "heresy against the king's man." Init +1; Atk dagger +1 melee(1d4+1); AC 9; HP 5; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +0; Ref +1; Will +2; AL L. Equipment: 1 dagger, 1 lute, pouch containing 2 silver pieces.
5. **Bindle Braank:** Young dwarven apothecary apprentice looking to earn enough coin to start his own business back in Bromforge.
Init +1; Atk mace +1 melee(1d6); AC 10; HP 5; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2; Ref +1; Will +1; AL L. Equipment: 1 mace, 1 pouch with two applications of clot-moss (see alchemical herbs section), one pouch containing 5 silver pieces.



6. **Lily Swan:** A tom-boyish human female on the run from her family after jilting the local constable's son at the altar. She vows to never return to Bitterweed Barrow. Init +1; Atk short sword +1 melee(1d6+1); AC 10; HP 5 MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +0; Ref +1; Will +1; AL N. Equipment 1 short sword, 1 yard of linen, 1 jar of honey; 1 purse containing 3 silver pieces.
7. **Cecil the Unwashed:** A six-and-a-half foot tall brute, slow of mind, with an affinity for the care of small animals. Former lumberjack. Init +0; Atk +1 battle-axe melee(1d10-1); AC 11; HP 5; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2; Ref +0; Will -3; AL L. Equipment: 1 battle-axe, 1 live rabbit in a shoulder sack, 1 whetstone, 2 copper pieces.
8. **Grayson Brogue:** A known thief with a reputation for picking pockets and a talent for picking locks. If given the opportunity, he will certainly try to ply his trade against his new employers. Init +2; Atk dagger +2 melee(1d4+2) or poisoned dart +2 missile fire (1d4+1d3 poison); AC 10; HP 6; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +1; Ref +2; Will +2; AL N. Equipment: 1 dagger, 1 dart, 1 thieves kit (+2 to pick locks, trained die), silk purse with 5 gold pieces.
9. **Illydia Willowbreeze:** A war-painted elven female taking a year-long pilgrimage to acquaint herself with the strange customs of the outlanders beyond Ishlachyren. Init +1; Atk javelin +2 melee or missile fire (1d6+4); AC 12; HP 6; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +1; Ref +1; Will +1; AL N. Equipment: 1 javelin, hide armor, 2 applications of quick-root (see alchemical herbs section), and a pendant with an ornate tree adorned with jewels.
10. **Thraxx the Basher:** A devout follower of Greythaak the Bearded Anvil and a former guard of Bromforge, dismissed after losing his left arm in battle. He seeks his adventure now in mercenary work. Init +1; Atk battle-axe +2 melee (1d10+1); AC 12; HP 8; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +3; Ref +1; Will +2; AL L. Equipment: 1 battle-axe, 1 vial of holy water, 1 book of dwarven poetry, 1 pouch containing 12 gold pieces.





TIPS ON TYING THE ADVENTURES TOGETHER

Nebin Pendlebrook's *Perilous Pantry*, *The Frost Fang Expedition*, and *The Crypt in Cadaver Canyon* were all written before *The Sullenlands Campaign Setting* was brought to life. Because of this, you'll find no mention of the God Mist, the lost princess, nor the orchestrations of the Dark Chorus within their pages. But that doesn't mean it is difficult to integrate those adventures into the Sullenlands narrative! First off, we now have a map that shows where these locations are located in relation to each other.

This should streamline the judge's task of planting narrative seeds, based on where the PCs are now, and what the surrounding areas might reveal when the PCs go exploring. It behooves the judge to understand the lore of the Sullenlands, so that you'll be able to seed knowledge to your players gradually, without obvious and distracting 'info dumps'. Doing so will allow you to establish cohesive campaign themes through natural interaction with your players. Conversations between your PCs and the NPCs they encounter can easily be steered toward the major concerns across the lands: including major points of interest like the God Mist, the impostor king, and the disappearance of the princess heir. Your clerics, elves, and wizards will no doubt feel the stirring of the Dark Chorus and sense evil on the horizon. Here are a few points in each of the first three adventures that can provide good opportunities to help the mythos of the Sullenlands come to life:



NEBIN PENDLEBROOK'S PERILOUS PANTRY AND BITTERWEED BARROW

Being a 0-level funnel, it's expected that the beginning PCs know little-to-nothing about the wider world around them. Remember... the smaller the world the players begin with, the more mystery and wonder awaits them when they do go exploring!

The New King Ravianwhurst: Since Bitterweed Barrow is dependent on trade from the south and Eldercliffs, the little village and its constable will have quickly feigned loyalty to King Ravianwhurst. Beneath the surface however, loyalties still lie with the Sullens.

The God Mist: At 0-level, your PCs will likely have little opportunity to encounter the effects of the God Mist. However, there will be opportunities to learn about it when they encounter the trapped wizard **Varooth Moss** in the adventure's final chapter. Once freed, the mage may inform the PCs that he "senses a great silence across the voids." And that he must, "research this most-concerning matter". Perhaps he could learn more if the party escorted him to visit an old friend in the north... a wise old wizard by the name of **Dagon the Doleful**?

THE FROST FANG EXPEDITION AND NEVERTHAWES

If Varooth Moss has convinced the PCs to escort him to Dagon in Neverthawes, they can likely learn much about the 'void silence of the God Mist'. Spellcasters will be made aware of the increasing danger of corruption while employing magic (which might help them understand why the old wizard has separated himself from the citizens of this northern village).

The New King Ravianwhurst: Well away from the reach of the new impostor king, edicts that make their way to the town's leaders have been virtually unheeded. Rumors are circulating throughout the town however, that the mad wizard Dagon the Doleful has hidden away the missing princess in his floating castle, either as a hostage, or as an honored guest. These rumors are unfounded idle gossip without merit. Or so they say...



The God Mist: It would be perfectly reasonable to blame Dagon's madness on the God Mist. Varooth Moss may suggest as much. Varooth may strongly urge the party's magic users to use great caution while employing the arcane arts. He himself may swear off magic, committing to a self-induced week-long sleep in order to explore the subject in his dreams (giving the judge an excuse to exclude him from accompanying the party.)

The Dark Chorus: The party will come face-to-face with one of the Chorus' dark trilogy in **Malotoch the Carrion Crow Goddess**. Regardless of the outcome with Dagon, this is a great opportunity for the players to learn about Malotoch's plan to "rule above all." She may challenge party wizards, elves, and clerics to "abandon your gods, and pledge allegiance to the Dark Chorus... the world will soon be laid to waste. My carrion children will feast upon the unbeliever's fetid flesh!"

Regardless of whether the PCs save Neverthawes or not, Varooth Moss may now realize that Malotoch is behind the death and corruption of his dear friend Dagon. He also knows that his fellow brother in magic would never align himself with the Carrion Crow Goddess. He has heard of a spellcaster who specializes in the study of chaotic gods, seemingly without succumbing to their twisted temptations. Her name is **Ala Leann**, and she lives far away to the south, across the Bleaklands in a city hidden amongst the desert cliffs...

THE CRYPT IN CADAVER CANYON AND THE CITY IN THE CLIFFS

Whether the PCs have arrived at the City in the Cliffs immediately after The Frost Fang Expedition, or the need to level them up has taken them through another module or two, the desert city can be an excellent location to learn about the God Mist and other campaign themes.

The New King Ravianwhurst: The Council of Thirteen are somewhat split on their allegiances to the new king. While they are not especially beholden to outside commerce and are somewhat isolated from the king's reach, a few members have enough assets in Embergulf and Eldercliffs that they are obligated by greed to remain loyal. Others would be willing to align themselves with anyone who opposes the pretender. Regardless, the members of



the council, and the many merchants and traders in the city are excellent sources of gossip and conversation about the politics of the Sullenlands!

The God Mist: Ala Leann will be glad to accept a meeting with the PCs, and by consulting dusty tomes and brittle scrolls, will lay out what she knows about the alignment of the thirteen moons and the causes of the God Mist (and the dangers of practicing magic in these dark times).

Of course, she and the city have more immediate problems and she will implore the party to first appease Buldakatak's curse by finding Guldava Tick. Afterwards, she will gratefully advise the party, laying out the plans of the Dark Chorus. She might even have information about a race of cannibalistic elves bred deep underground: a potential army of ancient evil preparing to overwhelm the surface world! (See the **Bellows of Bromforge** mini-adventure in this very book!)

The Dark Chorus: Should the PCs save the city and thwart the plans of Buldakatak, Ala Leann will make good on her promise: she will, along with the party's elf and/or wizard, perform a ritual to learn the identities of the other two chaotic gods within the Dark Chorus. Whether the ritual succeeds or not is left up to you the Judge and the cleverness of your players! Feel free to complicate the ritual in a way that makes another quest inevitable. This is an excellent way to direct your adventurers to an adventure you wish to play: simply integrate the needed ritual component into the adventure's narrative, side-by-side with whatever other McGuffin the adventure requires!

ADVENTURES TO COME...

Stay tuned to Purple Sorcerer Games as we expand on the world of the Sullenlands, crafting adventures that further explore the God Mist, the plans of the Dark Chorus, and the role that a certain missing heiress may play (along with your heroes) in thwarting the evil cabal's schemes to destroy the world!



MORE SHOPS IN THE CITY IN THE CLIFFS

Our amazing Kickstarter Patron backers have provided this list of shops to flesh out the City in the Cliffs or other locals in the Sullenlands. Many provide intriguing seeds that could flesh out an entire side adventure for your parties!

Thanks to everyone who supported the campaign and made the Sullenlands Adventure Omnibus and Guide possible!

Alasdair's Wondrous Limning: A cluttered shop full of manuscripts and folios. Within, a thin unkempt man who bears the shop's name works frantically. You can hire him to illuminate manuscripts, translate texts, transcribe, or buy old tomes for 50% value or 100% if the text is in Dragon for reasons he won't say.

The Apothecary of the Soni: Always open. While it looks to be an unusually expensive apothecary, it is actually one of the entries into the thieves guild headquarters. It is located behind the building with no doors. The proprietor is Soni Kurai Chiarkara Hito, who by his appearance seems to have come from a distant land from far across the seas. (Actually a deep elf thief in disguise).

Bowfisher Fletching: Bows and arrows crafted in the elven tradition by surly master marksmen Yandro Bowfisher. Specializing in arrows with a spider-silk thread attached at the end to allow for retrieving your "catch". Some might suppose they could have other uses...

The Burnt Crust Bakery: "Succulent pies, delicious pastries, hot crusty loaves, baked goods so good you'll never want to shop anywhere else" so claims master baker and proprietor, the ever smiling halfling Cade Tosscombe. Master Tosscombe likes to add a little extra into his secret cake, pie and bread recipes, something addictive in nature that keeps people coming back for more. Cade makes his extra "ingredient" from herbs he harvests from sites he's found on and around the cliffs surrounding his home. These are getting harder to find now and Cade's starting to worry.

As much as he loves seeing the long lines of people wanting to buy his wares every morning, and as happy and cheerful as





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275

those folk might be he knows that this in part is just a side affect of the drug he's mixed into their baked goods. The worrying thought is if the herbs harvest dries up then he might have a riot on his hands if the quality of his products drops sharply. Now if only he could find some help in seeking out some of those herbs, it could mean a long and possibly dangerous quest. Now where might he find a willing adventurer or two to do him a simple favor?

Byriver Toys: Kindhearted, generous, and nimble-fingered halfling Avior Byriver crafts a myriad of splendid toys in his quaint home-based shop. He presents a tiny toy to each child in town on the child's birthday.

Cap'n Jack's Bait and Tackle Shop: This nautical themed shop sells bait, tackle and fishing gear. Waterproof map/scroll cases may be purchased for 1 gp. Foul weather gear storm cloaks to keep the rain off, and protect from the winds of the high seas can be acquired for 10 cp. Retired Sea Captain Jack Fracas enjoys his twilight years and oversees the shop with his feisty twin daughters Oasis and Stormy.

The Cat of Nine Tales: A favorite drinking spot for traveling bards. The tavern hosts a nightly storytelling competition, and the winning bard takes home a live cat as their prize.

Chance Encounters: A seedy gambling den running rigged games of chance and a host of other illicit activities. The owner, Rex the Rake, can be challenged to a 'fair' one-on-one game by questioning his skills.

Charalee Chandler: On the outskirts of the city (due to the awful smell), Charalee makes candles and soap from beef and sheep tallow. He is very good at solving difficult mysteries, and may provide PCs with helpful hints.

Clifford's Big Wall Belay: Clifford stocks all sorts of climbing gear whether you want to head up or down. He's no thief but he has connections; he's trained lots of them to climb. And nobody suspects foul play when a novice craters. For the right cause, he'll close his shop and guide a party personally.



Cocoa's Kennel and Canine Haberdashery: Guard dogs, hunting dogs, riding dogs, pack dogs ugly as any mule; Sheila's got a canine companion for every adventurer! She's got scarves, sweaters, packs for gear, water bladders, bow ties and hats - everything you need to outfit your dog in style. (Her dog Cocoa loves cheese and ear scratches).

Court of Gamers: The proprietor of this game shop is a young blue-haired halfling named Sondra. She welcomes all into her establishment for gaming and merriment, and charges only a pittance.

Drak's Shards: Appearing at first like a junk store, Drak's Shards sells shards, chips, and slivers of gems, metals, glass, or other interesting materials that have caught Drak's eye. Most items are junk, but perhaps Drak has lost track of a shard in his inventory that is much more than mundane.

Drake & Arden's Phantasmagorical Festivities: Brother and sister proprietors Drake and Arden sell virtually any games, puzzles, toys and mind-benders one can imagine... some of which are just this side of fantastic. Many would-be adventures visiting this shop manage to find just the thing to spur them on to further exploits. Where do they get such wonderful toys?

Estrid's Exotic Elixir Elements: Acquire exotic components for potions from Estrid of the North. Examples include harpy's tongue, drop of blood from a pixie, and a giant's fingernail. Estrid's stock changes daily, so there is a 25% chance of the ingredient being present. Pricing is the minimum DC required for the potion x 100 gp.

Fantin's Cellar: A wine shop, catering to all variety of tastes. Retired adventurer Michael Fantin runs the shop with his grandsons Madden and Maverick. Will offer a 10% discount to customers willing to share a good story with him.

Gareth's Gruels: Hungry but have barely a copper to your name? You came to the right place! No refunds, no substitutions please!

The Glorious Outhouse: Literally a mildly enchanted public restroom, it's run by a rather goofy looking but well-intentioned young lady who believes in sewage systems. She hopes



to demonstrate how much better life would be without all of the refuse being thrown in the streets, or haphazardly dumped into the river. She waits outside barking for patrons to use it. There is a small fee to enter, but if used the 1st PC will gain 5 temporary HP, the 2nd 5 Temporary luck points (if shared they act like Halfling Luck), the rest of the party gets nothing.

Grimm Guindecker's Dungeoneering Supplies: It's a crowded shop with all manner of ropes, pulleys, crowbars, shovels, picks, 10' poles, lanterns and torches. Grimm is a retired dwarf adventurer who knows his business.

Hudde's Charts and Maps: Due to unfortunate circumstances the former master passed away leaving his inexperienced apprentice in charge of the shop. Any map acquired from Hudde will drop any chance of successfully navigating in the wilderness by -2d, apply this to survival attempts and even reactions of any encountered wildlife. The maps are that offensive.

Hurut's Harmonicas: This narrow nook of a shop is filled with shelves of small musical instruments. Harmonicas of a wider variety of styles than you've ever seen take pride of place, but there is a sizable stock of other wind instruments. The store is staffed by a rail thin young man with light blue skin and messy brown hair. A hawk sits on a perch in the back corner of the store, eyeing you as you enter.

The Iron Spike: Metal weapons, from the mundane to the exquisite, hang from the rafters inside this rustic Dwarvish Smithy. Prices are inflated by roughly 30%, but a PC may make a successful Will Save to barter (1d6x10% from the cost of any item) with the forge's owner Flintmier.

The Magpie: This public house serves fine ales and terrible pies made of black fowl. The clientele is a friendly, overly optimistic group, full of retired adventurers and men at arms who will agree to serve as hirelings after a few pints of brown ale. (Costs start at the going rate, then drop per round of ale bought after the first). The new halfling owner, Yelhsa, cares little for the pub but is secretly mining the lone silver vein under the pub making the whole structure, and even the buildings neighbors, unstable. Yelhsa cares nothing for the clientele or the neighborhood (though he constantly says he does).



Menagerie of the Weird Eye: Here is a shop where you can find a bit of everything, but specializes in the out of the ordinary. Need a map to a haunted swamp? Perhaps a bit of dust from the wings of a Cockatrice? You could perhaps find it here. The proprietor dresses in long hooded robes, from within the hood one can sometimes see what appears to be a single glowing eye. Its speech is scratchy, like ground sand under a heavy load. The proprietor is nameless and is never seen to leave the shop.

Michael's Alcove of Semi-Useful Things: The owner Michael lives in the upstairs apartment with his large dog Ruby. Michael's son Mason runs the store and lives in the basement. The main store has an over abundance of semi-useful items. A PC has a 5% chance to find a very useful item spending at least 10 minutes searching.

The Mundane Society: Adopt gently used pets rescued from magic users. Pets for companionship only. No familiars, blood sacrifices, or battle-sheep. Ask for Roxanne.

Nice People: You'll find this tavern in what was formerly a nice part of the city, run by the half-giant alchemist, Mardus. Rows of glass bottles filled with colorful liquids line the shelves, all concocted by the owner. Each drink consumed within 24 hours has a cumulative 10% chance of causing a magical effect lasting 1d2 hours for each drink. DC 15 Fortitude roll to save. On a fail, roll 1dN (where N is the number of drinks imbibed) on the minor magical corruption table (Table 5-3). On success, roll 1d20+5+the number of drinks on the Clerical Spell - Blessing table.

The Ogre's Den: A ramshackle tavern filled with all the town lowlifes, thieves, and adventurers. The food is simple, but surprisingly good. The drink is strong ale and mead. Wine drinkers will be hard pressed to find a drink, and will receive a suspicious eye from the tavern's owner Stinky: an unusually friendly one eyed half ogre. Stinky is quick to make friends, but you never want to cross him!

Pallantides' Sundry: Outrageously overpriced goods and services overseen by Boss Pallantides, a roguish sort of fellow who wears all white. The Sundry is filled to the brim with all manner of items for adventurers and villagers alike. Buy low, sell



high is a way of life at The Sundry, so if you are wanting to be rid of anything you may pull out of an abandoned cave or tomb, this is the place to do it!

Pavash's Oddities: This cluttered shop looks more like a junkyard than a proper store. The always pleasant Pavash has collected objects from all across the lands. One might purchase anything they might desire if only they could find it among the mess. Famous for its gift bags of random items sold for a flat price regardless of contents.

The Pleasurable Puff: A tobacconist operated by an elderly and eccentric Halfling named Cavendish Puff. An assortment of aromatic tobacco and pipes can be purchased. The store is renowned for Puff's signature blend of tobacco, "Pigsly Krinkle-Snout's Delight". Judges are free to give any of the tobacco blends strange/magical properties.

Porthos' Menagerie: Sells various water fowl and birds... and, for the right price, a young griffin, hippogriff, or other flying beast!

Professor Ramsay's House of Misfits: A museum chock full of taxidermied former side show performers, each one with an aging and yellowed placard describing the unfortunate freak's past and how they passed on. At sunset, the light seems to play tricks, and visitors have sworn they could see some of the exhibits moving...

RationAle: Rations, cheese wheels, sawdust-flavored protein bars, and a variety of road-tested ales. Everything a traveler needs for a long road trip.

Rho'Shel's Humiditorium: If you're lucky, the cigar you pick out of the exhaustive humidor hasn't been pre-sampled by its enormous proprietor, a reclusive veteran named Rho'Shel. His skin is scaly, though whether this is the result of magic gone awry or some odd quirk of genealogy is unknown.

Rockbottom Stones: The Rockbottom siblings, Samuel and Lindsay, procurer of stone, mineral, and crystal - both mundane and mystical. Purchased stones will have a small chance (5-10% per 10gp) of bestowing a one time +1 bonus to your next saving throw, or similar effect.



Sabrina's House of Gems: In addition to buying, selling, and trading gems of all types, Sabrina's shop offers jeweled items and weaponry for the discriminating customer.

Skathasnacky "Guiding Tracks and Healthy Snacks": A dusty stucco walled shop owned and operated by a gangly brown elderly man with a bald head and gray bushy beard named Bogair Yol who breeds and sells beetles for use in the art of Skatharomancy and as tasty snacks. Small wooden cages line the walls each containing a beetle with an iridescent carapace of either violet-blue or greenish-orange. Cost is 5gp per beetle or 20gp for 5 beetles and a recipe card. Eating a beetle raw heals 1HD of HP. Eating a cooked beetle (DC 8 +2 w/ recipe card to prepare) heals 3HD of HP. Beetle tracks can be used for divination (Skatharomancy) to assist characters in knowing which path to follow.

To interpret a beetle's tracks a wizard makes an intelligence check of DC 14 or a cleric makes a personality check of DC 14. Anyone else must make a successful luck roll. The judge determines the results of a successful Skatharomancy check based on how much information they want to reveal. Wizards and clerics should be given more information than other characters performing only a luck roll. It is by no means an exact science.

At any given time Bogair Yol has 1d4 beetles crawling through his beard and loosely fitting robes. He will demonstrate the art of Skatharomancy upon a very dusty point-of-sale counter in the center of the shop for any character willing to part with 10sp.

The Spa of Questionable Delights: For 5 silver, tired adventurers can delight in the mud and hot spring baths. Their soothing minerals relax and rejuvenate - most of the time. (Any adventurer spending time in the spa may restore up to 1d6 Luck points per day (above any normal restoration), but there is 5% chance (1 on a d20) that they will permanently lose a luck point instead!)

Star Hat Miniatures: A small sign reads, 'Your Heroic Likeness in Miniature'. Below, in fine print: 'For a Modest Fee'. Within this humble and rather cluttered store you find a broad and sturdily built Wizard, dressed in robes of shifting shades of azure with a gold star embroidered on his Phrygian cap. Sitting at his work-



bench he invites you in with a cheerful grin. Around him shelves line the walls, filled to the brim with tiny figurines. There are all manner of life-like heroes, legendary creatures and monstrous beasts. Curiously, you could swear that you saw one or two of them moving...

Talespinner's Bardic Emporium: A well-known haven of singers, tale-tellers, musicians, performers, and others looking for artistic work, this place is also a pawn-shop for all the curios, arcane items, and musical instruments of those down who need money quickly.

Strakeln Spelunking Supplies: Who better to get your spelunking supplies from than the famous Dwarf miner/spelunker himself Thorin Strakeln! From high mountain mines to underwater caves, Thorin has what you need.

Thimil's Combustibles: From bombs to boomsticks, if it combusts Thimil has it! Thimil sells mostly effective explosives, though there's always a 1-in-6 chance it'll blow up in the user's face. No refunds, all sales final. Absolutely final.

Tordek's Specialty Weapons: Are you in a restricted class? Do you Like to stand out in battle? Need a special weapon to get the job done? Stop by Tordek's Specialty Weapons and let cleric and master craftsman Tordek Brawnnavil help you find the perfect weapon to get the job done. You won't find weapons like this anywhere else in the City!

Truffle's Trinkets: Truffle Wiffleberry is a jubilant halfling who sells jewelry and baubles from his quaint shop. To trusted customers, however, he deals in the trade of jewelry-type magic items (rings, necklaces, broaches, etc). He will also purchase said items at 60-70% listed rates.

Vanara's School of Mimicry: Classes are taught by Vanara, a myna bird of mysterious and dubious origin, thus this school is not for sentient creatures of the world. Instead, the bird teaches any mundane animal companion to recite simple phrases to entire sonnets based on the willingness of the owner to part with gold, though the results are typically very disturbing to others...

J. Walkingraven, Purveyor of Fine Teas and Sundries: This cluttered but comfortable cafe offers a wide selection of exotic teas, plates of roasted root vegetables, & balsamic sausages.



PCs who are willing to recount their adventures (at length) with the talkative and gregarious proprietor have a chance of being offered rare items from the 'secret menu' (DC 5 personality check).

The teas have a mild relaxing effect that causes those who partake to divulge more than intended, particularly about their problems (DC 10 personality save). J. Walkingraven delights in offering 'solutions' in the form of complex capers, projects, and other story hooks.

Wilson's Wondershop: Wilson Friendly runs this shop with his rehabilitated zombie companion, Copernicus, and sells all manner of hard-to-find herbs, supplements, charms, and potions.

The Wizeden Warbler: This tavern and rare book library caters to learned patrons. The gray sage Lubus runs this tavern featuring red velvet, reading candles on every table, and the heads and bodies of chitinous insects mounted on the walls.

Ye Olde Shoppe of Strange Delights: Here you can purchase various oddities such as potions that change your physical form (30g), Waking Dream Powder that causes hallucinations (15g), and pet spiders that can talk (20g). Though efficacy is not guaranteed, each purchase does come with a small vial of genuine dragon blood. (Whether it is or not is up to the judge to decide!

Zankor's House of Metal: All kinds of weapons can be found at Zankor's house of metal. Zankor loves them all. However, his specialty is the axe. Handaxes, battleaxes, single-headed axes, double-headed axes are all available. Zankor will take custom weapon requests. The shop has a small amount of all purpose metal tools. Zankor's shop does not carry armor. He is not a skilled armorsmith. He is much more masterful in creating hand tools and weapons.



THE BELLOWS OF BROMFORGE

A 2nd Level Sullenlands mini-adventure for the Dungeon Crawl Classics RPG by Mark Bishop, featuring the incredible artwork of Misinkthope!

INTRODUCTION

Deep within the tunnels of that great dwarven fortress of Bromforge, an ancient evil has possessed the Glimmervault furnaces, silencing the bellows by snatching the miners, and disappearing with them into the darkness. The adventurers have been tasked with a dangerous delve into the darkest tunnels of Bromforge to discover the source of the upheaval, and to return the furnaces to full function by rescuing the miners. This adventure is designed for 4 to 8 2nd-level characters.

BACKGROUND

The immensely vast underground labyrinth of Bromforge boasts several dwarven cities and communities. The prodigious copper mines beneath the largest city, Glimmervault, are among the most prosperous in the known world: the chief reason the dwarven armies of Bromforge are well-equipped, well-financed, and all-together formidable.

In the lowest furnaces of **Deep Quarry #6**, a mysterious chamber has been unearthed, revealing ancient and strange totems. The smooth black pillars, carved with both curious glyphs and strange faces are old indeed, beyond the remembrances of the wisest dwarven scholars. Regardless, the smooth and profitable operation of the mine came first, and the mysterious room was quickly documented and then dismissed. That is, until workers in Deep Quarry #6 began to disappear.

Strangely, the first to go missing was none other than the dwarf who initially breached the wall to reveal the hidden chamber, **Orrdeth Grumquick**. Soon, others began to disappear, until the mines in Deep Quarry #6 were deemed by the council to be too dangerous to work in or explore. When professional clearers and mercenaries sent to solve the mystery also began to disappear, the troubles reached the ears of Bromforge's highest authority.



THE BELLOWS OF BROMFORGE



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285

Elder King Thorigard Braank has called for the council to dispatch a “more ruthless force” to deal with the problem, even yielding to the near-heretical idea that forces from other races might be needed to cast fresh eyes upon the problem. None but the clans of Bromforge have ever delved so far into the earth beneath Glimmervault. Worthy adventurers thus chosen should consider themselves blessed, as this will be the first time that outsiders have been allowed to trespass so far into the dwarves inner sanctums!

JUDGE'S NOTES

By whatever means the judge concocts, the PCs will find themselves visiting Glimmervault in Bromforge at the time of the disappearances. Feel free to drop this adventure into your own campaign by modifying, chopping, changing names and personalizing the plot points to fit your world. If you'd like to know more about this setting, the locations within this adventure can be found in the Purple Sorcerer mini-campaign guide **Life in the Sullenlands**.

The dwarves of Glimmervault are a secluded society (more so than others within Bromforge) and will be skeptical of any party possessing an elf or a wizard. (They normally shun those associated with magic and conjurations). But seeing as their own efforts have failed to uncover and resolve the problem, they will eventually arrive at the conclusion that it is time to consider more desperate tactics. *Here in this mining community, time is money.*

The PCs may see a notice being tacked to doors around town: *Delves Needed! The stout of heart need only apply at The Iron Sky Commonhouse.* Or since Glimmervault is a hub of activity and commerce in the Sullenlands, perhaps an NPC with some past importance in the campaign can make an appearance and introduce the PCs to the city's dilemma.

The king's trusted adviser **Stronk Dusklight**, known as the *King's Hand*, sits at a corner table of The Iron Sky Commonhouse, interviewing potential candidates. Roleplay the encounter as you wish, but

Stronk should eventually hire the PCs and invite them to meet him at the front gates of Deep Quarry #6 within the hour. As recompense, he may offer the party an adequate amount of



gold (25% now; the rest upon satisfactory completion), upgrades in armor for the party, and perhaps more importantly, a boon that may aid magic users during the time of the God Mist (see sidebar: The Amulet of the Old Oak), *all delivered, of course, upon a satisfactory resolution to the problem.*

The adventurers will have a short window to restock supplies in town before reporting to Deep Quarry #6's gates if they wish.

THE AMULET OF THE OLD OAK

As described in the Sullenlands mini-campaign setting, the PCs are living through the time of The God Mist. It is a seven-year period that comes once every seven generations, when distant moons align and all gods and patrons are partially blinded from their followers, creating even more unpredictability in spellcasting than usual.

The **Amulet of the Old Oak** was a gift to the dwarves from the mighty elf-chieftain **Larongar Quiren** who hails from Ishlachyren to the north. Elder King Thorigard Braank has kept the necklace locked away, however, leery of its magic and unsure that the elven chieftain's motives are entirely sincere. As a result, King's Hand Stronk Dusklight had been authorized to *"see to it that this magnanimous gift finds a new home far from the sacred halls of Bromforge."*

The amulet consists of an alabaster jewel encased in a bone facade resembling the cap of an acorn, affixed to a golden chain that acts as a conduit to the ethereal realms. Once a day the wearer may add a +2 to any spell check by merely clutching the "acorn" as the spell is invoked. Additionally, should the spell check fail to succeed, the God Mist's negative effect is nullified in this one instance.



ENCOUNTER TABLE

Area	Type	Encounter
1	T	Acid Pit
2	T	Runaway Mine Cart
3	C	Primordial Dread Shadows
4	C	Visage Spiders
5	C	Red Spider Swarm
6	C	Stone Grappler
7	C	Visage Spiders/ Mother Spider
8	C	Mother Spider
9	T/C	Dark Elves/ Visage Spiders/ Mother Spider/ Platform
10	C	Dark Elves

PLAYER START

You arrive at the subterranean gates of Deep Quarry #6, one of twelve mining domains beneath the great dwarven city of Glimmervault. A call has gone forth from the Dwarven King Thorigard Braank for brave adventurers to investigate the disappearance of over two-dozen dwarven miners, including Orrdeth Grumquick, the miner who recently discovered an ancient chamber occupied by strange statues covered in glyphs.

The reward will be handsome, if you can claim it! But rumors persist that whatever beast must have crawled up from the earth's depths to silence the bellows and furnaces of Glimmervault is not only a curious mystery, but a treacherous danger!

The King's Hand, Stronk Dusklight fumbles for an iron key that unlocks the chained gate. The large door creaks open, and soon his torchlight casts light and shadow into the immense cavern ahead. *"You'll go that way, past the bellows and the furnaces. The third tunnel on the right is marked with a skull. Follow it and you'll find the chamber that young Grumquick unearthed. Beyond that... well, may the eyes of Greythaak the Bearded Anvil give you wisdom and strength."*



AREA I: THE FURNACE AT DEEP QUARRY #6

The furnace room is a large rocky chamber containing two massive stone furnaces and bellows. Large smelting pots hang by hook and chain near the ceiling. Various mining implements have been abandoned, covered with dust. There are three tunnel entrances on the southern-most wall. One is marked with a carved goat, the next with a carved fish, and the last with a carved skull. At the end of the large room, a stout ram stands next to a wooden wheelbarrow, munching on the bed of straw beneath it.

The furnaces are cold and silent, likewise the hanging smelting pots. The PCs may find **50' of rope** hanging on a peg, a couple of **mining picks** (D6 damage), a **shovel** (D4), a **box of torches**, and hanging from one beam, an **iron cage containing one canary**. The bird is hungry, but otherwise in good health. The ram munching on the straw is wholly uninterested in the new visitors.

The wheelbarrow is parked upon the bed of straw, burying a series of planks that cover a pit. If the pit is opened, a swarm of frenzied bats burst forth. The bats do no damage but everyone standing on the straw near the hole must make a DC 10 Reflex save or fall into the 10' pit, suffering 1d6 damage.

A wooden case rests at the bottom of the pit, filled with **six bottles of etching acid**. If the reflex save failed with a result of less than 5, the unlucky soul crashes into the box, destroying 1d6 bottles and adding an additional 1d6 burn damage.

Beyond this furnace chamber, all tunnels and rooms are assumed to be shrouded in complete darkness.

Stronk Dusklight will leave the party to their task, locking the gate to Deep Quarry #6 as he departs. *"Just in case you stir something up,"* he'll say as he wraps the chain around the gate. *"Just call out when you're back. We'll hear you."*

Ram: Init -1; Atk hoof or head-butt +2 melee (1d4); AC 8; HD 1d6; hp 5; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2; Ref +0; Will -2; AL N.



AREA 2: THE FIRST TUNNEL

The first tunnel has the chiseled visage of a goat above the door. The path inside descends into a cobwebbed darkness.

The tunnel winds for approximately 50' past chiseled stone walls and wooden beam supports, ending in a 20'x20' chamber dotted with various mining equipment. In the center of the room, a mining cart rests on rails that run into a dark passage in the south-east wall. (The room's only exit).

If a light source is used, the PCs can see that the rails begin to descend steeply right after exiting the cavern. The slope can be descended by rope (or by whatever contraption the PCs derive) with a **DC 6 Agility Check**. Tumbling down the 30' incline results in 3d4 damage and a spill into **Area 5**.

Adventurous explorers may decide to ride the mine cart down. The cart can accommodate up to six passengers. At full capacity, the brake has a 50% chance of failing when the cart reaches the bottom and



begins to climb the unfinished ramp. If this happens (or the brake is not applied) the cart's passengers will sail 30' over a deep chasm and land on the cavern floor of **Area 6**, requiring a **DC 12 Fort Save** to avoid 2d6 damage as the cart crashes!

If the mine cart is ridden safely down to its stop, or the PCs descend the rails by some other means, they will arrive at the dead-end room in **Area 5**. The ledge where the rails end is a straight drop of 300' into darkness. From the ledge, PCs with infravision can see across the 30' chasm to the cavity on the other side (that leads to **Area 6**), but no further.

AREA 3: THE 2ND TUNNEL & UNDERWATER CHAMBER

The second tunnel has the visage of a fish chiseled above the door. The way beyond descends into darkness on a roughly-hewn path.

If the PCs continue: *The tunnel ends at a frigid pool of water that has risen to cover the path. Though the area is flooded, it is obvious that the tunnel continues onward down beneath the cold, dark waters.*

The flooded tunnel continues another 30' before the path reemerges in another small dead-end chamber at **Area 3**. PCs with infravision can swim and traverse the tunnels in three rounds, each round requiring a **DC7 Fort Save** to avoid 1d4-1 choking damage. All other PCs require five rounds (and the same Fort Saves) to grope and find their way, unless they can provide a source of underwater light. Resourceful PCs may have the lead swimmer make their way with a rope to provide a guide for others. (Which will reduce the trip to three rounds).

Once the players emerge at the far side, read or paraphrase the following:

As you reemerge from the flooded tunnel, you are greeted with an echoing chamber filled with an eerie yellow light that dances upon the rough-hewn walls. A trail of shimmering dust literally snakes about the room, seeming to sing ever-so-faintly as it



moves across the walls like a loosely-formed ribbon. The subterranean room appears to be a naturally formed chamber, no larger than 20 feet square. Strange black ciphers and glyphs are etched upon the walls and the low ceiling. Stalactites and stalagmites stretch from bottom to top, casting ominous shadows. The cavern appears to be a dead end.

Near the center of the room, a glowing piece of yellow amber sits atop a broken stalactite, like a roughly-hewn egg. The amber egg is trimmed in gold inscribed with elven characters, set with emeralds and rubies, and provides the chamber's mysterious yellow light. The glow from the egg keeps the ancient evil of the living glyphs in stasis, captured as they are upon the ceilings and walls. The egg is an ancient eldritch trap, its radiance enchanted to attract primordial shadows, trapping them when they enter the chamber. These embodiments of hopelessness are pinned to the surface of the rocks, in glyphs that reveal their true names.

If the egg is disturbed from its perch, the light will dim and the shadows, now freed, will descend upon the rooms inhabitants. If the egg is returned to the perch and the inscribed elven incant is read aloud, its glow will rekindle to full strength in one full round, returning the shadow glyphs back to the walls and ceiling. The amber egg would be worth 5,000 gold pieces just for the raw materials, but seekers of rare arcane knowledge would covet it as priceless!

Primordial Dread Shadows (5): Init+2 (the shadows always receive an initial surprise attack unless detected by magic); Atk necrotic grasp +3 melee (1d4 cold damage +1 point permanent random ability score loss,); AC 13; HD 3d6; hp 13; MV fly 30'; Act 1d20; SP undead traits, incorporeal, immune to non-magical weapons, half damage from silvered or mithril weapons; SV Fort +4; Ref +4; Will +6; AL C.

Primordial Shadows are undead chaotic creatures and so can be turned by a cleric. They are immune to critical hits, disease and poison, as well as spells sleep, charm, and paralysis, along with other mental effects and cold damage. They are incorporeal and can pass through walls, water, or other creatures. They cannot be grappled. They are not hindered by gravity.



The amber egg is an artifact from another age. In addition to the elven characters carved upon the gold casing are what appear to be elves with large glowing eyes.

The artifact was placed in this hidden submerged chamber to draw and trap the dangerous spirits. If stolen, the shadows will always be drawn to the amber egg, finding it every 1d14 days. If the inscribed elven incant is read aloud and the egg is stood upright in a completely dark room, after one round the egg will begin to glow, holding any primordial shadow that finds it in the room until the egg is moved again.

AREA 4: THE PATH OF THE SKULL

A skull is etched above the third door's archway. The path below leads into cobwebbed darkness.

A successful casting of **Detect Magic** or **Detect Evil** before descending the path may reveal that there are creatures nearby. The loathsome spiders lurking in the chamber use webbing to trap their prey, but the spiders begin to glow in the darkness in the eyes of the caster. As the PCs proceed, read or paraphrase the following:

The rough-hewn cavern walls are covered with an oily webbing. The sounds of chittering and small ticky-tack steps are heard in the distance.

The webbing is highly flammable. If ignited, every creature inside the tunnel receives 1d6 ongoing fire damage (DC10 Reflex Save to drop and roll ends). The dog-sized spiders have grotesque human faces with slightly elongated ears and will wait until travelers reach the midway point of the 60' tunnel before closing in on the party from small tunnels and burrows hidden behind the webbing.

Visage Spiders (8): Init +1; Atk bite +1 melee (dmg 1d4); AC 12; HD 1d6; hp 4; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +0; Ref +1; Will -1; AL C.



AREA 5: SUPPLY STORAGE

The mine cart tracks end on a ledge. Below, a supply room waits fully stocked with metal railing, stacks of 4' wooden ties, buckets of rail spikes, lanterns, and torches.

The side room is filled with supplies intended to continue the unfinished track on the ledge above. A mutilated dwarf miner lies face-down behind a crate, seemingly one of the missing. Just beyond the tips of his decaying finger he has scrawled five letters in the dust: "E L V E S".

If turned over, hundreds of small red spiders will pour from the miner's mouth and ears, overrunning the party. The dwarf carries 1d30 gold pieces, Greythakk's Amulet of Protection (+1 Luck underground), a silvered short sword, and a jade dagger worth 30gp.

Red Spider Swarm: Init +3; Atk swarming bite +2 melee (1+poison); AC 8; HD 3d6; hp 14; MV 10'; Act 1d20; SP attack area expands 10' per round, half damage from non-area attacks, poison (DC 7 Fort Save or additional 1d4 poison damage each round); SV Fort -1; Ref +3; Will -4; AL N.

AREA 6: THE UNEARTHED CHAMBER

At the bottom of the tunnel you finally encounter the chamber that was recently unearthed by the miners of Deep Quarry #6. This is as far as the miners were able to explore before they began to disappear and the mine was closed. An oppressive presence seems to permeate the rough cavern, with odd ebony pillars and broken columns jutting out awkwardly from the rubble. Perhaps the eerie remains hint at some past subterranean civilization long lost to time? Some of the pillars are carved with disturbing faces, standing guard like ancient totems.

The room is approximately 40'x50' and comprised mostly of uneven slopes of broken stone. The ebony totems are carved with glyphs. A **DC 16 Intelligence check** reveals the glyphs to be vaguely elvish in nature. Any elf in the party will recognize this without the check, though the exact meaning will remain indecipherable. The tunnel opening on the furthest wall to the south is easily visible. The smaller tunnel opening behind the rocks in the





eastern wall is more difficult to find, but any active exploration in that area will reveal it.

A cursory inspection will reveal that all tunnels exiting the chamber are also covered in webs. A **DC8 Luck check** will reveal a trail of blood droplets leading to the southern tunnel exit.

Two Stone Grapplers lurk amongst the riot of fallen stones, waiting for a chance to strike. As the PCs begin to leave the chamber, up to four tentacles from one of the Stone Grapplers will make a surprise attack on the last PC exiting the room, pulling them back into the chamber. The Grappler receives a +2 bonus on each attack on the surprise round, with their regular attack bonus applying thereafter. The 2nd Grappler will engage on the following round.

Stone Grappler (2): Init +3; Atk tendril +3 melee (1d4+ grappled) and bite +3 melee (1d8); AC 13; HD 4d8; hp 24; MV 10'; climb 10'; reach 20'; Act 4d20; SV Fort+6; Ref+3; Will+2; AL N.

Special Traits of the Stone Grappler: On a successful attack, the Grappler's target is "grabbed". The captured PC has the option of using an action to escape (DC12 Strength check) on their turn. If a target is still "grabbed" on the Grappler's turn, they suffer an additional 1d4 points of constriction damage, and the creature will also attempt a bite attack on that PC. All attacks made by a "grabbed" PC suffer a -2 penalty.

The eye of a dead Stone Grappler is considered to be of great value, fetching 50gp from dwarven alchemists in Glimmervault, twice that in communities above ground.



AREA 7: THE SPIDER'S NEST

The tunnel widens to reveal a purple-hued cavern, some 40' round and just as tall. Stalagmites jut from the floor. In the middle of the room, one such stone formation looks as though it was lopped off and hollowed out to contain a 4' pool of molten lava bubbling within it. Throughout the cavern, dozens of eggs lie nestled in straw, varying in size from as small as a fist to the size of a small barrel.

This chamber acts as an incubator for the eggs, with the pool of lava providing the warmth. The blood trail from the previous room leads to one nesting area where a few of the larger eggs have already hatched. The gory remains of two miners lie nearby, apparently used as a source of food for whatever creatures have hatched. If the PCs decide to destroy the eggs, the chittering screams of the "spiders" within the eggs will summon one of the large spiders from Area 9 in 1d4 rounds. Smaller "visage spiders" will emerge at the same time to attack the party. If the eggs are left alone and a certain amount of stealth is practiced, the large Mother Spider and her young will remain in Area 9. Entering the lava pool will cause 1d10 damage +1d6 ongoing fire damage.

On the wall opposite where the PCs enter the cavern, a wide ornate archway provides access to another tunnel. Carved into the frame of the entrance are pictographs showing elves bowing to a half-human, half-spider creature. The pathway descends some 75' before arriving at a doorway where flickers of light escape around the closed door to dimly illuminate the tunnel walls.

Visage Spiders (4): Init +1; Atk bite +1 melee (1d4); AC 12; HD 1d6; hp 4; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +0; Ref +1; Will -1; AL C.

Mother Spider: Init +3; Atk bite +3 melee (1d8+1) and acid spit (1d6+2); AC 14; HD 5d6; hp 24; MV 40'; Act 2d20; SV Fort +4; Ref +3; Will +3; AL C. The Mother Spider is a hybrid of a different sort, with long bony arms and hands. Standing eight feet high, it can quickly reach any part of the room, floor or 40' ceiling, where it might choose to spit acid at the PCs.



AREA 8: IRRIGATION TUNNEL

This winding tunnel is quite narrow, necessitating single-file travel. Soon the rocky path merges with a small stream of water that continues to follow the cavern floor in the direction you are walking.

If the PCs continue: *Eventually, the watery path ends in a small room with an 8' round opening in the floor where the water trickles over the edges to a dimly lit chamber below.*

The oval room is the collecting pool of an irrigation system sending water to the mushroom farm below in **Area 9**. The 8' opening in the floor reveals a 10' drop shaft before exiting in the cavern ceiling 20' above the floor. Thus, from shaft opening to cavern floor the water falls 30'. From this vantage point, the PCs can see only what is directly below them: a few rows of orange and purple mushrooms in slightly raised beds. The splashing of water makes it hard to hear anything beyond the room they are in.

If the PCs make an inordinate amount of noise, the Mother Spider will pop in to investigate, receiving a surprise round to act. There are stalagmites in the room that can easily support the weight of PCs should they decide to descend by rope. After descending 10', any PC will clear the shaft and see the whole of Area 9 (see that room's description). Unless precautions are taken, there is a 50% chance that the descending PC will be spotted by the Mother Spider or the mushroom farmer. If that happens, proceed to the descriptions in Area 9.

Mother Spider: Init +3; Atk bite +3 melee (1d8+1) and acid spit (1d6+2); AC 14; HD 5d6; hp 24; MV 40'; Act 2d20; SV Fort +4; Ref +3; Will +3; AL C.

AREA 9: UNDERDARK MUSHROOM FARM

Flickering torches line the walls of this chamber, revealing an expansive cavern. Within it, many rows of strangely colored mushrooms grow in raised beds. Water falls from the center of the 20' ceiling to splash on the floor, flowing in grooved patterns to areas of the "garden". An ebony-skinned humanoid walks the rows, occasionally prodding the soil with a stick.



A grinding metallic noise suddenly draws your attention to the northern wall of the chamber, which is pierced by a stout iron cell door. Near the door is what can only be described as a horror: an eight foot tall lanky spider-ish creature, possessing long bony arms that terminate in grasping, human-like fingers! The monstrosity has opened the creaking metal door, and now pulls a struggling dwarven miner out by the leg. With astonishing quickness the spider drags her prey to the furthest row of mushrooms, then begins pulling the shrieking miner limb from limb! The creature then lifts the torn appendages above the mushrooms, irrigating the soil with a shower of fresh blood.

On the distant eastern wall, beneath a precarious platform of boulders, a large portcullis is closed, the dimly-lit tunnel behind it disappearing into a vast darkness.

The room is 50' wide by 75' long. The water cascades lightly from an opening in the ceiling above the center of the room. A platform of boulders rests on a temporary wooden catwalk above the closed portcullis. The cell on the northern wall is merely a shallow alcove hollowed out of the stone, with the cell door added to bar prisoners escape. Three dwarves remain inside the cell; **Orrdeth Grumquick** is among them.

The ebony-skinned "farmer" is a **Deep Elf**, an inhabitant of the lower realms. One more Deep Elf, an artisan, works hidden upon the platform, chiseling out statuary reliefs into the cavern wall above the portcullis. Unless one of the large spiders was already killed in **Area 7 or 8**, there are two of the creatures here: the one already seen "fertilizing" the crops, and the other just out of sight with the Deep Elf artisan on the platform. The four **Visage Spiders** spin webs on the underside of the platform.

The raised mushroom beds can provide cover, so a stealthy PC might be able to belly-crawl and reach the cell area unnoticed with a series of three DC 10 Stealth Checks (if coming from **Area 7**). The key for the cell hangs around the neck of the "fertilizing" spider. The lock could also be picked with a set of thief's tools and a DC 12 Pick Lock check. Unless measures are taken, the squeaky door will alert the **Mother Spider**. She will quietly creep toward the source of the noise to investigate.





Thus it is possible, with some luck and planning, to rescue the captive dwarves without being noticed. The gentle waterfall will provide a modicum of sound cover for PCs trying to remain quiet. If a full-on fight should ensue, all of the cavern's occupants will join in on the skirmish.

The Deep Elf on the platform will produce a horn and spend his first action sounding a warning to the soldiers stationed down the hall behind the closed portcullis. After the horn blast, a reinforcement force of $1d8+4$ Deep Elves will arrive in 6 rounds at the closed portcullis. Up to four deep elves may choose to make ranged attacks as the others work to open the portcullis, which can be opened in two full rounds.

The Rock Platform: Two chains act as guy-lines staked from the floor to the catwalk's supporting beams. The platform can be made to collapse with a DC18 Strength check. Up to three PCs can contribute to the check by breaking the chains or toppling the support beams. Any creature still perched upon the platform must meet or exceed a DC14 Reflex check or receive $3d6$ crushing damage in the collapse. Anyone beneath the platform must succeed at a DC14 Reflex check or receive $3d10$ crushing damage. The collapse of the platform seals off the portcullis and tunnel.

Deep Elves (2): Init +2; Atk short sword +3 melee ($1d6+1$) or short bow +2 missile fire ($1d6+1$) or spell +3 (see below); AC 13; HD 2d6; hp 12; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +1; Ref +2; Will +1; AL C. Deep Elves have heightened infravision and can see 120' through the darkness. They are immune to magical sleep and paralysis. Deep Elves are not sensitive to the touch of iron. A Deep Elf knows one of the following spells: (1) Cantrip pg.130 (2) Charm Person pg.131 (3) Sleep pg. 155 (4) Spider Climb pg. 156.

Visage Spiders (4): Init +1; Atk bite +1 melee ($1d4$); AC 12; HD 1d6; hp 4; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +0; Ref +1; Will -1; AL C.

Mother Spider (2): Init +3; Atk bite +3 melee ($1d8+1$) and acid spit ($1d6+2$); AC 14; HD 5d6; hp 24; MV 40'; Act 2d20; SV Fort +4; Ref +3; Will +3; AL C.



THE DEEP ELVES

These are not your father's dark elves.

So forget everything you know about the dark elves or the drow. It is the Dungeon Crawl Classics way to defamiliarize past tropes in order to make the player's world seem less familiar, and thus dangerous once again. With that being said, the Judge should still feel free to allow the players to assume that they know about these "deep elves", as you chalk it all up to inaccurate rumor and legend. How could they know? No one in the Sullenlands has ever seen a deep elf before.

Perhaps in legends past, the deep elves have been romanticized as stoic and handsome creatures, but nothing could be further from the truth. Their slate gray skin is permanently peppered black by the ever-clinging dust of the ashen magma-dust of their subterranean homes, and coarse like creviced leather; their noses are pugged similar to that of a bat; their teeth filed into fangs as is their custom. Their eyes are pupil-less red orbs, for since the dawn of time the deep elves have lived miles beneath even the most subterranean dwarven cities.

So close to the earth's core have they existed in their madness, that they have been forgotten by all but the oldest gods. The deep elves have never seen the moon's glow nor the sun's radiance, though that may change now that the tunnels beneath Bromforge have torn down the curtain that once separated the two worlds.

The Deep Elves were long ago cast into the bowels of the earth by the **King of Elfland** as punishment for their depraved hearts and their elevation of cannibalism as a spiritual transformation. He took away their magic and coarsened their bodies to match the corruption of their souls. Abandoned, they sacrificed an entire generation of their species to the **Mother of Abyssal Darkness**, a chaotic primordial creature, in order to avail themselves of her magic. She is worshiped and deified with sigils in the likenesses of bats, lizards, snakes, scorpions, spiders, and wasps.

Deep elves are resistant to lawful and neutral magic, especially underground where the aura of "The Mother" protects them. When they finally do breach the earth's surface, they carry the Mother's aura with them for up to ten days before it dissipates.



This aura clings to the dark elf like a shadow, a palpable caliginous gloom that obscures the elf from immediate notice. While this indistinct and indiscernible pall mutes the dark elf's presence, when they are noticed, it triggers a queasy sadness that nudges the observer to look away.

Deep elves, unlike surface elves, have no sensitivity to iron. Oddly though, a lawful or neutral cleric's Turn Unholy spell, while not having the ability to repel the deep elf, does, as the spell success dictates, create a vulnerability to silvered and mithril weapons (+1 to attacks and an additional 1d3 damage times the yelder's caster level. For example, a 2nd level attacker armed with silvered or mithril weapon would receive +2 to attack and inflict an additional 2d3 damage).

The Mother of Abyssal Darkness blesses her "children" with dark magic in adolescence. Deep elves are born chaotic in nature. The weak, infirm, and disfigured young ones are sacrificed at the Mother's altar and eaten in ritualistic feasts. Though the deep elves might live as long as their cousins on the surface, their custom is to submit their blood and flesh to the collective when they reach 100 years,

keeping the bloodline strong and virile, while reserving the limited resources of their underground world. The aged dark elf's associates sharpens their blades the night before the death ritual takes place. The feast not only feeds the fellowship, but also the dark magic of the Mother.



Deep elves speak a long-vanished variation of the Elven language. They are cunning in group warfare and recklessly loyal to the Mother. They are quick to agitation and wrath. When the breach at Bromforge opens the gateway between these two worlds, the dark elves will merely see the world above as a new resource to plunder.

They desire nothing more than to grow fat on the blood and flesh of the weak infidels of the lands of moon and sun.



AREA 10: TUNNELS TO THE UNDERDARK

If 1d8+4 Deep Elves should arrive at the portcullis and manage to raise the gates, the PCs might find this new wave of formidable foes overwhelming. If the party engages and the tide turns against them, consider allowing the Deep Elves' to deliver subdual damage instead of lethal wounds, with a plan to take the PCs prisoners to be carried off into the mysterious lower realms for some dark purpose. Be aware that these creatures are sadistic and cruel: learn more about them in the sidebar: **The Deep Elves**.

As the mystery of the missing miners is solved, another more grand puzzle has been revealed! With the current fractured state of the Sullenlands, the sudden appearance of a new race of aggressive mutated humanoids should send shockwaves throughout the realm, opening up an entirely new chapter in history. In this new world, your players will need to forget what they've learned so far, and be encouraged to embrace unconventional thoughts. Allow this new menace to turn the PC's present world upside down as they are forced to adapt to these unknown and unexpected threats.

By challenging the player's pre-conceived expectations and making their world a truly dangerous and unpredictable place, you'll be tuned in to the Dungeon Crawl Classics tradition!

MAKE THE SULLENLANDS YOUR OWN

We hope that this Sullenlands mini-campaign guide helps you flesh out your campaign into a cohesive world that your players will enjoy coming back to again and again. We've tried to keep things relatively loose so it's easy to wrap this content around your own campaign elements. In addition, there are many wonderful adventures available within the Dungeon Crawl Classics universe from an array of publishers. We believe the Sullenland's unique "hooks" can help you build bridges from one adventure to another in a way that will help your whole world seamlessly come together. Grab some dice. Order pizza. And then make the Sullenlands come to life at your table!



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